KASHMIRI MARIYA (ELEGY) MANUSCRIPTS: THE VALUABLE SOURCES FOR THE DISSEMINATION, RECONSTRUCTION AND SAFEGUARDING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE-III

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KASHMIIRI M LarsiY (ELEGY) MANUSCRIPTS: THE VALUABLE SOURCES FOR THE DISSEMINATION, RECONSTRUCTION AND SAFEGUARDING THE HISTORY AND CULTURE-III

ABSTRACT

Manuscripts are the links to the historical facts that will otherwise remain unknown to the world. They contain authentic information and facts about the social, political and cultural aspects of a nation. Therefore their intellectual value cannot be over emphasized. Many countries and nations are joining hands towards preserving such cultural assets by way of taking conservation and preservation measures including digitization and documentation.

Marsiya or Elegy has gained more importance after the Martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s) and his companions and household in Karbala. Marsiya has been since written and recited in order to mourning the tragic events of Karbala. Many Marsiya manuscripts are available in different languages written during different times by many great writers and poets like Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Balti, Punjabi and Kashmiri. These Marsiya manuscripts are being used to be recited at different occasions especially during the month of Muharram-ul-Haram. Many of these Marsiya manuscripts are at the verge of extinction owning to need of preservation and conservation. The study had identifying and documenting some of the Kashmiri Marsiya manuscripts.

Keywords: Marsiya, Elegy, Manuscripts, Yusuf, Yaqoub, Sakeena

INTRODUCTION

Culture is defined as knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society Chowdhury (2010). He further adds that heritage means “our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations”. Veltman (1997) says that Culture is concerned with the development of coherent viewpoints which bring a cumulative effect to otherwise isolated experiences of a group, making them feel special yet allowing others to have a parallel experience. Hence an Italian’s culture links them with Dante and Petrarch, and yet they can respect an Indian’s culture which links them with the Vedas and the Mahabharata. The vast and the rich Culture of India comes in many forms and shapes which urge people to play a central part to preserve their cultural heritage. Liew (2005) further adds that Culture provides links between the past, present and the future. Cultural information can bring communities together, as well as promoting the understanding of a culture and society. Jokilehto (1990) defined cultural heritage as the entire corpus of
material signs - either artistic or symbolic - handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of humankind. As a constituent part of the confirmation and enhancement of cultural identities, as a legacy belonging to all humankind, the cultural heritage gives each particular place its recognizable features and is the storehouse of human experience. The preservation and the presentation of the cultural heritage are therefore a corner-stone of any cultural policy. The cultural heritage thus should be considered both in time and in space.

Soualah and Hassoun (2011) say that Manuscripts are living witnesses to human civilization. They represent a real knowledge medium of a specific era. The access to these works is a real problem because of their fragility which limits handling; and because distant countries conserving them require travel for access. The medium of information storage has changed from clay tablets, palm leaves to paper and now to electronic and optical media. Ahmed (2009) points out that the traditional preservation method constitute of all form of direct actions aimed at the life expectancy of undamaged or damaged elements of manuscript like mechanical cleaning solvent cleaning etc. Machine made paper made of wood pulp containing harmful acidic ingredients that caused deterioration was used. Manuscripts, which contain centuries of accrued knowledge in such areas as philosophy, sciences, literature, arts and the pluralistic faith systems of India are more than just historical records. They represent the collective wisdom and experience of generations of thinkers. In fact the entire gamut of history is left unexplored or partially explored in manuscripts. Shafi (2004) says that many digital library initiatives focus on preserving various cultural heritages. Often, the initiatives comprise of various materials such as pictures, maps and paintings, and manuscripts are one of the materials included. Some Western and Indian digital library of manuscripts initiatives include MASTER (Manuscript Access Standards for Electronic Records), Oxford University Manuscripts, Medical Manuscripts in NLM, European Manuscript Server Initiative (EMSI), and Unesco Memory of World. Those projects have used photographic and digital methods to develop a full or partial archival copy of the manuscripts available on-line using different software with JPEG format for image processing in association with different metadata initiatives (as cited in Rifin & Zainab, 2007).

