

**WHAT HAPPENS BETWEEN THE TAQ AND THE OLD CITY OF SRINAGAR IN KASHMIR?**

By

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SUBMITTED TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ARCHITECTURE STUDIES

AT THE

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

JUNE 2019

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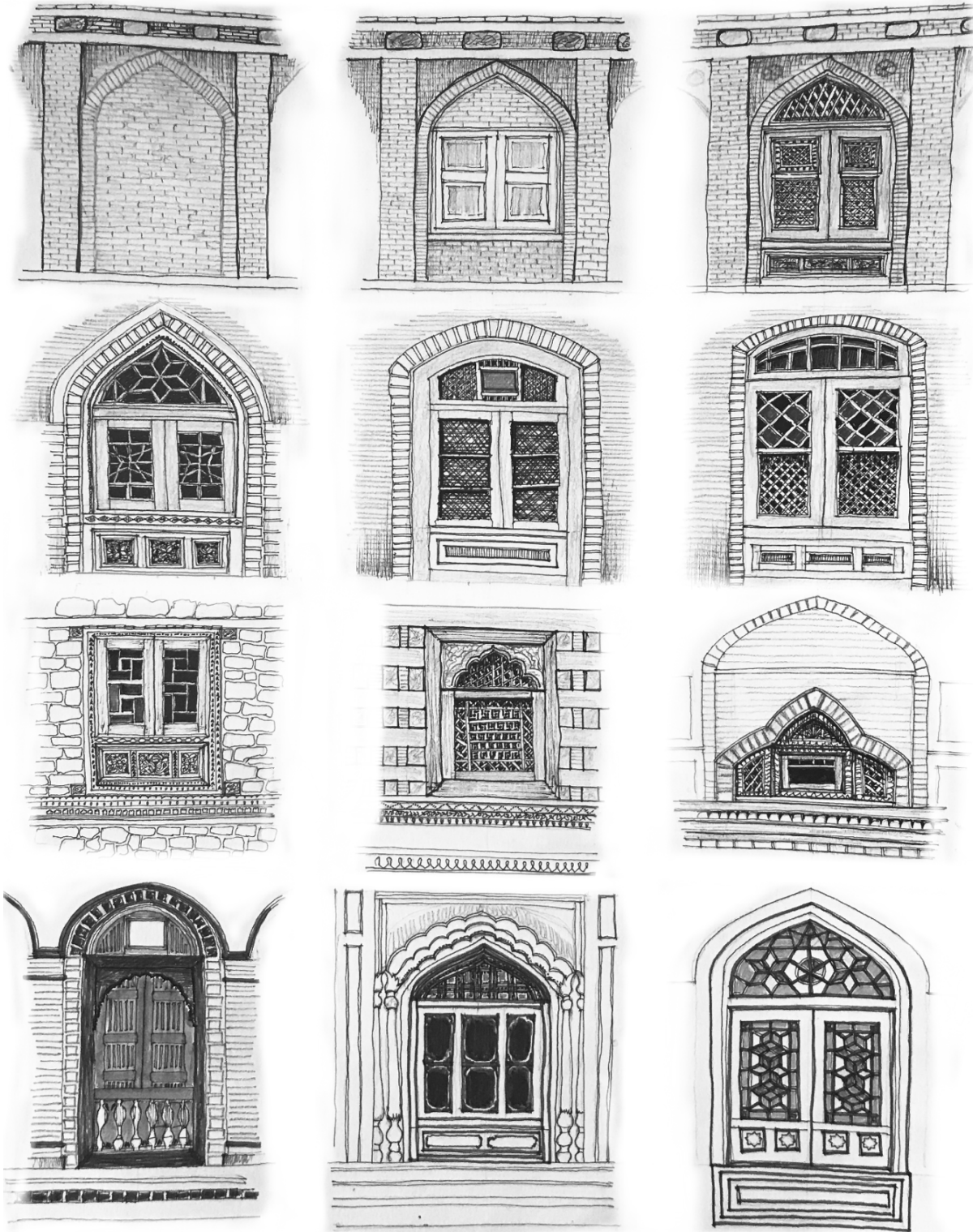
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**What happens between the 'Taq' and the Old City of Srinagar in Kashmir?**

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Submitted to the  
Department of Architecture on May 23, 2019  
In Partial Fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree Of  
Master of Science in Architecture Studies

## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the importance of the traditional building crafts as integral and inextricable parts of traditional architecture, known as the '*taq*', in the Old City of Srinagar and delves into the question, 'How does architecture become a platform for the different building crafts and a medium to facilitate their development, and vice versa?' The study shows the interrelation of Architecture and Craft through five scales of spatial configuration in the old city: 1) the urban context of the city; 2) the streetscapes in it; 3) the *Dargahs* amidst neighbourhoods; 4) traditional houses in the city; and 5) finally the crafts as they have been practiced individually in incorporated within interior architecture. This approach seeks to understand the relation of Architecture and Craft in Srinagar at different levels and to explore in detail, where the two meet and where they diverge. It is important to explore the intricate interdependency of these systems of spatial expressions and building functions to study their growth and diversification that we see in the old city of Srinagar today. There is ample research on both Traditional Crafts and Architecture in Kashmir as individual and separate topics of study, but this thesis study helps to look at them as cohesive and mutually supportive elements of the traditional built environment in the urban context of the Old City of Srinagar. It explores those relationship through fieldwork and visual methods of studying and enquiring at different spatial scales (e.g. maps at the urban scale and photography and drawing at the architectural scale). The results of the study encourage a new and different way of looking at, and studying, the relationship between architecture and craft in the old city of Srinagar. It synthesizes a framework that can have a broader application to study areas with similar circumstances in other regions of India.

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## CHAPTER 1:

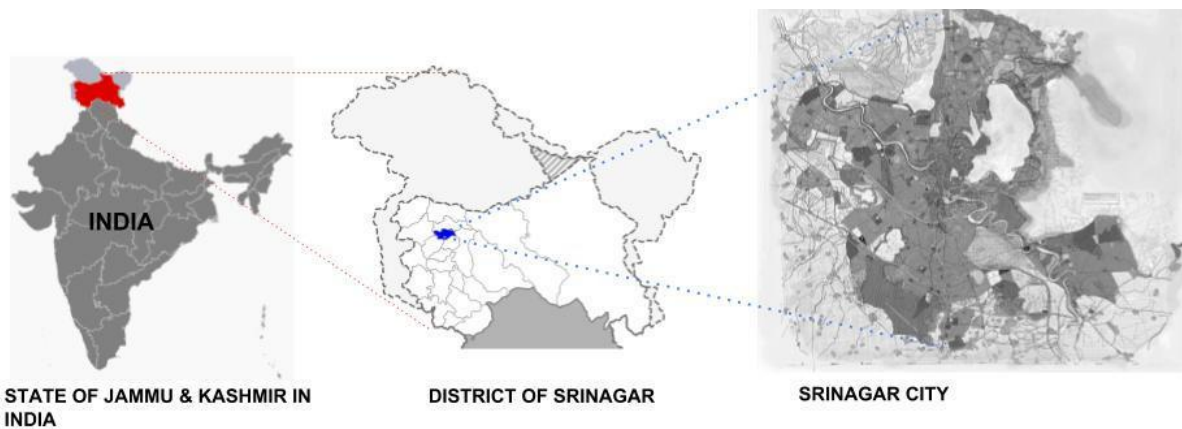
# Introduction

This thesis focuses on Srinagar's distinctive architectural heritage and building crafts and tries to show how this built tradition combined to foster the development of a distinct architectural style and system. This study looks at various spaces and buildings of wood and brick in the Old City of Srinagar with their distinct features. Kashmir is a state that has been associated with some of the best living traditions of crafts, cuisine, houseboats and *shikaras*, with these places located around mountain streams, lakes and snow clad peaks. It is only over the last thirty odd years (since 1989) that Kashmir has been seen as an arena of violent conflict.<sup>1</sup> As the valley and one of its major cities, Srinagar, hopefully is getting back to normal situation and conditions, one can attempt to study and regard those traditions of heritage values, craftsmanship and an urban culture that has developed in the city over time.

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<sup>1</sup> Alkazi, Feisal. Srinagar: An Architectural Legacy. New Delhi: Lotus Collection Roli Books, 2014. p.18

Cities develop in response to their surrounding context, natural environments and the inhabitants of the city. The growth of a city is a highly complex and intricate process and is interdependent on various vital elements that shape its characteristics. The city of Srinagar developed due to its geographical and historical situations at different times and the building and craft systems of its built environment evolved in response to it. This thesis study looks into these intricacies behind the development and interdependence of architecture and craft as it has developed in the Old City of Srinagar through ages.



**Figure 1.1: City of Srinagar and its context**

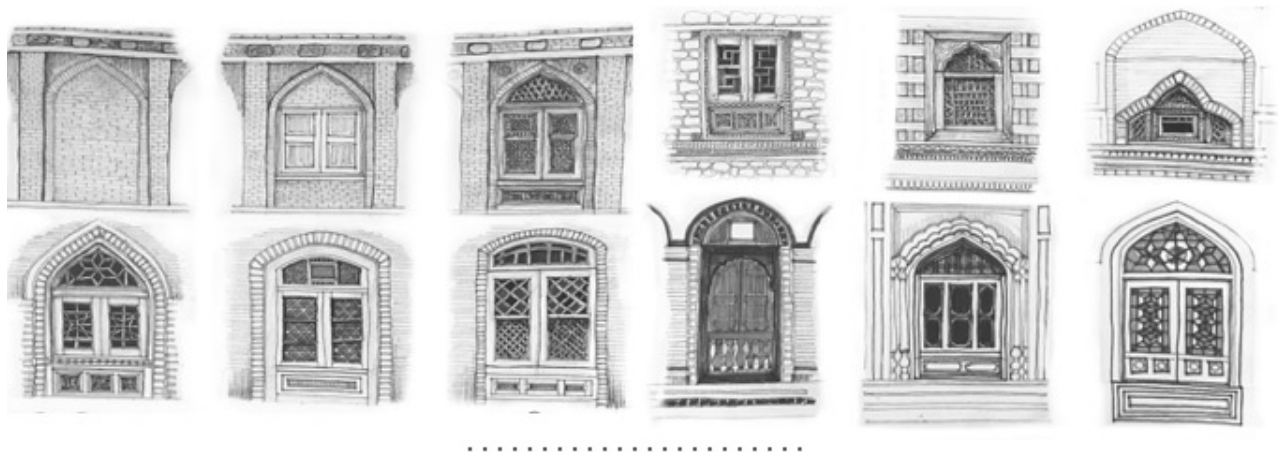
‘The question of ‘what happens between the Taq<sup>2</sup> and the Old City?’ came up when I recently visited the city of Srinagar for field research. Taq are the supportive brick piers or columns in the traditional building or construction system in Kashmir, between

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<sup>2</sup> “Taq construction is a composite system of building construction with a modular layout of load-bearing masonry piers and window bays tied together with ladder-like constructions of horizontal timbers embedded in masonry walls at each floor level and window lintel level. These horizontal timbers tie the masonry in the walls together. The masonry piers are almost 1 to 2 feet square and the window bay/alcove (*taqshe*) 3 to 4 feet in width. The *taq* modular layout defines the Kashmiri house size measurements, i.e. a house can be 3 taq (window bays) to 13 taq in width.” (Langenbach, Don't Tear it Down! Preserving the Earthquake Resistant Vernacular Architecture of Kashmir 2009, p.37)

which mostly the buildings' windows, traditional cantilevered balconies, and doors to the building are incorporated. Some of the window panes have wooden screen-work patterns and some stained glass panels in them, which are traditionally known as *pinjrakari* work and *dasta* work respectively. These small iterations observed in the buildings led to a deeper question. 'How are the architecture and building craft connected or related in the Old City? The relation between Architecture and Craft in the Old city became the primary theme to be studied, explored and interpreted for this thesis.

### What happens between the *Taq* and the Old City of Srinagar in Kashmir?



Looking at traditional architecture and crafts as integrated and interdependent systems of practice in the built environment of the Old City (Urban Context) of Srinagar in Kashmir

**Figure 1.2:** The initial question of my study, 'what happens between the Taq[1]?' was intriguing as I was drawn to the details and iterations between it on my research field trip. Taq are the window bays between supportive brick piers or columns in the traditional building in Kashmir between which mostly the buildings' windows, traditional cantilevered balconies or doors to the building are incorporated. The spatial and planned configuration of the traditional building are highly dependent on the deployment of these masonry piers in the construction system, but after observing several buildings I saw that there are ample iterations in the fenestrations and openings that occur between the taq. My study initiated with observing and tracing these iterations and asking the question, "What happens between the Taq in the Old City of Srinagar.?" But when the question was placed in a broader/larger context of the city's built environment, it turned into. **What happens between the Taq and the Old City of Srinagar?**



LIST OF CRAFTS	DESCRIPTION
PINJRAKARI	WINDOW LATTICE SCREEN -WORK
DASTAWORK	TRADITIONAL WINDOW MULLION + STAINED GLASS WORK
KHATAMBANDH	INTRICATE PATTERNED WOODEN PANELLING ON CEILING
PAPIER MACHE	PAPER MACHE WORK TO COVER WALLS/ CEILINGS or MAKING OBJECTS
CARPET MAKING	SILK OR WOOL CARPET – HAND WOVEN
WALNUT WOOD CARVING	OBJECTS AND FURNITURE MADE BY CARVED WALNUT WOOD
NAQQASHI	INTRICATE WALL EMBELLISHMENT PAINTED ON MUD PLASTER OR PAPER MACHE
COPPER/SILVERWARE	MAKING OF COPPERWARE/SILVERWARE WITH INTRICATE ENGRAVING
WICKERWORK	OBJECTS MADE OUT OF WEAVING PLIABLE WILLOW TWIGS
NAMDAWORK	HAND KNOTTED FELT CARPET MAKING

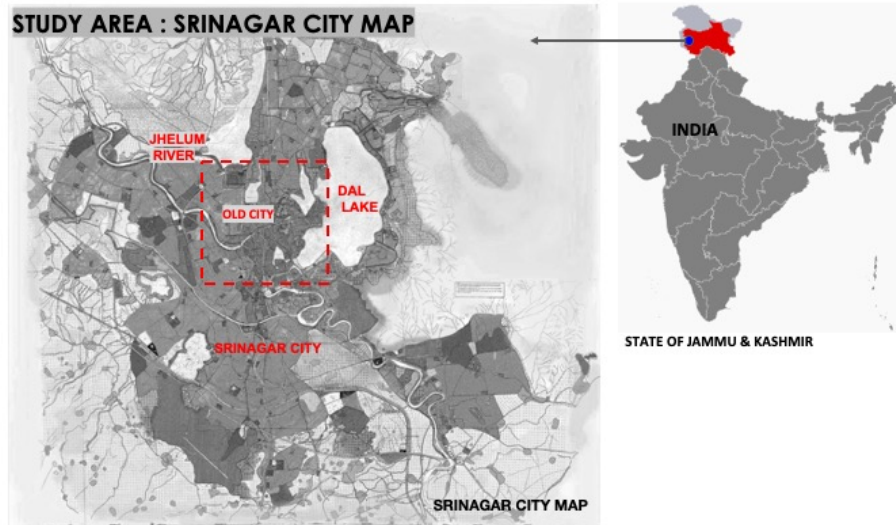
**Figure 1.3: Crafts as Practiced today in the old city of Srinagar**

Another aspect of the built environment of the old city that I found highly interesting was the building crafts practiced in the city. This figure enlists the different building crafts and its process that I was able to observe and photo document on my field trip.

These iterations in the taq I comprehended were also related to the traditional crafts of the built environment (Figure 1.3) such as traditional wooden screen or lattice work done for openings and windows which is known as *pinjrakari*, and the wooden mullion and stained glass work done in windows which is known as the *dasta* and the use of *varusi*<sup>3</sup> or *dub*<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> “Dub is a projecting wooden bay window which is mostly located on the upper floors, these windows are usually used in summer months and they can be square, rectangular or octagonal in shape. Dubs are occasionally provided with window shutters with intricate *pinjrakari* and delicate mullion work. Some dubs are narrow linear galleries running along the entire length of the building.” (J&K, Shehar-i-Kashmir: Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City (2004-05) Volume 1 2010, p.68 )

<sup>4</sup> “Derived from the word *Urs*; *Urusi* or as it is commonly called *varusi*, comprises foliated arched wooden screens covered with beautiful geometrical patterns. These screens are used to partition large halls. Sometimes the screens are used as window opening on external façade.” (J&K, Shehar-i-Kashmir: Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City (2004-05) Volume 1 2010, p, 74)



**Figure 1.4: Srinagar Old City**



**Figure 1.5: Srinagar City, Jhelum River, Dal Lake**

Figures 1.3 & 1.4 shows the latest map gathered from the development and land use plan of the city as of 2018. The Old city of Srinagar that developed around the Dal lake and along the Jhelum River is my primary area of focus in this study, but the methodology that I have developed in this thesis is adaptable for carrying out similar study in other cities of India.

As will be elaborated in chapter two, the thesis will examine the relationship between architecture and craft at five scales. At the largest scale in the old city of

Srinagar, which is often referred to as Downtown<sup>5</sup> locally, one can see how the spatial planning was influenced by the spread of commercial workshop spaces known as *kharkhanas* in which essentially the production and to some extent the sale of the craft objects happens, and these kaarkhanas are amidst neighbourhoods traditionally and locally known as *mohallas* in the city. The trade system and markets become important nodes in the zoning of downtown Srinagar as well, making it the commercial district of the old urban city.

Following the previous spatial scale, the second scale I look into is the Streetscapes of the Old City that stitch the neighbourhoods together. The streets become a highly active feature of downtown Srinagar and a brilliant place to examine how the old buildings lining these streets and lanes interact, respond and reciprocate with the pathways and lanes, creating spaces that are conducive for shops on the street level and overhanging balconies above them.

The third spatial scale I look at in this study, where traditional Architecture and Craft of the city are linked, are the Sufi Shrines known as Dargahs and Khanqahs. They are interesting sites to analyse this thesis's thematic relationship. Then the spatial scale narrows to case studies of local traditional houses, where architecture and crafts interweave themselves complexly in the many features of those buildings. Here the elemental transformations happen both in the crafts as well as in architectural design

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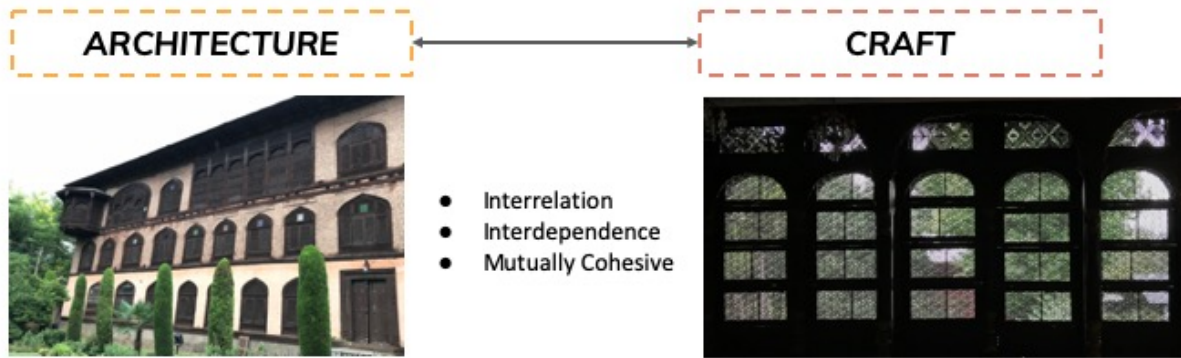
<sup>5</sup> "Downtown, popularly known as *Shehr-e-Khaas*, is a notable area in the municipality of Srinagar. It is the largest and the most densely populated area in the city of Srinagar"  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downtown\\_Srinagar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Downtown_Srinagar)

and the links of these transformations are explored in detail in that part of the thesis (figure 1.6).



**Figure 1.6: Five Scales taken for the study**

The fifth and the last spatial level to be explored is craft practice and the objects incorporated and arranged within buildings. For example these include collapsible pinjrakari screens, the carpets, the intricately carved copper and silver ware, and the papier mache with *naqashi* boxes, which in this part of the study are explored as an architectural feature or element that could be deployed and dispersed from the place where it is produced to the place where it is consumed. It becomes a keepsake, a souvenir a memory or a feature of the traditional creative cultural asset from Kashmir. An object becomes a part of the whole; a concentrated identification or a mark of the city's creative skill and built heritage.



The study explores the importance of the traditional building crafts as integral and inextricable part of traditional architecture in the Old City of Srinagar.

Currently Architecture and Crafts are regarded as separate subjects of study in conservation.

This study delves into the question, ‘How does the architecture become a platform for the different building crafts and a medium to facilitate its development and vice versa?’

**Figure1.7: Relationship between Architecture and Building Craft**

The objective of my study is to understand, how Architecture and Craft are related to one another through such varying and differing situations of the old city and how they have helped each other to intricately develop and connect on various different scales in the urban context of the old city of Srinagar and to test this bond or link at each scale to see the strength of this correlation (figure 1.4).

### **Overview of Architecture in the Old City**

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the building systems that developed in Kashmir are of two significant types of systems: *taq* (local name) which is timber-laced masonry with load-bearing walls and the other one, *dhajji diwari* (local name) is timber frame in-filled with masonry. The traditional buildings in Srinagar are essentially of these two systems. But in the contemporary situation of the city due to destruction

and damage from earthquake and territorial dispute and conflicts, and changing preferences, the building systems are being replaced by modern methods of construction that might be cheaper and faster but perhaps aren't as efficient as the traditional ones.

