

Aryan Saraswat Brahmins Of Kashmeere {Kashmir}
Through
Two Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity,
Conversion
Trauma's, Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th
Century }

Contents

Part I : Curiosity For Past - Aryan Saraswat Brahmin Honorific
Gotra - Genesis, Orientation, Proliferation – Dattatreya' Gotra

Part II : Advent Of Islam By Preachers And Helped By Then Rulers-
T yranny - First Exodus 15th Century

Part III : Saraswat Bhatta's And Surnames

Part IV : Surname Roots From Shakta Worship - Re- return
And Rebirth Gratus Shriya Bhatta {Shri Bhat } -
Conversions and Re-Exodus - Stars Rise Under
Moghuls : Pandit Honorific

Part V : Controversy Pandit Honorific – Under Later Moghuls
Afghan's And Later Dogra Rule ; Star Pandit's : Narain
And Bhawani

**Aryan Saraswat Brahmins Of Kashmeere {Kashmir} Through
Two
Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity, Conversion
Trauma's,
Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th
Century }**

- Brigadier Rattan

Kaul

{The article intends to remind our Gen X of triumphs, traumas, achievements, exodus and survival of Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* {Kashmir} during the past two millenniums. The inspirational effort goes to **Puja**, who enters the portals of family of Bhawani Kaul of *Kashmeere's*, becomes part of the community and welcomed to philosophy and fold of Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* {Kashmir}, like Queen Yasomati {300 BC} and Queen Ahala {13th Century- who built *Ahalmatha Math*, present-day '*Gund Ahlamar*', close to the roots of Bhawani's descendants }- *Author*}

**Part I – Curiosity For Past - Aryan Saraswat Brahmin Honorific - Gotra
Genesis,**

Orientation, Proliferation - Dattatreya Gotra

Curiosity For Past. These are not the triumphs and travails of a particular Aryan Saraswat Brahmin of *Kashmeere* {Kashmir}, commonly referred now as *Kashmiri* {*Kashmeeri*} Pandit, but transition of a community through two millenniums of religious philosophies, search of identity, *Gotra* orientation, honorific's *Bhatta* and *Pandit* and selective surnames. This medium also intends to remind Gen X of our roots, genesis of specific names and surnames, honorific's and other details of the community, with details to give insight of that era, before these pass into oblivion.

In late fifties, it was part of curriculum of my school to visit places of interest during vacation or on weekends, in and around Srinagar City; to know about our culture, places of heritage or join sports like Regatta, Hound – Race, Civic Action Spree's etc; indeed rewarding for a just teenager in me. My rewarding visits, however, were to Sri Partap Singh Museum {S P S Museum} at *Lal Mandi* and later to Research and Publication Department of Jammu & Kashmir State; to see ancient artefacts, sculptures, paintings manuscripts in Sanskrit, Sharda, Persian, *Kashmeeri* and Urdu. In manuscript and history section there were birch leaf manuscripts, hand wrought paper miniature paintings, papier-mâché artefacts, silk scrolls and volumes of manuscripts in different languages, contents of which could not be deciphered due to lack of knowledge of languages in which they were written. Our subsequent visits under our teachers were more rewarding with teachers giving out some contents of these papers. I had heard of many scholars of the community; Narain Kaul, Anand Ram Pahalwan, Tota Kaul Kardar {Father of Historian Anand Kaul and Grand Father of Historian and writer P N K Bamzai}, Govind Koul, Pandit Sahib Ram, Pandit Sahaz Bhat, Bhawani Das Kachru, Bhawani Kaul, Professor Nityanand Shastri, Mukund Ram Shastri and many others. Their contribution

during last few centuries was enormous but they remained near anonymous, unsung and were hardly mentioned in chronicles or given credit for their scholarly work. In the exhibits too there were many markers attributed to such scholars but amongst them were two common names; Narain and Bhawani Kaul. I had heard that there was philosopher, writer and intellectual by later name, who rose to high level of intellectual and administrative standings during 18th and 19th Century {AD}, while Narain Kaul had earned a name during Moghul reign. My job, wars and varied interest kept this task incomplete but high on my list and it is pleasure to recount achievements of our community and sons of the soil; of the time when tyranny from Muslim rule was predominant in *Kashmeere* with only flicker of sunny patches, at intervals. It was inevitable that in this process entire community came under the scan. **In the bargain I hit gold, many aspects of our community; names, forms of address, surnames, travails, transitions and genesis thereof surfaced; covering a broad spectrum of nearly two millenniums.** Complete and specific analysis of works and achievements of various revered community ancestors including these two are subjects by itself and beyond the scope of this paper. A later direct descendant of these illustrious Pandit's was Late Lambodher Kaul of Badiyar {1899-1971 AD}, who too had the qualities of his ancestors; intelligence, sacrifice and humility. Justice Kishan Lal Kitchloo, Chief Justice of High Court {40's} termed him as his right hand and embodiment of a Kashmiri Pandit {KP} of his time. Another descendant of the family Late Sham Lal Kaul {1910-2001 AD}, keen and gifted with tremendous knowledge, would have brought the contribution of his ancestors in print, had he not parted from his rare collection of books and details due to **third** exodus. In all humility this paper owes its birth to these two illustrious descendants.

In this paper I have quoted excerpts from Persian Chronicles written during Muslim rule. This is basically that our Brahmin scholars and chroniclers of that time, for obvious reasons of threat and lack of patronage, used guarded language to describe the events and travails of the community clearly at that time. The description in Persian chronicles, while glorifying Muslim rule, gives events in their own words and is closer to reality; for they were part of and patronised by the system. In this paper *Kashmeere*, closer to pronunciation of *Kasheer* {For Kashmir} has been used for reference to our land and *Kashmeeri* to the denizens.

