STUDY ON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KASHMIRI SETTLEMENT AND THEIR TRADE ACTIVITIES IN MATTANCHERRY AND FORT KOCHI

Dissertation submitted to the

Post-Graduation Department of History, St. Teresa's College Ernakulam

(Autonomous) in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

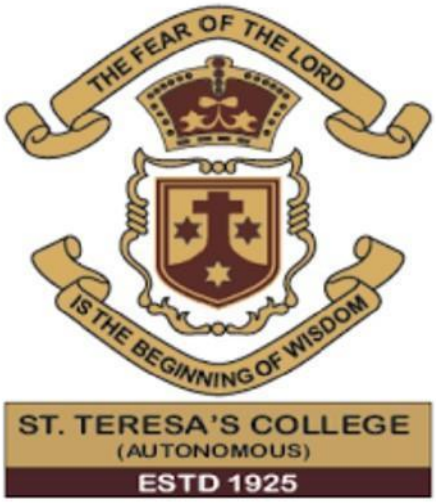
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY

By

BRIGIT MINI

M.A. HISTORY (2021-2023)

REG. NO. SM21HIS003



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

ERNAKULAM

March 2023

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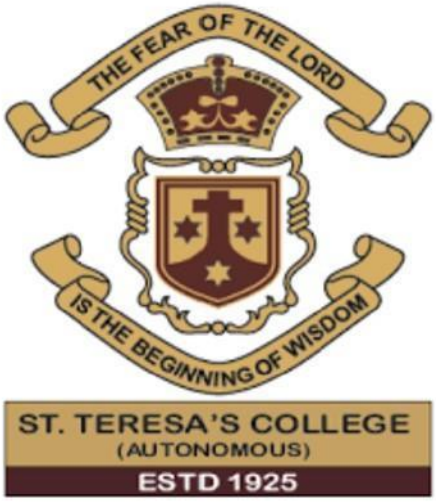
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled **"A STUDY ON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KASHMIRI SETTLEMENT AND THEIR TRADE ACTIVITIES IN MATTANCHERRY AND FORT KOCHI" submitted** in the partial fulfilment of the requirements for M A Degree in History, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam is a bonafide work done by **BRIGIT MINI** under my supervision and guidance. In addition, it is certified that this project or any part of this has not been previously submitted elsewhere to adjudge any degree, diploma or other title or acknowledgement.

Head of the Department **Supervising Teacher**

Submitted to viva- voce Examination held on ……. At the Department of History, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam.

Name and signature of Examiners

1.

2.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation work entitled **"A STUDY ON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KASHMIRI SETTLEMENT AND THEIR TRADE ACTIVITIES IN MATTANCHERRY AND FORT KOCHI"** is an original work done by me under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Mintu Judson Lecturer of Department of History, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam and I have not submitted this project to any other universities for the award of any degree or diploma.

Place: Ernakulam **Brigit Mini**

Date: St. Teresa's College Ernakulam

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INTRODUCTION

Kashmir is a region in the north west of the Indian subcontinent it borders Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region to the northeast, Tibet region to the east by the Himachal Pradesh and Punjab in India to south, Pakistan and Afghanistan to the west to the northwest. The history of Kashmir has been the subject of dispute between India and Pakistan since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. The Kashmir place is predominantly mountains with deep slender valleys and high barren plateau. The people of Kashmir have migrated to different parts of India. It is believed that Kashmiri Muslims started to migrate around1965 because of the internal problems that took place in the heart of Kashmir. The major reason behind their migration to different parts of Kerala and so on is mainly this dispute. The Kashmiri Muslims also known as Koshur. They do not have any substantial non secular differences from the Muslims. Their culture, tradition, rituals, morals, customs, knowledge, belief, and other habits and their capabilities remain the same. Culture can be also represented through customs and tradition. The traditions are passed down from one generation to another.

The Kashmiri Muslims community is one among the several communities which migrated to Kerala, for example Gujaratis, Jews, Cutchi Memon, Saraswat Brahmans etc. the Kashmiris have been found in many places in India including Kerala. The language that they speak is also referred to as Koshu itself. Even though they do not have significant religious differences from the other Muslims their tradition has slight changes. The most of the migrant community of Kashmiri now

settled in Kerala. They have lots of written and unwritten history which give us clues regarding the time period of their settlement in Kerala and reason for their migration. The main reason was to start a peaceful life here. The migrated community who settled here is now currently engaged in trade and purposes. Their handicrafts, textiles, antique, and dry fruits have great markets and demand in the foreign countries, thus they started to set up their business in this area which is most likely a tourist center that is Kochi, Trivandrum, Alappuzha. Their journey to Kerala and other parts of the region was not easy, the struggles and the problems that they faced still unforgettable. The project is divided into five chapters. First chapter focuses on the historical background of the Kashmiri migrants and their pattern. It also discusses various problems of

Kashmiris during the partition and the consequences of Kashmir conflict and its impact. It would also trace the migration and their growth in Kerala. And the second chapter is about to focus on understanding the settlement of the community in Kerala mainly Kochi, Mattancherry. It also gives a detailed explanation about the region and its importance. Mattancherry was one of the places that they settled in Kerala hence it also dealt with their trade activities and their life in Fort Kochi also.

The present scenario of Kashmiris who migrated to Kerala is now settled mainly in Kochi Mattancherry. Most of them work in the trading sector. As we know Kashmir has been facing lots of problems till now and there are not any changes even after the independence major and minor conflict among them still took place in the region. The people from the region have also faced the problems because of these disputes and conflicts. To escape this harsh situation the migrant Kashmiris settled in Kerala Kochi Mattancherry Fort Kochi and pressured trading activities as a livelihood which was favorable to the migrants. Thus it is an apt choice to study about the migrants of Kashmiris in Kochi.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the historical background of the Kashmiri migration
- To understand occupation, cultural and religious influence practiced by the community
- To trace the present condition of the Kashmiri community and their trade in Kochi
- To trace the transition in their life style over the years and situation after the pandemic

METHODOLOGY

Methodology used in this dissertation deals with both primary data and secondary data as well as published works and books as evidence. The most important source of primary data is one on one interview with various people belongs to the community which include mostly artisans, traders

The secondary sources of the project include Books, Articles, News reports, online sources etc. Hence it is a descriptive work with the usage of comprehensive understanding to reach a conclusion.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is proposed to be organized under five chapters

1. Chapter 1: Introduction.
2. Chapter 2: A study on Historical background of Kashmiri settlement and their trade activities in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi
3. Chapter 3: Settlements of the Kashmiris in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry.
4. Chapter 4: Kashmiri migrants and the changing scenario over the years.
5. Chapter 5: conclusion.

CHAPTER I

A STUDY ON HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF KASHMIRI SETTLEMENT AND THEIR TRADE ACTIVITIES IN MATTANCHERRY

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

History is an integral part of our existence and it is an umbrella term that relates the past events as well as memory, presentation, collection, organization, discovery and the interpretation of information about these events[1]. There are historical sources such as written documents, art, artifacts and oral accounts. India`s history and culture is dynamic, and it is punctuated by the integration of migrating people with diverse culture[2]. Culture is a complex whole including belief, knowledge, ritual, morals, customs and other habits and their Capabilities[3].

Kashmiris are an ethnolinguistic group speaking the Kashmiri language living mostly but not exclusively in the Kashmiri Valley in the Indian subcontinent. There are about 6.8 million speakers of Kashmiri and related dialects in Jammu and Kashmiri diaspora in other states of India. Most Kashmiri are located in the Kashmir valley; they form the majority. Some traditional types of music of Kashmiri are Chakri, Henzae, and Ladishash**.** The Kashmiri community is one of the numerous communities which migrated to Kerala. Additionally, they had known as Koshur they're Dardic ethnic group lived in the relevant valley of Kashmir inside the disputed kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir they speak the Kashmiri language. Kashmiri is an Indo Aryan language.

Their language itself referred to as kosher, most of them left Kashmir Valley and moved to other parts of India. Kosher or Kasmiriyans are discovered in the location of south India which extends from Punjab, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Northern Tamil Nadu including Kerala, Trivandrum and shaped a society there.

This category varied in their language and tradition from other Muslim Communities as stated approximately the language spoken in the value of Kashmir and the encircling hills. By means of

[1] Portal:History/Introduction.[2017] . https://en.m.wikiversity.org/wiki/Portal:History/Introduction
[2] National Informatics Center AncientHistory.knowIndia.
https://knowindia.gov.in/Cultureandheritage/Ancient-history
[3] Cultural Transmission.[n.d].CARTA. https://carta.anthropogeny.org/moca/topics/cultural-transmission

starting place it's miles a Dardic language but it has become predominantly Indo-Aryan in person relenting the records region Kashmiri vocabulary is mixed containing Dardic, Sanskrit, Punjabi, and Persian elements.

Religious distinctions are glaring in vocabulary and desire of alphabets. Kashmiri Hindus favor words derived from Sanskrit and write Kashmiri inside the Sarada Alphabet. A script of Indian foundation even though they do not now have substantial non secular differences from different Muslims. Their customs and traditions have slight modifications. A maximum of the migrant groups now settled in different parts of Kerala, including Trivandrum, Mattancherry, and Fort Kochi. And they engaged in different Sectors maximum of them had been merchants

HISTORY OF KASHMIR

The history of Kashmiri is interwoven with the history of the broader Indian subcontinent and surrounding region, comprising the areas of central Asia, south Asia, and East Asia. Historically Kashmir referred to the Kashmir Valley; today it denotes a larger area that includes the Indian-Administered union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. "Kashmir can claim the distinction of being the only region of India which possesses uninterrupted series of written records of its history"[4]. A lot of these elements made this possible essential clue to the expertise of modern Kashmiri personality and reason for their migration. The longevity of Kashmiri tradition can mainly be attributed to it being a 6 and 7 hundred years ago were so mixed with Kashmiri Muslims in culture[5]. Unlike the rest of the country there's no communal watershed in Kashmir records. Kashmiri Muslims are probably the handiest Muslim community within the Sub-continent which owns its pre-Islamic beyond with as much pleasure because the Non-Muslim as Kashmiris.

Kashmir History is not divided between Hindu and Muslims Periods but between the periods of Kashmiri and Non-Kashmiri rulers and it is also believed that majority of the Kashmiri Muslims Are Sunni[6]. However, the young faith of Islam in violated the Kashmiri personality and gathered in a new renaissance reflected in what Kashmiris appeared as the golden age of the king

[4] Puri, Balraj, "Kashmiri Muslims, Islam and Kashmiri tradition,"https://www.epw.in/journal/1990/6/roots-specials/kashmiri-muslims-islam-and-kashmiri-tradition.html
[5] Ibid4
[6] Puri, Balraj " Kashmiri Muslim, Islam and Kashmiri Tradition,"https://www.epw.in/journal/1990/6/roots-specials/kashmiri-muslims-islam-and-kashmiri-tradition.html

Zain-ul-Abidin popularly called Bud Shah from 1420-70[7]. He Symbolized a Harmonious Kashmiri personality on the secular or the non-religious plans as Nund Rishi did it on the spiritual plane. The truth that Islam is rooted within the Kashmiri culture and Kashmiri manner of existence is permeated with the Islamic way of life. Kashmiri Muslims who constitute Ninety-Five Percentage of the populace of the Valley to reconcile cosmopolitan Islamic affiliations with territorial patriotism[8].

Therefore, the Kashmiri Muslims thus have remained isolated from Muslim's mainstream of the subcontinent. They both reacted regardless of their community depending on which aspect of their identity they perceived to be threatened that would explain all the changes and differences in their life from time to time. Basically, the migration of the Kashmiri Muslims started to flow around 1965 it is first believed that when the internal problems took place in the heart of Kashmir was the major reason behind their migration in different parts of Kerala and so on, also their presence and participation is actively happening till now.