Marsiya / Marsiyas an Urdu-Persian poetry form that is recited normally on the death of a dear one. This art form was first originated in Iran where it was customary to recite Marsiya in order to commemorate and lament the death of Hazrat Hussein and 72 of his comrades during the siege of Karbala. Marsiya generally consists of six-line units, with a rhyming quatrain, and a couplet on a different rhyme reveals Indian Poetry (2009). The Marsiya, a form that usually details the seventh-century C.E. martyrdom of the Prophet of Islam’s grandson, Imam Husain A.S., has a reputation for being more complex and more erudite than other genres of the Shia Muslim mourning assembly; the majlis reveals Bard (n.d). Marsiya has its roots in Arabic and Persian literature. They are traditionally either recited by
Marsiya-Khwans or sung by a Marsiya-Soz at Shia mourning assemblies held during the month of Mohharum. Though its language draws heavily on Arabic and Persian vocabulary, the Urdu Marsiya is imbued with the color and flavor of the Indian subcontinent. The best of verses are exquisite cameos composed of images of local flora and fauna, drawing on local custom and tradition. In terms of emotional range, the Marsiya swings between heroic displays of martial skill and tender descriptions of affection and bereavement between the high moral virtue of the people of the House of the Prophet and their ultimate vulnerability in the face of death and loss.

Thumri, Chaiti and Sohar (n.d). About the glory of marsia, Husain (2010) says that if one extreme of the literature is Ghazal—the lyrics, then the other is Marsia—the epic. The Ghazal relates to Ramz—the allusions and the imagined, but the Marsia relates to the real episodes and its content is not all sweet narrate, but verbosity of battlefield description, pain, valour and chivalry. When a scene of Karbala is versified in the style of Marsia—the elegy is read with intone in the rising and falling voice—a generic cut and created to suit the descript, where every scene of Karbala depicted is articulated through unique and subtle wording of the Marsia. Hyder (2006) the idealmarsiya open with a Chehra, the section that leads the reader/listener into the subject of that particular marsiya through a verbal sketch of the description of a particular time of the day, the difficulties of travelling in a desert, or the praise of Allah (Hamd), Muhammad (Naat), or Ali and the Imams (Manqabat).

Problem

Manuscripts are one of the precious materials of our cultural heritage. They are valuable sources for the dissemination, reconstruction and safeguarding the history and culture. Manuscripts provide not only the most authentic witnesses to life in the medieval era, but also a record of what aspects of life were considered to be of sufficient importance to immortalize in the medium. Kashmiri Marsiya manuscripts have been written during different time periods almost from 600 years and contain rich and valuable information about the religion and the tragic events of martyrdom of Imam Hussain (a.s) and his companions in Karbala. The manuscripts are scattered and form the part of personal collection of many households of Marsiya writers and orators. Many of these Marsiya manuscripts are at the verge of extinction owing to need of preservation and conservation. The study makes an endeavor towards identifying, documenting some of the Kashmiri Marsiya manuscripts.

Scope

The scope of the study is confined to the identification, documentation of some of selected Kashmiri Marsiya manuscripts.

Objectives

1. To identify various Kashmiri Marsiya manuscripts.
2. To gather relevant information about selected titles.
3. To capture scanned images of selected manuscripts.
4. To document each Marsiya manuscript.

Methodology
For objective 1st and 2nd a survey was carried to various places including households of Marsiya writers and orators to identify various Marsiya titles and manuscripts. The information pertaining to each identified manuscript was gathered by consulting Marsiya knowing persons including writers, scribes and orators, besides few important books were consulted for the same.

For objective 3rd high resolution scanner were used to digitize the manuscript by choose the best resolution for clarity and easy up and downloading procedures. For objective 4th MSWord 2003 was used to create documented files of manuscripts with associated metadata.