‘The conduct of the wise one, which is unrestricted by motive, shines, being free from pretence but not the affected calmness of the deluded person whose mind is attached; *Ashtavakra Samhita* xviii.52’.

Aryan, Saraswat Brahmin Honorific. Honorific ‘Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere*’ has been specifically used for our community, as only ‘Aryan’ word encompasses broader spectrum of people {Aryans} of *Bharatvarsha* and not *Kashmeere*. Aryan, a derivative of word *Aryenem* in Central Asian Scripture *Avestan*, is connected with their move out of Central Asia around 18th Century BC {Some Historians are of the view that this move took place somewhat earlier; in large groups between 3700 {+ -} 800 years and 1800 BC}. *Hindustan* appellation, pronounced *Sindhustan*, dates back to Cyrus The Great {Of Persia -6 Century BC}, to describe the people living beyond River Indus {Sindhu}, which was Eastern Boundary of then Persia. Persians had phonetic problem of pronouncing alphabet ‘S’ and *Sindhustan* was pronounced as *Hindustan*{also *Hindoostan*}, inhabitants as Sindhu’s {Pronounced *Hindu*}, Country {*Stan*} of Sindhu’s as *Sindhustan* but pronounced *Hindustan*. **There is no doubt that Aryans came to *Bharatvarsha* {*Hindustan*} from Central Asia and their entry was opposed by then inhabitants of *Bharatvarsha* {*Hindustan*}. They had to mix, cajole, conquer, even force their settlement at places. ‘Conquer’ also meant various methods other than use of force; minds, hearts etc. The lot of hubble propounding various theories over their origin, ‘Aryan invasion’ or ‘Aryan Invaders’ is unwarranted.** ‘Aryan’ word was applied as a title to themselves by our ancestors and referred to as a race; in distinction from the people they {Aryans} had ‘conquered’. ‘*Arya*’ is also title used for people **‘cultivated in mind and character’**, whose way of life aims at **‘elevating the individual soul through a disciplined life to Godhood {*Mukhti*}’**. Philosophically it is a term of ethical,

intellectual and spiritual excellence, applied to those who had completely mastered *Aryasatyani* (Holy Truths) and who tread *Aryamarga* {Path to *Moksha* or *Nirvana*). *Aryavarta*; abode of noble or excellent ones or the sacred land of the Aryans, referred later as *Bharatvarsha*, was the ancient name for the geographical area South of Indus {*Sindhu*} extending from Northern to Central *Bharatvarsha* {*Hindustan*} including geographical limits of *Kashmeere*, East to Western Sea and bounded on the North and South by the *Himalaya* / *Hindukush* / *Sindhu* and *Vindhya* mountains respectively. The *Bharatvarsha* or *Bhaarat Khand* form of invocation to Gods and address, has been scripted in the beginning of many rituals in religious scriptures of Brahmins of *Bharatvarsha* {*Hindustan*}. For ease of understanding *Bharatvarsha* has been referred as *Hindustan* in this paper. The original word *Aryavarta*, the sacred land of ‘Aryans’, also seems to have origin from words *Aryenem Vaego* mentioned in Central Asian Scripture *Avestan*. *Vaego* means *Beeja* {Seed} thus meaning ‘Seed of Aryans’.

Aryans settled at many places in *Hindustan*, mostly along river *Saraswati* {*Avesta* named it *Harahwati*; **pronunciation of alphabet ‘S’ here also is ‘H’**}; regarded as most central and intimately mentioned in the *Rig Veda*, most sacred of our religious scriptures considered very old; dating around fourth millennium BC {4000BC; 3700 BC {+ -} 800 years {Other prominent *Vedas* are *Yajur*, *Sarna* and *Athar*; preserved as *Shruiti* {voice heard} and *Smriti* {remembered} and finally compiled by *Brahma Rishi* and considered pre *Mahabharata* – 3100 BC}. *Rig Veda* was originally written in *Khartoshi* {*Khartoshi* script was from right to left and is attributed to Aryans}. *Brahmi* came thereafter followed by *Pali* and *Gupta Lipi* while *Devnagri* script was evolved in 6th Century AD. In ancient times Aryan bards who sang hymns extolling their adventures were called *Arthvan*;, meaning a person of essence, who with passage of time became their priests and later called Brahmin and got mentioned in *Brahma Purana* as such. Definition of Brahmin in *Brahma Purana* refers to ‘those who wrote, read and spoke *Vedic*’ {*Vedic* was spoken by Aryans and *Brahmi* was the script {*Lipi*}}. A *Shaloka* in *Brahma Purana* defines a Brahmin {translated} thus; “**The wise man overcomes anger through mind control, lust through the renunciations of desire... Through conduct he should protect mind and speech. ...Through constant vigilance he should shed fear and through the service of the wise, he should overcome pride – *Brahma Purana* 235. 40 - 42**”. Study of *Rig Veda* text suggests that the Sage’s, *Vedic*’s, *Rishi*’s lived on the banks of ‘**Saraswati; The Great Goddess Stream**’, which saw transition of Aryans to *Brahmanism* in *Hindustan*, getting them honorific ‘*Aryan Saraswat Brahmins*’. River *Saraswati* originally flowed through what is now known as present Rajasthan and portion identified as modern river *Syr-Darya* joining the Aral Sea {North Part of Arabian Sea} and ‘**changed its course at least four times**’. Once it changed course or started drying up, Aryans living along its banks dispersed to many parts of *Hindustan* including *Kashmeere*. As per common belief *Saraswati* River dried up in stages and by around 2000 BC it finally dried up, though not confirmed scientifically, and became a mythical river. A significant group of Aryans, closer to Northern Belt/ Indus {*Sindhu*}, left the area around 3000 BC, when a significant change of course of *Saraswati* River took place. This period is considered authentic era of their entry to *Kashmeere*; as *Saptrishi Samvat* approximately starts with their entry into the valley {It is 5080 *Saptrishi Samvat* in 2004}. *Kashyapa*, a *Rishi* and a Gotra head also chronicled as the father of Nila, Naga King of *Saras* {*Saras* - Inland Sea; *Kashmeere* was then called *Saras*, inhabited by *Nagas* {Aborigines/ Tribals} with capital at *Nilakunda* {*Verinag*}}. At the behest of his father, *Kashyapa*, Nila invited, rather welcomed, Aryans to his land from *Saraswati* River areas. **As the time passed many more smaller groups entered the valley of *Saras* and many smaller groups came out of *Saras* and settled in Northwestern *Hindustan*. There is no historical proof that Aryans directly moved to *Saras* {*Kashmeere*} valley from Central Asia while moving towards *Saraswati* River, as their route to *Sindhustan* {*Hindustan*} from Central Asia was far away from *Saras* {*Kashmeere*}**. Prefix address of ‘Aryan’ for our community is well chronicled, including by Kalhan in *Rajatarangini*, who calls it as the ‘*Land of Aryans*’ {Verse 341 Book I}. Western and Indian scholars also assert that our community, without any doubt, belong to the Aryan race; **‘It is certain that it {*Kashmeere*} was a colony of Aryan**