KASHMIRI CONFLICTS

Kashmir has been in dispute between India and Pakistan since the time of the partition in 1947. Since the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, this unresolved land and the people who lived there have been at the root of constant tension between the world's most populous democracies.[9] Three major wars have been fought between these two countries over the years and it has only heightened the fear that now exists even with their advanced technology. Global and regional implications aside, the instability and lack of conclusive resolution to the political dispute have left the population of Kashmir Divided an uncertain about the future. A land of immense beauty, Kashmir has seen its once burgeoning tourist industry fade completely in the face of military incursions and terrorist activity. [10]

It is important to understand the background of the conflict that the Hindu Muslim Communal conflict is the outcome of British Imperialist policy "DIVIDE AND RULE". So as the result, there were sharp conflicts between these two groups of people on the basis of religious lines and

[7] Ibid6
[8] Ibid6
[9] THE CARTER CENTER, "The Kashmir conflict: historical and prospective intervention analysis," WWW.CARTERCENTER.ORG
[10] Ibid9

India and Pakistan came into being as two separate states based on the 'Two Nation Theory in 1947' these two counties experienced a communal holocaust with some 800000 causality there for it is argued that Kashmir problem is actually dates back to the partition of British India[11]. This meant in reality the states would have to seek accession to either one of the two dominions in accordance with the broad principles of the partition plan.

Muslim majority states would accede to Pakistan and the rest to India. In these circumstances, Maharaja Hari Singh, the ruler of Kashmir, at first delayed and later concluded an agreement which Pakistan accepted but India did not. Between August and September 1947 the Muslim subjects of Maharajah rose in an open revolt[12].

On 22 October 1947, the peace in Jumma and Kashmir was shattered by an invasion from Pakistan territory. Since Kashmir was facing great threat to the life and honor of the people the ruler was well as various leaders of the national conference made and appeal to India for some urgent help Maharaja Hari Singh fled from Srinagar to India and Decided to Join India 26th October 1947 as well as India accepted the accession and sent troops to Srinagar to Supress the Rebellion and to drive out the tribesmen of Pakistan out of Srinagar. In this process took control of two-third of Jammu and Kashmir the rest went to Pakistan.

There were serious number of events broke out from 1846 to 1990 in 1846 Kashmir is sold: The British colonial rulers of British India Empire sold Kashmir, including its population, through a deed of sale called the Treaty of Amritsar, to a Hindu warlord who had no roots in the area. This warlord began calling himself the Maharajah of Jammu and Kashmir. His was a particularly brutal regime, memories of which persist to this day.

Several mosques were occupied and shut down by his forces. The slaughtering of a cow was declared a crime punishable by death.1925 to 1947: discrimination against the Muslim majority: Maharaja Hari Singh continued this policy of discrimination against the Kashmiri population, 94 percent of which is Muslim in 1857 The War of independence, The Subcontinent fractured into hundreds of states, 1931 In Kashmiris first organized protest:

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[11] Ibid 9

[12] Barry,Buzan, " South Asian Insecurity Relationship and the Great Powers", 1986

The people of Kashmir hold their first organized protest against Maharaja Hari Singh's cruelty. The 1931 protest led to the "Quit Kashmir" campaign against the Maharajah in 1965, and eventually to the Azad Kashmir movement which gained momentum a year later. Then March 3, 1940 Azad Kashmir came into being: The Muslim Conference adopted the Azad Kashmir Resolution on July 26, 1946 calling for the end of autocratic rule in the region. The resolution also claims for Kashmiris the right to elect their own constituent assembly, during August 14/15 1947 Independence of the British-India into India and Pakistan, In August 1947 Kashmiri resistance encounters Maharajah's troops: The first armed encounter between the Maharajah's troops and insurgent forces occurred in August 1947.

At this time, Britain was liquidating its empire in the subcontinent, October 1947 Pashtuns from Pakistan's Afgania storm Kashmir Maharaja of Kashmir asks India for help, 1947/1948 Indo-Pakistan War of 1947, 1965 Indo-Pakistan War of 1965 December6, 1971 Indo-Pakistan War of 1971; Secession of East Bengal, 1972 Republic of India and Pakistan agree to respect the cease-fire as Line of Control. April 13, 1984 The Indian Army takes Siachen Glacier region of Kashmir, 1989 Militancy begins in Kashmir February5, 1990 Solidarity day is observed throughout Pakistan and Azad Kashmir for the alleged massacres by Indian armed forces as Indian state terrorism[13]

Rivals of Kashmir

Conflict in Kashmir arose due to unfair competition and different goals of three parties who were according to president Ayub – the people of Kashmir, India and Pakistan. According to India Kashmir is an Integral part and will not sacrifice Kashmir to Pakistan there is a stiff resistance and oppositions against the idea of Granting independence to Kashmir many in India also believes independence of Kashmir as a risk. As session to India fraud and violence and Pakistan over the year under different civil and military regimes has supported insurgency in Kashmir[14]. The Kashmiri people are themselves a party of this conflict. Over the years they have held movements of self-determination all these movements in Kashmiri people only become very worst and sometimes violent even the Kashmiri people are divided are over the opinion, one

[13] Ahmeed, Saifuddin and Chakna, Anurug "Kashmir conflict A critical Analysis"
[14] B.Pithawalla, "An introduction to Kashmir"

group wants independence, the second group wants attachments with Pakistan and the third group wants to stay in India

The Consequences of Kashmir Conflict

These are some consequences of their conflict which is forced displacements, death, gross human right violation, psychological impacts, and condition of women during the partition and women becoming prostitutes. As per the reports a large number of people have been displaced due to armed conflicts between the two countries. Over 2200 families, comprising 11884 persons have migrated from Doda, Udhampur, Poonch, and Rajouri regions to Kerala, Gujarat etc. In Kerala Kashmiri people relocated to Fort Kochi and Mattancherry region. According to the reports of ministry of home affairs 2006 around 55,476 Kashmiri Pandits families had been displaced due to armed forces in Jammu and Kashmir since 1990's about two lakh Hindu refugees were living in Jammu and Kashmir before 1947.

Due to all the conflict, Kashmir Has been a center of human right violation all these conflicts resulted in death of lakhs of Kashmiris. Women's are raped the children's are killed and people are forced to flee from Kashmir due to all the armed conflicts. It has been reported from the early 60s that thousands of people have gone missing from the state. Often the migrants and the refugees said that life in Kashmir was full of violence, no peace, no security , no fair environment and poverty. The psychological impact of conflict and violence is ever lasting.

During the war, many lost their beloved persons that injured them psychologically. To clear it, we can take the example of the Japanese who lost many things in World War Second. There are many such stories in the region of Kashmir.[15] During the Partition of India, violence against women was an extensive situation It is estimated that during the partition between 75,000 and 100,000 women were kidnapped and raped The rape of women by males during this period is well documented, with women also being complicit in these attacks.

Systematic violence against women started in March 1947 in Rawalpindi district where Sikh women were targeted by Muslim mobs. Violence was also perpetrated on an organized basis, with Pathans taking Hindu and Sikh women from refugee trains while one accused that he

[15] Saifuddin Ahmed , and Anurug Chakma , "Kashmir Conflict: A Critical Analysis,"

witnessed armed Sikhs periodically dragging Muslim women It has been estimated that specifically in the Kashmir, the number of abducted Muslim women was double the number of abducted Hindu and Sikh women, because of the actions of coordinated Sikh jathas who were aided and armed by Sikh rulers of the 16 semi-autonomous princely states in Kashmir which overlapped the expected partition border, and had been preparing to oust the Muslims from East Kashmir in case of a partition. India and Pakistan later worked to repatriate the abducted women.

Muslim women were to be sent to Pakistan and Hindu and Sikh women to India some of the Muslim women were initiated to join in the hands with the woman[16]. During the 16s and 18s time period of Kashmir marked the darkest period in their history. There was a time which was the breakout of series wars with the two parties India and Pakistan. The consequences was more than terrible women was the main victim of the partition they had gone through the way which a human being cannot when the unexpected wars and the militancy took place in the Kashmir, the Kashmiri valley faced increased number of famine, poverty, unemployment, lack of healthy issues etc[17]. Child marriage too is becoming common in the heavily militarized areas in order to escape rape and molestation.

The dropout rate from schools is also on the rise as the girls are fed up with the routine taunts and harassment by the army personnel when they are en route to school. The militancy began to dwindle and the economic repercussions on those who were hit by the conflict increased and unemployment soared, poverty forced many to land in the flesh trade[18]. Women choose prostitution forcefully or unforceful. During this time the prostitution was legalized and they chose this as a major source of revenue. The areas of Srinagar, Taswan and Maisuma become very common for prostitution despite girls being trafficked to other brothels which are located in different parts of India. Through that the people who migrated from Kashmir had got the chance to taste and explore the cultural and ethnic diversity of India which was also an important reason for their migration to all parts of India including Kerala. They became freer and that helped them to develop their community to improve themselves without the edge of the fear which was faced by them in their own homeland.

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[16] Chowdhry, Geeta , " Women, States, and Nationalism: At Home in the Nation,"
[17] Metcalf Barbara D, and Thomas R. Metcalf, "A Concise History of Modern India,"
[18] Ahamad Sikander, Mushtaq ul haq, "Women in Conflict Surviving and Struggling in Kashmir," https://www.jstor.org/stable/23214468

Political condition since 1947

The militant groups in the state of Jammu and Kashmir after 1989 had started a campaign of civil and violence unrest in support of their need for the independence of Kashmir and unification with Pakistan. There were usual clashes that took place between separatist militants and Indian security forces and thousands of civilians lost their lives. It have been said that The most recent being the crossfire in Kargil, which once again brought the two nations on the brink of war[19]. Since the rest of India was thriving against British rule, the Kashmiris were also searching for their Independence from domination and exploration by Hindu Dogra rulers in 1846. Until 1947. When the accession happened Jammu and Kashmir was a princely state. Without any prior planning the subcontinent decide to divide the province between India and Pakistan and the people in the both side has no idea about the partition because it was took place without their consultation which led to dissatisfaction both in Pakistan and amongst the Muslim population of Kashmir

Economic backdrop

Kashmir is a land scarce and labor abundant state, with less than 30 percent of its total area suitable for cultivation. The majority of the land comprises mountains and hillsides. In the 19th century, Kashmir was dominated by a rural elite, with rich landlords exploiting the landless peasantry that comprised the bulk of the population[20]. The state has been categorized as one of the union's special category states, due to its level of economic backwardness at the time of independence.

By 1950, for instance over 85 per cent of the population was engaged in making Handicraft and agriculture, only 11 percent was literate and installed power capacity was a mere low. Therefore any analysis of the state's long-term development record must be considered in the light of the level of backwardness that prevailed before Kashmir acceded to India.The history of international relations in the region has been marked more by conflict than co-operation. The region is experiencing the Kashmir conflict, one of the protracted conflicts in the world which is known as the time-bomb for South Asia. It is high time for realization of the importance of

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[19] Prakash , Siddhartha, " Political Economy of Kashmir since 1947" https://www.jstor.org/stable/4409390
[20]Prakash , Siddhartha, "Political Economy of Kashmir since 1947," https://www.jstor.org/stable/4409390

resolution of this conflict. It is widely recognized that the peace and prosperity of South Asia is mostly depending on the future of this conflict[21].

Exodus of Kashmiri Hindus

Tens of thousands Kashmiri Pandits [the Hindus of Kashmir] left the Kashmir Valley during the Kashmiri Independence movement of 1989–1990. This migration has been fervently debated by all sides ever since. The voices of Pandit advocacy organizations have gained prominence and often serve to create a narrative that forwards the Indian government's interests: painting the conflict in Kashmir as one of Muslim desire for communal hegemony versus the Indian state's secularism and democracy. The international community has increasingly recognized and respected the right to reparations for property lost during times of conflict. Pandits arise and may be resolved. Such a plan is both likely to result in a meaningful solution to the problem of displaced Pandits and to compel the Indian government to work towards improving the living conditions of all communities.