I aim to take a closer look at the buildings which make up this city of Srinagar majorly; the ordinary local houses in the Downtown area, constructed of timber and brick and stone. These buildings offer a chance to study the link and connection between traditional construction techniques and traditional building crafts and design in the urban cityscape of Srinagar. It also gives a chance to study the emergence of new craft materials and techniques, building systems and contemporary architecture that are continuously replacing it, leading to the loss of some skills that could otherwise prove helpful if developed and evolved further according to the needs and desires of the people and city in the present day.

### **Architectural Systems**

*Taq* and *Dhajji diwari* building systems are seen in majority of the old houses in downtown Srinagar. Following the 2005 Earthquake of Pakistan and Kashmir, one can still see the houses made by these building systems still standing (some in poor conditions due to inadequate maintenance and no repairs done after the 2005 earthquake). Some houses affected by the earthquake are seen leaning at different angles in a balancing act demeanour as if they might fall any instant due to any kind of shock, tremor or vibration. However, many of them remain safe. The frame or construction system of the building prevents it from collapsing all at once. It gives the houses a certain amount of 'give' or flexibility through the system. Both of these

systems are employed in combination with each other. Both prevent cracks from running whole sections of the wall due to heterogeneity of materials and the role of these materials at that particular moment of movement. This in turn prevents huge sections of buildings from collapsing rapidly during earthquakes but only leads to part of the infill cracking or falling out. This can be easily repaired and in parts or phases. The buildings achieve a sense of flexibility and room for movement with piers or posts deeply buried and drawing strength from the soft soils at the same time the structural framing of the building achieve vibrational movement that are coordinated with and along the grain of the force of the wave of earthquake. "Earthquakes in Kashmir have occurred with regularity over the centuries, and the Kashmiri houses reflect an adaptation to this threat through the interlacing of heavy timber within the plane of the exterior walls of the masonry buildings." (Langenbach, Conservationtech.com: Building Conservation Technology 2014, p.1)

Like many countries that have been largely deforested, wood is basically used for only that much that is utterly necessary, thus masonry is the main building technique. As mentioned above majority of buildings and houses in the city of Srinagar can be separated into two traditional building systems. First one, *taq* (local name) which is timber-laced masonry with load-bearing walls and the other one, *dhajji diwari* (local name) which is timber frame in-filled with masonry This system does not have any precise name in Kashmiri language to recognize it as a separate method of building. It is described by people as "*Taq*" which refers to the spatial arrangement of the pier stand bay windows between it. This traditional building system with the load bearing piers and horizontal wooden-runner beams was in use essentially before the

dhajji-diwari came into practice. The bricks that were used primarily were small-sized, rough, and hard-fired. They are locally called as *Maharaji Bricks*.<sup>6</sup>

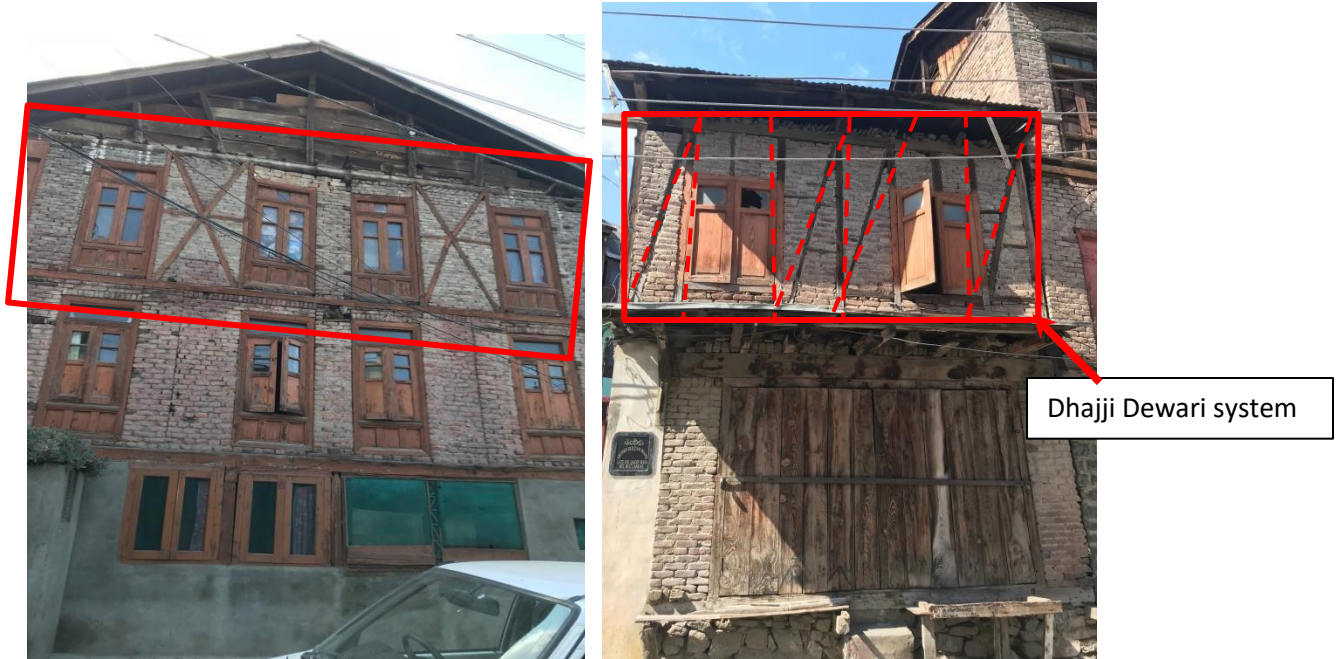
These bricks gave the buildings a certain different appeal and look. No plaster covers the bricks, timber, and mud and they were left exposed on the exterior. The interior walls were coated with a combination of clay or sometimes lime and other ingredients. The mud plaster intrinsically provided for insulation against heat in summer and the cold winters. The plaster had to be renewed on the interiors every two weeks by adding more coats of plaster over the surface the process is known as *livun* in Kashmiri. When the plaster dried the wall became plain beige surfaces to be painted and incised upon with intricate floral and geometric patterns called as *Naqqashi* locally.

Some of the basic features of the architectural systems (Taq and Dhajji Dewari) that by default become a prominent planning system in the spatial configuration of the traditional buildings in the Old City of Srinagar are as follows.

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<sup>6</sup> “The houses were raised on a plinth made up of stone masonry laced with heavy timbers measuring at least one meter in height. Above this stone the exterior walls were constructed of a mixture of brick and rubble stone set into a thick bed of mud mortar (Taq), or with a single layer of modern size brick surrounded by heavy timber. The Taq houses were usually faced with a layer of small, very hard, hand-made clinker bricks, known as Maharaji bricks” (Langenbach, Conservationtech.com: Building Conservation Technology 2014)

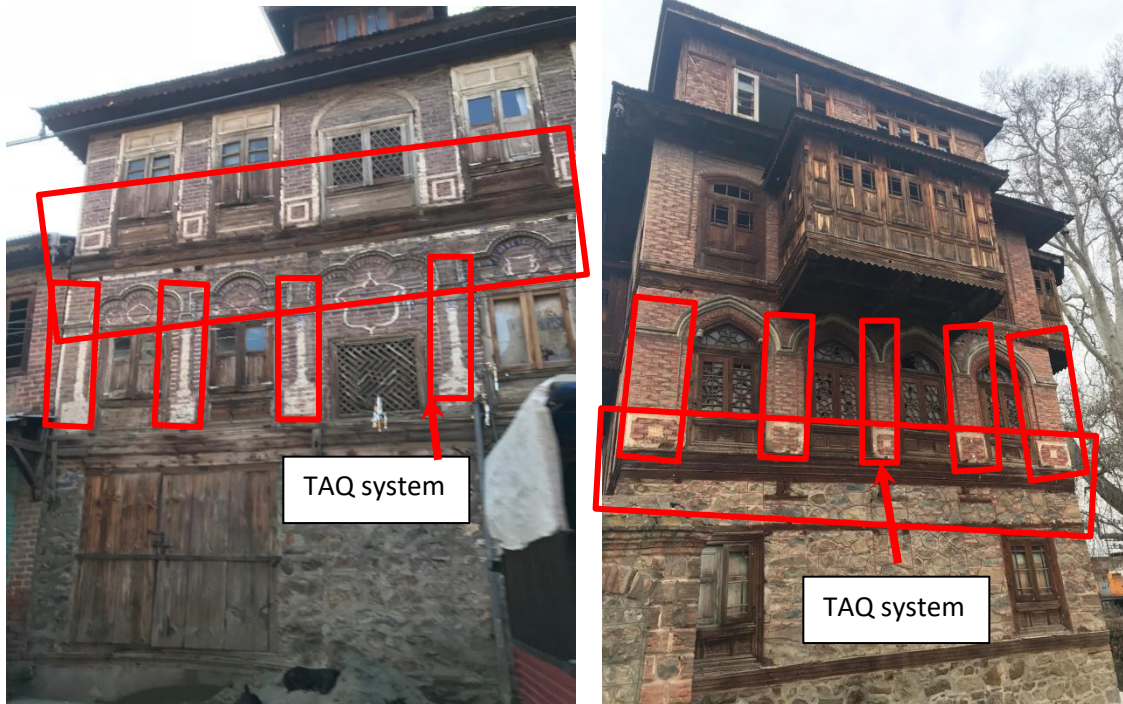




**Figure1.8 : Buildings in Srinagar having *Dhajji Dewari***

### **DHAJJI DEWARI SYSTEM OF BUILDING**

- The dhajji diwari construction is based on a system of braced timber framed structure in which 4-9 inch thick masonry is used to fill in the gaps left in between the braces.
- Very few buildings exist today that are entirely constructed in this system.
- Normally this system was limited to the upper floor levels or attics of the building.
- Mud is used as cement cannot withstand the movement of the timber frame without cracking.
- Economical use of locally available natural materials.



**Figure1.9: Buildings in Srinagar having 'Taq' System**

### **TAQ CONSTRUCTION SYSTEM OF BUILDING**

- Predominantly used in the Old City of Srinagar
- 2 1/2 – 3ft. thick masonry wall piers supporting wooden floor beams form the basic structure of the building.
- The distance between two piers is around 4 ft. and is known as taq.
- The gap in between each taq is filled in with a window opening or masonry.

In Srinagar in many buildings the *Taq* and the *Dhajji Diwari* are used in combination in the same structure or building. The *Dhajji Diwari* is commonly used for shared partition walls between structures, whereas *Taq* is used on the outside or facade walls. Principally the *Dhajji-Diwari* is lighter in terms of weight and can be used in upper storeys or in case of cantilevers.

Over the past two decades, building practices have changed intensely in Srinagar. Many of the new structures are made up of reinforced concrete. Brick is used only as infill between reinforced concrete walls and floor slabs.<sup>7</sup> in the present day, the masons and labourers working in construction in Srinagar know about this traditional way of building and the techniques but some don't formally know its name or what it is called. Some are partially unaware of why such techniques are used and some know that it is optimal against earthquake and during shock or movement but are unaware of how the systems work in preventing damage. Thus, there is knowledge carried forward about these techniques but in an unclear sense.

### **Overview of Building Crafts in the Old City**

The city is associated with various different building crafts that are seen as part of the structures and the distinct architectural features like the fenestrations, traditional balconies, floors and ceilings. The traditional crafts on a large urban scale started when there was a heavy influx of craftsmen, artisans and various artists following the arrival of the sufi Saint Shah-i-Hamadan into the valley of Srinagar in 1372. 1372. It was particularly during the rule of Sultan Sikandar (1389- 1413 A.D.) and then under that of Zain-ul-Abidin (1420-70) that the socio-cultural relations with Central Asia and Iran became stronger. Sultan Sikandar maintained friendly relations with Timur and later his son maintained friendly relations with Shah Rukh Mirza, son of Timur, and Mirza Abu

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<sup>7</sup> “much of the construction is not engineered for earthquake forces. Instead, it must rely on the infill masonry for most of its lateral strength. The timber runner beams and *Dhajji-Dewari* frames have been abandoned as unwanted vestiges” (Langenbach, Conservationtech.com: Building Conservation Technology 2014)

sa'id the Timurid ruler of Khurasan.<sup>8</sup> By patronising the master architects and craftsmen of Samarkand and Bukhara, who came to Kashmir during his reign, he helped in popularizing their skills among the local architects and craftsmen and fostered development of the crafts in the region.

The Crafts of the region became celebrated characteristics of the city of Srinagar and still continue to be so, though evolving presently to cater to the shifts in building paradigms, preferences of local public, changes in techniques and materials, etc. Some of the building crafts with the traditional architectural features with which they are associated, and that were observed for this study, are Traditional Kashmiri Carpet Making, *Naqqashi*, *Pinjrakari* (Wooden Screen-work in Window Panes), *Dasta* (Mullion Work with Stained Glass panels), Walnut Wood Carving, Copperware and Silverware work, Papier Mache Work traditionally known as *Kar-i-Qalamdani*, *Khatamband* (Intricate Geometric pattern Wooden Panelling):

Going back to the initial question, “How does architecture become a platform for the different building crafts and a medium to facilitate its development, and vice versa?,” the study will delve into the intricacies behind the development of the architecture and craft systems that are practiced in the old city. The architecture of the old city gives flexibility not only in the physical sense of the building but also in the area of design and craft innovation. Since the buildings have fragmented components, that is they have various small parts and features, each of the distinct feature catalyses

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<sup>8</sup> Guzanfar, Farooq Syed. “Wood and Brick Architecture in Kashmir (1339-1585 A.D.); Stylistic Idiomatic and Axiomorphic Changes.” Proceedings in the Indian History Congress 74 (2013): 865-74.

further development to it. For example, the mud plaster walls in the interiors of the building become a surface for *Naqqashi*, perhaps due to the availability of a blank surface, *Naqqashi* has developed into a craft with a complex school of practice and processes. The motifs done on the walls might have started gaining certain symbolic meaning to it and each motif might have a story and meaning behind its presence.

Similarly, taking any example of any architectural and building craft feature of the building, it becomes highly important to trace it back to its need, reason, meaning and practice with the changes that happened in its development processes. The following study takes a step toward this by first documenting the connections at different spatial scales in the Old city of Srinagar. To make the study more conducive to go through and elaborate on the intricacies and links, it is highly important that it be supported by visual and graphic examples on each scale. Thus a certain conceptual approach and methodology developed.

In the following chapter, I discuss the conceptual approach towards the study, the framework developed to look at and study the interdependence of Architecture and Crafts and the methods and sources that helped in considering the topic undertaken in a systematized manner while also giving it sense of a fresh perspective in creating the methodology for the study.

## CHAPTER 2:

# Conceptual Approach and Methodology

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) is a non-profit organization set up in 1984 with a mandate to protect and conserve India's vast natural, built and cultural heritage.<sup>9</sup> Its headquarters is located in Delhi but INTACH's volunteers have a network of chapters in various cities, towns and villages across India, and are extensively responsible for spreading of the heritage movement and doing work in the field. The INTACH Jammu and Kashmir team has architects and conservation experts who are trying to preserve the cultural and heritage legacy of the city by creating awareness, mediating between the government and the public, offering architectural and engineering consultation to owners of heritage buildings, and documenting heritage structures.<sup>10</sup> Where the INTACH J&K Chapter office is located in the city, in the same building a floor below is Centre for Heritage and Environment of Kashmir (CHEK). The people at the centres work together to preserve and document

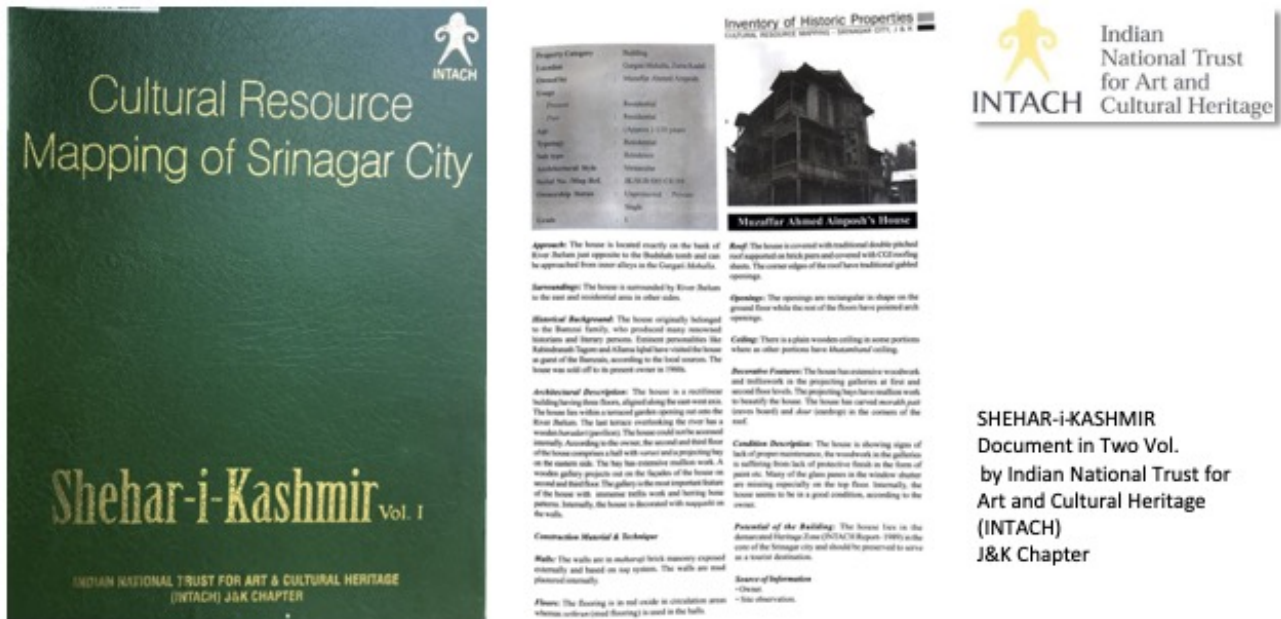
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<sup>9</sup> J&K, INTACH. *Shehar-i-Kashmir : Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City (2004-05) Volume 2*. New Delhi: Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage, 2010

<sup>10</sup> INTACH J&K Website, <https://intachjkchapter.wordpress.com/abc/>

the cultural Heritage of the city. INTACH J&K Chapter in Srinagar has many prestigious institutes that they have partnerships with, and the conservation and documentation work by them so far has been incredible for the city. INTACH has done tremendous work in mapping and documenting the cultural heritage of the city, and further geospatial mapping of the cultural built resources of the city is being done by other groups and individuals as well.<sup>11</sup> This is valuable for the city as the buildings are under constant threat of damage, and comprehensive and accurate recording is necessary to attenuate the risk of losing heritage or serve as basis for reconstruction.

### PREVIOUS WORK IN THE FIELD



**Figure 2.1 : Previous Work in the Field (INTACH)**

<sup>11</sup> Khan, Zubair Latif, Manzoor Ahmad Rather, Nisar Ahmad Kuchhy, Umar Firdous Ahmad, and Khalid Omar Murtaza. "Geoinformatics For Cultural Heritage Mapping -A Case Study Of Srinagar City, Jammu And Kashmir." *International Journal for Technological Research in Engineering 2*, no. 7 (March 2015): 1234-1241.

Another Primary institute that caters to the Traditional Crafts of Kashmir is CDI - the Craft Development Institute, which fosters the environment for developing new techniques and resources for the artists and craftspeople in Srinagar. They are affiliated with National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, which hosts a number of competitions nationwide for encouragement of traditional Crafts. The craftsmen are welcome to participate and display their work in competitions, which provides them a stage for gaining recognition and for interaction with other artists and people. There are different NGOs and Individuals nationwide that are trying to support the handicrafts and cultural practices throughout India. Depending on what they offer, the craftsmen can gain training, education and resources for innovation and idea development in their respective works. CDI as an Institute is helping the artisans and craftspeople with trying to provide resources for their development.



**Figure 2.2 : Previous work in the Field (CDI-Kashmir)**



Though there are these institutes that are doing research and development in the fields of traditional architecture and crafts in the city, there are gaps between the two fields. A common platform is required to set the two elements of the built environment of the Old City of Srinagar as such that there is a possibility to see and experience them as a whole. The method that I have synthesized for this study is an attempt to see the two elements as interdependent. Hence the relationship between Architecture and Craft becomes a lens to study the built environment of the Old city in different scales, from the larger spatial scale that is the urban context of the Old City, narrowing down to the small scale of craft objects. The following thesis summarizes how I will be studying the five scales in the thesis (Table 2.1).

### CONCEPTUAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY : AT EACH SPATIAL SCALE

SPATIAL SCALES	URBAN CONTEXT OF ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFTS	ARCHITECTURE & CRAFTS IN STREETSCAPE OF THE CITY	DARGAHS AS A SITE FOR ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFTS	HOUSES IN THE OLD CITY	CRAFTS AS PRACTICED TODAY AND OBJECTS PRODUCED
VISUAL ENQUIRY PROCESS	Mapping different Areas and Locations visited during Field trips	Observation + Field Drawings and Analysis through Street Transects	Building Survey, Site Observation and Visual Interpretation through Photos	Building Survey, Site Observation and Visual Interpretation through Photos	Site Observation + Understanding Processes + Interviews of Craftsmen & Artists
VISUAL MATERIAL USED	MAPS	MAPS/ PHOTOS	PHOTOS/ DRAWINGS	PHOTOS / DRAWINGS /	PHOTOS / DRAWINGS
PLACES IN THE CITY VISITED FOR STUDY	DOWNTOWN AREA/ OLD CITY OF SRINAGAR	STREETSCAPES and MARKETS (BAZAARS)	DARGAHS (SUFU SHRINES)	TRADITIONAL HOUSES	WORKSHOPS (KAARKHANAS)

**Table 2.1: Summary of Study on each Scale**

The conceptual approach and core methodology that I took for this study was principally through field research, the gathered information was observed, analysed and interpreted. Photos, maps, and drawings are various visual examples that are used

to support this approach towards the study. The interviews of craftsmen that were carried out on the field trips helped in supporting the research further. The study depends on the mode of visual thinking and enquiry as the secondary aspect of the research methodology.