immigrants from Central Asia. Their features and fair complexion speaks of their inner Aryan race'. With the selective use 'Aryan immigrants from Central Asia' it is meant that Aryans came through Central Asia to plains of *Hindustan* and then into the valley *Saras {Kashmeere}*. Another Anglo Ornithologist, Thompson, , is of the view that Aryans; '**A longheaded race of tall stature with narrow noses and fair complexion and their purest representatives are found today mainly in Kashmeere**'.

Gotra Genesis And Orientation. With passage of time *Brahminical* religion and *Gotra* orientation took roots as part of religious rituals amongst Aryan Saraswat Brahmins including those in *Kashmeere*. Many of us do not know mythology behind *Gotra* and possibly only know our *Gotra* and that *Gotra* of *Dattatreya Kaul's* starts from Sage *Dattatreya* {Also known as Lord *Dattatreya*}. Reference to *Gotra* in *Vedic* literature is very infrequent. *Rig Veda* refers to it only at a few places; at four places it has been referred mostly in prayers to Lord *Indra*, as a 'mountain and a cloud'. There is considerable difference of opinion regarding real connotation of the word '*Gotra*' in *Vedas*. Many consider use of word *Gotra* in *Vedas* meaning 'cowshed', while others connect it with a 'Group'. It is obvious that the connotation to a 'group' came about with the *Brahminical* religion taking firmer roots. The earliest reference to its usage, referring to a 'group' or '*Gotra*' is found in *Chhandogyan Upanishad*, where an *Acharaya* {Scholar} asks the *Gotra* of one *Safya Kama*. However, as time passed, institution of *Gotra's* was fully established by the time of Buddha; as Buddhist literature makes frequent references to *Gotra's*. The sages, who founded the initial *Brahminical Gotra's* are seven {**Sapth Rishi's**; *Bhrigu*, *Angiras*, *Marichi*, *Atri*, *Paulaha*, *Pulastya* and *Vasistha*. The fifth *Rishi Paulaha* brought forth demons (*Rakshas*); sixth *Pulastya* devils (*Pisachas*); while seventh *Vasistha*, died and appeared again as a descendant of *Marichi*. *Bhrigu* and *Angiras* could not properly represent as founders of families and other three; *Jamadagni*, *Gautama* and *Bhardvaja* took their place. Seven *Rishi's* heading *Brahminical Gotra's* as enumerated in ***Satpatha Brahmana*** are; ***Gautama*, *Bhardvaja*, *Jamadagni*, *Atri Vasistha*, *Kashyapa* and *Visvamisra***. It is interesting to note that *Kashyapa*, chronicled as father of *Nila*, the King of *Saras {Kashmeere}* and *Visvamisra* are included in this list; slightly different from the original list. Descendants of *Kashyapa Gotra* apart from being found in *Kashmeere* are also found in more so in Northern and erstwhile Northwestern belt. This leads credence to the theory that smaller groups of Aryans moved out of *Kashmeere* subsequently and settled in Northern and Northwestern region of erstwhile *Hindustan*. To this list of seven *Gotra* heads ***Agastya*** has been added as eighth *Gotra* head and *Brahminical Gotras* of *Hindustan* are traced to them. These founders belonged to the era of *Saraswati Bank Ashrams*, not at the same time, are pre-*Mahabarata* and as their descendants proliferated and with geographical changes of *Saraswati River*, they migrated to various parts of *Hindustan*; from *Nepal* to *Western Ghat's* and *Central* to *Northern Hindustan*. Five descendants of these eight ancestors also were given *Rishi* order and are designated as *Gotra* heads; ***Dattatreya*** {Son of *Atri*}, ***Paladeva*, *Aupamanyava*, *Maudgalya* and *Dhaumyayana***. Mostly descendants of these five and original founder ***Bhardvaja*** moved to extreme Northern region of *Hindustan*; mainly *Kashmeere*. However, a sprinkling of those who had *Gotra* name of the original heads like *Gautama*, *Vasistha*, and *Atri* also moved to *Kashmeere*. Tenth *Gotra Kashyapa* is common in the plains of *Hindustan* and the valley of *Saras {Kashmeere}*. Thus technically descendants of ten *Gotra* founders moved into *Kashmeere* {***Dattatreya*** {Son of *Atri*}, ***Paladeva*, *Aupamanyava*, *Maudgalya*, *Dhaumyayana*, *Bhardvaja*, *Gautama*, *Vasistha*, *Atri* and *Kashyapa***} and not six, as we are made to believe.