Review of Related Literature
Culture is that invisible bond, which ties the people of a community together. Hofstede (2001) says that Culture could be defined as a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from another (as cited in Hakala, Latti & Sandberg, 2011). Zuraidah while studying Culture says that culture forms everyday lives of the people. The colorful cultures are evident in not only the music, dances, games, the many art forms and past times, but also in the values, beliefs and norms (as cited in Manaf and Ismail, 2010). Chowdhury (2010) defines Culture as knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. He further adds that heritage means” our legacy from the past, what we live with today and what we pass on to future generations”. Liew (2005) adds that Culture provides links between the past, present and the future. Cultural information can bring communities together, as well as promoting the understanding of a culture and society. Veltman (1997) explains that Culture is concerned with the development of coherent viewpoints which bring a Cumulative effect to otherwise isolated experiences of a group, making them feel special yet allowing others to have a parallel experience. Hence an Italian’s culture links them with Dante and Petrarch, and yet they can respect an Indian’s culture which links them with the Vedas and the Mahabharata. UNESCO says that Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. Cultural heritage is based on the aspects of our past that we cherish, want to keep and pass on to future generations and outside world. Cultural heritage manifests itself in diverse forms, from mega-structures, like pyramids, medieval cities, monastic complexes and museums, to languages and dialects, songs, art, folk stories, customs, practices and dances. However, Jokilehto (1990) suggests that cultural heritage should be considered both in time and in space. First, it
no longer stops at the dawn of the nineteenth century but now also embraces the records left behind by the twentieth century. Second, the aim is not only to preserve increasingly numerous items of cultural property but also to safeguard complexes which go far beyond single large monuments or individual buildings.

The preservation of cultural heritage is central to protecting a sense of who we are a meaningful reference in our culturally diverse world. Ekwelem, Okafor and Ukwoma (2011) states that “preservation of cultural heritage resources is essential to sustainable development. It recognizes the importance of cultural continuity and of human history in nourishing social cohesion, a sense of self, of belonging, and of place in a context within which to understand the past and to contemplate the future”. Maltesh, Lahkar and Gajakose (2007) says that Culture is preserved through verbal and written forms on subjects like songs, stories, epics, novels, poems, philosophical treatises, manuals, performances etc. Williams (2001) states that preservation of cultural heritage resources is very important to the development of the various cultures. It is a witness of where we have come from and where we are (as cited in Ekwelem, Okafor and Ukwoma, 2011). Conway (1990) adds further that the purpose of preservation is to protect information of enduring value for access by present and future generations (as cited in Hedstrom, 1997). Ramana (2005) says that Preservation of traditional materials became more successful and systematic after libraries and archives integrated preservation into overall planning. Manaf and Ismail (2010) further adds that these institutions provide their respective communities with scientific, creative and cultural heritage resources. Day (1997) is among the earliest authors to discuss the importance of recording technological context for digital preservation. He suggested that Dublin Core elements could be used to preserve details (e.g., migration, encoding) about the technical context of digital materials. Furthermore he suggests that the metadata recorded for each instance would make it possible to discover how to accurately manipulate and display digital materials (as cited in Beaudoin, 2012). In recent decades, many major libraries and archives established formal preservation programs for traditional materials in paper, microform, photographic, and to a lesser degree audio-visual formats observes (Hedstrom, 1997). Liu (1999) says that in a changing society, the lack of funds and experienced librarians and the need to preserve precious historic and cultural heritage is particularly challenging. In order to resolve this difficult situation, networking and co-operation between libraries, archives and information departments is vital. (Nazir and Bhat, 2014); (Nazir, 2014) the manuscript has beautifully discussed various concepts of the Marsiya in all the four parts in an ordered manner.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Manuscript</strong></th>
<th><strong>Bibliographic Information</strong></th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Author</strong></td>
<td>Munshi Mohammad Ali</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date of manuscript</strong></td>
<td>1993</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date of content</strong></td>
<td>1300 Hijri</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Script</strong></td>
<td>Perso-Arabic</td>
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<td>Kashmir</td>
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<td><strong>Material used</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mulla Abdul Raheem</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>No. of stanzas</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Orator</strong></td>
<td>Akbar Ali Fakeer</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Annotation /Notes**

