

Kalhaṇa's 'victory' over Rashīd al-Dīn: contesting pre-Islamic histories of Kashmir during the Jahāngīr period.

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In 1589, when the third Mughal emperor Akbar (r. 1556–1605) reached Srinagar for the first time, a manuscript of the *Rājataranḡiṇīs*, –the *Rājataranḡiṇī* of Kalhaṇa, Jonarāja, Śrīvara, and Śuka–, was dedicated to him. Out of interest for its contents, Akbar ordered its translation into Persian. A Muslim intellectual named Mullā Shāh Muḥammad Shāhābādī completed the translation within a couple of months. Thanks to Muḥammad Shāhābādī's Persian translation, a pre-Islamic history of Kashmir recorded by Kalhaṇa and Jonarāja became known to the contemporary Muslim historians. Indeed, in his *Ā'in-i Akbarī*, Abū al-Faḍl enumerated the names of the kings of Kashmir starting with the legendary king Gonanda I; the names of non-Muslim kings in the *Ā'in-i Akbarī* accord with those in the *Rājataranḡiṇīs*.

However, much before Shāhābādī's translation, another pre-Islamic history of Kashmir was compiled in Ilkhanid Iran, i.e. the section of the history of Kashmir of Rashīd al-Dīn's (d. 1318) *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* or the Compendium of Chronicles, whose informant was a Kashmiri Buddhist monk Kamālashrī (< Kamalaśrī). By contrast with the *Rājataranḡiṇī* of Kalhaṇa that states that the first king of Kashmir was Gonanda I, the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh*'s history of Kashmir states that the first king of Kashmir was Pravarasena. In addition, the names of non-Muslim kings in ancient Kashmir are totally different between the two chronicles. As is well known, the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* was much valued at the Mughal court; not only that Akbar ordered to make a copy of the chronicle with 98 beautiful miniatures, but also that the *Tārīkh-i Alfī* or the History of Thousand Years completed in 1591 or 92 relied highly on the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* as a reliable source.

Consequently, Muslim historians of the next Mughal emperor Jahāngīr's (r. 1605–27) period had an issue in compiling a Persian history of the subcontinent or a Persian provincial history of Kashmir: which of the Persian translation of the *Rājataranḡiṇīs* or the *Jāmi' al-Tawārīkh* is more reliable? The historians who were able to access both sources produced various histories of pre-Islamic Kashmir which are confused mixtures quoted from the two sources. Historians' confusions ended with the compilation of the *Tārīkh-i Kashmīr* of Ḥaydar Malik Chādūra in 1620 or 21. After his compilation, the Rashīd-based history of Kashmir disappeared in Mughal Persian historiography. This presentation details the various pre-Islamic histories of Kashmir made by the historians of the Jahāngīr period.