Despite their weakened position as a displaced people, the Pandits are also paradoxically a powerful community, whose fate will likely have important repercussions for all Kashmiris. The Kashmiri Pandits [also known as Kashmiri Brahmins] are a group of Kashmiri Hindus and a part of the larger Saraswat Brahmin community of India. They belong to the Pancha Gauda Brahmin group from the Kashmir Valley a mountainous region located within the Indian-administered union territory of Jammu and Kashmir[22].

Kashmiri Pandits are Hindu Kashmiris native to the Kashmir Valley and the only remaining Hindu Kashmiris after the large-scale conversion of the Valley's population to Islam during the medieval times prompted by the growth of Islamic militancy in the valley, large numbers left in the exodus of the 1990s. Even so, small numbers remain The Exodus of Kashmiri Hindus, or Pandits, is their early-1990 migration, or flight, from the Muslim-majority Kashmir valley in Indian-administered Kashmir following rising violence in an insurgency[23]. Half of the Panadit population left the valley or felt compelled to leave and 30–80 were killed at the time of the migration, the insurgency was being forward by a group calling an independent and secular

[21] Saifuddin Ahmed ,Anurug Chakma , “Kashmir Conflict: A Critical Analysis,”
[22] Ibid
[23]Rai, Mirdu, “Kashmir and the Future of South Asia,”

Kashmir, since it was the conflict between the land for the Islam and Hindus there were growing Islamist factions envisioning an Islamic state The condition of Kashmiri Pandits was very pathetic they forcefully displaced from there[24].

Migrant Pandits

After the exploitation towards the Kashmiri Pandits they have settled down in different countries of India 'displacement' of their community took place in an atmosphere of fear created by Muslim separatist who killed members of the Pandit community. It is noteworthy that Pandits use the term 'force displacement' instead of migration. The pandits which migrated to different parts had to face socio economic as well as cultural issues. Pandits with differ cultural practices and food habits and they lived In various climatic conditions discovered it difficult to adjust in other places. The affluent among them could afford to have their second homes in different states in India including Kerala etc[25].

Looking at the conceptualization of Kashmiri has been seen largely as a relationship between the Muslim majority and the minorities from other religions while more stress has been given to the relationship between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits. The migration of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley to different parts of India had a negative impact on this relationship. No doubt, there have been differences between the two communities on various socioeconomic and political issues, but till the late 1980s it never led to confrontations on a scale that would make one of the communities feel insecure in their own homeland.

It was the tolerance, defined in terms of Kashmiriyat, which kept the two communities together. The migration of Pandits posed a threat to the secular fabric of Kashmiriyat. There has also been change in the conceptualization of Kashmiriyat by Kashmiri Pandits after migration[26]. All these factors and the consequences led to the saga of the Kashmiri community in part of Kerala especially in the regions of Fort Kochi and Mattancherry and their journey in the God's own county. However the lives of Kashmiris in Kashmir was peaceful at some point but the passage of time the economic, political, and geographical condition of the land made India and Pakistan to establish their own supremacy which led to the partition of India. Some of them moved out of

[24] Sumantra Bose, "Kashmir at the crossroads inside a 21st century conflict,"
[25] Ibid
[26] Henriette Sender M , "The Kashmiri Pandits : a Study of Cultural Choice in North India,"

the valley to survive, some of them forcefully uprooted from one place to another. Apart from these, many others who have departed are still to be found in our Kerala other than Kashmiris i.e. Gujarati, Konkani, Jews, Daccini Muslims, Kuchi Memon, Naina's, Thulu Brahmins, Kannadas, Vaniyer community, Agarvals, Sikhs, Punjabies, etc. From the time of Portuguese trade in Kerala became more popular in the commercial and other purposes which made a great outcome till now.

The trade and economic condition of Kerala was most favorable during the early time which is continuing to the present. Kerala welcomed the tourists with the mind of an open door. Which led many communities to settle here and that improved their lifestyles and they started many trading shops, factories, and they even developed as trading groups in different parts of Kerala. And Kerala became a major commercial hub for the migrant communities. However their journey was not that simple because there will definitely get into small and major conflict between the natives and the locals. Kerala has also witnessed number of migrant's community so around every small and bigger region

TRADE, CONVERSION AND THE GROWTH OF THE KASHMIRIS AND OTHER COMMUNITY OF KERALA

One of the foremost deficiencies within the historiography of Muslim civilization has been the absence of analysis that satisfactorily accounts for the expansion of individual Muslim communities. In distinction to the big body of refined scholarship which has been printed on alternative aspects of the history and culture of the Muslim world few works have however appeared which create it attainable to grasp however the method of settlement and conversion interacted to form the evolution of specific Muslim societies. This can be as true for those areas wherever Muslim armies 1st established "Islamic" states because it is for those regions where Islam 1st arrived within the person of merchants[27].

One region that strangely charts the evolution of associate Islam of southwestern Bharat, the world currently enclosed among the fashionable boundaries of Kerala State. The Muslim community of Kerala originated together as an instance of a widespread phenomenon, the peaceful growth of Islam on well-established trade routes in elements of Africa, India and Southeast Asia. throughout a minimum of half a millennium before the birth of the Prophet Muhammad the slim littoral of Kerala had attracted West Asian merchants to its industrial centers so as to get spices, aromatic and hardwoods which are native to the region or the Chinese and Southeast Asian merchandise that several Malabar ports equipped within their role as entrep6ts in the ocean trade which s from the Mediterranean to East Asia.

The Hindu rulers of Kerala depended upon industrial duties for the majority of their public revenues and then welcomed foreign merchants, secured the protection of their trade and granted their settlements autonomy to culturally or religiously outlined commercial communities. The mutuality of interests led to the institution of Roman commerce settlements in Kerala and, by the first Christian era, resulted the permanent foundation of Jewish, Dutch, Kashmiris and Christian community there[28].

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[27] Dale, SF "TRADE, CONVERSION AND THE GROWTH OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF KERALA, SOUTH INDIA," https://www.jstor.org/stable/1595642

[28] SF Dale, "TRADE, CONVERSION AND THE GROWTH OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF KERALA, SOUTH INDIA," https://www.jstor.org/stable/1595642

Inscriptional proof demonstrates that Muslims resided in Kerala with the aid of using the 9th century however the earliest extant account of a longtime Kerala Muslim network dates best from the mid-fourteenth century, while the itinerant North African, Ibn Battfita, visited the Malabar Coast on his manner from Delhi to China. Ibn Battuta's know-how of Kerala turned into restricted with the aid of using his lack of understanding of Malayalam, the Dravidian language spoken with the aid of using the majority of the indigenous population, and he confirmed little hobby with inside the sociology of the Muslim network there, however he did document treasured data at the character, length and establishments of that network[29].

It is not that easier to get much information about the conversion and the expansion of Kashmiri society in Kerala. However, the 15th to 16th century tries to help understand the competition and confrontation between the Europeans and Kashmiri merchants , making it more simplest to appreciate the militant strain in Kerala and the culture of Kashmiri Muslim culture which made it dramatically convenient during the British period. When the Portuguese lost with the old pattern of peaceful trade in Indian ocean their attacks were directed relations at Muslim merchants, who is in Kerala were concentrated in and around Trivandrum and part of Calicut[30]. Armed encounters between the Portuguese and Muslims continued to occur through the eighteenth century, although in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Dutch followed by the British gradually supplanted the Portuguese as the Muslims' principal antagonist.

KASHMIRIS IN KERALA

Kashmiri started moving to Kerala in the early nineties when militancy erupted in Jammu and Kashmir. Most of them were small-time traders who started setting up small traditional businesses in areas around Mattancherry, Idukki, and some parts of Trivandrum. Another small population consists of those Kashmiris who visit Kerala for studies or those who work in the Technopark Trivandrum. However the total population of Kashmiri in Kerala remains around five thousand. And the major concentration of kashmiris is in jew town, Mattancherry where they have set up handicraft shops on either side of the road that leads to a 16th century Jewish synagogue. Mattancherry is a small town situated on the banks of Kochi backwaters. The town is

[29] Ibid
[30] SF Dale, "TRADE, CONVERSION AND THE GROWTH OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY OF KERALA, SOUTH INDIA," https://www.jstor.org/stable/1595642

buzzing with tourists at all times as people make it a point to visit the famous Portuguese architectural marvel known as Mattancherry palace.

This 16th century palace is famous for its mural painting depicting scenes and characters from Hindu mythology. The town also has some of the oldest population of jews in India tracing their roots to the tomes of king Solomon. After the formation of Israel in 1948, a vast majority of the jews from Mattancherry emigrated there and those who stayed back are on the verge of extinction as there is only one woman of childbearing age left in the whole jew town. It is said that forty year old Yaheh Hallegua[31]. Who is in charge of the synagogue and sells tickets to the visitors, holding the key to save the centuries old Jewish race in India from extinction.

While Jewish population in jew town is facing existential threats, another community is slowly finding an alternative home in Mattancherry. A small but strongly bound Kashmiri business community which has made Mattancherry its home since early 90's is slowly making itself acceptable in the jew town. The owner of sofi arts says that she came to Kerala during the 90's at that time there were no business opportunities in Kashmir. Since then Kochi has become her home. She deals with handicrafts and papier items. And she also talked about her safety while she was here. She replied that she has been here since the early nineties and there were never any problems with police or authorities. Even though there were still problems somewhere, Kerala was the best place for business overall. During the time of 2008 there was some arrest taking place of the Kashmiri salesman from Idukki. And that made almost every Kashmiri living in Kerala under suspicion. In 2009 a Kashmiri journalist based in Delhi who was in Kochi on a reporting assignment was detained for ten hours by Kerala police and grilled for his motive to visit the state[32]. At that time it was a really tough time for the Kashmiri traders in Kochi; they thought that they had to wind up their business from here.

In the second chapter I would like to deal with their settlements, Trade, other important migrant kashmiri communities and their condition in Kochi and the socio and economic lifestyle of the migrants. It also focuses on the cultural, religious and customs of these communities and their practices in Kochi.

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[31] Irfan,Shams, " Kashmir, Kerala and jew town," 31st Jan.2012.https://kashmirlife.net/kashmir-kerala-and-jew-town-2084/ .

[32]Irfan,Shams, " Kashmir, Kerala and jew town," 31st Jan.2012.https://kashmirlife.net/kashmir-kerala-and-jew-town-2084/ .

CHAPTER II

SETTLEMENTS OF THE KASHMIRIS IN FORT KOCHI AND MATTANCHERRY

Cruise to Kochi

Cochin symbolizes the hopes and aspirations of the individuals of Kerala within the context of development. Within the annals of history the name domestic fowl is imprinted with golden letters; its spices creating the foremost and deepest impact. Etymologically, domestic fowl is the latest name given to the current lovely land in its numerous manifestations. Muciris, one among the oldest urban centers in the western coast of Asian nations, is believed to be the earliest manifestation of the place domestic fowl. The town is also dynamically joined to the domestic fowl Royal kinsfolk and that they complete a very important role in the growth of this town. The Portuguese, who stressed their presence terribly robust within the city ranging from fifteenth century inwards. The Portuguese were followed by the Dutch, French and English.

The effects of their presence are seen even these days here in the kind of architecture, language and alternative cultural nuances. There are individuals from the sub-continent who came here at intervals and created domestic fowl in their home. Kashmiris, Gujrathis, Jains, Konkanis, Punjabis, Tamils, Marathis Bengalis, Pathans, Kutchis, Saits, to name a few. This spirited cultural landscape, whereby virtually sixteen different linguistic and cultural teams co-exist even today, is marked by its wealthy customs, traditions and art forms.

The trendy domestic fowl town may be envisaged as a classical example of making a populated area during which diversity becomes a supply of strength instead of of conflict. It's not nonetheless acknowledged once specifically man started inhabiting this lovely piece of land known currently as Cochin. But the fabric evidence, periodic in nature, does recommend that this place witnessed the occupancy of man a minimum of from the Neolithic amount onwards. The megalithic-Iron Age, a period following the Neolithic in Kerala, additionally witnessed intense human activity during this area as the evidence envisages. Additional analysis should be distributed so as to determine the precise nature of the person setting interaction of these distant past[33]. Time has bought in many changes to the current land. Its natural landscape has been worn

[33] "Cochin city heritage," https://www.c-hed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/City_Heritage.pdf

quite a bit over the years because of the intervention of the many natural and human factors. Its cultural landscape has been subjected to 'changes' and also the land has become a living repository of divergent culture and traditions.