## **Table 2.2: Methods Used at Each Scale:**

### **FIELD WORK**

#### Maps

- Map showing the area considered for the study
- Map of the public areas (*Mohallas*, Markets) visited
- Map of the Dargahs in the city visited for the study
- Map showing location of the Houses visited for the study
- Map of the areas associated with specific crafts in the city

#### Drawings and Photos

- Photos taken by me on the August 2018 and February 2019 Field trip to Srinagar of
- streetscapes, neighbourhoods, markets and *kaarkhanas*
  - the houses visited
  - the Dargahs visited
  - the Objects seen in the Srinagar Arts & Craft Emporium

#### Interviews

Artists and Crafts-people working in different workshops  
Architect Sameer Hamdani from INTACH

#### Newsletters and Documents

Newsletters from Craft Development Institute  
INTACH's two volume document on the Heritage structures of the city of Srinagar called, "Shehar-i-Kashmir: Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City."

The materials gathered from the field research for this study are the primary sources for this methodology and study. The visual examples and interpretation are essential to the study as they help in making the idea being discussed more tangible on each scale. A combination of these visual examples and descriptions and

interpretations through annotation and diagrams will be shown in all the spatial scales considered for the study. To keep the study precise and attempt to make the implications and interpretations for the synthesis of the study, examples from two or three sites visited for each scale are incorporated in the research chapters, even though there are a lot more examples that could be found in the Old city of Srinagar.

The methodology that I have taken for this study is majorly through primary field research and the materials gathered and secondarily through the visual interpretation and understanding of maps and photographs of the undertaken subject, as one of the objectives of this study is to encourage new ways of looking at the city. Inspired by the book '*The Eye is a Door*' by Anne Whiston Spirn, the study is based on means of visual expression and interpretation as part of the inquiry of the topic. Photos, maps and drawings are used to support the study, and the interpretation of them would be through drawings, schematics, diagrams and description through text. I largely use the photos that I have taken during my two field trips to the city. This approach of documentary photography has been inspired by works of various photographers that use photos to reach out and convey ideas through photos as well as understanding the subject through them. One of the photographers, Amir Wani who reaches out from the city of Srinagar to different people through his photography showcases a different side of Srinagar and Kashmir. He captures pictures that are accompanied by poems that provide an apt description of the valley. He hopes in portraying the reality, resilience and the beauty through his lens.

**CONCEPTUAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

- Visual interpretation and understanding of photographs of the undertaken subject
- One of the objectives of this study is to encourage new ways of looking at the city

Interpretation & Observations

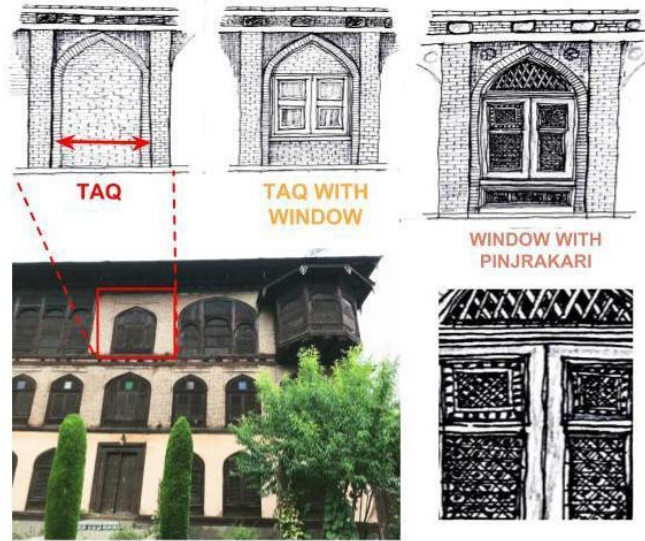
Textual description

Diagrammatic understanding (drawings, schematics, diagrams)

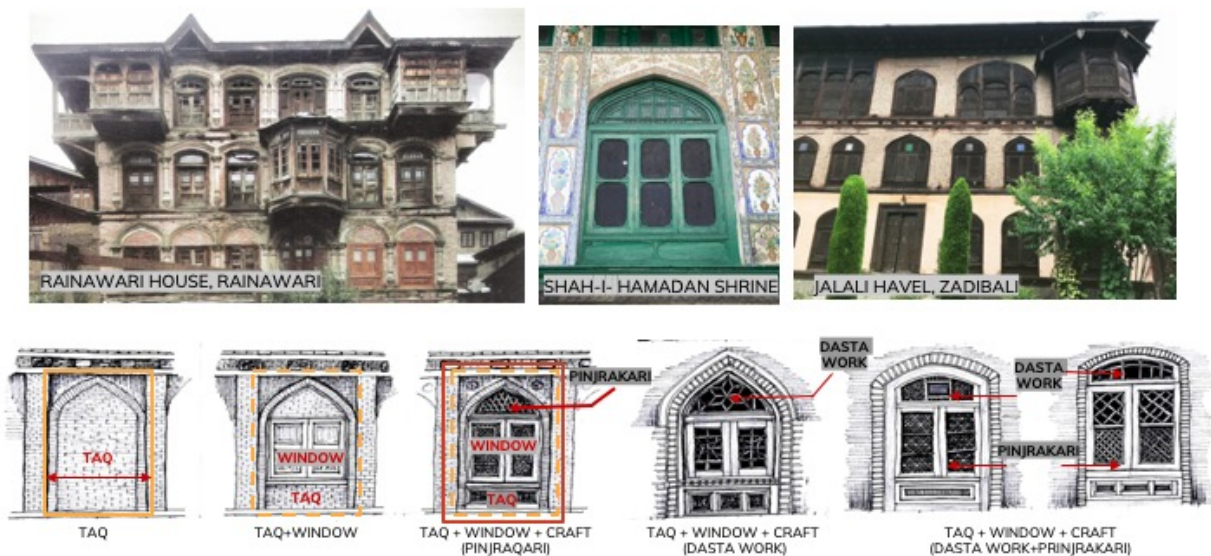
Maps

Craft Objects

Interviews



**Figure 2.3: Conceptual Approach towards Understanding Taq**



Observing different iterations in buildings

**Figure 2.4: Development of an example of visual interpretation of the iterations observed.**

The inspiration for the methodology also comes from the work of photographer Raghu Rai, who is a celebrated documentary photographer in India and his wife, Conservation Architect, Gurmeet Rai who works in parts of Northern India with him. The images in this study at each spatial scale are interpreted and the observations of

them are discussed and listed down through textual description and/or diagrammatic analysis. The interviews of craftsmen that were done on the recent field-trip can be seen as material that would support parts of the study. The study depends on the mode of visual thinking and enquiry that might lead to discovery and detailed understanding of the topic.

The research on scales of architecture and craft initiates with the following chapter that discusses in detail the urban context of the Old city of Srinagar and how it has developed. It also discusses the planning of the Old city and how it catered to the commercial aspect of the practiced crafts and looks at the development of *mohallas* and *kaarkhanas* and *bazaars* in the city.

## CHAPTER 3:

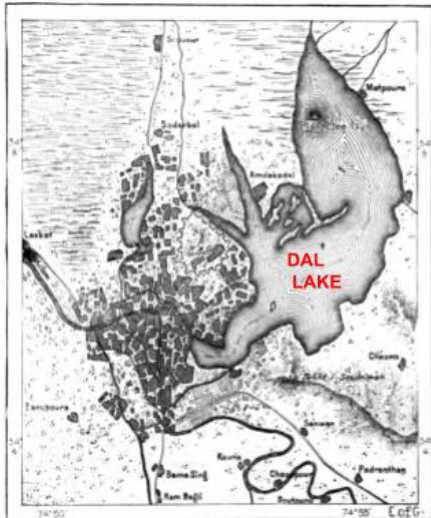
### **Urban Context of Architecture and Crafts in the Old City**

Urban Context of Architecture and Crafts in the Old city is chapter which is crucial to locate and study the proximity of workshops and neighbourhoods and to study the patterns of production and consumption of the crafts in the city. The study of maps locating these areas helps understand the relation if there is any, in the place of production or practice and the place of consumption. The chapter looks closely into the role of local markets of the city and their relation to the workshops and neighbourhoods traditionally called kaarkhanas and mohallas respectively. The Map in the study shows the relationships of the kaarkhanas, bazaars and mohallas. First, I will describe the overall settlement patterns of Srinagar, and then look in detail at the Kaarkhanas, Bazaars and mohallas model on the map.

#### **Settlement**

Srinagar lies on the intersection of many trade routes from China towards Central Asia and has been a node that acquired various cultural influences. Srinagar developed on the bank of river Jhelum, which is a perennial water source and was a

highly convenient traffic route for trade and commerce at the active peak of the old trade routes. During the 14<sup>th</sup> century C.E. the urban city developed from the right bank of the river and stretched to the Hari Parbat which is located in the centre of the city contemporarily. “From sixteenth century onwards a host of outside forces ruled the Valley, some more benign than others.”<sup>12</sup> Presently we see the different influences and styles woven into the city’s urban fabric and overlapping one another. The Old city has developed a distinct flavour both culturally and aesthetically that is evident in its architecture and crafts.



**SRINAGAR CITY MAP (1891)**  
(Maps of Kashmir From 'The Earth and Its Inhabitants, Asia, Volume 3' (1891) by Elisée Reclus)

<https://www.searchkashmir.org/2012/10/maps-1891.html>

**Figure 3.1: Old City of Srinagar growing around the Dal Lake and Jhelum River**

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<sup>12</sup> First the Mughals, making Kashmir an integral part of their vast Indian empire, then the Afghans and Sikh regimes, and finally the Dogras, and through them, by proxy, the colonial power of the British (Alkazi,2014)

Srinagar continues to be a peculiar urban centre with a rich living heritage, an ideal environment to study the impact of historical change on art, architecture and craft. Its location in the middle of the valley of Kashmir, surrounded by extremely high mountains, has allowed it to develop a unique culture influenced by the conditions the city faces. “The valley is located at the crossroads of four very different civilizations, each of which have had a tremendous influence on its local history and culture.”<sup>13</sup>

Kashmir Valley is also the last sufficiently populated and accessible plain with abundant natural resources before those of Central Asia and the Historic Silk Route. As Srinagar could easily be accessed both by land and water, it emerged first as a trading post and then developed into an urban centre. Trade has always been a major part of the Kashmir story, drawing merchants and traders from far and wide over several countries and regions around it. The fertile plain, has been well irrigated by several large lakes and the Jhelum River, provides for a large population. Over the centuries different groups came and settled permanently in the Valley.<sup>14</sup> Srinagar became a meeting point for all those coming in through the mountain passes.

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<sup>13</sup> The Indo Gangetic Plain with its imperial capital either in or around Delhi; the civilization of West Asia; Central Asia; including Samarkand and Bukhara, and finally the kingdom of China, through Tibet. (Alkazi 2014)

<sup>14</sup> The Sakas who arrived in second Century B.C. made the valley their home as did the Yuechi Tribe of China later, from whom Emperor Kanishka emerged. The Huns arrived in the fourth century A.D. and the Gujjars came from North Punjab later. From Tibet, a large number of people regularly migrated into the valley.



## 1) URBAN CONTEXT OF ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFTS



**Figure 3.2: Example to study the Urban Context**

The nature and character of the place, the climatic considerations and to large extent the religious practices helped in the development of urban pattern of the city. These characteristics are result of an the introverted orientation of the settlement. The Old city does not open into the river on a scale comparable to some other major river based settlements. The river banks have many *ghats* lined but they are comparatively smaller in scale than and not as significant as the Ghats lined by the river Ganga in Banaras. There is a lack of public spaces on the riverfront and the ghats are connected by narrow lanes that traverse through the mohallas and dense settlement and the narrow lanes are known as *kochas*. Like most cities develop on the banks of a river, Srinagar developed along the course of the river Jhelum and the many canals connected to it. The riverfront comprises of a high stone wall, with *ghats* and is dotted

with religious buildings like mosques, shrines, khanqahs, and temples. The river front also includes civic structures like mohallas, lanes and traditional wooden bridges called *kadal*.

The Old city is dotted with landmarks that are locally described as being on the right or the left bank of the meandering course of the river. The river divides the old city centrally but is connected by bridges. (Safa Kadal, Nawa Bazaar Kadal, Ali Kadal, Zaina Kadal, Fateh Kadal, Habba Kadal, Zero Bridge) The old traditional bridge made out of wooden members and the new concrete bridges with vehicular access run alongside each other.

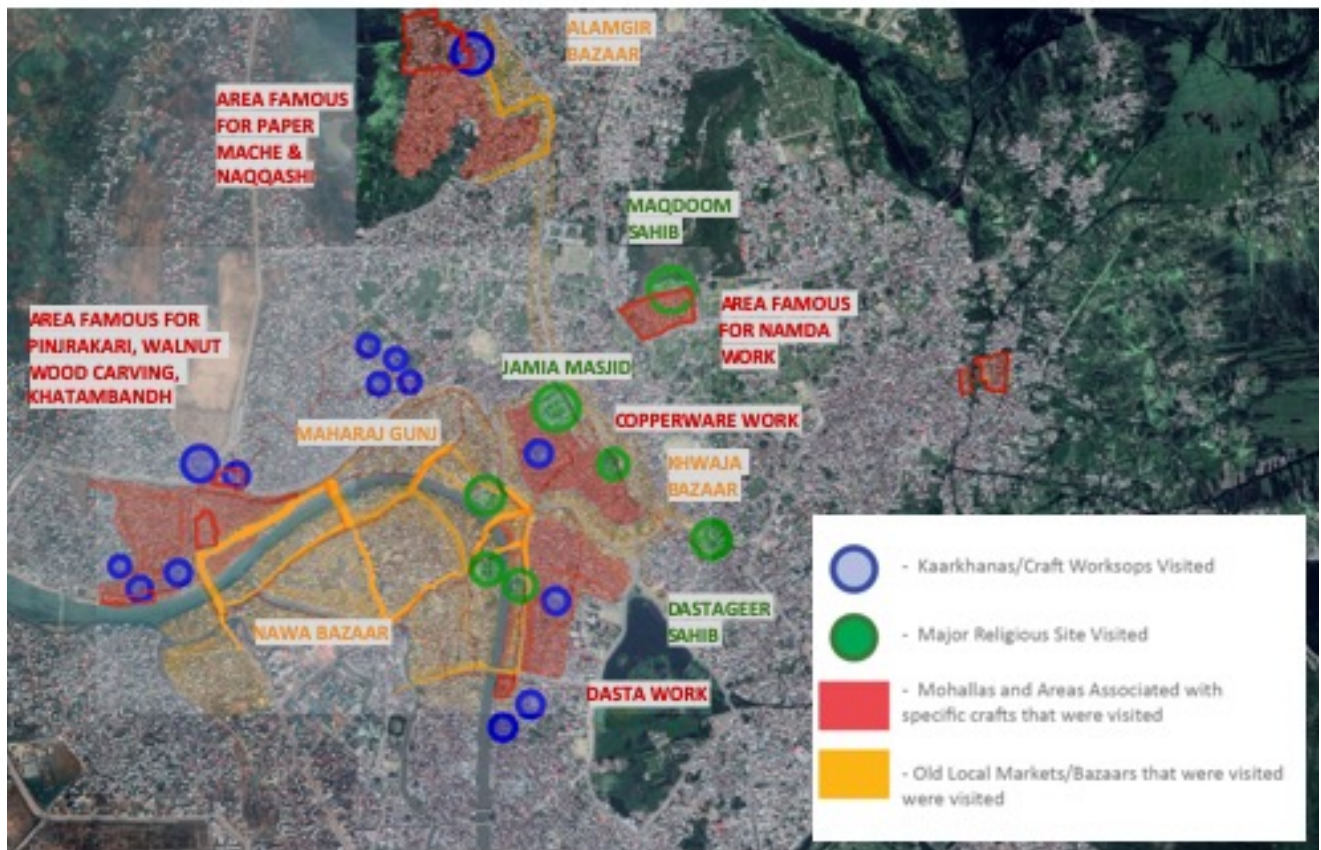


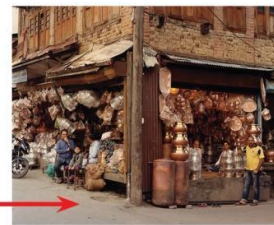
Figure 3.3 & 3.4 : Visited Kaarkhana, Bazaar & Mohalla mapping



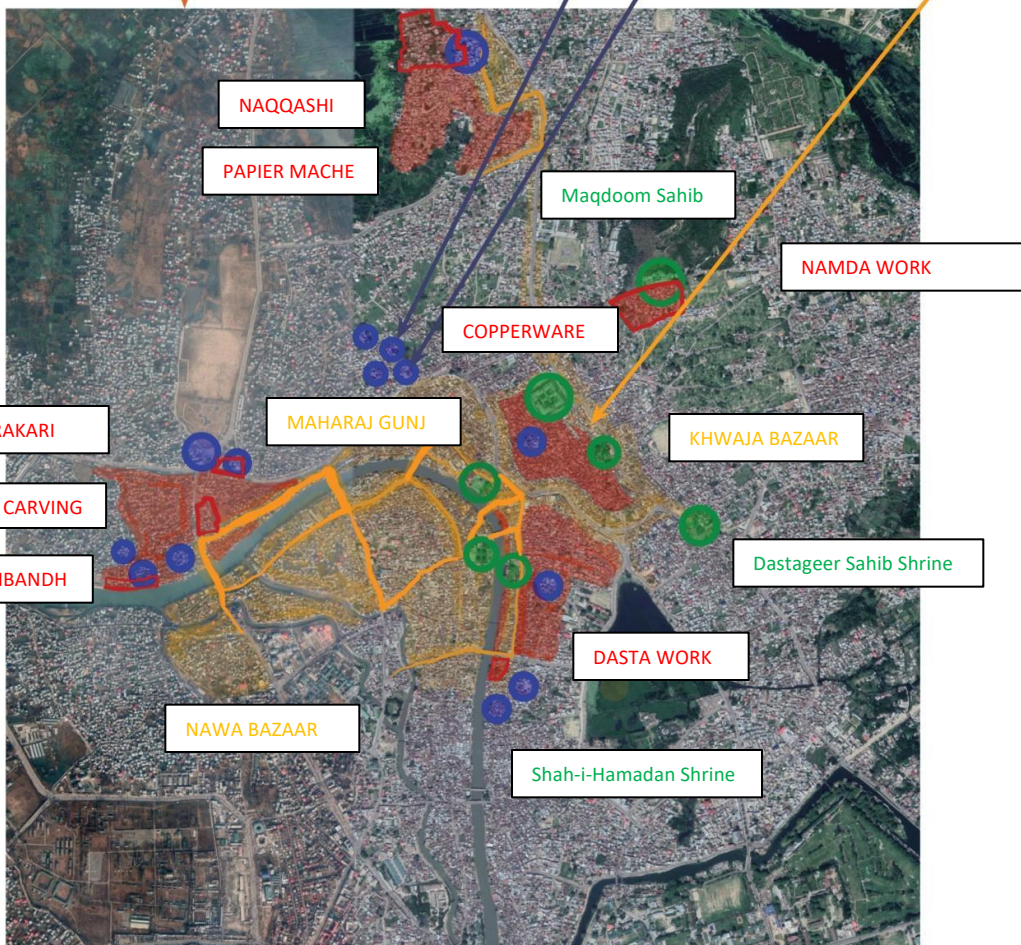
Copper Glass Making







Copper Glass Carving



Copperware Shop around Jamia Masjid, Srinagar



Workshops, Neighbourhoods and Markets Visited

-  - Kaarkhanas/Craft Workshops Visited
-  - Major Religious Site Visited
-  - Mohallas and Areas Associated with specific crafts that were visited
-  - Old Local Markets/Bazaars that were visited

In the old city of Srinagar which is often referred to as Downtown locally, one can see the spatial planning of the old city influenced by the spread of traditional commercial workshop known as *kaarkhanas* in which the making of craft objects takes place, and these kaarkhanas are amidst neighbourhoods known as *mohallas* in the city. The markets known as Bazaars become important nodes in Downtown, making it the commercial district of the old urban city. This chapter studies the settlement pattern of the city and the connections between the different areas in city. At this scale I mapped the location of the sites of production and practice (kaarkhanas), the local markets where craft goods are sold, and the neighbourhoods where they are famous for its production. My findings at this scale were not exactly how I had hypothesized these areas co-location.

It was found that at this scale the Kaarkhanas shown in blue ,the Bazaars in yellow And the Mohallas associated in Red are spatially separate spaces today, while there are interesting associations between different areas of the city being famous for producing and practicing specific crafts, In reality, the link between the three has gone through a lot of changes due to the transformations happening in the city today. The proximities between places of production of the crafts, markets and the areas associated were not entirely as the hypothesized model of co-location. In some small parts of this model the mentioned components are co-existing in the city but in many places the co-location doesn't exist. This helped to test the pattern of production, consumption and utilization of building crafts in the city that use to be to what it is now.

The Workshop, Market and Neighbourhood Map a shows the locations of the sites visited in the Old City of Srinagar during the two field trips. It helps to see the relation between the markets and the areas associated with a particular craft and the neighbourhoods and workshops within them. Through the map, we get the idea that the markets are located in the core of the old city on both the sides of the bridges and on them too. Religious mosques and shrines are fringed with local markets too. The kaarkhanas and bazaars are not related directly, just like other markets they have the central aim of trade, and the products in these bazaars vary, with a few stores focussed on one any particular trade according to the area in which it is located. The Historic Market, Maharaj Gunj which started at the wholesale market in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century near Ali Kadal does not cater as how it used to. On the other hand some of the mohallas are inhabited by Craftsmen (*Karigar*) of specific trade that they are associated with but majorly they have changed according to the changes and transformations in the city. They have become shared spaces and different crafts are carried in one space according to the demands of the owner or availability of space or affordability of the rent of these workspaces by the craftsmen. The craftsmen work under an owner or independently or as a group and offer the products made by them for retail by shops in the market or for trade by a middleman or are bought by the owner.