Gotra, however, did not tag itself with a name of a person or family nor found usage as surname; but got mentioned for religious ceremonies. In *Kashmeere*, *Gotra* got mentioned only for religious ceremonies; marriages etc and not as prefix or suffix to a name, as it was sacrosanct to avoid its common daily usage. Like there was no name like *Sada Kaul Dattatreya* or *Dattatreya Sada Kaul*; he was *Sada Kaula Bhatta* or simply *Sada Kaul* in medieval times. Same *Sada Kaul* for religious ceremonies, however, was '***Sada Kaul Bhatta***

Dattatreya Gotra Kashmeere Vasse' {Meaning Sada Kaul Brahmin of Dattatreya Gotra of Kashmeere}; which he had to utter himself. It was one up man-ship, differentiation from co-religionists, fix or flout superior *Brahminical* roots and lineage that *Gotra* was mentioned. Above *Gotra's* are also found in many parts of *Hindustan* { Western Ghats and Konkan } though Brahmins settled in Western Ghat's adhere to restricted usage of *Gotra*. They suffix their first name with that of father, followed {generally} by place of birth/residence like Vijay {*First name*} Balram {*Fathers name*} Dewasthale {*Place name used as surname also*}.

Proliferation of Gotra's In Kashmeere. Amazing that if only descendants of ten *Gotra's* entered *Kashmeere*, approximately 200 *Gotra's* and Sub *Gotra's* proliferated in *Kashmeere*. This proliferation dates back to early part of medieval period or earlier, as no *Rishi* heading a *Gotra* is chronicled to have existed during first millennium AD. A scrutiny of *Gotra* list gives you equally contradicting indications. The basic parameter was that *Gotra* remained unchanged and a girl and her progeny adopted her husband's *Gotra* as her new *Gotra*. Certain aberrations and adaptations have taken place as under: -

- *Gotra* of five out of original eight {**Satpatha Brahmana**} were also adopted {*Gautama, Bhardvaja, , Vasistha, Kashyapa and Atri*}; rather than restricting these to only five of their descendants {**Dattatreya** {Son of *Atri*}, **Paladeva, Aupamanyava, Maudgalya**} and **Dhaumyayana**. Thus descendants of following *Gotra* heads/founders moved into *Kashmeere* {**Dattatreya** {Son of *Atri*}, **Paladeva, Aupamanyava, Maudgalya, Dhaumyayana, Bhardvaja, Gautama, Vasistha, Atri and Kashyapa**} taking *Gotra* numbers to ten.
- New independent *Gotra* heads like *Shandliya, Kaushika* came up; antiquity and vintage of these *Gotra's* cannot be ascertained. These *Gotra's* are predominant even today amongst the Brahmins of *Hindustan* and is indication that these *Gotra's* manifested after the initial groups of Aryans moved to *Kashmeere* and later smaller groups of their descendants subsequently moved in to *Kashmeere*.
- Permutation combination of *Gotra's* came about by prefixing *Dar, Deva, Mitra, Swamin, Dat, and Raj* etc; like *Mitra Atreya, Mitra Kaushika, Mitra Shandliya, Mitra Kashyapa, Raj Dattatreya, Raj Kaushika, Dev Vasistha* etc. Genesis of these remains unknown but definitely do not belong to *Rishi* order but to some Godmen of a particular era.
- Another set of *Gotra's* appeared with descendants of the original eight and other six main *Gotra's* starting their own appellation and combinations; like *Kaushika Atreya, Deva Bhardvaja Kaushika* etc. These are somewhat mixed combinations spanning older and later generations.
- Matriarchal system has not been in vogue in our history, which could have possibly thrown up two *Gotra's* in the same family; that of son and daughter-in-law. However, when the boy shifted as *Ghar Jamai* and like an adopted son; could be that their progeny opted for combination of two *Gotra's*. While adopting such a system, pseudo *Gotra* names are bound to come about. Likely *Gotra* like *Bhardvaja Kaushika* is as a result of marriages between *Gotra's*, evolving a clubbed *Gotra*. A close study of *Gotra's* in *Kashmeere* will indicate *Dar* and *Deva* prefixes do not indicate a separate *Gotra* but a respectful appellation of original *Gotra*; like *Dar Gautama, Deva Gautama* are appellations for same *Gautama Gotra*. This is common amongst the *Gotra's* of *Hindustan* also.
- *Kashmeeri* Brahmins perform their religious ceremonies and rites according to *Vedas* of *Laugakshi Rishi* and *Nilamatpurana*, which gave birth to many more *Gotra's* with prefix, suffix or combination with *Laugakshi Rishi* and he also finds his way in the list of *Gotra* founders of *Kashmeere*. This is particular for *Kashmeeri's* only and also indicates assimilation of the original inhabitants of *Saras {Kashmeere}* in the main religious stream of then prevalent religion of *Kashmeer*. *Nilamatpurana* {Dr. Buhler was responsible for delving the *Puranam* in English} is as sacred as *Vedas* to *Kashmeeri's*. Our rituals etc are admix of Naga and Aryan customs and rites, which gives indication of mixture of Naga and Aryan blood in *Kashmeere*, restricted though, by way of marriages and progeny bringing

another line of descendants having their own *Gotra* and its name. **Recent selective genetic research all over erstwhile Bharatvarsha has shown that Aryans, when they came to Bharatvarsha, comprised more of men than women. Over a period of time they had to marry the local breed of women and thus their numbers proliferated. Similar would have been the case of cross mixing with Nagas in Kashmeere.**