Each nook and corner of this nice land has tales to inform of eventful history and the aforementioned history is mirrored in its wealthy cultural heritage and traditions. Records and monuments speak volumes regarding folks that came to this land from numerous components of the land and had mercantilism and cultural relationships with individuals of this land. Individuals from Greeko-Roman world, Arabs, Jews, Chinese, different East Asians, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English, to call the foremost vital among the lot; migrated to poultry and the majority of them left their mark on this land, regardless of the length of their keep here. They're within the sorts of structural monuments, coins, inscriptions, icons, texts, language and art forms[34].

It is thought that the Greeko-Romans got here as early as within the first century of the Christian technology itself and had very close relationships with this land for nearly 4 centuries. The discovery of the Roman gold coin hoards from the diverse components of this place stand testimony to this. Further investigations into this thing through unearthing diagnostic evidence for this relation within the shape of Terra- Sigilate Amphora and Roulette ceramics might also additionally throw extra mild to this period.

It is thought that the Arabs and Jews additionally had the near tie up with the land at some stage in those periods. Kodungallur discovered the primary mosque in India, stated to have been constructed through Malik-l-Dinar within the sixth century A.D. In Chendamangalam, Paravur, Ernakulam. Mattancherry and some other places you spot Synagogues status as dynamic hyperlink among the beyond and the time they have been constructed. The Chinese and the others from East Asia had additionally begun out their interplay with the land faster or later. From the Medieval duration onwards a sturdy presence of Chinese changed into this area. Digging in to occupational layers belonging to medieval duration, whether or not it's far in Kodungallur, Tripunithura or at Mattancherry could really yield a large wide variety of Chinese made celadon ceramic ware And for that matter, the Chinese fishing net, taken into consideration as a completely unique characteristic of Cochin, is thought to have its beginning in Our Chinese connection.

[34] Ibid

Then the visible changed into occupied by means of the Portuguese, from the fifteenth century on. They constructed an empire right here and within the manner constructed buildings, forts, churches, homes etc. with a detail of Portuguese structure in all of them. After someday the Dutch wrested the empire from the Portuguese and advanced it drastically via means of giving a Dutch contact to all their systems and additionally via means of laying out streets and gardens.

The English flip took it out of the palms of Dutch, and pulled down the whole lot their predecessors had taken a lot labor and fee to rear up, and all however succeeded in setting lower back the metropolis to its vintage role of comparative obscurity Cochin City has constantly been unique for its Heritage and Pluralistic Culture throughout its history, that's based totally on change and transport hobby Being an Island City Cochin has specific environmental capabilities and a cultural heritage, that's intertwined with the environment. The metropolis's ever-developing call for and capability for boom possibilities continuously engage and rely upon its precious herbal and cultural heritage[35].

However the diversity and other factors had led the migrant community to Kochi and Mattancherry. We cannot leave these two sites of Kochi as mentioned. As per Kochi is the queen of Arabian sea the Mattancherry and the Fort Kochi had an irreplaceable place in the history of Kochi. It is said that during the time of Jews and Portuguese the influence of their time period is noticeable in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi. The Kochi has influenced their ethnography and remained a cultural hub of Kerala like the Queen of Arabian sea. In the second chapter I would like to deal with Major trading centers, customs and traditions, cultural diversity and their traders association Kashmiris in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi of Kerala

[35] "Cochin city heritage," https://www.c-hed.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/CityHeritage.pdf

THE NEIGHBORS OF KOCHI

Mattancherry

Mattancherry is a locality in the city of Kochi, India. It is about 9 km south-west from the city center. It is said that the name Mattancherry comes from "Ancherry Mattom", a "Namboodiri illam" which the foreign traders then pronounced as Matt-Ancherry, gradually became Mattancherry. The place where erstwhile 'Ancherry Mattom' located is now a Tamil Brahmin settlement. Another possible origin is from the Malabari Jewish community which states that the name Mattancherry comes from two words, "Mathana" meaning "gift" in Hebrew and "cheri" meaning land Island in malayalam. According to Oral traditions, the land was granted to them as a gift from the Hindu Rajah, hence the name become Mattancherry

THE OATH OF THE 'COONAN CROSS' In Mattancherry

About three and half centuries have passed because of the 1653 A of the Coonan Cross at Mattancherry, Cochin, via means of which the Christians of Malabar swore off submission to the Latinized Western Church imposed on them by the imperial Portuguese Government of Goa. This incident in Kerala History is thought via way of means of one of a kind expressions, the ‘Koonankurussu Sathyam’, the Oath of the 'Coonan Cross', the Oath of the 'Leaning' Cross or the ‘Sathyam’ Oath of the sixteenth January, 1653 A.D. This occasion changed into the fruits of a sequence of resistance actions led via the means of the Malabar Syrian Christians, who have been denominated as St. Thomas Christians of Malabar, in opposition to the imperious Portuguese and their arbitrary moves in socio spiritual matters.[36]

In retrospect, the Synod's Proceedings have been authoritarian, scheming to convert the indigenous Malabar Church right into a Latinized Western Church. Hence the Syrian Christians have become restless. Sheer pressure of situations with the aid of using manners of threatening political stress with the aid of using colonial electricity precipitated them to simply accept a brand new ecclesiastical hierarchy.

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[36]Johny,P.D. “THE OATH OF THE 'COONAN CROSS, MATTANCHERRY, COCHIN, ITS SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND ,”https://www.jstor.org/stable/44148123

The Syrian Christians have been additionally reduced from the social customs of Kerala. Even the Raja of Cochin whom the Syrian Christians had approached for safety abandoned them. Tfie Jesuit Prelates of Goa have been unable to decrease in any manner their discontentment. The autocracy of the Jesuit Archbishop, Francis Garcia (1641-59) had fanned the hearth place of discontent.

This explosive state of affairs becomes defined with the aid of using the General of the Carmelite Order who visited Cochin in 1637 A.D. He reported that the St. Thomas Christians have been at the alert to discover a few sources of outdoor assistance to put off their harsh mast. The Oath taken by the Syrian Christians of Malabar was a historic one. Except for its emotional expression of rancor and also the methodology of agitation, the oath was meant to declare the suzerainty of the Church of the Syrian Christians of Kerala and it had been a resistance movement against the colonial power. This resistance movement was marked by its special features, its naturalness and modality. The earliest record instance of a resistance movement against the Europeans, had manifested itself in fowl someday in 1502 A.D.

Once the Portuguese same ill-treated the native Muslims of Calicut, however it failed to develop into a major event. The abuse of the Syrian Christians however amalgamated into a significant clash, resulting in a vow of disobedience of the Latin religion Hierarchy and therefore the Colonial power. The Oath of the Coonan Cross wasn't solely a system of rules revolt however it had been a mutiny against the colonial power, Portugal. It had been also a movement against the tried uprooting of AN endemic culture by a colon power[37].

[37]. Johny,P.D. "THE OATH OF THE 'COONAN CROSS, MATTANCHERRY, COCHIN, ITS SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND ," https://www.jstor.org/stable/4414812

THE RELATIONS WITH THE PARADESHIES AND THE SYNAGOGUE IN MATTANCHERRY

JEWS OF JEW TOWN

Ibn Battuta, who was traveling in Malabar in 1342 passed through the region a year or so after the destruction of the old coastal town, but apparently before the development of the later Cochin, as he does not mention it as a port. However, in his brief account he mentions the Jewish settlement of Cochin, which was set above a hill, and had apparently remained unaffected by the geological changes to the coastline[38].The location of the Jewish city halfway between Calicut and Quilon corresponds to Cochin, while the name Kunji Karl is most likely a version of the Indian name Konchi Ghari. This name survives locally as well, the old town is still known as Cochangadi and the historic synagogue of Cochin as Kochangadi Synagogue.

Jewish settlement appears to have moved to the New Town soon after its establishment, as the synagogue is said to have been founded in 1344, although, as we shall see, the majority of the Jewish population moved to the town some time later, and the synagogues the current date from the 16th century. Historic person city, the center of the once-thriving fowl human community, is thought for its old world charm and 16th-century Paradesi temple. Quaint retailers around Synagogue Lane and Jew Town Road sell antiques, carvings, and vintage collectibles, alongside Kerala crafts and aromatic spices.

At ease out of doors cafes and artsy eateries, some in heritage buildings, serve native specialties and Western fare. The Malayalam term for Jew town is 'YAHUDARUDE PATTANAM'. Jew town is the land which given to the jews by the king of Kochi. It was built by the Kochi Raaja during the reign of Kesavavarma in 1567. According to the old tradition the Mattancherry is the land which is gifted by the king to the Jews 'Mathaan' means 'donation' in Hebrew language so Mattancherry is a donated slum. Paradesi synagogue was built. The same year after Jew Town was built. .the location of synagogue shows the interest of king of Kochi towards the Jews. The location of the synagogue is right next to the Payyannur Krishna temple where the king and his

[38]Shokooh, Mehrdad "The Town of Cochin and Its Muslim Heritage on the Malabar Coast, South India,"https://www.jstor.org/stable/25183570 .

family used to pray. The king was the protector of the jews and the prayers in jews homes would sing praises of the king.

The paradesi synagogue is the predominant place of worship for the Jews.At that time there were black Jews and white Jews. Among the Jews of Kochi, there were varieties of white and black. Like varna, it was a caste system, but the classification had nothing to do with skin color. The separation of white and black was based on its racial purity White Jews were called foreigners. That is why the place of worship came to be called Paradesi Synagogue. Their ancestors are said to be Europeans.

At the end of the 15th century, European Jews seeking refuge from religious persecution from Spain and Portugal came to Kochi. During 1440 AD domestic fowl town grew around Mattancherry settlement as a city of five miles of circumference and Chinese and Arabs accustomed trade with the natives of the town. Domestic fowl was dominated by the domestic fowl Rajas within the amount from twelfth Century onwards. In the sixteenth Century AD Portuguese came to domestic fowl and later on engineered their Fort and therefore the formation of Fort domestic fowl.

The trade activities flourished after Kodungallur port and Jews, Konkinis, Kasmiries and lots of alternative ethnic teams moved to Cochin and settled here. In the seventeenth Century AD, the Dutch and subsequently British in the eighteenth Century invaded Cochin. Fort Cochin, Mattancherry and Fort Vypeen placed right at the ocean mouth have knowledge about huge trade connected activities and have developed an upscale philosophy, culture and tradition distinctive to the current heritage zone.

this can be mirrored within the heritage of this area, that exhibits nice monuments, structures and settlements of outstanding heritage worth Fort domestic fowl & Mattancherry can with pride claim the individuality in the entire heritage zone which isn't seen anyplace else in the region, and this makes it a serious attraction for the tourists as well[39]. Like in any other place in Kerala, people of various religious communities like Hindus, Muslims, Latin Christians and Syrian Christians co-exist in Mattancherry[40].

[39] Ibid
[40] https://www.keralatourism.org/kochi/mattancherry-migrant-communities.php

The oldest of the Asian nation's individual communities was within the erstwhile Cochin China Kingdom. The normal account is that traders of Judaea got wind of Cranganore, an ancient port close to Cochin China in 562 BC, which additional Jews came as exiles from Israel in the year seventy AD, when the destruction of the Second Temple. Several of those Jews' ancestors passed on the account that they settled in India when the Hebrew King Solomon was in power. This was a time when teak wood, ivory, spices, monkeys, and peacocks were in style in Cochin.

There's no specific date or reason mentioned on why they arrived in India, however Hebrew students date it up to around the early middle Ages. Cochin China may be a cluster of tiny tropical islands stuffed with markets and lots of completely different cultures similar to Dutch, Hindu, individual, Portuguese, and British. The distinct Jewish community was referred to as Anjuvannam. The still-functioning house of God in Mattancherry belongs to the Paradesi Jews, the descendants of Sephardim that were expelled from Spain in 1492, though the Jewish community in Mattancherry adjacent to Fort Cochin China had six remaining members as of 2015[41]. The current Jew town there were a number of Kashmiris who settled here and started their own rental shops after the migration.

