

as the wind tore off the moistened paper, as soon as it was laid on the rock. He and his companions caught us up at Baltal on the other side of the pass, and the Nāsik paper impressions which he brought along with him, were excellent.

On the road between Dras and Pandras, on the Tibetan side of the pass, there is a boulder, on which a much worn inscription *Om maṇi padme hūm* can be distinguished. This is the only inscription of that kind which I have been able to trace in the now Muhammadan territory between Shargola and Kashmir. As is the case with all ancient examples of the *Om maṇi padme hūm* formula, the Pandras inscription also has the *d* and *m* written separately, while all the more modern inscriptions show *d* and *m* combined into one compound character.

The Zo-ji Pass is called Du-zhi-la by the Tibetans after a goddess Du-zhi-lha-mo (probably Dus-bzhi-lha-mo, "goddess of the four seasons"). The following tale is told of that deity. Du-zhi-lha-mo was the wife of Naropa. When the latter went to Ladakh, he wished to leave her behind, on account of her Kashmiri smell (*Che-ri*, in full *Kha-che-dri*). She was displeased at that, and turned her back towards Ladakh, and her face towards Kashmir. This caused Ladakh to dry up, and Kashmir to become fertile. People say: "I wish he had taken her to Ladakh, then it would be as green as Kashmir." And the sudden appearance of the luxuriant vegetation on the Kashmir side of the Zo-ji Pass is really an ever fresh and pleasant surprise to the traveller from Ladakh. Although during the last two or three days a few scattered trees have made their appearance on the roadside, a beautifully wooded mountain slope is more than he would expect to rise before his vision, and yet it is so; for on turning a corner of the excellent new road across the pass, green wooded Kashmir suddenly makes its appearance, and desert Ladakh remains behind.

The first typical Kashmiri village on the south side of the Zo-ji Pass, is Sonamarg (Golden Meadow). A short distance above the village, there are remains of ancient ramparts which were built across the valley. The Tibetans call them *La-dvags-rgyal-poi-mchibs-ra*, "the king of Ladakh's horse-enclosure." They believe that their ancient kings had their horses on this side of the pass. The Kashmiri inhabitants of Sonamarg, however, believe that these ramparts are the remains of a Qila' (fort) of a certain Ibrāhīm Khān of Kābul. I may add that the Tibetans call the resthouse of Baltal *Shing-khang*, and the village of Sonamarg, *bSod-nams-ma-lig*.

About a mile above the village of Gund, on the old road, is a rock covered with several ancient and crude carvings of human figures which are believed by the Tibetans to represent King Kesar. They remind one of those put up in commemoration of the dead in Manchad and Lahul. How these carvings of human beings (about eight), came to be connected with King Kesar, I do not know. On the same rock we found also sun symbols, for instance, wheels with eight spikes.

In Śrīnagar, the capital of Kashmir, I was particularly interested in all those places which are connected with Riñchan Bhōṭī, the Tibetan (Ladakhi) king of Kashmir (circa 1319—1323 A.D.). As is stated by Sir Walter Lawrence in his book on Kashmir,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Valley of Kashmir*, p. 190.