Picture of the settlement on the left bank of Jhelum river nar Safa Kadal

Traditional Dubs overlooking the Jhelum

A post or a kiosk as part of the Ghat

Dilapidated Ghat



**Figure 3.5 : Analysis of the neighbourhood facing the Jhelum River**

Srinagar is a tightly filled or packed city which is full of different houses next to each other. In some old parts of the city like Downtown Srinagar, the houses are assorted together with shops, schools, and small scale manufacturing units or industries known as *karkhanas*. Quoting Randolph Langenbach who is one of the scholars in the architecture of Kashmir and professor of architecture and building conservation, “The houses themselves are what form the essential backdrop for a remarkable scene. They appear rickety and insubstantial, almost as if they were deliberately built only as a stage set for the human pageant that takes place around them” (Langenbach, Conservationtech.com: Building Conservation Technology 2014)

The houses are part of a densely packed social and neighbourhood unit known as the '*Mohallas*'.<sup>15</sup> These are blocks incorporating houses, shops, markets and mosques or schools in some of them. Some of these *Mohallas* face the river and are at the edges of the bank of the Jhelum River that flows through Srinagar. Here the houses and streets had traditionally developed with steps leading to the river where the boats (*shikaras*) of the people would be parked. This gives a picture of how the housing units were influenced by land and water. The mohallas would look over canals and be in contact with the life on water of the floating markets on boats and the hydroponic floating gardens through the *kochas* and the ghats. This has changed in the present day as many of the canals are being filled up and reclaimed as land to build on.

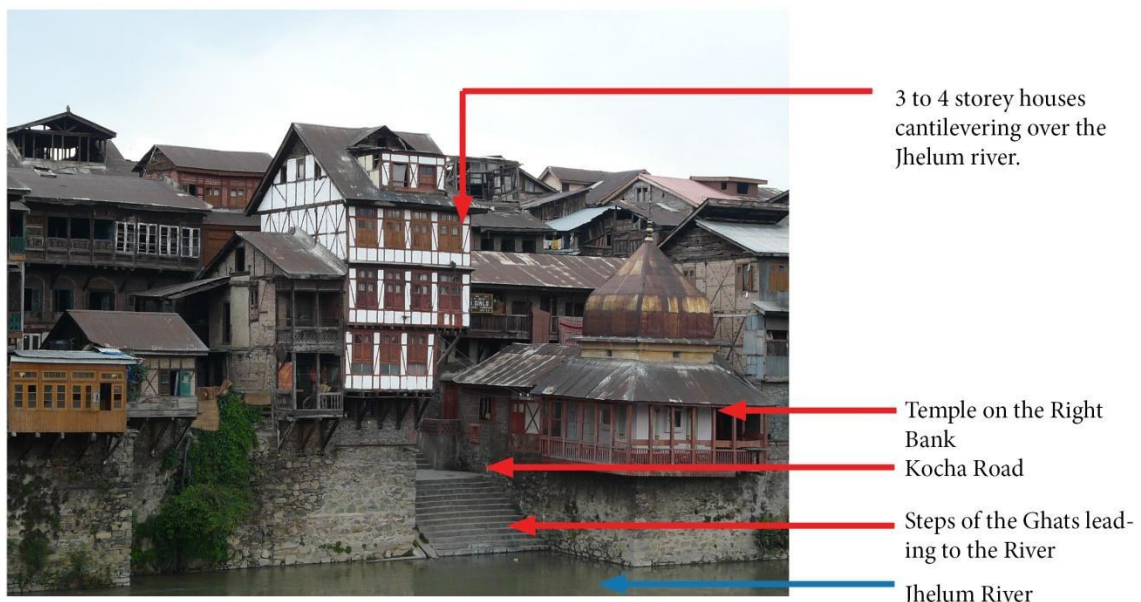
The city at that time was majorly linked by waterways and riverine transport as there were few roads. So as the study uncovers the layers of architectural heritage of Kashmir, we see a tapestry of culture and traditions made up of very different interlinked strands.

Along the river, there are linear rows of three-to four-storey residential buildings which stand together in a densely packed system. The traditional riverfront with such distinct architecture stretches along both sides of the river from Zero Bridge up to Safa Kadal. While the key function of Srinagar as a city was always the administrative centre of Kashmir, it thrived wholly on trade and commerce and is doing so currently. The bazaar and the workshop were the prominent nodes of the old city and still remain

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<sup>15</sup> From historical references and etymology relating to the naming of various wards and mohallas of the City it seems that after natural physical features, the most important determinants of the City were religion & Occupation.

so, which in turn supported an urban lifestyle of the city. It has remained a trade based city whose prosperity depended on commerce rather than agriculture. The markets and the workshops still remain integral to the Old city but have adapted to the occurring changes in the development patterns, needs, infrastructure, preferences of the people, and the change in occupation. The markets adapt to new developments in the area, for example Government hospitals and colleges and the shops and workshops around these nodes start to change to cater to the new developments.



**Figure 3.6: Analysis of the cluster of houses on the Jhelum riverfront**

The workshop traditionally was usually a sombre place but it was here that the oral traditions of crafts and arts prospered. These workshops peopled by artists served as real literary saloons of the day. And as people from different generations of a family worked alongside, they became a living repository of this cultural legacy. Presently this cultural legacy is getting difficult to pass on but the areas of the city still resonate with



these intangible associations. The importance of home as workplace declined with government institutions providing an alternative livelihood away from the home-based handicraft sector. And traditional mohallas also started losing their original character. Men whose forefathers had lived in a particular mohallas were forced to move out. With their dislocation, the network of family and community life, which had held the fibre of the mohallas together, began to unravel.

Here the link between architecture and craft is not as strong as I had hypothesized. The link is perhaps less stronger than the link on other scale as the city has been subject to a lot of transformations. The occupations, professions and preferences of the people change and so does the inherent and traditional descriptions of the mohallas. Adaptive tendencies result in the influx of newer occupations. Though the city still fosters the traditional crafts, at some places the transformations go against the grain of the relation between architecture and craft. The relationship between the two grows a little weak with new developments that happen in the urban milieu. Though the relation between architecture and craft is evidently seen in the buildings lining the streets of the Old city but there is a rupture in the practice of it currently, due to the new trends in building systems and preferences. In the next chapter the study explores these visual evidences found in the streetscapes.

## CHAPTER 4:

# Architecture and Crafts in Streetscapes of the Old City

This chapter looks at the different streetscapes explored during the field trips to Srinagar in the downtown region. It discusses the description of the streetscape, proportions, spatial configuration of the houses, materials, building systems and construction systems that are involved in the architecture practiced.

### 2) ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFTS IN THE STREETSCAPES OF THE OLD CITY



STREET of  
CHINKRAL MOHALLA



CHINKRAL MOHALLA



**Figure 4.1: Streetscapes in the Old City of Srinagar**

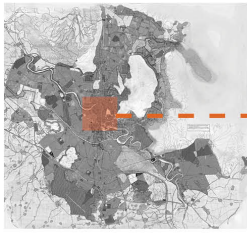
In this chapter different iteration of different elements like doors, windows, screens, balconies, building system in a streetscape are observed and how the crafts and architecture become integral to every house as it develops to a simple expression or a much intricate and complex one.<sup>16</sup> These changes or iterations in the elements must have happened as these elements must have been the only parts of the house that could be easily customized and changed according to the owner's requirement. The houses in the old city are densely packed with hardly any room for spatial changes and personalization. The streets on which the houses open up to become the space that provides the encouragement for iterations, personalization and space for interacting with the streets through architectural design.



**Figure 4.2 : Mapping of the streets in the Downtown Area visited for the Study**

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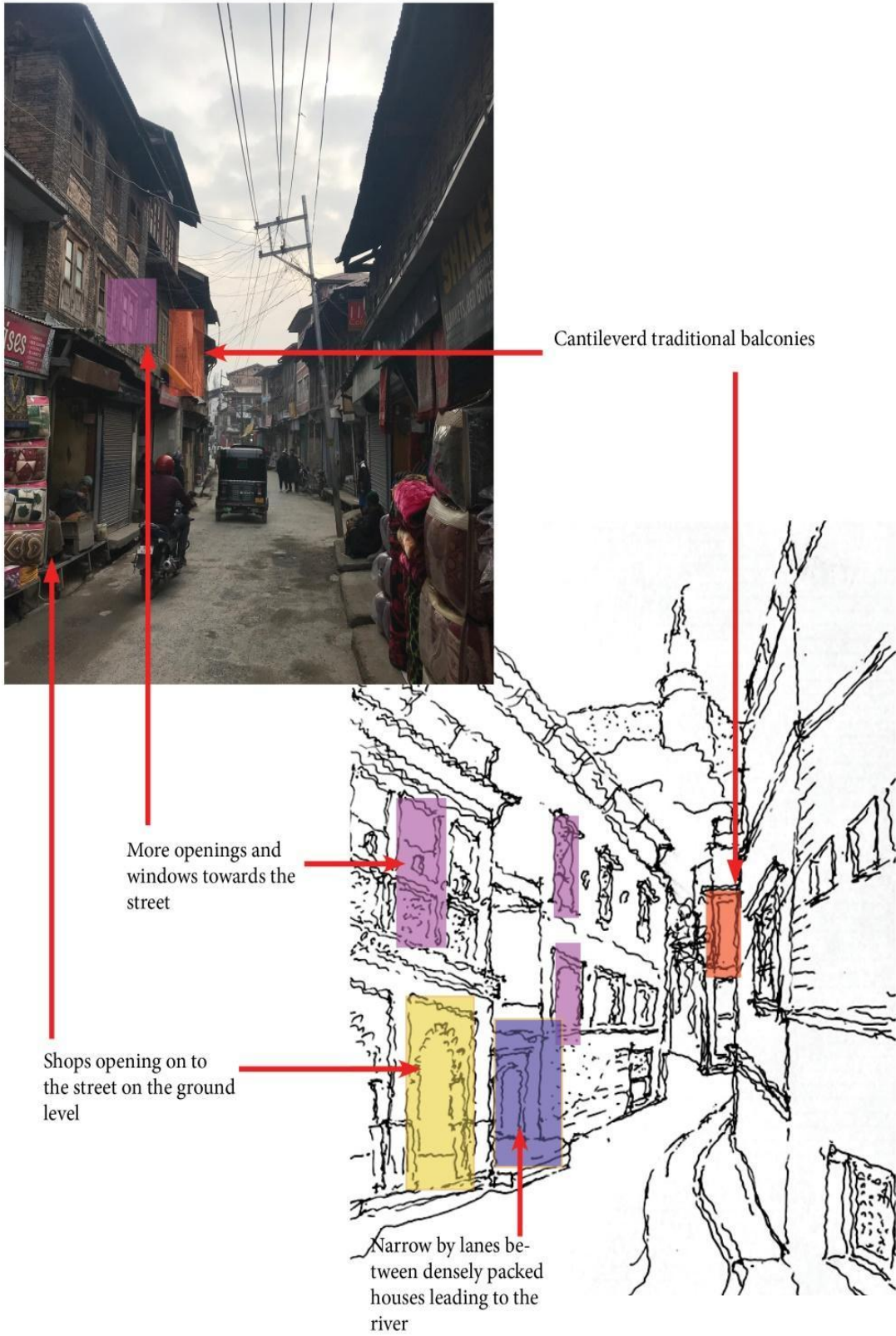
<sup>16</sup> I say this because of the different types and motifs done in each of the crafts. They differ according to the time and labour required to make them, perhaps different meanings and depictions.



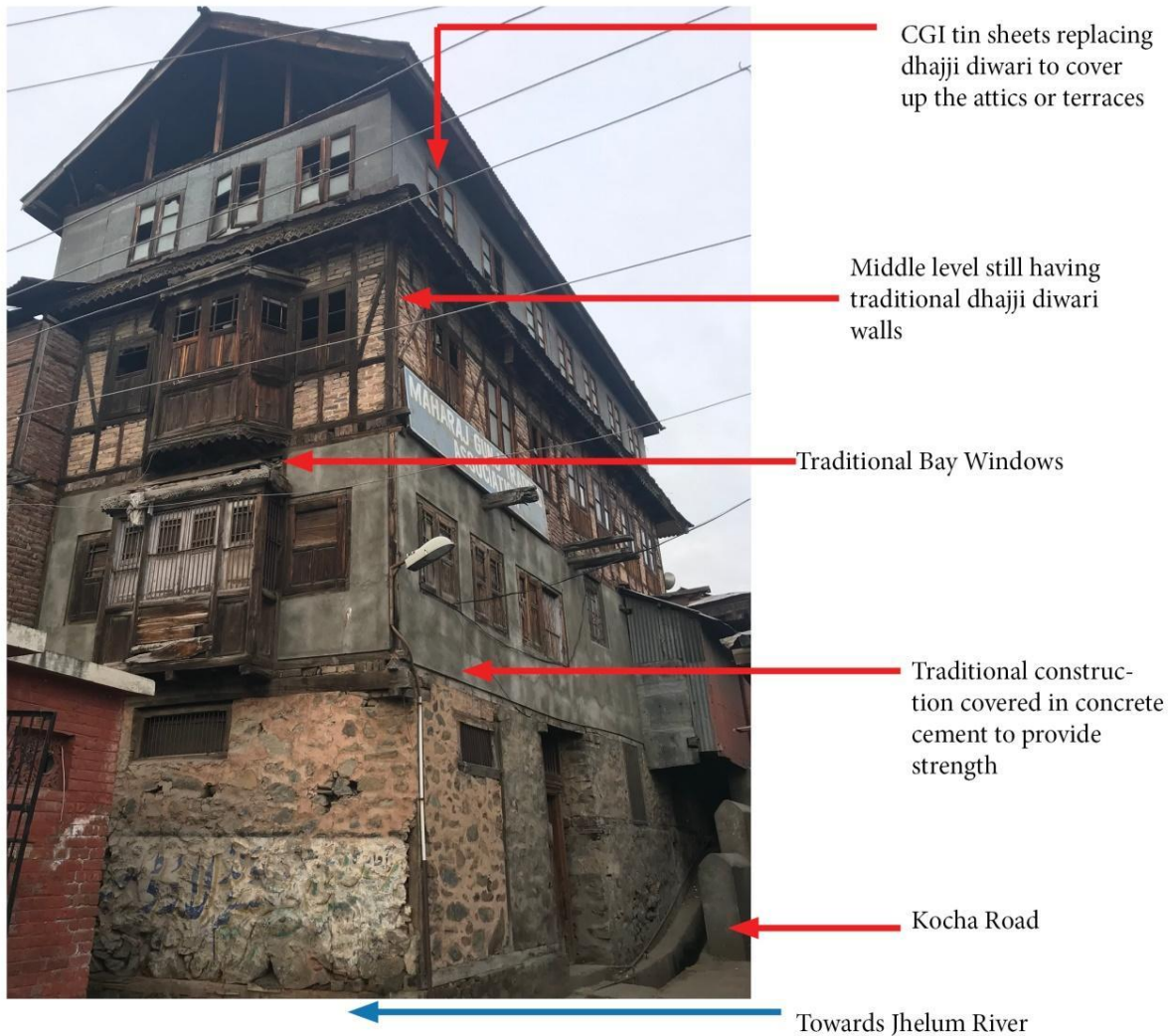
Streets visited for the study in downtown Srinagar.



Figure 4.3 : Different places visited while traversing the city



**Figure 4.4 Street Scape near Fateh Kadal, Srinagar**



**Figure 4.5: Analysis of a building near Safa Kadal**

Mixed neighbourhoods were always a part of the overall urban pattern, yet certain mohallas and streets came to be associated with specific communities or occupations. As the city developed the mohallas and the residential quarters started getting organized on occupational lines an individual mohallas was typically made up of thirty or more residential units with an associated mosque or temple. For mohallas situated on the banks of the river or a canal, an important urban feature would be the ghat. As water-borne travel was principal mode of transportation until the twentieth

century, the ghat served as the main hub for most goods transported into the city. Though the mohalla's ghats might be small, its social relevance cannot be understated. The *ghats* acted as the focal point which attracted people for ablution, drawing water, and other daily chores and activities. Parallel to the river, located at the rear of the mohallas was the cart road that served as the secondary line of communication and connection for the city and also as the public face of the settlement. For it was on this road that the bazaars existed. The intersection of this road with the lane coming down from the bridge formed the chowk, a vibrant pulsating centre of city life.

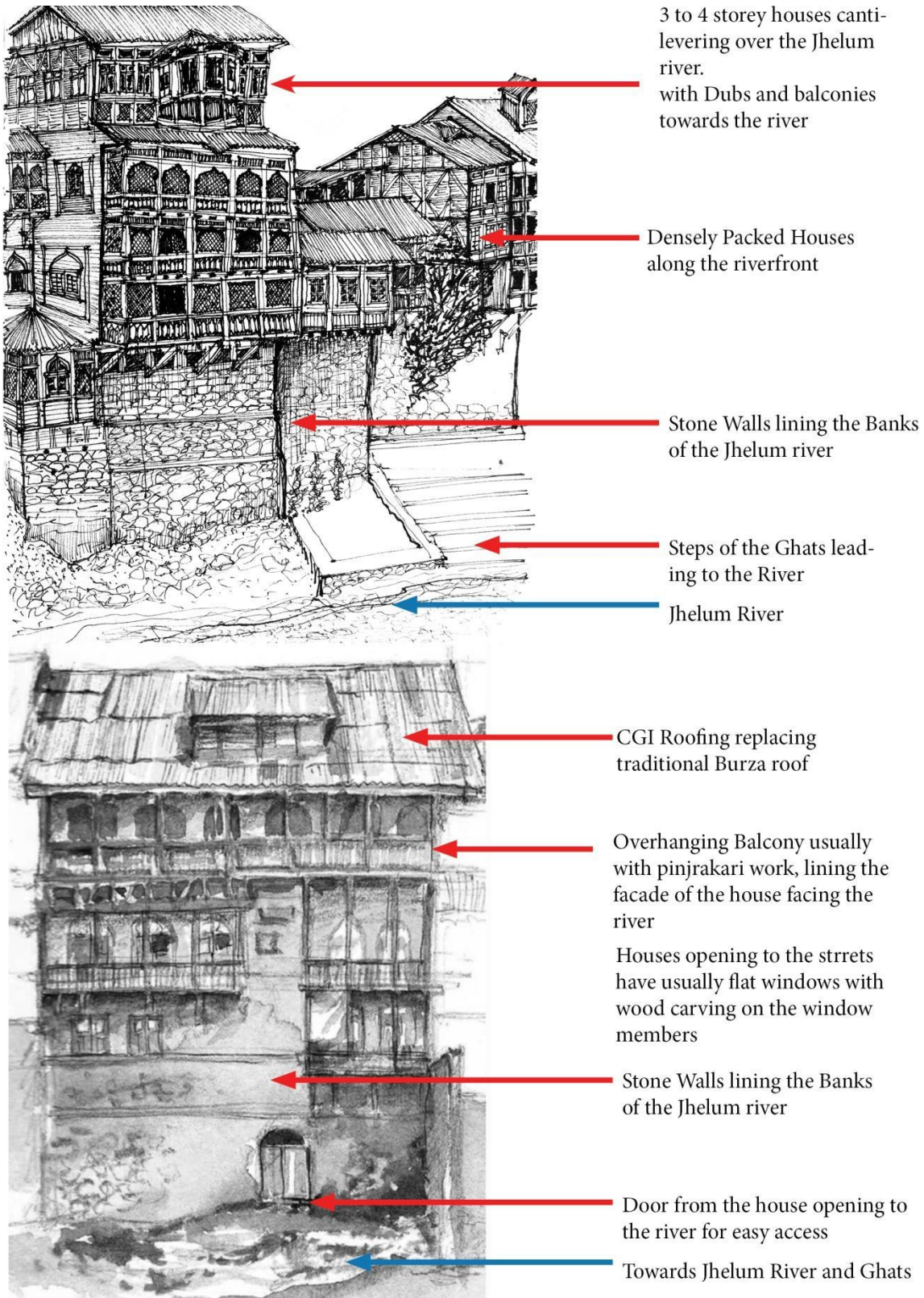


**Figure 4.6: Open Street markets**



**Figure 4.7: Local Market**

Source- (<https://photos.uncorneredmarket.com/Asia/India/Srinagar-Kashmir/i-g6bVxPZ/>)



**Figure 4.8: Analysis of a building near Safa Kadal**



The houses of the wealthy traders and landlords, located on the riverfront, stood out from their neighbours, dominating by their sheer size, scale and display of the intricate wood work of the varusi and dubs. Several of these houses would have their own private access to the river. Yet the overall physical character of the mohallas along the riverfront was of a single cohesive unit, with streets and lanes surrounding them. Projecting wooden balconies, intricate lattice-work window screens and birch bark roofs, covered with iris and tulips was the image of the city till the early twentieth century. Some of the houses located in the mohallas away from the river are surrounded by large gardens fenced in by mud walls or high masonry walls with a wooden door as an access to the court leading to the house. In case of mohallas which are occupied by members of the same family, the individual compounds of different residences would be interconnected by means of a smaller side door. There are hardly any common public or civic open spaces along the riverfront, more so in the more densely-populated mohallas in the Old City. Till today, a sense of community pervades daily life in Srinagar. Streets in the Old City are lively, colourful and active due to the shops and markets. Often at street corners in downtown area or near mosques or religious shrines, in the early morning or afternoons, families celebrate someone surviving an accident or mishap by serving food.<sup>17</sup> The street corners are also places where the willow wicker repair worker sits in the winters and adds coals or repairs an object known as *kangar* locally, which is a wicker basket that has an earthen pot filled

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<sup>17</sup> This is usually tehr or dud vigra, a dish of rice, turmeric, meat and fried onions and is served to passers-by on the street.

with coal to provide portable heat to the craftsmen, auto-rickshaw drivers, shopkeepers, vendors etc.