SETTLERS IN TRIVANDRUM

Madhu Kammath who I have interviewed was the owner of the Kammath restaurant in Mattancherry jew town and his store was close to other Kashmiri handicraft stores in jew town. According to him, the first migrated Kashmiri community in Kerala was settled in Kovalam in Trivandrum. Before coming to Kochi almost everyone settled there and they had the handicrafts store in Trivandrum. It happened about 35 years ago but it didn't last long because Trivandrum was a coastal line area and their main occupation was fishing and they cannot cooperate with the local people from there. Besides that there were also other reasons behind why they couldn't settle there. That was the time when many problems regarding Kashmir were taking place in the society[42].

[41] Malekandathi, Piusl, "THE JEWS OF COCHIN AND THE PORTUGUESE: 1498-1663" https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/44155767.pdf?refreqid=fastly-default%3A77c3babd66d3af35f53e2c4a2edf4513&ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv2%2Fcontrol&origin=search-results

[42] Madhu Kammath, personal interview,16-10-2022.

Moreover, the prevailing views and many incidents against the Kashmiri pandit community greatly affected their way of life. About thousands of pandit families migrated from Kashmir and came there and the problem persisted and the attitude towards foreigners was very unfair. In addition to all this, there was a conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and the Kashmiri community who had migrated and lived here was treated as terrorists. Since the kovalam is a coastal area and the difference between traditional works of the local people was totally different from the migrated Kashmiris thus they could not stay there for long. Their major and minor problems among them started from the beginning to end therefore they started to move to other favorable places. People who migrated from Kashmiri due to famine, poverty, and unemployment are said to have settled not only in Kerala but also in many parts of India like Punjab etc.

And finally their journey to Kochi started afterwards and began there. Encouraging tourists and tourism Kochi presented a perfect climate for them. From Portuguese to British tradition and art, Kochi attracted them greatly. Also at the time many tourists came to Kochi and reached out to many historical places and this is another thing that made their business life to hold them for a decade. The people who migrated started their own shops and then built houses which made them become permanent residents.

Another thing he says is that there are many Kashmiri people here who set up shops in Kochi at an early age because the Kashmiri government did not allow them any freedom to do their own business or shops in their own land. He also adds that there was a situation when their government did not give permission to let anyone from outside or do business; these are some other technical factors of their migration. But today's government is providing them a very favorable situation by solving their needs and problems and providing them with all the necessary help to create a society and environment for them

THE KASHMIRIS OF JEW TOWN

Old Kochi is home to a small community of Kashmiri traders. The weather, the food, the culture, everything is different here but it has one thing in common with home: the warmth of the people. The half open gray windows of white Jewish synagogue, partially visible from the entrance of the by line, entice you to explore more. The standing tiled roofs, the curio shops exhibiting

antique and vintage artifacts and the colorful walls; all sort of old world charm In jew town of Mattancherry in kochi. Although the Kashmiri community in Kochi is small they are an integral part of Kochi's multi-cultural fabric.

Khurshid A Geelani, who runs a three charming handicrafts store in the city, came to Kochi in 1987.He says the city started opening to tourists in 1992 and he adds that Kashmiri traders follow the tourists whenever there is tourism potential they can see the Kashmiris arriving[43]. Though the Kashmiri flow into Kochi really began in 1993 when Gulshan Khatai, revered name in the community established a landmark store in MG Road retailing Carpets, Walnut Wood, furniture and pashmina shawls. The trend began to continue by the 2000s, the city has become a popular destination for tourists, fort kochi and Mattancherry saw Kashmiri handicrafts store open year after, each bringing a different style of business. The president of Kashmiri Traders Association Sajid Khatai explains the migration differently. "The exodus began when militancy shouts up in the valley and tourists stop coming there. We had to come out for our bread and butter," he says as most of the community is into retail of handicrafts, Sajid states that they are well known for their salesmanship[44].

KASHMIRI MALAYALEES IN FORT KOCHI

Though they are an orthodox community they have integrated with the locals to some extent. A few of their men have married Malayali women and their children speak Kashmiri at home and Malayalam with their friends. According to Sajid, whose daughters study in Kochi His wife Rasiya works at the J&K Bank in Kochi. Syed Reza Shah Madni, who is visiting from Srinagar, also has strong ties with Kerala. The first Kashmiri to come to Kerala as a student in 1958, the 80-year-old was here to attend the reunion of his batch from College of Engineering, Trivandrum.

Madni , a student from the state , has been coming here for the reunion regularly since 2008. For them kochi was a new world they only have heard about Madras but anything beyond was unknown. After Madni arrived in Thiruvananthapuram, he says many of the other students

[43] Khurshid A Geelani, Personal interview,16-10-2022.
[44] Sajid Khatai, Personal Interview, 17-10-2022.

followed to here. The first two girls to come were Krishna Dhar and Basanti Zutshi. With them they formed a Kashmiri Students Association,"[45].

For Krishna Dhar Bhan, Kochi became home by accident. Krishna was married to a naval officer stationed here and ran a dental clinic in Panampilly Nagar for many years before retiring at the age of 70. She remembers her two worlds. She says her father had to hide from her relatives in 1960 that he was sending her to Kerala to study dentistry. He was a doctor and a progressive man, which is why he sent her this far. When she last visited devastated Kashmir in 2017, she said she visited her home on Gupkar Road, now occupied by the military, which let her in. He says he collapsed in the station commander's office, which used to be his bedroom. "They welcomed us. It was very exciting to be back home after all these years. I sat on my balcony and saw the mountains, the clouds and the Chinar tree. Kochi is my home; He gave me everything. But my roots are in Kashmir," she says[46].

Another Kashmiri who is Tanveer Phumboo and Ashrat Mir have diversified, if only slightly, from the handicrafts business. Their three stores wear a distinctive look, unlike the Kashmiri shops and showrooms, as they deal with block printing and cotton fabrics. Phumboo says that they entered fashion consciously. There's a glut in the handicrafts market and also the dangers of fake products. Mir conducts block printing classes at the store and teaches tourists to print on T-shirts, which they take back as souvenirs Phumboo points out that, over the last decade, entire families have moved to Kochi and settled here[47.]

THE LIFE OF KASHMIRIS IN JEW TOWN

The shops in the jew town by line which sell embroidered kurtas, pashminas, papier mache boxes and hand knotted silk carpets, are deserted. And the Kashmiri traders who own or work in these shops are catching up on news from home. 45 year old Nair Hussain a Kashmiri who hails from Saida Kadal, Srinagar, and who runs two shops in synagogue line he says "this is the only place in India where we can live the way we want,".

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[45] S,Priyadershini. "Meet Kochi's Kashmiris."26th Feb.2020,https://www.thehindu.com/society/meet-kochis-kashmiris/article30922007.ece
[46] Krishna Dhar Bhan,personal interview,16-10-2022.
[47] Tanveer Phumboo, personal interview, 16-10-2022.

At a time when over eight million people have been through a lockdown in the Kashmir valley after article 370 of the constitution was effectively revoked on 5 August, serene Mattancherry and adjoining Fort Kochi offer the comfort of home to about 500 Kashmiri traders, who own over a hundred shops here. They first started shifting here when the military gripped the valley in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Following in the footsteps of Gulshan Khatai, the primary Kashmiri businessman who opened a handicrafts shop in Kochi in 1972. Another trader, Khursheed Geelani opened the primary Kashmiri handicrafts shop in Jew Town in 1992. Over the years, many others left strife torn Kashmir for a nonviolent existence in this southern port city, approximately 3,500km away. Everything here is totally different here: the weather, food habits, subculture and language. However one factor is common with Kashmir: the warmth of the people.

Hussain is one of the many Kashmiris who have settled here. As a 17-year-old from Saida Kadal, he says he wanted to escape the daily intimidation by security forces. He says that they frisked him every time he stepped out of home. They would not even let him put my hands inside the pheran. Even in cold winters, as if he was carrying a gun under the pheran. After he cleared class higher secondary in 1999, Hussain left to work at a handicrafts factory in Madurai, without informing his family. In 2001, he was sent to Kochi when the company opened a unit there.

Four years later, he opened his own shop on Princess Street in Fort Kochi. Today, he owns four shops, two each in Fort Kochi and Jew Town. Hussain is married to a local Malayali, Mouhzeena Nibras they had faced trouble from the local Kashmiris they objected Hussain from marrying each other because he belongs to Shia and she was a Sunni here we can see the religion is still a contrasted term among them. But still for them Kochi is their home. In August 2019 an IAS officer of Kashmiri Kannan Gopinathan, resigned from his post as a protest against the lockdown imposed on Kashmir. His claim was that the Indian Government has failed Kashmiris and that Indian people didn't stand for them and meant to say that Kashmiris feel safe only in Kerala and not in any other part of the country.

He further added that it is the responsibility of the Indian government to build a safe environment for them across the country. In today's polarized India this could sound like wishful thinking but Kerala, a state with 54.73 percentage Hindus 26.56 percentage Muslims and 18.38 percentage Mattancherry and Fort Kochi, former Dutch, Portuguese and British colonies, have remained

havens of tolerance, pluralism and multiculturalism. Yamini Nair, co-author of One Heart. Two Worlds says the 5 sq. km radius of Mattancherry has traditionally been a multicultural space.

It is home to at least 39 communities, including Jews, Sindhis, Konkanis, Rajasthanis, Tamil Vannans, Gowda Saraswat Brahmins, Dakhinis (from Hyderabad), Anglo-Indians (from Goa), early settlers from Yemen, and now Kashmiris Christians is pluralistic society. And much historical evidence shows that the earliest Jewish traders popularly known as Malabari jaws landed in present-day Kodungallur as early as 970 BC. They dealt in spices, silk, pearls, ivory and animals. Apparently, they later shifted south to Kochi, owing to floods.

As we know Jew Town is named after a later community of primarily European Jewish migrants, also called Paradesi Jews, who arrived from Spain in the 15th century. The Hindu kings of Kerala warmly welcomed the Jewish settlers over the years and gifted them several pieces of land. The Paradesi synagogue in the Jew Town of Mattancherry is built upon one such piece of land. The paradesi synagogue is after the Kashmiri shops so basically we should cross the handicraft shops to enter the synagogue and they says that the clock tower of the synagogue itself is an example of the multiculturalism of this place: The numbering of the clock is done in four different languages Hebrew, Arabic, Malayalam and Roman, as of the present days there are only few Jews left in Mattancherry. The others have left or passed on.

Usually, festivals in Mattancherry are occasions for communities to celebrate together and savor fusion cuisines such as the coconut milk curries of the Malayalis, the papadams popularized by the Gowda Saraswat Brahmins and the brown gram of the Gujaratis. Even though most Kashmiris avoided eating beef in Kashmir to not hurt the sentiments of their Pandit neighbors, they have taken to Malabar paratha and beef curry, the popular cuisine of Malayalis here. Kashmiri children go to local schools and speak fluent Malayalam. They are fond of Kashmir but often fail to understand the complexities of the conflict.

The lockdown in Kashmir has impacted business in Mattancherry too. Hussain says he had ordered items such as carpets, shawls and papier-mâché boxes worth rupees 10 lakh in June; these still haven’t arrived from Kashmir. “The laborers working in shawl factories were mostly from Bihar, and they left Kashmir. The colors required for papier-mache are not available since

the markets are closed. After having been stuck in their homes for about four months, people don't know where to pick up their scattered lives from," says Hussain[48].