- It is also apparent that ‘later descendants’ of *Gotra* ‘Founders’ or ‘Heads’, as enumerated above, had their own aspirations; made friendly combination with other *Gotra* or added their name as an addendum with originators. Also those who did not know their *Gotra*; anointed their *Gotra* from then *Rishi*’s, *Godmen*, etc.

Dattatreya Legend. Sage Atri {Also Atreya}, during his life, undertook penance for the good of mankind for which *trinity* {Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh} appeared before the sage and offered themselves for carrying on his good work. As a consequence a strange boy, with three heads and six arms, was born and started calling Sage Atri as ‘father’. Atri did not like the way in which his ‘son’ was born; this self-born ‘son’ immediately merged back into nature. Second time Saraswati, Lakshmi and Parvati {Consorts of *trinity*} wanted to test Anasuya, Sage Atri’s wife. They sent ‘*Trimurti*’ {Godhead with Three Heads} to her; but Anasuya converted *Trimurti* into three infants. Anasuya, though happy, neither accepted nor rejected the infants, because they were not biologically her’s. Subsequently, the Goddesses requested Anasuya to return them their ‘husbands’; she agreed and the three babies disappeared. In due course Anasuya prevented a catastrophe which one ‘*Sumati* {Another sages wife} had nearly created, for which she got a boon from the *Trinity* and she wished for a son. Thus Lord *Dattatreya* was born; when Atri and Anasuya aspired. In the **first** instance *Datta* {God-Savior} was born as a *Samashti Murthi* {Collective form; with three heads}; in **second** instance he manifested as *Vyashti Murthi* {Individual form; as three babies} and in **third** instance collectively, from union of a husband and wife. This phenomenon ‘**represented principles and harmonious relation between Creation, Sustenance and Destruction**’. It also symbolically demonstrated link between God- Savior’s {*Datta*’s} three {*Treya*} forms; of ‘Creation, Sustenance and Destruction’; thus name of *Dattatreya* and his descendants *Dattatreya Gotra*. He introduced and propagated both *Vaidika* {Ritualistic} and *Avidika* {Non-ritualistic} paths and *Dvaita* {Dualistic} and *Advaita* {Monistic} philosophies, which formed the base of Shaivism in *Hindustan* and *Kashmeere*. *Dattatreya*’s mention can also be found in various *Upanishads* like *Shandilya Upanishad* and *Dattatreya Upanishad* enumerating oneness of *Tattva*’s {Elements}; “**Sadaa dattohamasmi dattohamasmeeti pratyetat samvadanti ye na te samsaarino bhavanti**”. It means; ‘**When True Principle of Dattatreya is realised, that person should be able to experience that he himself is Datta {God- Savior}! He should become the experience himself**’.

Some of our own authors have written differing accounts pertaining to *Dattatreya Gotra* like; “Son of Atri and Ansuya who had three sons; Soma, Datta and Durvasa, to whom also a portion of the divine essence was transmitted. He was the patron of *Kartavirya*, and gave him a thousand arms”. In *Bahari Kashmir* {Urdu version of which is included by Mr. Fauq in his ‘*Twarikhi Akwami Kashmir*’} writer has an imaginative prosaic thus; “*Varsha Atri* was a famous Sanskrit scholar living in a village of Baramullah {*Varhamulla*}, much before the war of *Mahabharata*. His famous book ‘*Attri Dharma Shastra*’ is still available in the country. He had three sons, *Dattatriya*, *Durvasa* and *Soma*. *Dattatriya* is a combination of two words, *Datta* plus *Attriya*. *Dattatriya* received his initial education in Kashmir, but with the coming of youth,

he like his father left his home touring and travelling Northern India. There are a number of places in Central and Western India where he is supposed to have stayed for sometime. He met *Parasar Rishi* and *Vamadeva* {**Incidentally Vamdev is Bairav of our Goddess Sharika and one wonders as to how he, a Bhairav of a Goddess, gets involved in mythology of a Gotra**} at Badrak Ashram in the Himalayas...*Dattatreya* had a huge and powerful body and lived for a long time. He had many sons. His descendants are Kauls of *Kashmeere* settled in and outside

the valley. *Dattatreya Brahmins* are also found in Maharashtra and Deccan. They are also his descendants. They are generally called Brahmins but the word *Dattatreya* is written as a prefix to their names”.