**Figure 4.9: Building near Aali Kadal**

The traditional features of the city began to change due to the colonial influences of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. New architectural features and urban patterns were introduced. For the first time the riverfront was converted from a purely private residential area into a public domain, when the *bundh* road was constructed along the riverfront. The buildings could be seen sporting stone arches in a colonial style. One can see the colonial influences very evidently in the windows of the much recent houses of the old city.

## CHAPTER 5:

### **Dargahs as sites for Architecture and Craft**

Dargahs, commonly known as shrines of Sufi saints or teachers are important and vital *religio-cultural* foci or centres in the City of Srinagar. The Dargahs are located amidst mohallas or different neighbourhoods and are visited frequently by the local peoples as well as tourists. These Dargahs as urban institutes of the city also become structures or places where one can see the fine building crafts and architecture being employed. This chapter looks into these structures to study the Architecture and Building Crafts relation on this level.

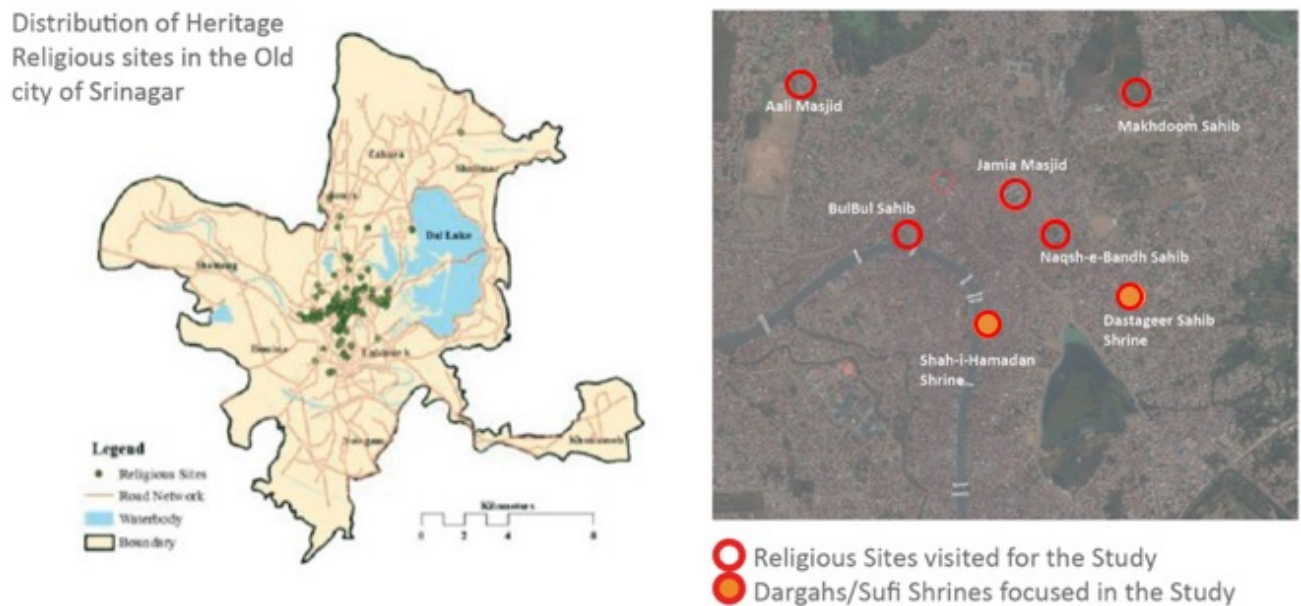
As in Most medieval cities, religion was an important determining factor for the settlement pattern of Srinagar, with most residential quarters clustered around the major khanqahs,<sup>18</sup> shrines or temples. So, in the fourteenth century the city developed around the khanqahs of Bulbul Shah and Shah Hamadan at Rinchepora (Bulbul Lanker)

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<sup>18</sup> Khanqah or Dargah are word that in South Asia can be used interchangeably for Sufi Shrines. It is a building designed specifically for gatherings of the Sufi brotherhood, or tariqa, and for spiritual retreat. In the past and to a lesser extent today, they served as hospices for Sufi travellers and Islamic students. Khanqahs are very often fond adjoining a Dargah, mosques or madrassas.

and Alauddin Pora (Khanqah-i-Mualla) respectively. There is a sense of monumental scale, as these religious structures tower above the surrounding residential quarters.

The city was also dotted with smaller mosques and temples which principally served the immediate mohallas that they were part of. For those temples, mosques or shrines located on the river front, the associated ghats also served as a major urban and social landmark. Over the centuries as the city continued to expand, the relation between religion and the urban fabric continued to grow becoming intricate and complex.



**Figure 5.1: Distribution of Religious Sites and Religious Sites Visited for the study**



Shah-i-Hamadan Shrine



Dastageer Sahib Shrine,

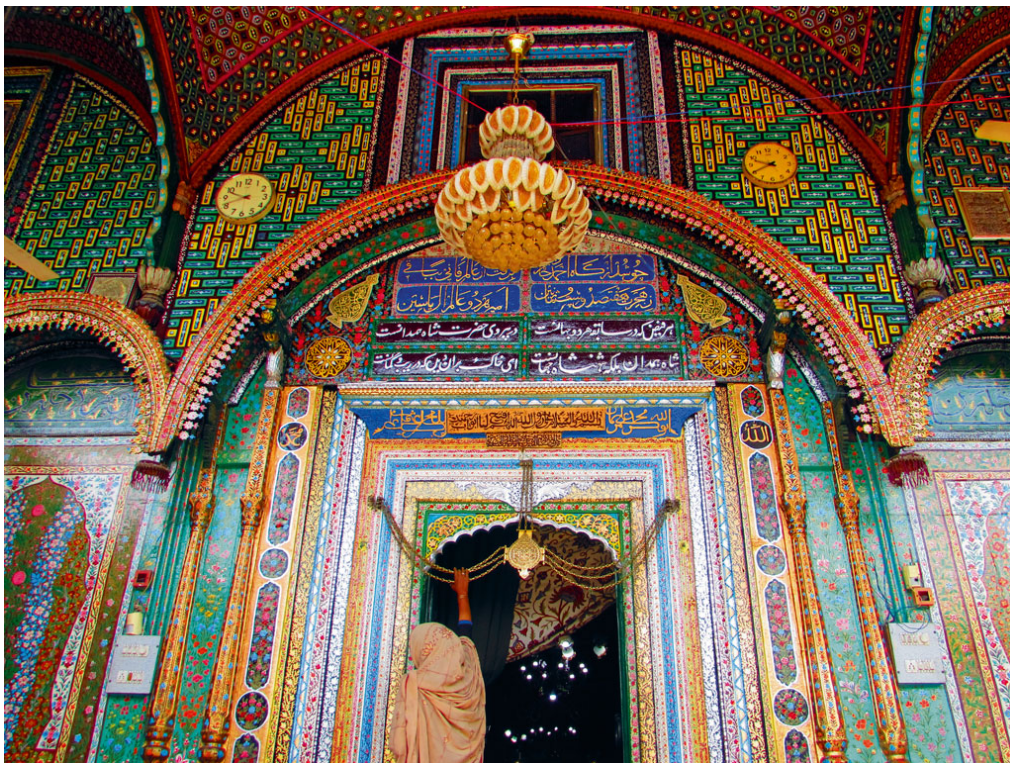


**Figure 5.2: Case 1 – Shah-i-Hamadan Shirne**    **Figure 5.3: Case 2- Dastageer Sahib**

With the arrival of the great Sufi Saint Shah-i-Hamadan in 1372 there was an influx of a large number of immigrant artists, calligraphers and architects from China, Persia and Central Asia and probably from the Swat valley that lies on the ancient Silk Route.

The shrines that would be discussed in detail in this chapter would be Shah-i-Hamdan Shrine overlooking the Jhelum River on the Right Bank of Zaina Kadal amidst the Khwaja Bazaar and Dastagir Sahib at Khanyar. The other Dargahs that are mentioned are Naqsh Bandh Saheb Shrine on the Khanyar Zadibal Pandach (KZP) Road near the Radapura Mohalla, Bulbul Sahib Shrine near Tara bal on the Right Bank of Jhelum River across Nawa Kadal.

### Shah-i-Hamadan Complex



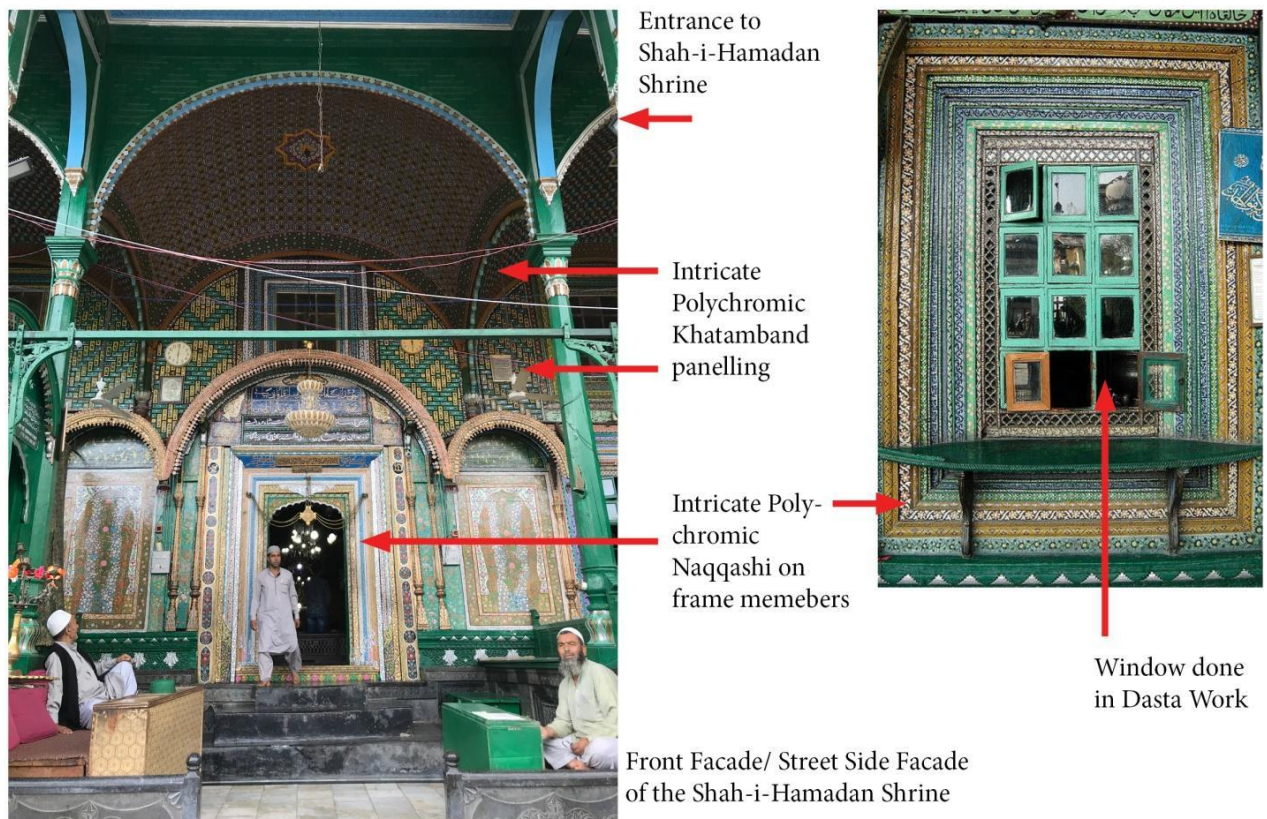
**Figure 5.4: Entrance Door to the Shrine, Shah-i-Hamadan**

<http://www.natgeotraveller.in/catch-the-dawn-at-kashmirs-famous-floating-market-on-dal-lake/>

The Khanqah-i-Mualla also known as the Shah-i-Hamadan Shrine is located near Zaina Kadal on the right bank of Jhelum and dates back to the medieval period and has been one of the most important Sufi Shrines in the city. The support and maintenance of the Shrine use to come from a royal jagir and this is only one of the

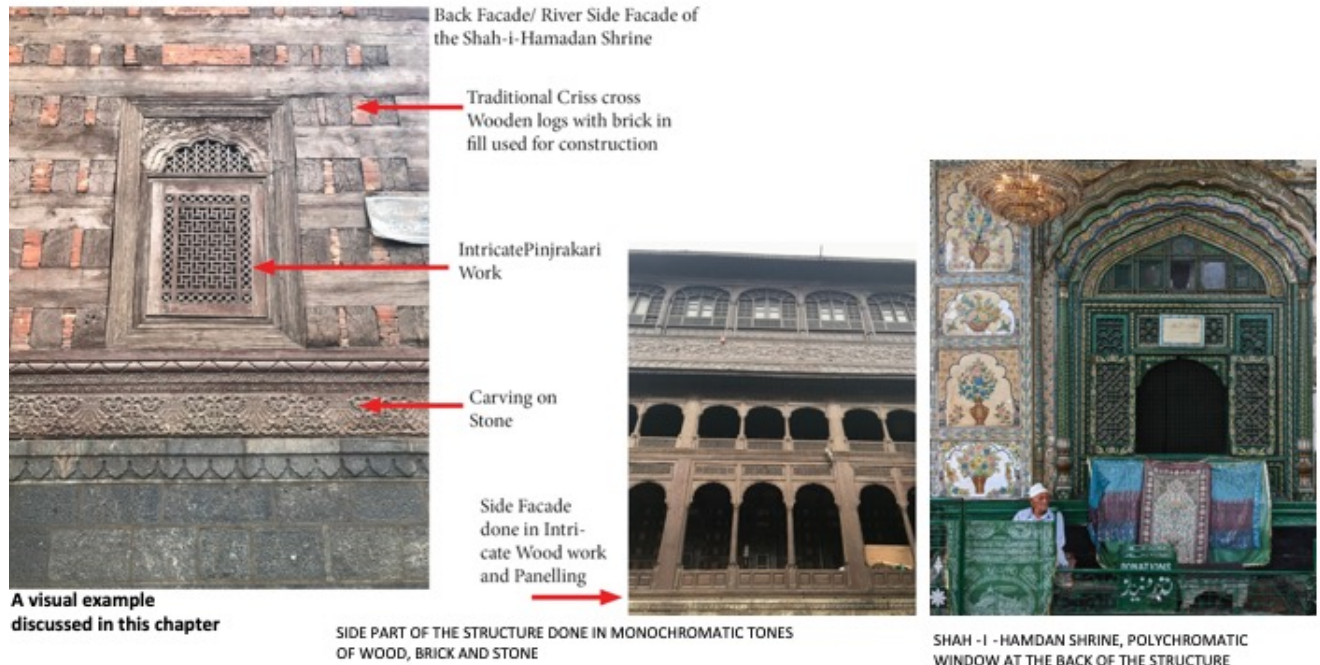
many shrines devoted to Hamadani that are spread across the valley. As for Hamadani himself, he was buried in Qulab in Tajikistan. For approximately first hundred years after the building of this shrine on the Jhelum River, free food was distributed in a langar<sup>19</sup> to popularize the shrine.

The main building in plan is seventy feet square and is two storey and the eaves are nearly 50 feet above ground. It has a three tiered pyramidal roof projecting over the whole structure. It surmounts an open pavilion for the Muezzin, over which rises the steeple that is 125 ft from the ground. Within the building there are arcades, verandahs and porticos and their openings are filled with pinjrakari work



**Figure 5.5: Analysing different parts of Shah-I-Hamadan**

<sup>19</sup> A Langar a charity kitchen essentially found in religious complexes and precincts throughout India.



**Figure 5.6 a, b, c: Analysing different parts of Shah-i-Hamadan Shrine**

This Slide shows the sides of the structure that are done in intricate wood work and the back of the structure has a polychromatic aspect to it. This part of the structure is seen having elaborate *Naqqashi* work and different building crafts are evident in the polychromatic windows.

The *khanqah-i-Mualla* was twice destroyed by fire in 1479 and 1731. The present mosque was rebuilt by Abul Barkat in 1732 and since then it has only required occasional repairs. (Alkazi 2014, p 120) TO ADD- Hankals, Piece of cloth tying, Entry, Walls covered with elaborate wood work with geometric patterns inside the shrine that are intricate and gilded and are extravagant, chandeliers as donations, praying mats, ceiling supported by 4 wooden columns and features wooden pieces in fishbone pattern, 14 chillahs that are room for solitary meditation.

Structure built with interlocked deodar logs with bricks filled in the gap, where perhaps originally clay was used. One can see the placement of one log horizontally on



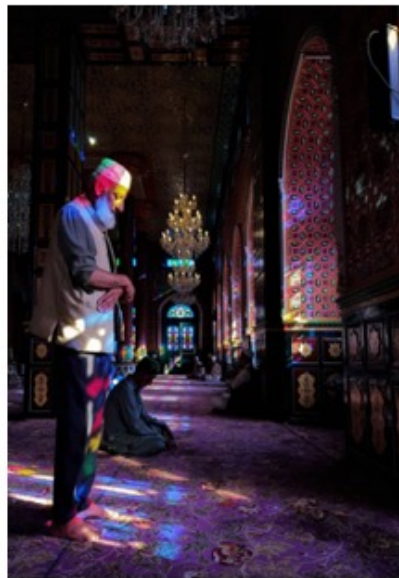
another, usually cross-wise in the form of headers and stretchers, like in masonry work. The logs were neatly squared and the space in between the course was filled with brick work. (Figure 5.6a)

The back of the khanqah is treated with lime plaster which is known as *guch*, The entire surface is painted with a variety of designs, the most prominent being stylized flowers in a vase. The windows are painted green with Naqqashi done around them. The interior of the worshipping space for women has elaborately coloured khatamband on the wall surface.

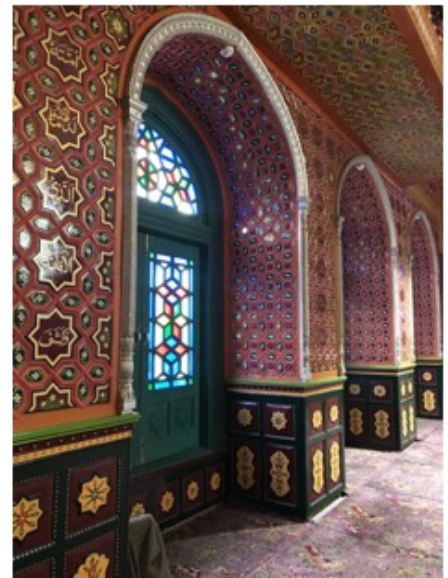
### Dastageer Sahib



**CASE STUDY 2: DASTAGEER SAHIB**  
DASTAGEER SAHIB SHRINE EXTERIOR



DASTAGEER SAHIB SHRINE  
POLYCHROMATIC INTERIOR



DIFFERENT BUILDING CRAFTS IN COMBINATION

### Figure 5.7 : CASE 2 – Dastageer Sahib Shrine

An Afghan traveller on a visit to Kashmir presented a holy relic to the then governor of state, Sardar Abdullah Khan. (Alkazi 2014, p.180) This belonged to a prominent Sufi saint, Syed Abdul Qadir Jeelan. Syed Buzargah Shah with whom the

relic was deposited was a prominent Sufi at that time and a khanqah was built to display the relic on religious festivals. The khanqah was enlarged in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century by Khwaja Sanaula Shawl and is an important part of both the socio-cultural as well as architecture of the area.<sup>20</sup>

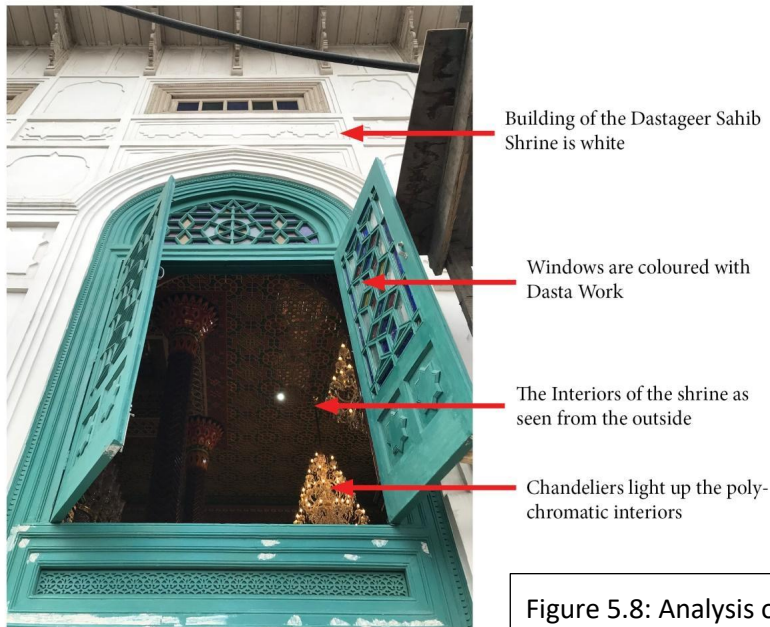
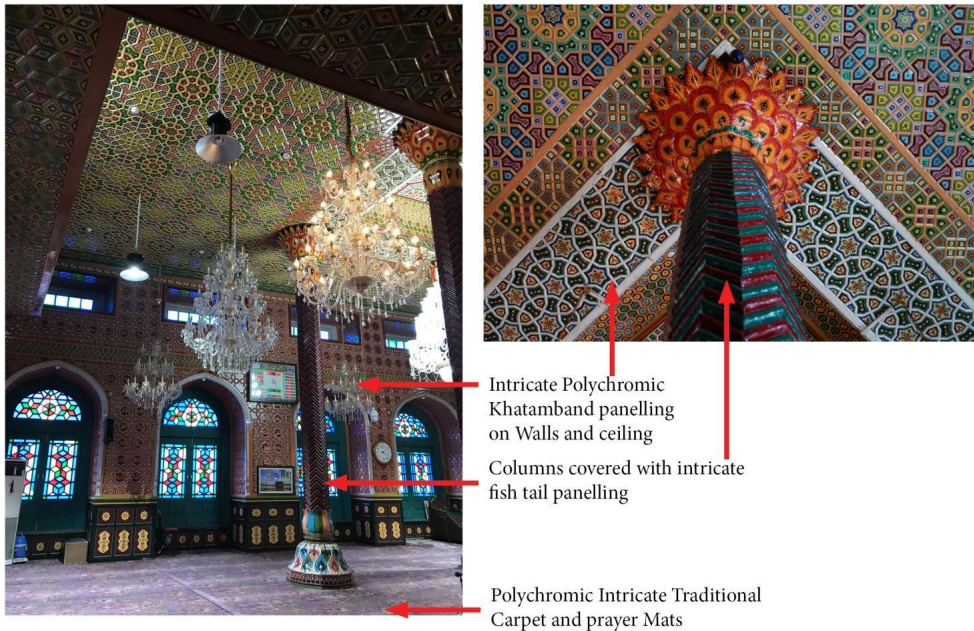


Figure 5.8: Analysis of photos from Dastageer Sahib Shrine

<sup>20</sup> Alkazi, Feisal. *Srinagar; an architectural legacy*. New Delhi: Lotus Collection Roli Books, 2014, p.121

The original khanqah consisted of a linear seven taq double heighted building aligned along the north-west axis. The khanqah has two dubs which are two storeyed on the corners of the western façade of the building. Carved eaves boards, wooden pendants, and mullion work in the window openings, decorated khatamband ceiling and dado, coupled with multi-faceted deodar wooden columns are some of the prominent architectural element featuring the traditional building crafts. In this building and others like the shrine of Shah-i-Hamadan and Naqshbandh Sahib the interiors of the shrine are in sort of a contrast with the exterior parts of the building in the sense that the interiors are extremely polychromic with building craft of highly intricate character.