Parvaiz Ahmed Dar of Srinagar is one of them. Dar, 28, used to earn about rupees 15,000 a month as a salesman at a handicrafts shop in Srinagar—but the lockdown changed that. Now the sole bread-winner for a family of eight, he arrived in Fort Kochi about a month ago. "Safety is the bonus here," says Dar, who earns rupees 12,000 a month now. "There is no frisking, no questioning and no detention by police."Of course, the local police do keep an eye on them. Sajid, who heads the Kashmiri trader's welfare association in Kochi, routinely provides them an updated list of all Kashmiri shop-owners and workers. His strong connection with the place, however, remains intact. "This is a truly cosmopolitan and secular place which welcomes everyone," Hussain says. "It is India, yet not India."

VOICE OF THE TADERS

The wake up of 2020 was not that easy. The terror attack in Kashmir caught in decades long border dispute between India and Pakistan who live in other parts of India have become targets of persecution and violence. The article 370 was crucial. The students have been expelled from colleges and from the apartments and the shopkeepers have been also attacked by the mobs. But in Kochi, a bustling port city in the southern Indian state of Kerala the immigrants and the traders found a safe place. Ahmed, who owns one of the many Kashmiri shops in Jew Town, says that it was a neighborhood that was home to a thriving community of Paradesi. Compared to the 50s the number of Jews was very less and most of them left the region and now it is occupied with the other community like Kashmiris. Stars of David and signs announcing jew street dot row of storefronts advertising pashmina shawls, Persian Kilims, and handicrafts etc. the shops extended all the way to the end of street leading to the 460 year old Paradesi synagogue. Most shops are located in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi.

When the rising separatist insurgency and the Kargil war between India and Pakistan made tourism an unsustainable business in Kashmir. That's when Kashmiri traders started migrating all the way to Kochi which was then a burgeoning tourist destination. They followed the tourists because that's what their trades depended on. Their trade was peace not war. The state is home to higher populations of Muslims and Christians than most other provinces in India and two

[48] Sajid Hussain, personal interview,17-10-2022

decades of communist rule have ensured that it remains relatively impervious to the sectarian troubles that plague much of Indian politics. Its deep rooted multiculturalism makes Kerala one of the safest places for Kashmiri according to their traders.

For Malayalis or native speakers of Keralas local language the philosophy is Malayali first. They leave their religion at home. The spirit of tolerance had not changed even in the last four years which saw the rise of the hind party. Kerala is one of the few states where the party has received almost no support. The party has been linked to an increase in religion based violence. The perpetrators of the recent revenge attacks on Kashmiri have been reported to be members of hindu group. Days after the terrorist strike in Kashmir took to the street of the northern city of Dehradun which says it shoots those who betray India demanding that Kashmiri students be removed from town. And the Indian government directed all states to ensure the safety of Kashmiris settled within their borders, especially students. No instance of assault had been reported in Kerala so far. The only response that they received from the locals in Kochi after the terror attack in February was concern. They asked for their safety and suggested bringing them to Kochi. They also say that they have faith in malayali society.

Despite the lack of overt violence, however, it's clear that fear lingers in the Kashmiri community even in Kochi. Several traders affirmed that they felt safe in the city, but asked that their names be withheld from this article. They described having to report to the local police station every six months for background verification. Or else, they'll think that they are terrorists. One trader said that although he has never encountered attacks or threats, he has been harassed by local rickshaw drivers and workers, who sometimes charge Kashmiris extra for services and say things like "militant" and "go back to Kashmir!" if they refuse. He also said that he is careful to not say too much on the phone when he calls home, out of fear of surveillance. No one here can be open about the truth they said, which is that they don't feel a hundred percent safe, even here.

THE KASHMIR VALLEY TO FORT KOCHI: Kochi Biennale

The Student Biennial now attracts a large community of gallerists, curators and collectors in search of emerging talent. Since the Biennale lasts three months, most crowds flock to the opening of the main Biennale the Kochi Muziris Biennale (KMB) and rush to the Student Biennale venues to see and seek, eager to spot new talent who the Biennale student already has a

reputation for throwing up. There were some annoying flagged posts that weren't published this year[49] .

While it was done quickly, it meant the opposite compliment about the art scene's serious interest in seeking the names of the young artists whose work caught their eye, and about how the Student Biennale has grown to accommodate it to conquer their own space next to the huge art world that is shown further down the street. We need to plan better, maybe speed up deadlines. There is a talented and dedicated team working to be able to see a perfect opening The Kochi-Muziris Biennale Booth shows the hardships of Kashmir's ethnic groups The plight of thousands of people from two community, trapped in conflicts between ethnic groups in Kashmir three decades ago finds representation at the Kochi Muziris Biennale in this coastal city[50].

A pavilion from the Srinagar Biennale is part of the ongoing Kochi-Muziris Biennale here, the largest such art festival in the subcontinent. This is one of the infrastructure projects, a key part of the curator's vision for this edition. This segment focuses on the pain and grief of two communities forced to flee their countries and settle elsewhere as refugees and has 14 artists from both religious faiths who have been affected by the conflict. It broke out, he said, in 1989[51].

The project's central work included a structure in the form of Sufi dargah. The art comes in the form of performances, paintings, photographs, papier-mache works and new media mix. Overall, the Srinagar Biennale here documents the migration and alienation faced by the Kashmiris. Most Kashmiri artists have been in and out of the Valley since the 1990s. All of them also talked about the situation in Kashmir. Also some of them explained their arts about the violence and conflicts of Kashmir. On the other hand, others show images with those who have disappeared in Kashmir and a video that captures a gravedigger sharing their trauma, the remaining artisan’s shows the minimalist drawings, titled 'Premonitions' are a stark representation of happenings in the Valley

[49] Binnale 2019, deepika Sorabee
[50] Ibid
[51] Ibid.

CULTURE OF KASHMIRIS: EXPLORING THE VIBRANT TRADITION, ART, MUSIC, FOOD AND FESTIVALS IN KOCHI

The inhabitants of Kashmir are known as Kashmiri, which is an ethnic linguistic faction. Indigenous Kashmiri people generally flock in the areas of Pakistan, Northern Punjab and Potohar. The influences of the Sanskrit dialect can be felt in your local language as you travel to different parts of Kashmir. The culture also appears to be heavily influenced by Persian and Central Asian beliefs. The various aspects of Kashmiri culture as outlined below form an important part of the Kashmiri spirit. Kashmiri culture is predominantly practiced by the people living in the valleys of Kashmir and Dodab. In addition, the valley is famous for its fine arts, consisting of traditional indigenous boats, houseboats, handicrafts and literature. The Kashmiri community of Kochi follow their native tradition and culture but since they have been part of kochi for so long their traditions and culture has become interwoven with that of Kochi.

Traditional Dresses of Kashmiri

A specialty of Kashmir has to be the vibrant costumes of the region. The women of Kashmiri look gorgeous dressed in traditional clothing paired off with exquisite jewelry such as necklaces, armlets, earrings as well as nose rings. Furthermore, they also wear loose salwar kameez to escape the summer heat. On the other hand, men wear kurta pajamas, shalwars, and skullcaps. The people look elegant in Pheran, which is a long overcoat that is beautifully ornamented with patches and embroidery work.

The fabric they wear largely depends on the weather and they ordinarily wear loose gowns. Women generally cover both their shoulders and head out of respect for elders. These traditional dresses of Kashmiri truly represent the breathtaking culture of the region. During the special occasion they wore Kerala traditional dresses. So we can see the diversity among them.

Dance and Music of Kashmiri

When talking about the dance and harmonies of Kashmiri, the words that come to mind are elegant and magnificent. The joyous festivals there are marked by, of course, music and dance which attracts the tourists to join in on the excitement. Throughout the region of Kashmir, a wide range of dance forms can be witnessed that are executed based upon the occasion that they mark,

for instance, a prominent dance form here is the infamous Mask dance that is executed on the occasion.

Another allure of these dances is the bright and vibrant attire paired off with truly exquisite jewelry. Some other prominent dances of the place are Chakri, Rouf, Bhand Pather, Hafiza, Kud, and Bacha Nagma.. Apart from that, instrumental music is quite prevalent. And it is said that they also performed their traditional danced in kochi during the special occasion like marriage, engagement or any other functions they performed on their homes and also to the closed one who is local malayali

Kashmiri Cuisine

Kashmir offers truly delicious cuisine that includes both vegetarian and non-vegetarian delicacies for this is a place that caters to all and these delicious dishes will leave you wanting more. Some infamous non-vegetarian dishes are the Kashmiri Kebab, Pasanda, Syun Alu, Yakhni, and Methi Keema and therefore it's every meat-lover's delight. But vegetarians need not worry because there are myriad dishes available for them, such as Rajmah, Shree Pulao, Ladyar Tsaman, and Nadir Yakhaen.

These flavorful dishes are prepared by utilizing fresh vegetables and paneer, to make it all the more delicious. Kashmir is an amazing destination for anyone like me who loves desserts. You absolutely must try out delicacies such as sevaiyaan, phirni, barfi, Kashmiri Aloo Dum and many more that will truly make your day. Kashmiris are known for their hospitality and they greet their guests with some refreshing hot tea and Kahwa. Another dish that is a staple to the household of Kashmir is its very own pulao. Additionally, Hak or Karam is a dish that is a favorite in the region and is specially prepared during cold winter evenings to provide warmth.

Festivals of Kashmiris

The culturally rich Kashmir is a land of festivals where everyone comes together and celebrates with zeal and enthusiasm. Even when they migrated they never failed to celebrate the special seasons and festivals because they come from exemplary heritage and culture which is beautifully brought out by the festivals of the region. Eid-ul-Fitr, Lohri, Tulip Festival, Holi, Shikara Festival, Hemis festival, Gurez Festival, and Sindu Darshan are few festivals here that

are celebrated with the utmost fervor. These festivals customarily mark an auspicious occasion and have their origins in mythology. These festivals are a must to attend because of their joyous nature, everywhere around you, you can observe the native inhabitants dancing, singing, eating delicious cuisine with their family dressed in traditional clothing, and tourists shopping for handicrafts.

Arts and Crafts of Kashmir

Kashmir is a prominent center for mesmerizing arts and crafts with its handicrafts industry particularly blossoming. Thus the migrants' coms from Kashmir also brought the cultural aspects and many more arts related things to the heart of Kerala. Just like this we shared the cultural and traditional aspects. In Kochi we can see lots of arts crafts shops and yet their handicrafts. The shops in the line are extended to the longest and the tourist is extremely interested in bringing their things. Thus their trade and purpose is going smoothly so far. Kashmir is practically synonymous with pashmina shawls that are well-known for their texture and amazing quality which have high demand in Kochi shops among the foreigners. They are particularly renowned for their softness and the warmth they provide.

These shawls are furthermore a symbol of royalty. Another prominent craft of Kashmiri is the hand-knotted rugs as well as wool rugs that possess floral patterns. Additionally, some lovely handicrafts of Kashmiri include paper mache, wicker, carved walnut furniture, and silverware. The government of Kashmir has also invested in the arts and crafts of the place for they serve as a major tourist attraction. If one ever visits Kochi handicrafts shops of Kashmiris one simply must buy the intricate handicrafts as a souvenir.

Architecture of Kashmiri

The Jhelum River was the only means of transport initially which resulted in the creation of ghats as a transport landing point and a range of residences with wooden balconies and complex gridwork evolved along the canals and riverfronts. Because the economy of Kashmir is largely dependent on agriculture and the combined activities, they never had the wealth to undertake a significant urban reconstruction. Therefore, the image of the towns of Kashmiri remains the same as they were 300 years ago, and the wood constructions with roofing are reminiscent of the

medieval European towns that live in culture and customs while maintaining the essence of ancient Kashmir for generations.

The traditional buildings are of two sorts, based on the plan- square plan and linear plan with windows on both sides, as the symmetry is the main principle for earthquake-resistance structures and the arrangement of the function within. Thus some of the traders here have similarities in the architectural style. They tried to copy that like their hometown had but it cannot be completely applied because our climate and other aspects are not favorable for the houses which they had. Their region was comparatively cold but Kerala is far from that but still the traders who own houses in Kochi had tried a little bit of their architectural identity and they somewhat succeeded to some extent.