Two
Aryan Saraswat Brahmins Of Kashmeere {Kashmir} Through
Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity, Conversion
Trauma's,
Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th Century
}

Part II - Advent of Islam By Preachers And Helped By Then Rulers –
Tyranny - First Exodus 15th Century

Advent Of Islam. Continuation of this narration will be incomplete without details of advent of Islam, role of then rulers and preachers. Indirectly these events throw more light on the process of our honorific, names, surnames etc; which came in stages to *Kashmeere* from mid of first millennium and got modified during Muslim period. *Kashmeere* was lost to Islam not by a planned invasion by Muslim marauders but by Muslim *Sufi's* and Islamic preachers, who were given honourable receptions by then *Kashmeere* rulers. What accelerated their work was indifference of then rulers, inner strife and even doubtful character of the Kings. Things started worsening during the beginning of 11th Century, in spite of King Harsha's achievements but by the time of Jaisimha {1128-55 AD} acute slide continued. *Trushkas* had started coming to *Kashmeere*, in a trickle, with their selected followers and slowly settled down. *Trushkas* is the name given to Muslims invaders in *Rajatarangini*. Actually most of the Muslim raiders were from Central Asia and dubbed as *Turkmens* or *Turks* or *Turki*. *Trushkas* apparently is adapted form of these, which also means invaders in *Upbrahmasha* } The first known Muslim

to have settled in *Kashmeere* {Many Muslims visited *Kashmeere* like famous chronicler Al-Biruni in 1030 AD} was a Syrian, named Hamid, who accompanied Son of Sindh ruler {Now in Pakistan}, also named Prince Jaisingh, when Arabs conquered Sindh during the reign of Jaisimha of *Kashmeere*. Jaisimha presented him {Jaisingh} an estate. After death of Jaisingh {Of Sindh}, Hamid became the owner of this estate. He then started propagating his religion among his friends and acquaintances taking advantage of his status and influence. King Jaisimha turned blind eye. In *Rajatarangini* by Kalhan, author has been critical of Jaisimha for many reasons and it is apparent that this could be also be one of them, as he {Kalhan} mentions soft stand of Jaisimha towards *Trushkas* {Muslims}. As time passed, help to *Trushkas* by the Kings was a deliberate effort to counter co-religionist opponents and that is how Muslim mercenaries found their way into the Army of then Hindu rulers. However, it was handful of Muslims *Sufi's* and Islamic preachers, pairing with then rulers, who changed history and demography of *Kashmeere*; preachers like Bul Bul Shah, Mir Ali Hamdani, Shah Mir and Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi. The rulers who helped in changing them, directly and indirectly were Suh Dev, Rinchen, Koteh Ren {Also called Kota Rani}, Shah Mir {As a ruler}, Sikandar *But Shikan*, his son Ali Shah and then Hassan Khan and Fateh Khan {14th and 15th Century respectively}.

Bul Bul Shah And Rinchen. Bul Bul Shah, who started the advent of Islam in *Kashmeere*, was a *Sayyid* of *Turkistan*. *Sayyid's* are priestly class of Muslims and in *Kashmeere* their descendants were nicknamed as *Muslim Brahmin's*. He paid his first visit to *Kashmeere* in 1286 AD, during the reign of Simha Deo (1286-1301) but went back soon. The state of affairs deteriorated during the reign of Suh Dev (1301-20) and many foreigners apart from Bul Bul Shah, mainly Muslims, came to *Kashmeere*. Suh Dev went out of his way to receive them, including Bul Bul Shah whom he received at Varahamulla {Baramulla} and gave him gifts. For some time things did not go Bul Bul Shah's way till Rinchen, a *Ladakhi* runaway, was thrown up as a rallying point in *Kashmeere* against the monarchy. Rinchen became King in 1324 AD, was not admitted to Brahmanism and Bul Bul Shah converted him to *Shia* faith in 1325 AD. *Bulbul Lank* {Lankar} locality, in downtown Srinagar is named after him and Rinchen, as a gratitude, constructed first ***Khanaka*** in the valley in his honour in the same locality. *Khanaka*, is different from *Masjid* in terms of name, design and has architecture of Central Asian design with tiled wood roof to cater for vagaries of snow and cold weather.

Rinchen, claimed to be a Tibetan Prince, which is doubtful, as during 14th Century AD Tibet had no principalities and the religious Lama's called *Rimpoche's* held sway. To come to *Kashmeere* Rinchen had to pass through Ladakh and if so he could have settled in Ladakh rather than *Kashmeere*. It is, therefore, fair to assume that he was a *Ladakhi*, 'assumed' to be a prince. After the death of Suh Dev in 1320 AD, he settled as a refugee in *Kashmeere* and yielded considerable power by his deeds amidst anarchy during the period 1320-24. Zulchu {Zulkadur Khan}, a mongoloid chieftain, invaded Kashmir in 1321 AD with a 70,000 strong army. Suh Dev's brother Udyan Dev, next on the throne, fled to Kathwar {Kishtawar} and the inhabitants were at Zulchu's mercy, who killed and took away thousands of men and women as slaves but due to adverse weather conditions perished enroute. The land of *Kashmeere* became barren, as there was no one left to attend to them, starting a saying; ***Yeti vowe Zulichen Gassa*** {***Here Zulchu cultivated grass***}. Rinchen, together with Ram Chand, Chief of Suh Dev's Army, drove off Zulchu and gained respect amongst the inhabitants. The people had lost faith in their ruler and found Rinchen a strong man, who could establish peace. Rinchen had previously also repulsed attack by *Khasha* tribe. Inhabitants who lived between *Vitasta* and *Chandrabagha* {Chenab River} were called *Khasha's*. Without any serious opposition, seized the throne and became undisputed King in 1324 AD, though Ram Chand, then Commander-in-chief of the late king, put in feeble resistance and was killed. Not a ripple was created, so much so Rinchen married Ram Chand's daughter {Koteh Ren also called Kota Rani. She was from Lar, near *Gandarbal* and became a turning point in the history of *Kashmeere*}. Rinchen, as King, approached one *Devaswami*, a *Shaivite* saint and scholar, for his admittance to the fold