In the case of prominent shrines and *khanqahs*, the natural wooden tinge of the outer façade contrasts visually with the rich internal atmosphere of interior spaces. The dark, sombre tone of natural, exposed deodar wood is often coated regularly with *rogan nela touth* (copper sulphate and resin. An admixture of dried walnut and pomegranate shells for staining adds a rich brownish tinge to the wood which, due to the release of natural oils, has an inherent tendency towards acquiring a reddish tinge)

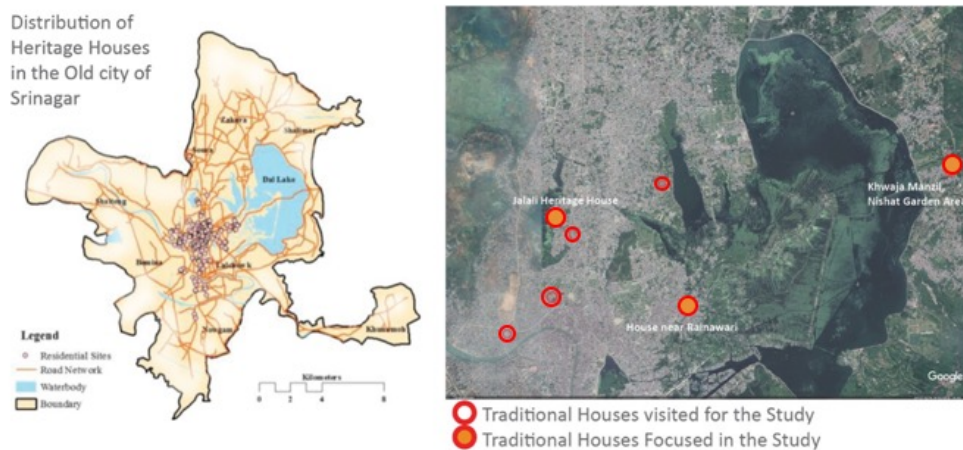
The link of Architecture and Craft intensifies at this scale. At the Dargahs, one can see the relationship as perhaps the strongest. This relationship transforms into a display of paying respects and becoming a way to celebrate the sufi teachers as well as the religio-cultural landmarks of the city.

## CHAPTER 6:

### **Craft and Architecture in Traditional Houses in the Old City**

This chapter discusses the Architecture and Craft as interdependent systems and functions on the spatial level of a house or one building as a unit. It attempts to answer the question what remains similar in the houses (Spatial configuration, Proportions, Layout, Materials etc) and what changes/iterates and develops in the houses (Window work - *Dastawork* /shape /size /colour; Fabric-Carpet; intricate surface patterns/motifs-*Naqqashi* and *Khatamband*; Wood carving-Screens or Pinjrakari work or *Varusi*, Balconies) when the interrelation and interdependence of Architecture and Building Crafts is studied on this level. It looks into the use of crafts elements as homogenizing, secularizing and personalizing element. The houses are of load-bearing construction along with *taq* and *dhajji diwari* system. The house is usually three to four stories and of square or rectangular plan. The lower floors or storeys have walls made of stone masonry and middle storey walls made of mud bricks and the upper most storeys are done in wood and mostly in *dhajji diwari*. This makes the lower portion of the building bear the load from the higher floors and also helps in strengthening the base during earthquake. The entry to a traditional house would be

through a door separated by a small court, a private one, from the street. The houses are mostly square or rectangular in building arrangement and planning, with typical traditional (arched/screened/bay) windows on all four sides. In areas where there is high density the houses share common walls with other houses. Glass as a material in building has only in recent times come in common use here. Conventionally oiled newspaper was stuck on the screened shutters to admit light into the homes at times of winter.



**Figure 6.1a,b : Distribution of Heritage Houses, Houses visited for he study**



**JALALI HAVELI, ALAMGIR BAZAAR AREA**

**HOUSE IN KENI MOHALLA**

**KHWAJA MANZIL, NISHAT BAGH**

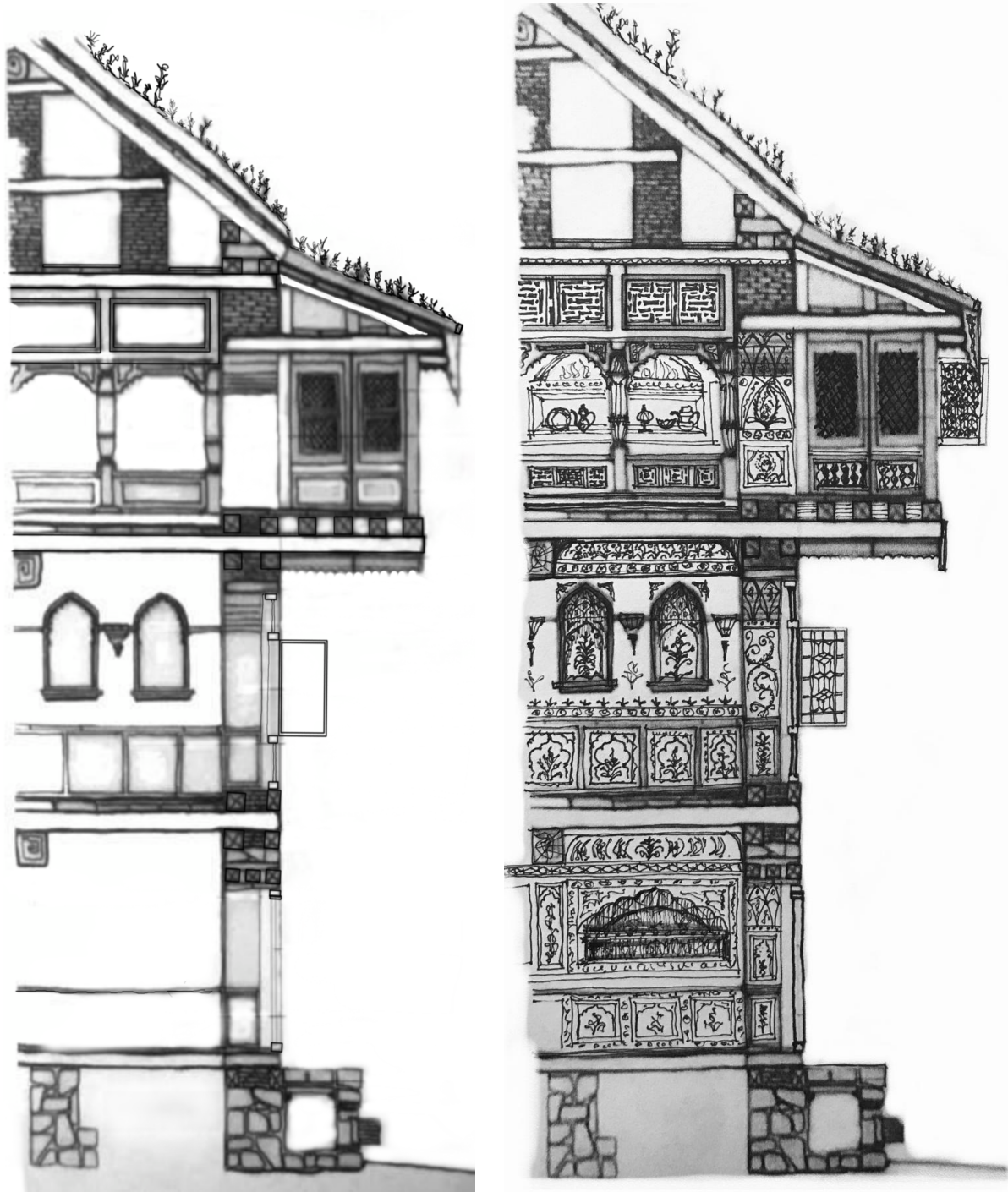
### Figure 6.2 a, b, c : Case 1, Case 2, Case 3 focused for the study

The living room and the kitchen in the traditional houses are situated on the ground-floor, and the bedrooms are set on the second and third floors. The top most part or level of the structure was generally walled only with timber. It was typically one single large hall with numerous windows. To take advantage of the cool breeze this room was generally used in summers by the family for social gatherings and other events. In winter it was mostly used as space for storage due to the harsh weather. Previously the roofs of the structures were mostly covered with mud laid on birch bark roofing known as *burza* locally, before the new introduction of corrugated galvanized steel or iron sheets for roofing. In the spring the soil roof would be covered with grasses, plants and flowers. The blooming of tulips and lilies over spread of the in the houses of Srinagar was well-known but most of the mud roofs vanished in favour of the new roofing system.

The different materials used in the building systems in Kashmir are the most significant elements and features that lead to the stability and sustainability of the buildings and houses. The buildings lower portions are made out of stone, followed by timber members interlaced with *maharaji* bricks. The windows are done in deodar wood with walnut wood screens that are intricately carved; both species of trees are local to the region. The above floors are done in wood frame members and bricks (dhajji diwari) and the houses were traditionally covered with birch bark shingles that were covered with mud and planted with tulip buds and other plants. This was

considered a simple but effective technique of natural insulation. The floors are of mud and walls were covered with mud plaster.

Looking at the image/drawing of the section, it gives an idea that the materials that are used are all natural and perhaps locally available. The use of materials is intricate and subjected to various levels of complexity but all the materials are natural products of the land and are earthy in the sense that as debris in case of damage or collapse will become part of the land. Whereas the materials that are replacing them or substituting them in these structures in the present day are in a way 'adulterating the system of materials' The newer materials might be easily available and perhaps economic compared to timber members but they aren't as sustainable. The people opt to replace the materials because of availability and easily available skill set by constructors displayed regarding the materials that are replacing the old ones.



**Figure 6.2: Typical Section through a traditional house in Srinagar**

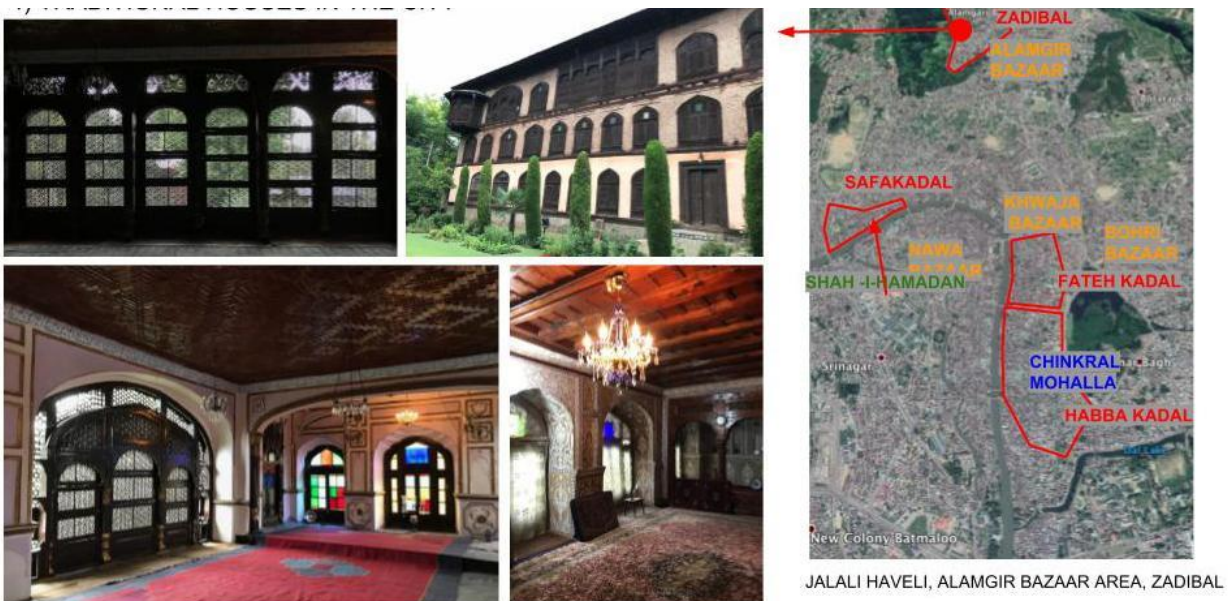
(Source: INTACH J&K Chapter. *Shehar-i-Kashmir: Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City (2004-2005)*. Vol. Volume 1. New Delhi: Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage, 2010.)

**Figure 6.3: Section through Interior of the house showing different Crafts**



The traditional construction systems are being replaced by reinforced cement which renders the entire structure as one unit leaving no room for flexibility or movement and thus proving inefficient to the geological features and phenomenon. The upper floors which were done in dhajji diwari are being replaced by corrugated iron sheets and the roofs as well are being replaced by them. The materials substituted in fragments don't have intricate connections to the material system of the buildings and are out of place and feel as if a temporary fix has turned into the primary material to work with.

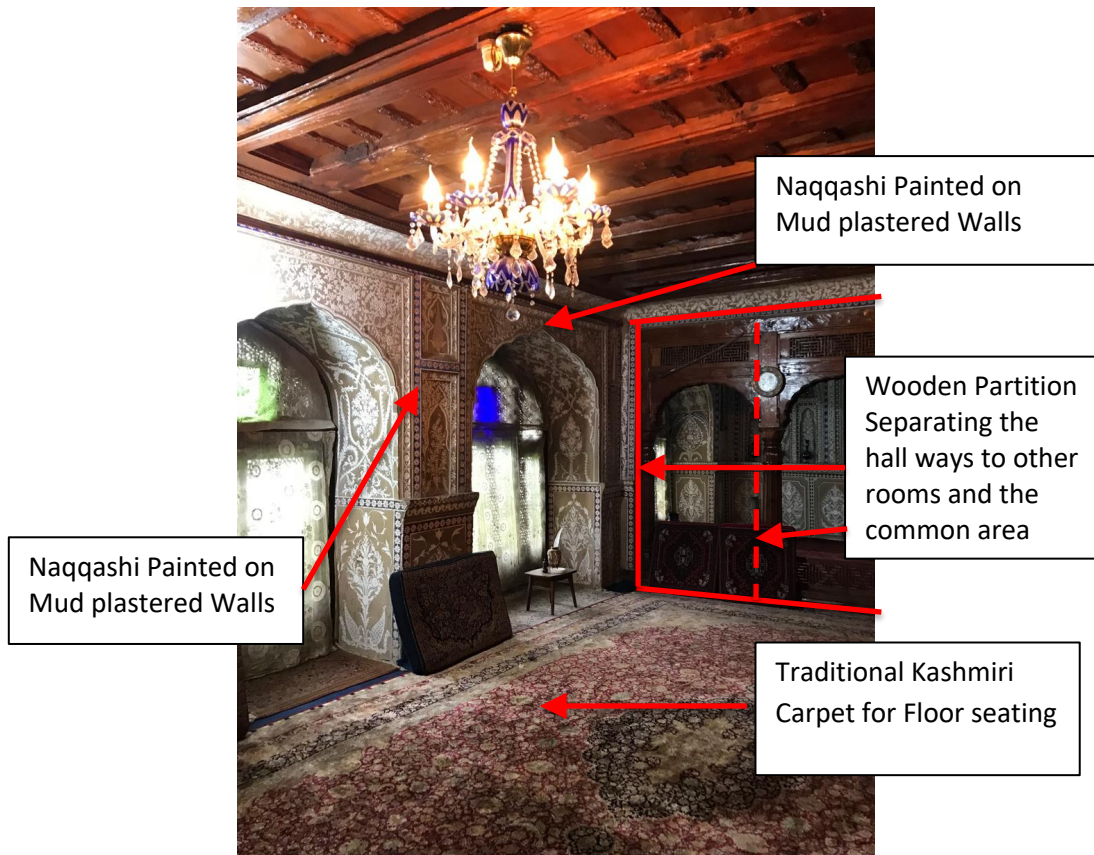
Case 1: The Jalali Heritage House, Alamgir Bazaar, Zadibal



**Figure 6.4: Jalali Haveli in Context to the Old City**

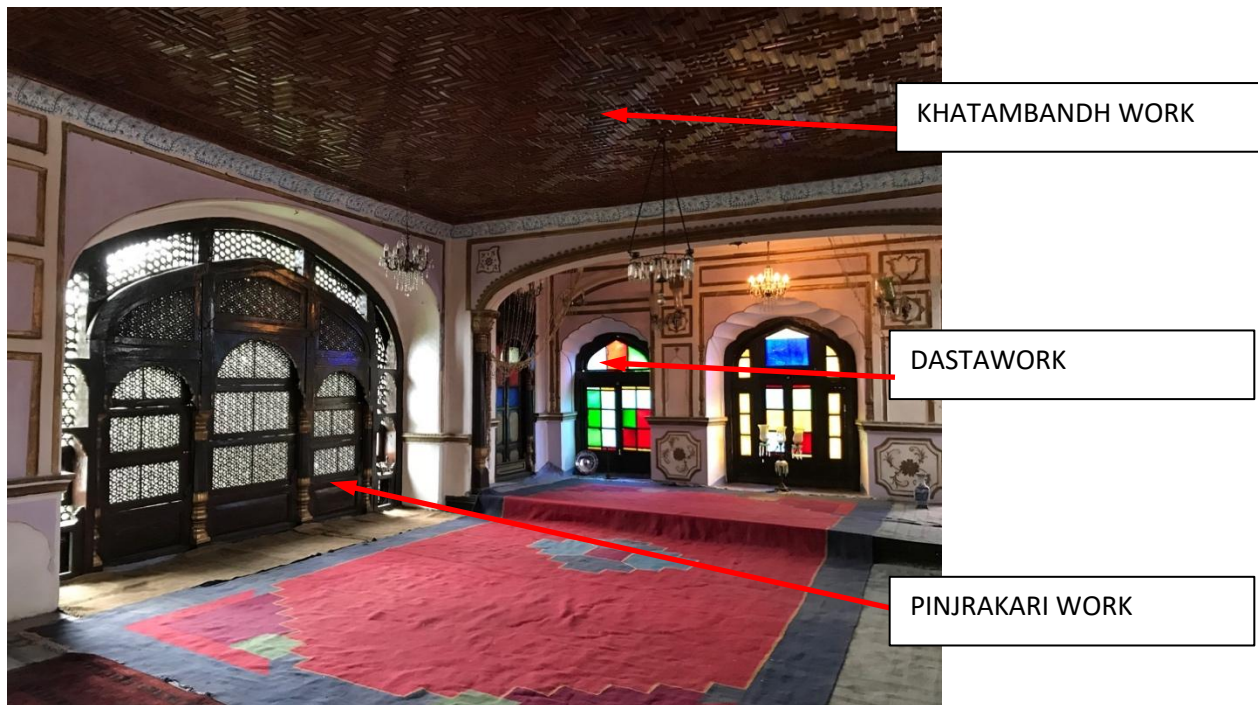
The Jalali Haveli is done in Taq system of construction with traditional features and materials like stone, wood, mud-plaster, and *maharaji* bricks. It is a three storeyed structure with ground floor walls made up of stone and upper floor walls with maharaji bricks. It has the intricate wooden screens known as *pinjra* traditionally, in its bay

windows and *varusi*. It has incised mud-plaster with decorative and intricate floral patterns in the interiors of the house which is known as *Naqqashi*. The house also has wooden panelling known as *khatambandh* and some ceiling work on the first level is done with papier mache.



The ground level of the building has a traditional hamam. The height of the first level is not as high as the floor height of the second or the third level. The second level has private chambers and one huge family hall where as the third floor is a huge gathering space on one side of the staircase and a private chamber on the other side. On the second level, the rooms display traditional intricate Naqqashi and on the third level, in the gathering space, intricate pinjrakari, khatamband, Naqqashi, carpet and dasta work can be seen. The house use to traditionally have birch bark or shingle

roofing known as burza but has been replaced by corrugated galvanized iron sheets. This traditional house is one of the best examples to experience the mutual dependence of Traditional Architecture and Crafts in the city.