The manuscript entitled “Yusuf” is written by Munshi Mohammad Ali in 1300 Hijri in Kashmiri language. As we know the title of this marsiya is Yusuf (a.s), the author has explained the event of Hazrat Yusuf (a.s). He has explained all the four parts of marsiya in an ordered manner. In the Hamd part author praises Allah. In the second part i.e. Naat he praise Prophet Mohammad (s.a.w) and similarly in the Manqabat part he praises Imam Ali (a.s).
In this title the author has mostly discussed about Hazrat Yusuf (a.s). He explained the ill deeds of Yusuf’s brothers for his brother. A brief description of the story is given below. His name was Yusuf (a.s), the most beautiful person who ever lived in this world. Not only was he physically beautiful, but he was also from a very noble family. His father, Yaqoub (a.s), his grandfather, Is-haaq (a.s), and his great-grandfather, Ibraheem (a.s), were all prophets of Allah. His brothers were deeply jealous of him, and plotted to get rid of him when he was a young boy. One day they took him on a trip, and threw him into a well. They thought that this was better than killing him. When they went back to their house, they lied to their father Yaqoub (a.s) and said that a wolf had killed Yusuf (a.s) after they left him to watch over their belongings. Yaqoub (a.s) did not believe their story, but decided to be patient and to trust in Allah’s help. By the will of Allah it so happened, that Yusuf (a.s) was found in the well by a water-drawer. When he lifted his bucket out of the well, he was surprised to see a little boy. The caravan of travelers who had sent this man to the well sold Yusuf (a.s) for a very small price He was bought by a kind Egyptian man who treated him very well and kept him in his house. After the passage of many years, and after going through many ups and downs in the land of Egypt, Yusuf (a.s) finally met his brothers who had thrown him into the well as a child. By that time, Yusuf (a.s) had attained a high rank in the court of the king of Egypt, and was responsible for looking after the storehouses of the country. Even though he recognized his brothers, they did not recognize who he was, probably because they did not think that such an important, high-ranking person could be the one they had thrown into the well as a young child. The brothers had come to Egypt to buy grains and food-stuffs at a time when there was a drought, and Yusuf (a.s) gave them a lot of grains and returned the price that they had paid to get it as well. He asked them to bring their other brother with them the next time as well. Yusuf (a.s) liked this particular brother very much and wanted to keep him with himself, so Allah taught him a strategy by which he was able to do so without revealing his identity. He hid a goblet in the baggage of that brother and then had his men search for the goblet in the possessions of the caravan of his brothers. When the goblet was found in the baggage of Yusuf’s brother, he was able to detain him for being the one who had “stolen” it.

Later, when the rest of the brothers returned to their home, their father Hazrat Yaqoub (a.s) was grief-stricken at the news of the loss of a second son. He told them to return and to search for this lost brother as well as for Yusuf (a.s). When they returned to Egypt, they went to Yusuf and tried to talk to him about their need for foodstuffs. They mentioned the hardships that they and their family were going through and requested him to give them a full measure of grains even though they could not give him the full price for it. It was at that time that Yusuf (a.s) revealed his true identity to them. Guess what he said at that time to his brothers? Instead of blaming them for what they had done to him and making them feel ashamed, he told them that they were free of blame, and hoped that Allah would forgive them. The brothers returned home with the happy news that both Yusuf and the second brother were safe and sound. Later,
the parents of Yusuf (a.s) were reunited with him after a separation of many years, and Yusuf (a.s) praised and thanked Allah for reuniting him with his family and for granting him authority and power in the land. The story of Yusuf (a.s) is a great example of forgiveness and mercy, and it is wonderful to consider how generously Yusuf (a.s) treated the brothers who had thrown him in a well to get rid of him.