of Brahmanism. He {*Devaswami*} flatly refused his admittance to Brahmanism, as he was *Bhautta* {*Botta*- generally refers to Buddhist people from Ladakh} and there was no precedence of converting people of other faiths to Brahmanism. **This assertion does not hold ground as Brahmins, who had converted to Buddhism had returned to the fold in first part of the millennium.** Rinchen eager to identify himself with people of *Kashmeere*, approached Bul Bul Shah, who readily admitted him to Muslim *Shia* faith in 1325 AD, including Ravan Chand {younger brother of Koteh Ren} and many others. The story goes that Shah Mir {More about him later} one night suggested to Rinchen, that they go for a morning walk and the person who meets him first would be a 'truthful' and it is better to adopt his religion. Next morning the first man to meet them was Bul Bul Shah; pre-planned as a result of the conspiracy of Shah Mir. The other story is that Rinchen, having been spurned by Brahmins, hardly had any option and decided this methodology on his own. He enquired from the first man he met as to who he was; **'I am a *Garibham* {Stranger}'** was the answer; the man who answered was no other than Bul Bul Shah. On conversion Rinchen took the name of Malik Sadar-ud-din, became first ruler of *Kashmeere* to be converted to Islam and launched vigorous campaign of converting Brahmins of *Kashmeere* to Islam. Shah Mir, who was around, was made one of his chiefs and became a close associate. Rinchen got a son from Koteh Ren, named Haidar Khan by Bul Bul Shah and Rinchen just before his death in 1326 AD entrusted care of his son to Shah Mir. It is not chronicled if Koteh Ren had converted to Islam; it appears she may have but returned again when she married Udyen Dev {King before Rinchen} on the death of Rinchen. This is also confirmed by the fact that her brother Ravan Chand had converted and she had allowed her son to be named Haider. It is also pertinent to note that Rinchen had been spurned for conversion to Brahmanism and converted instead to Islam. He would have ensured that his wife {Koteh Ren} too had converted. It may be argued that her name did not change but women converted to Islam during the period seldom changed their name. On the death of Rinchen, with the efforts of Koteh Ren, Udyen Dev was installed as King, though she yielded all power till he died in 1341 AD, leaving behind a minor son. After his death Koteh Ren {Kota Rani} held the reins of kingdom for five months. Udyen Dev can be termed as last Brahmin King of *Kashmeere* before Maharaja Gulab Singh took over reigns in 18th Century. This distinction is being wrongly conferred to Koteh Ren, who was only a head, had married a Muslim and even may have quietly converted to Islam. Of late some community writers keep her on a higher pedestal clubbing her with Lal Ded and others for guarding the community. As the history will reveal, she for her lust of power was another main step to push *Kashmeere* to Islam. Shah Mir, in the meantime, had become rallying point while Koteh Ren tried her best to 'establish herself' on the throne, was defeated, outwitted and finally executed.

Shah Mir. Shah Mir, runaway descendant of rulers of Swat where living had been made difficult because of invasions of Taimur, came to *Kashmeere* in 1313 AD with a group of *Sayyid's* during the reign of Suh Dev and they found *Kashmeere* a safe place. He received protection and facilities for carrying out religious preaching, indulged in political intrigue and remained safe from Taimur's terror. Shah Mir's grandfather {or ancestor}, a *Sufi* saint, had predicted that his grandson, named Shah Mir, would become ruler of *Kashmeere*. **"My son Tahir will be given a son named Shah Mir, who will become the ruler of *Kashmeere* and assume the title Shamsu'd-Din. The kingdom of that region and the government of those lands will remain entrusted to and confirmed in the hands of his descendants for a long time."** According to Jonaraja, Goddess *Mahadevi* came to Saimira {Shah Mir} in a dream and told him that he would become king of *Kashmeere*, which will remain with his descendants for a long time. That is what happened; a long spell of *Shahmiri* reign, though veracity of the dream, as recorded by Jonaraja, is doubtful. After death of Rinchen, Koteh Ren appointed Shah Mir as her Chief of the Army. When another Turk, Achala, invaded *Kashmeere* in 1331 AD, Udyen Dev fled to Kathwar {Kishtwar} and Shah Mir rose to the occasion and thereafter went all out to achieve his ancestor's prediction. Jonaraja writes that during the disturbances created by Achala, people found a protector in Shah Mir. There was no change in Shah Mir's plans to usurp power even after return of Udyen Dev and his these plans took concrete shape once