Example The balconies and wing panels are designed like jhumkas and have magnificent Pinjera Kari works. These kinds of models we can see in kochi Kashmiris homes are not in everyone but some of them have ideally their culture and tried to bring it on to Kochi. As technology has progressed, Kashmir's lifestyle has also evolved, architecture has also changed. Their dwellings are currently created using advanced technology and cement substitutes for mud and iron for wood. The traditional construction skills are decreasing and non-indigenous cement constructions are being replaced. The traditional shrines, such as the Naqschband Saheb, Dastgir Sahib, etc., are unique examples of vernacular architecture of Kashmiris.

Languages of Kashmiri

Kashmiri, Dogri, Hindi, English, and Urdu are the official languages of the Kashmiri people. Kashmiri, with about 9 million speakers, is the most widely spoken language in all of J&K. The Dardic language is also one of 22 scheduled languages according to the Indian Constitution and is the only Dardic language that has the status of an official language. Kashmiri also has a major influence of Persian especially in vocabulary while being among the most conservative Indo-Aryan languages.

The most diverse groups of languages are the Pahari languages spoken and most of the Kashmiris still speaks their native language on their houses also when they saw another Kashmiri on street they also greet on their mother tongue the fun fact is that they have been started their business in kochi more than half of decades they also speaks and good at Malayalam not just

because they are in Kerala but the affection and admiration to the culture of Kerala which have more than hundreds of various community. The Kashmir valley and Pakistan governed Kashmir speak and understand Urdu. Urdu was acknowledged in 1889 as J&K's state and official language

Occupations of Kashmiri

Most of the Kashmiri people are mostly occupied by Business and trade but their traditional occupation was agricultural activity. But after the migration and settlement they adopted the region's trend and started their safest carrier. The Kashmiris who are still known for their fine cloths and handicrafts have started their rental shops here and their journey begins. If we look back to Kashmir they were also the country's largest fruit producers, because its soil is highly fertile and compatible with fruit growing, such as apples, apricots, cherries and nuts, almonds and walnuts. The Kashmir valley is the sole saffron-producing location in the country. Most farmers participate both in sericulture and in supplementary revenues. But after the migration they had to leave their traditional jobs and be occupied with a variety of trading activities. Example the Kochi and Mattancherry, the line is fully crowded with the Kashmiris and share their happiness and sorrow together.

Religion of Kashmiri

In various sections of Jammu and Kashmir, three main faiths are visibly prevalent. Islam obviously dominates the Kashmir Valley in terms of the entire population and thus the valley is full of Muslim inhabitants. Therefore the Kashmiris who have been occupied here is Islam or Muslims. Some of them were converted after coming to Kochi because they married the local people of Kerala from different castes and that too were very less. Thus we share cultural and religious aspects from two different regions. They have migrated here but still the locals don't treat them separately or differently. Besides that, Hinduism and Buddhism also form major parts of Kashmir's religions. Buddhist adherents live in Jammu and Kashmir's Ladakh district

CHAPTER III

KASHMIRI MIGRANTS AND THE CHANGING SCENARIO OVER THE YEARS

PROBLEM WITH THE ATTITUDES OF LOCAL PEOPLE DURING THE INITIAL STAGE

The Kashmiri community in Kochi faced a major trade dip due to several reasons, one of them being clashes between the Kashmiri traders and local traders during the initial stage of their settlement. Earlier jew town belonged to the Dutch then it was shifted to Jews by the Cochin Maharaja and now the present day the Jew town belongs to the Kashmiri traders. Because jew town was a tourist hub local traders found that with the coming of Kashmiris their local trade was affected and this caused them to lock horns with the Kashmiris. Rahman, who has owned an antique shop for the last 50 years said that his grandfather faced a lot of problems to set up this shop in Jew Town. Local traders were unhappy with the Kashmiri trade and they even formed associations to drive Kashmiris away because they were endangering local trade.

This isolated the relations between the Kashmiri traders trade silently without speaking to locals much unless necessary. Local trades and people still do not consider Kashmiris as part of the Kochi community despite their previous experience here. Kashmiri handicrafts are expensive because of the detailed work and because these handicrafts are found in online stores at much cheaper rates. Thus the traders facing losses in offline markets. Another example was said by the Kashmiri trader that they even faced discrimination in the price dealing. The locals demanded high prices from these Kashmiris because they are different from them.

Another major reason for local traders and Kashmiri clashes was inter-religion. Inter community marriage between the Kashmiri boy who was Sunni and with the local boy who was Shia. The language was another factor which made them unpopular among the local people. The traders here are migrants and Kochi is not their homeland thus they are facing barriers in the society which is still continuing. There are limitations in accessing health care due to language barriers from the local dispensaries. It is also said that when the traders tried to call out the locals for solving the problems among them but it is still cannot be solved because of the language barrier between two different groups and during the first stage Also the locals tries to not promote

anything related to Kashmiri traders because it is a disadvantage to the local trade . The antique business forced the Migrant traders to either sell their shops or convert them into other businesses. There was not much competition during the starting stage but later the condition and situation changed made the people compete with each other.

And the current scenario is far better than before because the locals also try to cooperate with the traders and support their business most because the workers who work in the Kashmiri shops are mostly local Malayali which is a source of occupation and financial help for locals. But still they are not totally satisfied because of the previous experiences even during the interview none of the Kashmiris were not interested in speaking to us probably to avoid further conflict with the locals the major concern of the community today is the opportunities

PROBLEMS WITH THE RELIGION

Even though most of the Muslims of the Kochi and the Kashmiri are Sunni there are still differences between these two categories. During their initial settlement time in Kochi Kashmiris were not allowed in the mosque of Kerala because of the language barrier and because of local contentions. Even with Hindu and Muslim communal violence in Kerala, Kashmiris are facing problems with the Hindus of Kochi. It says that India is a secular nation but it is still a contrasting term because the gap between the religious groups still existed in the new century especially among the Muslim and Hindus.

In Kochi we can also see the problems among them. In the trading sector most of them are locals but the problems are mostly faced by the migrants one of them is the Kashmiris of Kochi. Being Islam and coming from outside, even today they are facing various problems from society. Besides that half of their shops in Kochi and trade today are located next to the temple in Jew Street. In the early days the treatment received by the traders from the locals and neighbors was very commendable but later when their business began to settle down in Kochi it severely affected the traditional traders and regular traders who were here from the starting.

After that the locals here started keeping the Kashmiri traders away from the society by taking religion and other things as a matter of concern. Therefore the Kashmiri traders are less approachable to local people and they are not ready to be friendly or interact with anyone from

outside except a few relatives and close friends. Even in the people's shops which are next to these traders they cannot be seen interacting even for a small talk, so it is very rare to see them.

No matter how progressive our society gets, things like the religious aspect does not change. The traders are still facing religious problems and they send their children to Muslims schools instead of regular government schools. Even their children and their elders continued to experience various forms of isolation and exclusion because of religious issues. Even though they are traders who are facing many religious and social problems, they also highlighted the attitudes of the local peoples who were nice to them. Another issue that needs to be mentioned among the release issues of Kashmiri traders is prohibition of inter caste marriage.

Religious differences and views can be seen within the Kashmir community and it is important to note that they should not marry anyone from outside the caste except Sunni. If in any case they have to marry a caste from another group they will be expelled from the Kashmiri society a few of the Kashmiri traders who were thus evicted can be also found in Kochi thus the Kashmiri community will not provide any assistance or other benefits to the expelled community. No matter how much improvements in the society and lofty ideals there have been when it comes to caste and religion various divisions and problems arrived and no changes can be seen anywhere even then and now both in the group even if its Kashmiri or if it is local Malayali. Due to religious and other differences local people still do not allow these Kashmiri traders or their families to stay close to their homes, or place they also don’t even agree to create any type of bond with their children or to interact with them.

THE SOCIO ECONOMIC CHANGES OF KASHMIRIS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Unlike everyone, the pandemic has affected society and many more really badly, which shook almost all human life. Most of them lost their jobs, some of them couldn’t find any way to pay back their debt etc. it was the period when most of them struggled to make their end meet. The entire world was facing the Covid19, some particular groups have affected the damage in life and society. There are some categories that need to be mentioned in particular, they were traders, employees, businessmen etc. just like every other commercial city, Kochi and the people of Kochi have been hit hard by the Corona. When we look back to the communities of Kochi they were also victims of the pandemic.

They came here to flourish their trade and commerce. But these periods were really luckless years of their life after the lots of hard work in the heart of kochi. During their journey as a migrant into Kerala and other parts of the state it wasn't easy for them to make their living here.But they still struggled to get in the line to get back on the track. After making their living in Kochi their hard work paid off. That was the period when Kochi warmly welcomed the foreigners and many others for trade and many other purposes.

We can also call it their golden era in the soil of Kochi. But after the outbreak of the pandemic it marks their life tougher. A majority of them have returned home unable to afford rent accumulated over the time. Slow down growth in industry and economy and accelerate their growth all of these have affected trade and sales. The pandemic has left Mattancherry and Fort Kochi, which once boasted major tourist hubs in Kerala, heritage ghost towns among several hundred merchants who see tourism as the sole source of income in these towns.

Fifty to hundreds of Kashmiri traders have settled here over the past three decades. They sell trinkets, jewelry, handicrafts, clothes, scarves and other items that guests, especially foreign tourists, enjoy through rental houses. The rows of stores that have closed in two places once occupied by merchants from this earthly paradise are painful reminders of how the pandemic has destroyed the livelihoods of half of the families in the country. Kashmir considers Kochi like home. Less than half a dozen of these merchants own houses in Kochi and the rest live in rented houses.

When their income is non-returnable or they are unable to earn the usual extra profits and they are unable to pay the rent that accumulates over time the nearly ninety-five percent of the merchants return to Kashmir. In early May 2020, when the pandemic showed no signs of abating any time soon. Most of them are heavily in debt and therefore cannot return home. Those returning to Kashmir find that it is simply not possible to pay their rent and shop, in Addison tuition fees, taxes, monthly loans, debt payments and utility bills. Most of them remain in business but face rent that has accrued over the past 16 months when inactive. Most employees and their employees are left without a source of income. Having made Kochi their home for three decades during the pandemic, they are beyond the reach of Kashmiri government welfare programs.

So they have no choice but to knock on the door of the Kerala government, who hopes to announce a bailout to help traders and others. Kashmiri traders Muzafar Hussain and Arshad Ahmed spoke of the precarious situation faced by traders in heritage localities. Sixteen months since the recession caused by the pandemic. Most of the Kashmiri traders in Kochi settled here around 2009, 2008 with their families. They hope the government will intervene so they can rebuild our lives and help attract tourists to this place.

Many traders planned to hope on the archaeological survey of India to reopen monuments such as the Dutch palace at Mattancherry during this period. Pandemic times are not easy for anyone. The tourism industry and the merchants that depend on it were hit the hardest. About 450 Kashmiri traders and their families stayed at home after the Covid outbreak. Kashmiri shop owners in the Jewish town who decided to stay in business are now struggling after their landlord asked them to pay the rent accumulated during the pandemic. This expulsion did not come naturally; all the merchants were doing business on the way to the synagogue.

According to the president of the Kashmiri Traders Association, thousands of Kashmiris have left Kerala during the pandemic. But about sixteen families remained in the neighborhood during this -year period because they could not afford to return. Their children are attending the local school and their shop will be demolished. According to the owners of the shops in the Jewish town, they have paid 50% of the rent since the beginning of the pandemic. That used to be the rule, but recently landlords have changed their mind and started demanding rent from 2020.They also want merchants to pay their rent in full from next month when business does not improve.

According to traders, a notice of eviction was sent to a merchant in Kashmir. The state government supports boat owners, tour guides and others in the tourism industry. But they kept quiet about the dealers. They were unable to leave their homes when the pandemic hit them hard. Traders and clerks also struggled as they could not pay their workers and traders could not import enough raw materials for their business due to high prices of consumer goods.Many traders are keen to dispose of their shops and the many-centuries-old wares kept for sale due to next to nil arrival of tourists and freight issues.