**Figure 6.6: Jalali Haveli – Third Level Common Room**

#### House Near Rainawari, Keni Mohalla

The Rainawari house is in the Naidyar region of Kashmir abutting a canal of Dal Lake, has stone rubble masonry typical to a traditional house near a canal, at its base and lower floor, It is a four storey structure with different fenestrations on each level. The upper floors are of *maharji* bricks with *taq* construction. It has bay windows and balconies on its third floor and the fourth or the upper most floors are done in *dhajji*

*diwari* type of construction. This house displays a fine example of wood carved windows with dasta work as well as the traditional balconies overlooking the canal the house is situated on. Each window of this building is intricately worked on.



**Figure 6.7 : Side Part of the Building from the kocha road leading to the Canal**



Figure 6.8 : Building seen from the canal



The Keni *mohalla* or neighbourhood located in the Nadiyar area on Rainawari has traditional buildings that provide for decent examples to study the interaction of clustered houses with canals. The *mohalla* has houses done in *taq* system of construction and maharji bricks with overhanging cantilever balconies on the upper floors of the houses. small narrow lanes separate different clusters of houses and here the fenestrations between the *taq* are interesting to observe. One can observe use of different building materials that make up the typical traditional houses with different windows with *pinjra*kari or *dasta* work and surfaces of the main structural wooden members of the window frame having carved motifs.



**Figure 6.9 a, b, c :** Houses in the Keni Mohalla displaying different Building Craft Work on the surfaces and fenestrations

## Khwaja manzil, near Nishat Garden

Khwaja Manzil, locally called the Shah house near Nishat Garden area is another fine example to see the interaction of architecture and craft at the scale of a house. Though this building is located away from the downtown area of the city, it is one of the finer example at this spatial scale to study the relation of architecture and craft. It is a well maintained building with some of the best example of paper *mache* work on ceilings and walls and *dasta* work in windows. This house is a more recent example as compared to the other two houses studied and also incorporates colonial influences in its features. The planned configuration of the building is unlike the previous two building discussed but the basic and typical features remain similar. The house has many sitting chambers with floors covered with carpets, windows with *dasta* work, walls with papier mache and *naqqashi*, ceilings with *khatambandh* and lacquered papier *mache* with *naqqash*

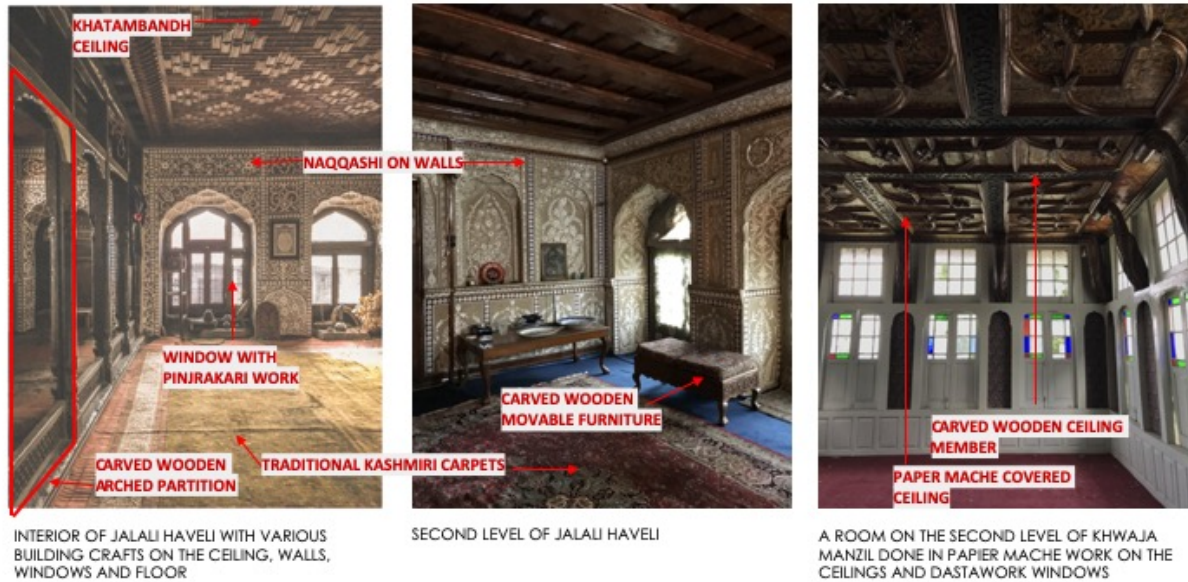


**Figure 6.9 a, b :** Elaborate Paper Mache and Naqqashi Work on the Ceiling made of Intricate carved wooden Members



**Figure 6.10: Traditional Carpet in the common area of the house**

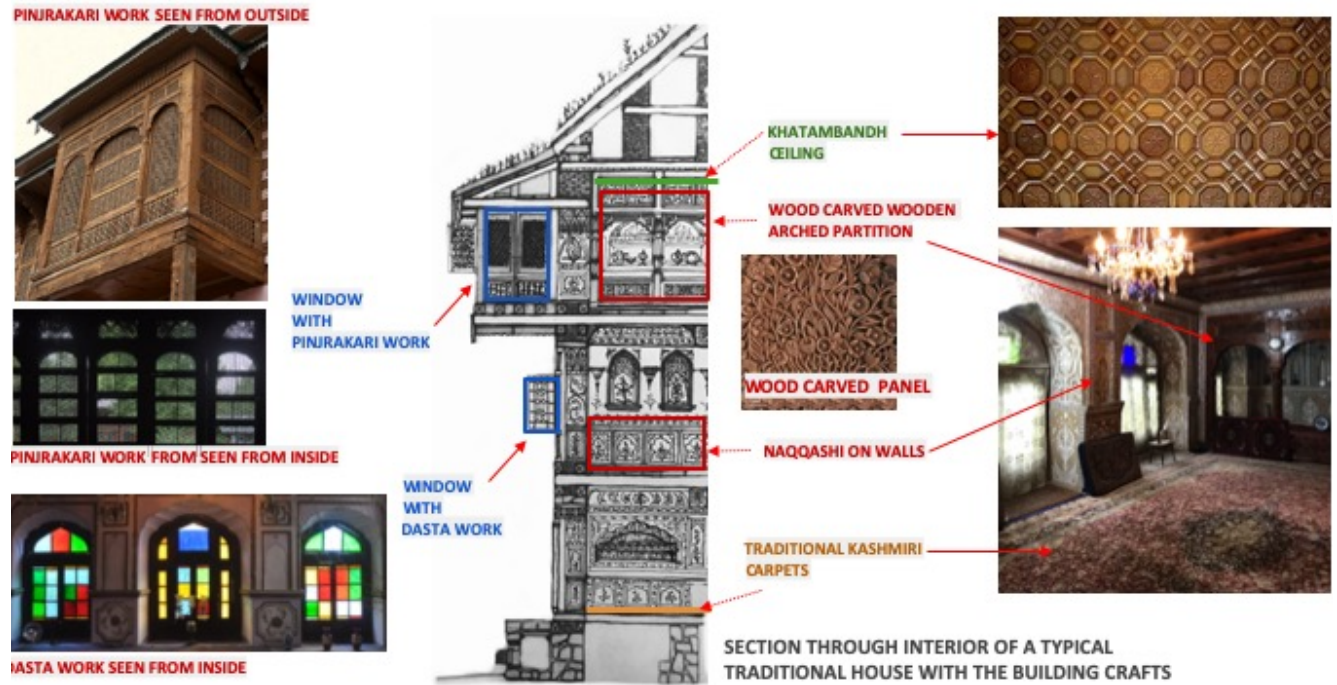




**Figure 6.11 a, b, c** : When the interrelation and interdependence of Architecture and Building Crafts is studied through observation and supported by such visual examples on this level, the study answers the question, what architecture and design features remain constant in the traditional houses for example the Spatial configuration, Proportions, Layout, Materials etc) and what iterates and develops in them like Window work, Carpet, Wall Embellishment, Ceiling etc)

As seen in the above examples at this scale, the link between architecture and craft becomes interesting to study. Crafts become a spatial expression in the house that transform the whole architectural experience of the building. The architectural surfaces get covered with the crafts in such a way that they become part of it. For example, the carpet with covers a simple stone or baked brick flooring is described as the soul of the traditional house by the inhabitants. They become crucial as a part of the space and interact more tangibly with the people using it. I mention this because the carpets more than just covering the flooring and functioning as an element of the traditional floor in the building, they also are essentially function as the seating spaces

in the houses during family congregations and occasions. Similarly each element of craft enhances the experience and space in the house.



**Figure 6.12: Different Building Crafts as part of the space experienced on this scale**

The space of the traditional house fosters an intricate growth of the building crafts and the architectural elements support many different crafts.

The relationship of Architecture and Crafts grows deeper and intricate and starts to intermingle. Building crafts become a way of personalization in the set scenario of the architectural spatial configuration of the house. The affordability aspect also influences the use of certain crafts, motifs, and the fineness or intricacies related to them which change the designs in the craft work. I feel that the lesser the changes possible structurally or in spatial planning, the more room there is for building crafts to function and be displayed. The relationship becomes more balanced on this scale and becomes more intricate and interdependent.

## CHAPTER 7:

### Crafts as Objects in and of a Building

Working in very modest surroundings – a small crowded workshop in the old city of Srinagar or an open room in the lush countryside that surrounds the city, the Kashmiri artists and craftspeople create great beauty in wool, silk, wood, metal and paper. This is a tradition that has been in existence over hundreds of years, the skills being transferred traditionally only from father to son, but now are practiced by many women as well. Working through most of the day in silent concentration with chai and zizir breaks, the created objects speak for themselves and the artistry of the crafts people of the Valley is known across the world.

#### 5) BUILDING CRAFTS AND OBJECTS



Figure 7.1 : Different Building Crafts and Objects

The last chapter of the study looks into the Crafts with its close relation to Architecture, as they are practiced presently and how they are developing with the transformations of the built environment in the Old city today. It touches upon the trade and commercial value of the crafts and how these aspects shape the crafts and its aesthetics. It lightly delves in the influence of tourism today in increasing the portability of the craft objects by making them into objects such as souvenirs, keepsakes, architectural or aesthetic objects from the valley of Kashmir.

<b>LIST OF CRAFTS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MATERIAL USED</b>	<b>AREA ASSOCIATED</b>
<b>PINJRAKARI</b>	WINDOW LATTICE SCREEN -WORK	THIN WOODEN MEMBERS	RIGHT BANK – SAFA KADAL AREA
<b>DASTAWORK</b>	TRADITIONAL WINDOW MULLION + STAINED GLASS WORK	THIN WOODEN MEMBERS + STAINED GLASS	FATEH KADAL AREA
<b>KHATAMBANDH</b>	INTRICATE PATTERNED WOODEN PANELLING ON CEILING	THIN SOFT WOOD PANELS AND MEMBERS	SAFA KADAL
<b>PAPIER MACHE</b>	PAPER MACHE WORK TO COVER WALLS/ CEILINGS or MAKING OBJECTS	PAPER MACHE	ZADIBAL, HASSANABAD
<b>CARPET MAKING</b>	SILK OR WOOL CARPET – HAND WOVEN	SILK AND WOOL THREADS	RAMBAGH, FATEH KADAL
<b>WALNUT WOOD CARVING</b>	OBJECTS AND FURNITURE MADE BY CARVED WALNUT WOOD	WALNUT WOOD	FATEH KADAL, SAFA KADAL
<b>NAQQASHI</b>	INTRICATE WALL EMBELLISHMENT PAINTED ON MUD PLASTER OR PAPER MACHE	PAINTED WITH LIME	ALAMGIR BAZAAR, NOWSHERA
<b>COPPER/SILVERWARE</b>	MAKING OF COPPERWARE/SILVERWARE WITH INTRICATE ENGRAVING	COPPER, SILVER, BRASS	HAZOORI BAZAAR, JAMIA MASJID
<b>WICKERWORK</b>	OBJECTS MADE OUT OF WEAVING WILLOW	THIN WILLOW TWIGS	NOWSHERA
<b>NAMDAWORK</b>	HAND KNOTTED FELT CARPET MAKING	FELT AND WOOL	MAQDOOM SAHIB

**Table 7.1 : Different Building Crafts and Objects, Materials Used and Areas associated**

I enlist and discuss the various building crafts and their practice and following that I discuss in detail the process behind some of them through visual examples collected from the visited kaarkhanas where they are made. As seen in the first visual scale of the city, the practice of the object has been associated with specific areas of

the city. This was due to the fact that many joint families occupying a specific *mohalla* were famously associated for the practice of the particular craft. The houses of these families were their work spaces for production of the objects and crafts. As the family grew, the practice proliferated and so did the neighbourhoods. Thus the areas in the city are famous for specific crafts. This system changed with the introduction of special workplaces and offices introduced due to colonial influences and the city started transforming. Though the areas are still famously associated with the crafts and some of the most old and famous workshops associated are still established there even today, the city has gone through major transformation when the place of production i.e. the workshops and consumption i.e. markets and retail shops are concerned.



**Figure 7.2 : Different Building Crafts and Objects in the traditional house** - the movable or portable objects like furniture pieces, papier mache boxes, carpets, collapsible screens and many other objects that are present in the traditional buildings add to the architectural experience of the space.

## Carpet making



The traditional art of carpet weaving still continues well in Kashmir. The craftsmen work with different materials like, primarily pure wool, pure silk and occasionally wool and silk blends of threads and are hand knotted. The process takes several months depending on the size of the carpet. According to the traditional culture and folklore, a Kashmiri house is incomplete without a Carpet or a rug.

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## Naqqashi



Naqqashi is the art of making floral or geometric designs on objects, ceilings or walls, which is done by the lacquer worker or traditionally called the Naqqash. This practice can be done on mud plastered walls of the house or it could be done on objects and on ceilings and was covered with a traditional lacquer called Rogan to give it a glossy finish.

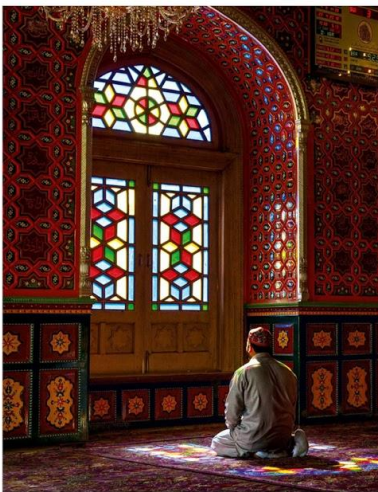
## Pinjrakari



Pinjrakari is the building craft that is essentially creating a surface of latticework or screenwork by criss crossing different thin wooden members to achieve a design pattern. It is then used as panels in the old traditional windows or railings of the balcony.

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## Dasta or Traditional Mullion Work



Dasta Work or Traditional Mullion Work is the technique of filling the window panes with stained glass panels between thin wooden members which are put together in forms of different geometric patterns by the *Wasta* or Master. Only one family presently practices this craft in Sriyanagr, but examples of it can be seen through out the Old city.

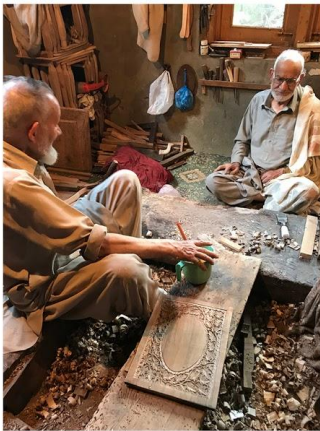
## Namda Work



Traditionally known as Namda is a practice of weaving woolen threads on felt surfaces to make rugs, or wall hangings and other objects from this type of fabric.

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## Walnut Wood Carving



The walnut wood carving of Kashmir employs a process of hand carving done very carefully and delicately in various styles by means of varied tools, fabricated locally depicting forms and motifs that have evolved over a period of centuries. The process is representative of local tradition of carving, evolved from stone and transmitted later on through the medium of wood representing various facets of carving; from flat to deep relief that employs a subtle three-dimensional effect.



## Copperware or Silver ware Objects making



Workshops that make objects like traditional pots called samovars and other vessels and utensils from Copper or Silver are found in plenty in Srinagar and there is a high demand for these objects both locally and globally.

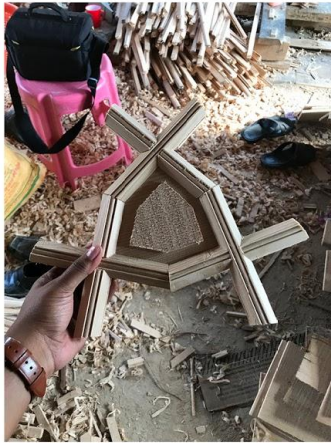
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## Kar-i-Qalamdari or Papier Mache



The Art of Papier mache, originally known as Qar-i-Qalamdari is the use of paper pulp to cover surfaces that is smoothed and floral or geometric patterns are applied on it by the Naqash. The surface is further covered with a thin coat of laquer. The technique was applied to ceilings, wall dados, door panels and objects.

## Khatambandh



Khatamband is a craft in Kashmir woodwork practiced by local carpenters and craftsmen who piece together thin panels of pine wood to create geometric patterns on ceilings generally but this practice extends to a variety of surfaces.

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## Willow Work



Willow work is the weaving of wicker to make objects. The craft of Willow Wicker is relatively new as compared with the other crafts of Jammu and Kashmir, like Carpets, Embroidery, Papier Mache and Copper work. Presently the craft is mainly concentrated in the area of Srinagar city, in nearby Gandherbal and in Anantnag



Carpet being hand knotted/ handwoven. Each Carpet takes months to complete depending on the size and number of people working on it daily.



Code for the Carpet Design written in Persian that has to be followed by the group of craftsmen working on the carpet to get a particular design

**Kashmiri Carpet Weaving in Kaudara, Downtown**

The portability of the created object becomes a crucial point in this part of the study as well as what these objects, which are results of the fine skills of the craftsmen represent when they are disseminated and distributed away from the place where they are created. This part concentrates on the production of portable objects like furniture pieces, papier mache boxes, carpets, collapsible screens etc.

Looking at relationship of architecture and craft at this scale, I feel that it finds a new territory that is unlike what is seen on other spatial scales discussed in the study. Some of the building craft objects start to acquire an architectural quality to them and are deployed and consumed as architectural objects from the city. Especially the Carpets, the walnut wood carved screen partitions, the armoires done in khatamband work or the carved headboards of beds. The portability of these objects made by the crafts people of Srinagar gives it a quality of being a traditional or ethnic piece of work from that region. The relationship of architecture and crafts intermingles due to the perception of the object by the consumer as well.

## **CHAPTER 8:**

### **Conclusion**

Through the examples seen in each chapter the intricate links of Architecture and Crafts and their role it has played and continues to play in the Old city of Srinagar, it is important to study the link to keep up with the changes, adaptations, developments in the architecture and crafts in the city, for helping and encouragement of its practice of different traditional practices, conservations of the systems in the built environment at different scales and levels can be done easily if we know the details behind each step and effort. It is also important to study the changes in the consumption, need and requirements of traditional building systems and crafts.

Through the study of the relation between architecture and craft seen on the different spatial scales of the city, it becomes simple to trace its linkages and face a specific point in the process and system with a thorough approach and understanding. There are merits and advantages in looking at situations in architecture with fresh perspectives and new ways to study the history of creative practices in different cities. Inter-reliant and intricate practices in the built environment that are studied in detail help to understand the processes of development, transformations, motivations behind

continuities and reasons behind discontinuities in their practices and application in the built form today.

### SYNTHESIS AND SUMMARY OF THE APPROACH

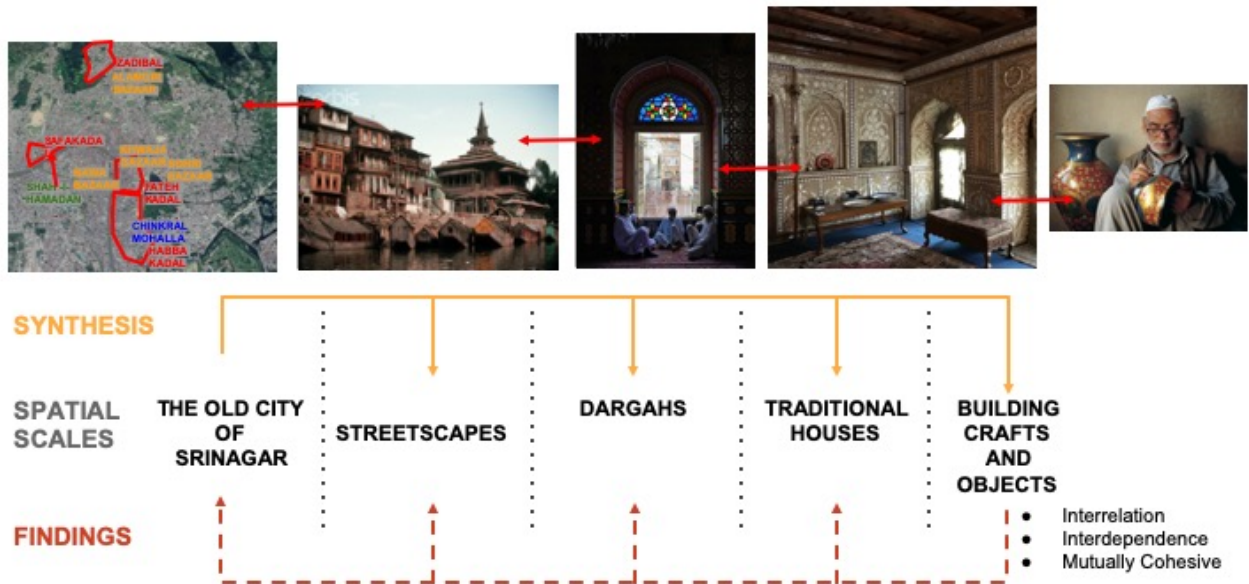


Figure 8.1 : Summary of the development of the thesis study

Finally, I say that the synthesis of the thesis looks into the examples of spatial scales in a way that encircles the understanding of the interrelation of architecture and craft in the context of the Old City of Srinagar by placing the last scale of the study in relation to the urban context of the city. and gives broader applicability to study other similar situations with the help of such methodological framework and approach.