In the Dard part author compares the event of Hazrat Yusuf (a.s) with Hazrat Sakeena (s.a) because she also jumps from the back of camel in Karbala and weeps on the grave of her father when shimar torched and slaping Hazrat Sakeena (a.s).

**Relation of title with karbala** In the battle field of karbala the situation was same as with Hazrat Yousuf (a.s) the author has correlate the event of Hazarat Yousuf (a.s) with the karbala, when Hazrat sakeena (s.a) and other holy household Ahle Bait (a.s) where tortured by the cruel enemies of Islam.
مولد تام فِسخًا مَرَّةً لِشَارَعَ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لم يُسْجَرَهُ خَطْبَةً. قَالَ شَعْرُ سَاسَةُ مُنشَرُونَ، أَرْبَعَ مَوَاتٍ مَعْقُولَ صَلَحَ أَنْ يُسْجَرَهُ خَطْبَةً. وَإِلَى نَافِع مُنْطَفٌ يُصَبَّهُنَّ لِلَّذِينَ كَرِيْنُهُمْ أَنْ يُنْفِخَ افْتِرَاحُهُ. مَا أَهْوَانُ عَلِيٌّ

كَانَ تُصَبِّرُهُمْ لِمَضْحَكَةٍ مَنْزَعَ عَالَمًا يَتَابَعُهُ وَيُرْسَوْرُ غَيْبٍ إِنْ يُمْضَتْ رُكَابٌ أَوْ أَنْ يَقْبَلُ مَبْنَى مَبْنِى مَبْنِى مَرْكَزُ اِسْتِطْعَامُ سَبَبًا وَعَاصِمًا لَّكُمْ بِهِمَا. لَهُمْ بِعَلَمٍ وَقَدْ أَفْتَطَى أَحْمَدُ وَمَا زَكَرَهُنَّ وَرَكَابُهُنَّ. كَأَنَّ شَعْرُ سَاسَةُ مُنشَرُونَ مَعْقُولَ صَلَحَ أَنْ يُسْجَرَهُ خَطْبَةً. يُصِبُّهُنَّ لِلَّذِينَ كَرِيْنُهُمْ أَنْ يُنْفِخَ افْتِرَاحُهُ. مَا أَهْوَانُ عَلِيٌّ
کلمات که ممکن است در ابتدای فصل بخورند: نه به‌طور مستند، به‌طور مستند.

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مطونان له‌یوسف

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ام راهی کنار مائی، مبارکه‌ی دوسر فرستای صبر و حمایت کنار مائی. این را در بختی می‌دانیم که مسیر شما در راه خداوند ملت‌های خود نمایند. نباید رخ دهد که پناه‌ی خود را در دست‌های دیگر بپذیری‌یم. این در این امر دارد که باید به قوی‌ترین راه چشم‌اندازیم. این همه در نهایت به سعید خداوند، که سرخ کرده‌اند و با الهام نزدیکی در حقیقت می‌باشند. بنابراین، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکته، باید به خوبی به سر خود بپردازیم و با این نکте
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي من الصورة. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة في شيء ما آخر، فسأكون سعيدًا بمساعدتك.
CONCLUSION

Kashmiri Marsiya has been written during different time periods by some great writers especially from more than 600 years. These Marsiya manuscripts form a part of collection of households of some renowned Marsiya writers, scribes and orators and can be found in deteriorated form and not much attention has been paid towards their safeguarding and preservation.

With the changes in times especially the changing modes of accessing information these manuscripts has either remained a part of personal collection with less or no attention. We will be losing this important cultural asset if appropriate steps are not taken for their preservation and conservation.

Libraries and information centres have transformed their activities towards preservation of such cultural assets and are world over involved in such endeavors. With the advent of open access software and digital libraries these things have become possible with less financial implications. Open source Software is an important tool to build the digital library collections. The digital library of Marsiya manuscripts is a step towards finding opportunities and methods of digitized such valuable cultural assets. It is also suggests that wider user oriented programs by libraries and archival institutions need to be put in place in order to convince the common masses for making their personal collections available for digitization of long term preservation.

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