The sprawling shops and tastefully-recreated gods owned in Mattancherry, which were considered a treasure trove of exquisite antique and handicrafts, some of which found place in the Limca Book of Records, are now symbols of despair. So much so that many traders are keen

to dispose of their shops and the many centuries old wares kept for sale due to next to nil arrival of tourists and freight issues during these times they kept their shops shut down almost twelve months. For most well heeled tourists from abroad and across India who arrived in Kochi, their visit to the coastal city was incomplete without a stroll past jew street in the heritage town and checking out the innumerable small and mega outlets that sold prized antique items.

According to Sunny L malayil, copartner of crafters, which is spread over a thirty thousands of square feet space in the heritage town that has the famed Dutch palace and one of the oldest synagogues he says that they scraped past in 2020 by banking on online orders. The pandemics second wave in early 2021 played spoilsport with even that since the fear factor increased. Antique and handicraft items from here were in high demand across the globe especially among high net worth individuals, architecture, interior designers, hotels and corporate entities. The pandemic induced slowdown has led to freight cost to the US increasing eventually. All this has in turn affected the livelihood of artisans who manufactured handcrafted items displayed in the shops. So many possessing excellent workmanship have already diverted to other fields. When we look at the prevailing trend in the handicrafts and antique craft sector both procurement and marketing have gone digital with pictures and videos being shared online.

BACKDROP OF THE TOURISTS DUIRNG COVID

The next to nil arrival of people into the Jewish town itself symbolizes the plight of its merchants. More than half of their customers are foreign tourists. Their cessation of arrivals has left most merchants unable to pay their rent, while power has been cut off in many cases due to nonpayment of fees, so a recovery is expected at least until December, according to tradition. It is the peak month for tourists. But after the pandemic, the streets remained deserted along with their income. We know that Kochi is the place where almost every tourist is looking for their attraction. The influx of foreign visitors and their influence here is irreplaceable. About 1,000 small and medium travel agencies, homestays stopped operating. As such, this has created a huge loss in the tourism sector. And it mainly affects the Kashmiri people because most of the products made by Kashmiris are bought by foreigners so their flow is decreasing, which also adversely affects the trade.

STRUGGLE FOR THE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

The pandemic has witnessed many conflicts among them the transportation service was one of the major issues which they faced the pandemic week many states in India that have considerable migrant populations elsewhere have been home with support from the center. But there wasn't even talk from any quarters on running trains to Jammu or anywhere. Most of them thought it was because they are from Kashmir. Most of the vendors couldn’t find their way back home even during their vacation period.

The workers tried to register a portal opened by their government administration and tried to call up nodal officers but the response was cold. The shops had business till the end of January. The pandemic has made them stay at home about four or five months at home. It has taken a huge toll on their mental health. There are close to 310 Kashmiris in jew town. While some of them own curio shops, the bulk of them work as salesmen. There would be ten to five people who have their families with small children. The family who has elders at home suffers even more. Because they want to return to their home the earliest. They wish to go back during these periods and come back when the season starts in November.

The traders body had decided to waive off the rent during the lockdown for shops in jew town and also announced discounted rents in the post lockdown period but with zero income many are unsure of the future. Small shops have a rent of RS 70000 to RS 80000 per month. For larger shops this can go up to over Rupees one lakh to more than that.

This is one reason why they wish to go back. It was the main reason behind every trader. They have now petitioned the Ernakulam district collector with a request to help them undertake the journey home. And it was given new hope by the collector who responded positively and said if the Jammu and Kashmir administration makes a request it would be helpful for the further procedure. Around 225 Kashmiris who have shops in Kovalam had approached the CMOs office with a request for repatriation. The Kashmiri migrants and the workers here are also present in our tour sports as traders weather it as foreigners. We can see them around states like Varkala, Kochi , Alappuzha, and Kochi. All four would be around 750 people and they want a train up to jammu tawi. Even if there is a minimum requirement of a thousand passengers in a train they were ready to pay to get back at any coast.

TRADERS CONCERN

Just like the earlier situation it was not easy for them to fight back to get back on their track. All the traders could not make a move from Kochi so they didn't have any other way than protesting. They showed their anger that they could. The thing is that everyone wants to go back to Kashmir but the protection and safety measures were not favorable for them. Because unlike everyone the Covid experience was new to everyone around the world. Hence the traveling and tour was strictly restricted for anyone to anywhere Thus the government and the country was helpless thus the traders cannot do anything but worry. The traders in Fort Kochi and Mattancherry were far away from home. During the normal days before the pandemic their streets on Monday and other days the streets were abuzz with news on home minister resolution to revoke provisions of article 370 of the constitution and bifurcate Jammu and Kashmir.

When the traders tried to communicate with their families who were on the other side of the region, they were also not expecting anything serious; they presumed that the troop buildup was because of a Pakistani attack. There were about more than hundreds of shops in the line and they had meetings on various Kashmir traders shops every day to discuss the issue that they are facing. Most of them are hoping that phone networks and internet connection will be restored soon. Their hopes and prayers become decreasing day by day because they thought their government and others left them in the dark.

Most people at home are for retaining the state's special status, the people particularly youngsters. Who have grown up with the sound of rifles around them whatever they do they didn't get a positive or quick solution or answers. Those who have already left Kochi don't know whether they can come back here and run their business again here. And those who want to leave the state don't know when it will be. And they were not happy with the removing special status and it was not the solution for anything because it was no use. Everyone has one hope that the situation won't be that bad like when the militancy broke out. That's the only thing which they were satisfied with during this time.

CURRENT SITUATION

Currently the status of Kashmiri migrants post pandemic has changed a lot. Business has again started taking momentum. Muhammad Raheem who has a shop which sells handicraft and authentic Kashmiri textiles he mentions that post pandemic things have changed since the business had started gaining life again his business related to import and export has also improved. He does his trade with the USA , Germany , Australia and the UK. Another reason for this improvement is because post pandemic tourism has started again in the similar way as before. The migrants who went back to Kashmir during the pandemic have again started setting up their business in Kochi. Also the problems with the attitudes of the locals also changed over a time. Almost all of the traders in the line have trade relations across the world; they engage in export and import activities of trade since their products have demands in the foreign market. One of the many reasons for the locals and migrant community to live harmonically is because various inter-caste marriages took place within the last two decades.

SOCIO ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

The office of the Kashmiri association is located in jew town itself among the various shops of the Kashmiris. The association is headed by Sajid Khatai who is also one of the businessmen. This Kashmiri association has been instrumental in looking after the welfare of Kashmiri people in Jew town and it is free of rent. Association holds meetings and functions in the same place. The association also takes interest and participation in all activities of the community. They also, like Cutchi Memons, tried to arrange a huge pilgrimage from Kochi.

The association also runs a charity and social organization that helps Kashmiris with financial help and their major contribution is that after the death of any Kashmiri in Kochi they help with the funeral rites and even pays all the expenses to send the body to their native land this is because most of them wants to buried in their native land with proper funeral rites which associated with Kashmiris. Whenever the news of a death arrives, all the required material is sent to the bereaved house.

Whatever the member of the family is concerned can afford is collected other ways it is treated as charitable expense of the association. The association also helps with the import and export of the Kashmiri traders especially the international trade with USA Germany Australia etc. The

Kashmiri association also helped them during the time of demonetization. When Kashmiri traders were banned from using 500 and 1000 notes the Kashmiri association helped them with the trade back by communicating this with the government. Kashmiri migrants collectively spend a certain amount every month and give it to the association as that fund in turn is used for the welfare of Kashmiri migrants. There is no separate women association for the Kashmiri community in Kochi, women's issues are also looked after by the Kashmiri association. The Kashmiri community just like other communities in Fort Kochi has made Kochi their home and have blended with the locals their tradition and culture.

CONCLUSION

From this project we can understand the history of the Kerala Kashmiri community, how and why they reached and flourished in Kerala and other parts of the districts. This project also helps us to understand their linguistic differences, customs and traditions which they practiced in various places, and also gives the detailed journey of the Kashmiri migrant community in Kochi. Kashmiri is one among the migrants in Kerala who is contributing a major portion in the trading in the respective regions where they settled. The trading sector is open to all countries and it has great value and demand in the market and this migrant community is basically influenced in the trading sectors.

This work has been done in five chapters. The first chapter deals with the migration pattern and their background of Kochi as we know there are many migrants all around the world so the Kashmiris are major among them which migrated to Kerala. Thus it deals with the main reason and the conflict which brought the people of Kashmir to migrate different regions. It also explains
the impact during the partition before and after the independence. The chapter helps to understand the situation and problems which were affected during the conflict. The chapter also covers a small historical background of Kashmir.

The second chapter of this work dealt with the settlements of Kashmiris in Mattancherry and Fort Kochi. From this chapter we can understand their trade and activities in that particular area. Also it traces the importance of these regions which they settled. The region Mattancherry and Fort Kochi is mostly a tourist hub and their products have higher demand hence they made their home in the heart of Kochi. It also deals with the customs and tradition of Kashmiris in Kochi which includes religious customs, traditional practices of the community.

The third chapter deals with the transition of this community over the years and how the society influenced them. It also speaks about the current situation of the migrants. It traces how life during the pandemic and how they overcame the problems during that time. It also speaks about the traders association which existed.

The work has been dealt with explaining how Kochi was favorable to make a home for them. In order to understand their journey, one of the major reasons for their expansion of trade is their association because it has made them build a home in Kochi by improving and expanding the trading activities therefore they have an organization above them to manage and to look after this society. The organization is known as Kashmiri Traders Association. The president of the association is now Sajid Khatai. All of the trading activities such as import, export, orders, retails even trade related activities took control under this association. The association also aims to provide social service and support for the benefit of the whole Kashmiri society who have settled in Kochi.

In the earlier days this institution faced a lot of challenges due to various factors including some of the problems faced by the organization were that it was an early period when the trade was starting to flourish and welcoming the traders to increase our income. But Kochi was a new place for this migrant community. During that time, export of spices, gold market, sale of cotton cloths etc. were among the main trades that existed in kochi. These sectors have also faced many problems at times.

Therefore it is very important that the business of this migrant community can attract the attention of others in kochi. Apart from that it was a period when most of the trading areas which existed here had started a competition with each other. The government approach to their trading sector was also very poor as non allocation of funds for them was another main issue. Moreover, at that time new trading institutions also made their Kashmiris go backward. Although initially the activity of this type of trading organization was comparatively very slow in process. This trading Organization has worked distinctively to overcome these obstacles in the coming period.

They have raised their trade association internationally to promote their trade therefore, they continue to provide special financial and economic support to their traders even today. Because of that the current situation of the organization has become a very active organization who is working for the migrated Kashmiri traders who settled in Kochi compared to earlier years. Now they have trade relationships with countries like the UK, Germany, USA, Australia due to the high influence of their products. Another important point of the association is that they help with the funeral rites and even pay all the expenses to send the body to their native land. We can

also see that most of the traders who work here are youngsters because the Kashmiri students after high school prefer continuing the family business most of the time rather than preferring other occupations they took after the business and settle down. Another major interesting fact about the Kashmiris is their cultural exchanges between the local people and the migrants because some of the traders who have been married to local peoples of Kochi thus share the cultural and religious facts.

However the present scenario of these migrants is far better than the earlier times but during the pandemic unlike every businessman the Kashmiris also struggled to get back after the pandemic. It has affected their daily life deeply. There were traders who closed their shops during the pandemic. The raise in the rent also made them struggle more. Some of the traders have been to various other jobs to meet their day to day life.

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APPENDIX



Kashmir Map with the border



Jew Town, Mattancherry



Paradesi Synagogue- Clock Tower



Kashmiri Traders Celebrating Iftar, Mattancherry, Jew Town



Kashmiri Ornaments, Mattancherry Antique Shop



Kashmiri ornaments, Mattancherry Antique shop



Kashmiri shops entrance-Mattancherry, jew town



Red Kani Jamawar Shawl



Kalamkari pure Pashmina Shawl



Pashtush pashmina shawl



Dhurrie Kalamkari



Modur Pulav



Rogan Josh



Shabdeg