It gives an applicability that can be used to study and document various places that richly employ ethnic and traditional practices and that can further understand the shifting trends and paradigms related to the practices.

## **Strength of the relationship of Architecture and Craft**

As seen in the interpretations and inferences in the chapters of this thesis, each spatial scale does manifest the relationship between Architecture and Craft but the strength of this link is subjective at different spaces discussed. The intricate bond sometimes gets weak and complicated to be displayed in visual examples and sometimes is highly strong and can be displayed very simply in visual examples of the spatial scales considered. Summarizing the findings and interpretations made in the synthesis of this study, my implications touch upon each scale individually and then discusses as a whole, the relationship of Architecture and Crafts seen in the Old City.

At the first spatial scale of the Old city that I have taken; the urban Context of Architecture and Craft in it, the relationship between Architecture and Craft is evolving due to the transformations that are occurring in the different places of the city. Due to these current transformations and their effects<sup>21</sup> the link grows weaker on this scale. Though it doesn't disappear, it just changes itself to accommodate newer techniques and materials, instead of what I hoped would be the case in the Old city of Srinagar. For example, the link manifests itself as a bond between cement shops and new houses done in reinforced concrete cement, raising a gap between traditional materials and methods of construction.

The second spatial scale that is the streetscape of the Old City of Srinagar, in the study has an intermediate strength between the Architecture and Craft relationship. I say this because, the visual examples seen in this part display a primary link between

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<sup>21</sup> Such as consumer preferences, economic conditions of the people, new systems of construction...

the buildings of the mohallas that open up on the streets, lanes, riverfront or markets but the intrinsic nature of the mohallas have changed essentially. This again is due to the transformations the city is facing. Though the remnants of the relationship are seen in the fenestrations and overhanging balconies, construction systems observed from the streets and lanes in the Downtown area of Srinagar, the immediate link of architecture and craft is not explicitly seen in the current context and situation of the built environment of the city today. The relationship at this level holds strong if viewed in a specific time period that was, and though it still adds that character to the streets of the Old city today, it has intermediate strength on this level.

Looking at the Dargahs in the study, I find that the relationship between architecture and craft to be at the strongest here. Architecture and Crafts of these buildings become a medium to display respect, love and faith towards the Sufi saint and teacher. Polychromic interiors, intricate woodwork, elaborate carpets and *Naqqashi* on walls become ways to make this cultural space monumental. Even though there is an evident change in building materials the display of affection still manifests its way through them. The relationship between Architecture and Building Crafts highly intensifies at this scale.

The spatial scale of a traditional house in the city sees the relationship of architecture and craft become highly intricate and starts intermingling in most of the elements of the house. Here the link is strongly felt and seen and comes across in the visual examples clearly. The Dargahs are in the public domain and are places that are cultural foci of the city, whereas the houses become personal spaces where the link between Architecture and Craft is seen intensifying in personalization of spaces and is



fostered by specific construction techniques and spatial planning configuration. Crafts make the experience of the space very different at this scale. If the houses were devoid of the crafts, the experience of the architecture would be contrasting and dissimilar.

I strongly feel that testing the strength of the relation between Architecture and craft provides fresh insight and new ways to study the history of creative practices in the old city of Srinagar as inter-reliant and intricate systems in the built environment. The study helps to understand the processes of development, transformations, motivations behind continuities and reasons behind discontinuities of such creative practices.

### STRENGTH OF THE RELATION OF ARCHITECTURE AND CRAFT AT EACH SCALE

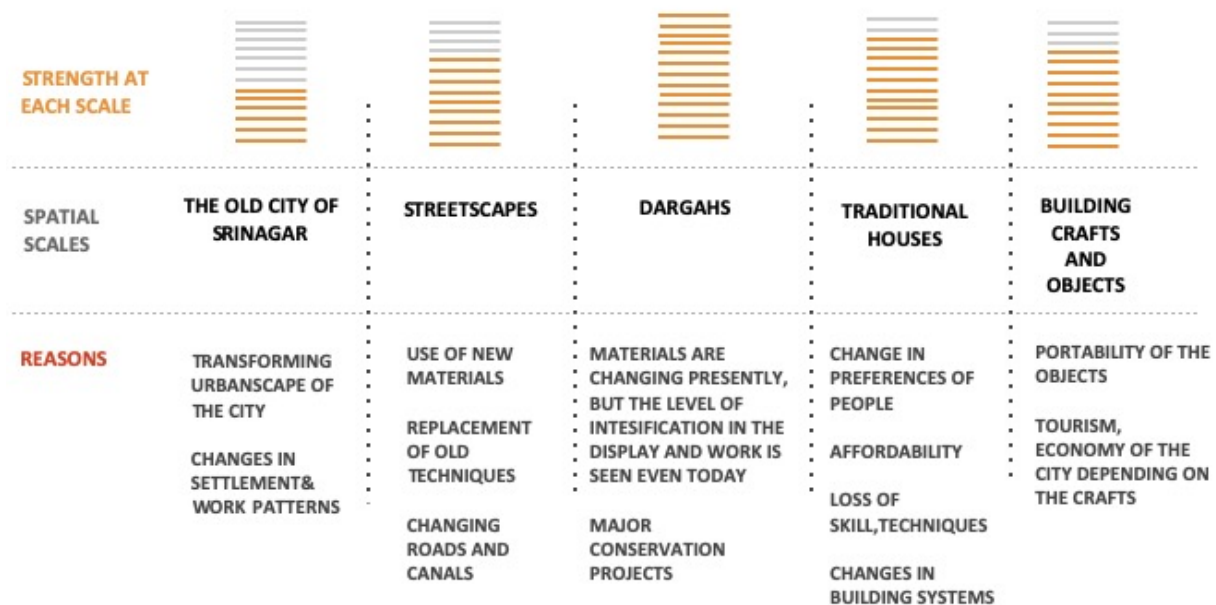


Figure 8.2: Summarizing the strength of the link on each scale

In the last spatial scale in the study that is the objects of crafts and the practice of craft in itself, the link between Building Craft and Architecture, according to me

takes an interesting turn. It becomes strong but also complicated at this microscopic scale. More than that can be shown by means of the gathered visual examples; it is felt through experience of the objects, interviews with artists and craftsmen and the processes that go behind making of the objects. The relationship grows and becomes a way by which the city relates to the object and the object becomes the means to transmit the character of the Old city of Srinagar. I feel, the objects acquire an architectural quality to them that is also subjective to its experience by its users. Portability of the crafts through movable pieces and objects like furniture, lattice screen partitions, and other such objects is crucial at this spatial level.

Traditional Architecture and Building Crafts of the Old City of Srinagar, apart from being a cultural asset and a resource from the past, also defines the City and its community's distinct identity, its history and most importantly its creative literacy and vibrancy. This encompasses not only the architectural buildings but the crafts associated with it. Understanding, management and effective conservation of these assets is of great value to the city but active conservation of the technical knowledge of the techniques, reasons and processes behind them is of great help to the people and communities practicing it. They reflect the skills, talent and unique aesthetics of local artists, artisans, designers and a tacit relationship between people of the city and their sense of tradition. They create a distinct mix of inspiration and ideas and a range of highly valuable skills. These assets are important in cultural vitality and are integral to the development and retention of local talent. As the study delineates the intricate network of strands of processes and systems that are linked to the discussed examples from the built environment of the Old City of Srinagar the relationship

between Architecture and Crafts of the place turns out to be as complex but evidently existing.

Though the sturdiness of the relationship does not always remain the same on all spatial scales but it is clearly present. This relationship brings the entire system of the built environment of Srinagar together in its understanding. Most of the Heritage buildings, if conserved, have a greater economic, cultural and social value. The revitalization of built heritage is particularly significant in Srinagar where the conservation of the architecture and crafts associated with heritage will have positive benefits of encouraging cultural revival, tourism and a sense of distinct identity.

Throughout the study and field trip research of this thesis, my objective has been to put light on the efforts that go in the making or creating of architecture and craft objects. The efforts seen and observed are deep, intricate and extremely complicated at every step of the system. This type of study helps to find ways to constantly improve alignment of specific practices that are associated with spaces like cities or states. The study might further help to achieve root and branch innovation in substance of practice as well as understand transformations of methods, values, knowledge-base of traditional practice or profession. It helps in realizing and comprehending the way the wider world imagines the practice or its objectives and values of the traditional architecture and crafts. The study's objective was catalysing new theory in terms of looking at interlinks behind the architecture or ethnic craft practices.

## FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study catalyses new ways in terms of looking at links behind the architecture and ethnic craft practices in Kashmir

The results of this thesis can further contribute to the work being carried out by INTACH and CDI in Kashmir presently

The study gives an adaptable framework to look at intricate processes from macroscopic to microscopic spatial scales in other regions in India



**Figure 8.3 : Findings and Implications**

**Most importantly, this developed methodology catalyses new ways in terms of looking at links behind the architecture and ethnic craft practices in Kashmir. The results of this thesis can further contribute to the work being carried out by INTACH and CDI in Kashmir presently The study gives an adaptable framework to look at intricate processes from macroscopic to microscopic spatial scales in other regions in India.**

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A Puzzle to Solve (Khatambad Craft, Kashmir)

<http://gaatha.com/khatambad-craft-kashmir/>

Carving against the Grain

<https://www.pipalpress.com/?p=1294>

## **CDI – CRAFT DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE**

<http://cdisgr.org/>

## **CONSERVATION TECH**

Randolph Langenbach

M-Arch (Harvard), Dipl.Conservation (York, England)

<https://www.conservationtech.com>

## **DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING, KASHMIR**

<https://srinagar.nic.in/planning-development/>

## **INTACH – Indian National Trust for Culture and Heritage ( J&K Chapter)**

<https://intachjkchapter.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.intach.org/>

## **Gaatha**

<http://gaatha.com/khatambad-craft-kashmir/>

## **Kashmir Through my Lens**

<https://www.instagram.com/kashmirthroughmylens/?hl=en>

## **Pipal Press**

<https://www.pipalpress.com/>

# **FIELD WORK SUMMARY**

This is a brief field Work summary for the 26 July – 6 August 2018 trip and the 28 January, 2019- 5 February, 2019 trip to Kashmir for gathering information for this thesis.

Hotel for the Stay

## **Comrade Inn**

1, Rajbagh

Opp. Rajbagh Police Station,

Srinagar 190008

Jammu & Kashmir

## **RESEARCH FIELD TRIP 1**

### **Travel Dates**

From - 26 July 2018

Mumbai to Delhi to Srinagar

To - 6 August 2018

Srinagar to Delhi to Mumbai

### **Day 1 – 26 July 2018**

- I met my colleague Architect Howra Syed at University of Kashmir Campus. There are two gates to the University, Sir Syed Gate and Maulana Rumi Gate. We went inside the University through Sir Syed Gate.
- We had a discussion about Howra's Thesis project which she had completed in April of 2018 for Bachelor of Architecture Degree at Rizvi College of Architecture.
- Her thesis topic was based on the other Side of Dal Lake with the *Dunga* Houseboats.
- We visited the houseboats in the latter half of the trip.
- Spent some time in Howra's house which is in Lal Bazar Area near Nigeen Lake, Srinagar, J&K 190011.
- Later in the afternoon visited the Hazratbal Dargah in Hazratbal Srinagar located on the left bank of Dal Lake.
- Walked along the Nowshera Road near AlamGir Bazar in Srinagar and reached the Syed Mirakh Shah Sahib Road.

### **Day 2 - 27 July 2018**

- Had a meeting in the morning with Architect Sameer Hamdani from INTACH. (Recorded)
- At INTACH Office in Srinagar, Sameer introduced me to the fellow colleagues and architects working at INTACH Srinagar and I bought a book, Srinagar: an Architectural legacy by Feisal Alkazi. I got to know about the new School of Architecture offering Undergraduate Degree program in Architecture that has opened in Bemina in Srinagar.
- The meeting in INTACH was helpful to plan the visits to the Old City (Downtown Area) in Srinagar as I was able to get relevant information and direction to go to different *mohallas* and parts of Srinagar.
- Visited the Jalali Haveli also known as the Jalali Heritage House which was built in the year 1863. I was able to visit the interiors of the house and click some photos and meet with the owner of the house.

### **Day 3 – 28 July 2018**

- Visited Dargahs in the City and Jamia Masjid Srinagar. The entire day was spent visiting Dastageer Sahib Dargah, Kankahi Shah-i-Hamdan, Bulbul Shah Dargah and Tomb of Rinchan Shah, Budshah Tomb which is the final resting place of the mother of Sultan Zain-UI-Abidin, Ziyarat Naqshband Sahib, Aali Masjid near the Eidgah of the city and Jamia Masjid.
- Had a difficulty finding a Tourist Map and was not allowed to make sketches of few sites without a letter of permission. But was able to photograph the sites.

### **Day 4 – 29 July 2018**

- For this day, I got prior permission to visit the Shah House near Nishat. It was recommended by Sameer Hamdani and Architect Athar that I should visit the House. I was allowed to photograph the areas that were accessible at the Shah House.
- Following the visit to Shah house I got to visit the Mughal Gardens; Nishat Bagh, Shalimar Bagh, Chashme Shahi and Pari Mahal.

### **Day 5 – 30 July 2018**

- Went to the tourist side of the Dal Lake and visited different tourist points and markets while on the Shikara Ride.
- Explored the Floating Garden and hydroponic agriculture practiced by the families that live in houseboats on the Dal.
- Met with Howra Syed and we got to go to the other side of Dal Lake where communities live on the lake in small Houseboats called Dunga Houseboats with Howra.

### **Day 6 – 31 July 2018**

- I took this day to explore the newer parts of the city of Srinagar. I visited places in and around Rajbagh, Bund GPO Road looking over the Jhelum River, Lal Chowk, General Post Office, Kashmir Emporium near the General Post Office, Mahatta Photography Studio and the Gulshan Book Store.

### **Day 7 – 1 August 2018**

- This was one of the most important visits in the old city that help me better understand what I would be taking forward as my thesis project.
- INTACH and some contacts that I got from the local people helped me get to the mohallas that I wanted to explore in the old city.
- Following the visit to the mohallas, I headed to the Crafts Development Institute to gather information about the Traditional crafts of Kashmir that are integral to its traditional Architecture.

### **Day 8 – 2 August 2018**

- I spend the day going to Kaarkhanas (Workshops) of different traditional crafts in the old city and spoke to the skilled craftsmen that were working there.
- This was helpful in understanding the processes of different Kashmiri crafts that are integral to the traditional buildings and Architecture of Kashmir.
- I visited the Walnut Wood carving Workshops, Pinjrakaari Workshop, Naqashi or Papier Mache workshop and the Khatamband workshop.
- I got an opportunity to talk about the different crafts and ask some questions regarding them with the craftsmen and owners of the different karkhaanas.
- I got a chance to meet with Wasta Bashir a member of the only family that still practices the craft of *Dasta* (traditional mullion work in windows)

### **Day 9 – 3 August 2018**

- Being a Friday, it was recommended by the local people to avoid going in the Old City of Srinagar as there was often tension and reported incidents of stone pelting, protests and local rows or disputes between different communities or ethnic groups after the Friday Prayers around Jamia Masjid.

### **Day 10, 11 – 4 & 5 August 2018**

- There was a two day strike in Srinagar that did not allow anyone to travel in the city by modes of local transportation. The city experienced complete shutdown in the two days and I was confined to the premises of the hotel.

### **Day 12 – 6 August 2018**

- The trip was cut short due to the strike, but I got a chance to go to the Tourist Reception Centre and The Kashmir Emporium near the General Post Office before taking the flight back to Delhi.

## **LIST OF PLACES VISITED IN SRINAGAR**

### **Dargahs (Shrines) and Mosques**

Khankahi Shah-i-Hamadan  
 Jamia Masjid  
 Hazratbal Dargah  
 Bulbulshah Dargah and Tomb of Rinchan Shah  
 Ziyarat Nakshaband Sahib  
 Dastageer Sahib Dargah  
 Budshah Tomb

### **Mohallas and Karkhanas**

Zadibal for Naqashi (Papier Mache)  
 Namchibal for Dasta Work  
 Safa Kadal (Right Bank of the River) for Pinjra-kari  
 Fateh Kadal for wood Carving

### **Places on Dal Lake**

Floating Market and Farms  
 Residential Houseboats

### **Mughal Gardens**

Shalimar Bagh  
 Nishat Bagh  
 Chasme Shahi  
 Pari Mahal

### **Institutes Visited**

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)  
 Crafts Development Institute (CDI)  
 Tourist Reception Centre  
 Kashmir Arts Emporium  
 General Post Office

### **Local Traditional Houses**

Shah House  
 Jalali Heritage House

## **RESEARCH FIELD TRIP 2**

From – 28 January, 2019

Mumbai to Delhi to Srinagar

To – 5 February, 2019

Srinagar to Delhi to Mumbai

### **Day 1 – Monday, 28 January 2019**

- Went to Keni Mohalla in Nadiyar area of Srinagar. A residential Mohalla with traditional taq houses
- Aali Kadal and Bohri Kadal Area was visited
- Bohri Bazaar/Market

### **Day 2 – Tuesday, 29 January 2019**

- Had a meeting in the morning with Architect Umer from INTACH.
- Went to Chinar Shade in Rainawari and visited the small alleys and lanes in Rainawari area
- Went to Habba Kadal
- Application for materials and information request for thesis research submitted to CDI

### **Day 3 – Wednesday, 30 Jan 2019**

- Dastageer Sahib Shrine
- Shah-i-Hamadan
- Naqshebandh Sahib Shrine
- Khwaja Bazaar

### **Day 4 – Thursday, 31 Jan 2019**

- Visited CDI again
- Visited School of Architecture in Bemina, Srinagar

### **Day 5 – Friday, 1 February 2019**

- Walk around Lal Chowk, Lal Chowk Market
- , Bund Road, Kashmir Arts Emporium

### **Day 6 – Saturday, 2 Feb 2019**

- Makhdoom Sahib Shrine
- Hazrat Bal
- Kashmiri Carpet Workshop
- Kawdara

### **Day 7 – Sunday, 3 Feb 2019**

- The city was under curfew and everything remained shut and barricaded as the Prime Minister of India was addressing at an inauguration event near Boulevard Road

### **Day 8 – Monday, 4 Feb 2019**

- Somawar workshops
- Brass and Copper workshops

### **Day 9- Tuesday, 5 Feb 2019**

Nawa Bazaar

### **LIST OF PLACES VISITED IN SRINAGA**

#### **Dargahs (Shrines) and Mosques**

Khankahi Shah-i-Hamadan

Jamia Masjid

Hazratbal Dargah

Dastageer Sahib Dargah

Makhdoom Sahib, Hari Parbat

Aali Masjid

#### **Mohallas and Karkhanas**

Keni Mohalla ( Residential)

Bohri Bazaar

Nawa Bazaar

Areas around Kawdara Road, Nalamar Road

Zaina Kadal

Zadibal for Naqashi (Papier Mache)  
Namchibal for Dasta Work  
Safa Kadal (Right Bank of the River) for Pinjrakari

### **Institutes**

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)  
Crafts Development Institute (CDI)

### **Local Traditional Houses**

Rainawari House, Near Keni Mohalla

## **LIST OF CONTACTS**

### **Architect Howra Syed**

#### **Hotel Comrade Inn**

1, Rajbagh  
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Phone: +91 94194 94949  
**Sajid Shah** (Comrade Inn Hotel Owner)

#### **INTACH J&K Chapter**

Regal Chowk, Press Colony,  
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir 190001  
intach.jk@gmail.com

### **Architect Sameer Hamdani (INTACH)**

#### **Government School of Architecture**

HIG Colony, Bemina,  
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir 190018  
Phone: +91 94190 72598

#### **Jalali Heritage House**

Owner: Mrs Sughra Hakim  
Opp. Doonipora Park, Zadibal,  
Alamgari Bazar, Srinagar,  
Jammu and Kashmir 190011  
<https://www.facebook.com/jalaliheritagehouse>  
Email: info@jalalihouse.com

### **Architect Tania Shah**

(Faculty at Rizvi College of Architecture)



**Khwaja House/Shah House near Nishat Bagh**  
Mohsin Shah

**Craft Development Institute**

Opp. J&K Bank, Nowshera,  
Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir 190010  
Phone: 0194–2411430, 2411772  
Email: [cdi@cdisgr.org](mailto:cdi@cdisgr.org)

**Artists and Craftsmen**

Artist Maqbool Khan (Naqash/ Papier Mache Craftsman)  
Artist Wasta Bashir (Dasta Work)  
Artist Farooq Ahmed (Carpet Work)  
Artist Sahil Ahmed (Copperware Work)  
Artist Muneer Ahmed Mir (Woodwork)  
Mir Zaffer Ali (Pinjrakari)

**Auto Rickshaw Transport**

Rauf  
Aisaan Bashir

**MATERIALS COLLECTED**

**List of documents obtained**

- Northern and Southern Kashmir Land Use Plan 2000-2021 (PDF document)
- Proposed Land Use Map 2021 (Jpeg)
- Master Plan 2000-2021 Srinagar Metropolitan Area Report by Srinagar Development Authority
- Review/updating of Master plan 2000-2021 and preparation of Master plan with Zonal development Plans - 2021 for Srinagar Metropolitan city (PDF)
- Srinagar: an architectural legacy (book) by Feisal Alkazi (INTACH)
- Detailed Tourist Maps from Tourist Reception Centre, Srinagar
- Information from INTACH by Sameer Hamdani (Audio Recorded)
- Youth Entrepreneurship in Kashmir: Challenges and Opportunities

**Government Documents that support the Crafts**

**CDI Materials**

Brochure  
Newsletters