Udyen Dev died in 1341 AD. Koteh Ren, in order to keep power, tried to keep together her flock and was even ready to compromise with Shah Mir. Bikhshana Bhatta, Koteh Ren's Chief Vizir and Malik Avtar {Brother of Koteh Ren} were sent to negotiate peace with him but were mercilessly murdered as soon as they entered Shah Mir's residence in 1342 AD. Another story of this incident goes thus; Shah Mir feigned illness and his collaborators made it known that he was about to die. As a matter of courtesy, Koteh Ren, deputed Bhatta Bhikshana and Malik Avtar to call on him and enquire about his health and were murdered as soon as they entered his residence. **Inspite of this, Koteh Ren compromised with Shah Mir and one night slept in the same bed and was handed over to executioners next day.** Jonaraja denies that they were married and writes that **Saimira** {Shah Mir} shared her bed for one night and then put her in prison. Hasan, Muslim Historian, gives the same story, but with a slight difference in detail. According to him; **'She was compelled by circumstances to agree to his proposal {of marriage}. On the day of their marriage she clad herself in gorgeous robes; but stabbed herself by ripping open her bowels and said to Shah Mir; 'This is my acceptance'.** The suicide story is most improbable, probably to protect the honour of Shah Mir, for he would have been accused of adultery under Islamic covenants. History will indicate that Koteh Ren was ambitious and would have done anything to remain in power; she married Rinchen, after his death married Udyen Dev. She could have got Shah Mir murdered, after he had murdered her emissaries, but opted for a compromise; marriage being most helpful to her. **Her compromise in no way should be construed as a sacrifice, for she did it for her own greed and not for the love of Kashmeeri Brahmins.** Wily Shah Mir, however, knew that she and not him would yield power and clipped her wings forever. Shah Mir ascended throne in 1343 AD and by coercion, taxation, tyrannical laws, sword and inter-marriages between the two communities broke the resistance of Brahmins and this way his contribution to Islam was enormous. His son married daughter of a Brahmin; daughter, Guhara, married off to a Brahmin *Damara* {Feudal lord} to obtain *Damara* support. Jonaraja comments; **'Damaras wore daughters of Saimira {Shah Mir} as garlands and did not realise that they were the she-serpents of deadly venom'.** Shah Mir died in 1345 AD and his reign was the beginning of tyrannical rule of *Shahmiri* Dynasty for next 222 Years; known as **Salatins**.

Sikandar - Suha Bhatta Ali Shah and Shah- e- Hamdan. Mir Ali Hamdani {*Shah-e- Hamdan*}, a preacher from *Hamdan*, first came to *Kashmeere* in 1372-3 AD and picked up conversion threads left by Bul Bul Shah, what is called *Nizam- e – Mustafa* {Absolute and total adherence to *Sharia* and covenants of *Quran*} and by 1378 AD *Kashmeere* had nearly fully muslimised. At the time of his third visit {1383 AD}, he brought along 700 *Sayyid's* from *Hamdan*, who had been forced to move out due to torture by Timur, then ruler of Persia. In 1384 AD he was reluctant to stay in *Kashmeere*, as the ruler had failed to propagate Islam in accordance to his wishes. Actually the reason was that though he was allowed implementation of Islamic faith as per *Quaranic* interpretation, conversions of Brahmin's, demolition of their places of worship, his *Sayyid's* followers, were given short shrift for they indulged in intrigue of their own, mostly against the King. He left *Kashmeere* via *Varahamulla* {*Baramulla*} under the pretext of a pilgrimage to Mecca and died enroute at *Paneri* {*Swadgir*; *Swat – NWFP* {*Pakistan*} in the same year {1384 AD}. During his time most revered *Kalishri* temple {*Kali* temple on the banks of *Vitasta* near *Zaina Kadal*, *Srinagar*} was demolished and converted into an estrade {*Platform*} on which he recited *Quran* and offered *namaz* five times a day. In 1389 AD then King *Qutab-ud-din* {Area around *Ali Kadal* known as *Qutab-ud-din-pora* is named after him} died and his eldest son *Sikandar* succeeded him. **Sikandar, another descendant of Shah Mir, was ready for further onslaught on Brahmins.** *Sikandar* {1389-1413 AD} has been given addendum of ***But Shikan*** {*Iconoclast* , *Idol Destroyer*} in chronicles and history, for his destruction of places of Brahmin worship, forceful conversion and killings. At *Mir Mohammed Hamdani* {*Shah-e-Hamdani's* son}, who had stayed back, *Sikandar* constructed *Khanaka* on the erstwhile site of *Kalishri* temple, named it ***Allah-u –Dinpur***, renamed later as ***Khanaka-i -Maula***. It is a folklore that *Lal Ded* {*Born 1320? – Died 89?*}, hid herself in a *Kandur's Tandoor* {*Bakers oven*} when she saw *Shah-e-Hamdani*. Legend says that she hid

herself saying ‘Here is a *man* going’ and came out fully decked up. This *Lal Vakh* gives the reason as to why she had started roaming around naked {Many say this is a philosophical *Vakh* and not indicative of her roaming around naked}. **“Goran vo'num kunuy vatsum, Neybra doupanam anndaray atsun; Suy gav Lali mey vaakh ta vatsun, Tavay mey hyotu nagay natsun.”** {Guru gave me only one percept, withdraw from worldly ways and look deep within, this percept became dictum for Lala and that is why I roam naked}. Indirectly *Vakh* indicates that the standing of the ‘men’ of that time was so low that she did not consider them as ‘men’. Lal Ded could have performed this miracle to indicate to *Hamdani* that had *Sayyid's* {Hamdani and his followers} purity and spirituality, they could have borne Timur's test for *Sayyid's* and run away. The other reason could be reverence to a man, whom she considered pious; it is a fact that she was soft to Islamic Preachers and *Sufi's*. Some chroniclers are of the opinion that the two never met; as recorded in *Waqiati Kashmir* in Persian; ***Nazd-I arbab-i tahqiq sabit na shud***, meaning ‘Held not proved by research scholars’. It is improbable that they did not meet though they were in the same area for nearly twelve years {1372-84 AD}. Apparently is an effort by muslim chroniclers not to expose either of them to a comparison with one another. To add to Sikandar and Hamdani's tyranny, a Kashmeere Brahmin named Suha Bhatta {Also referred as Suha Dev Bhatta, Saha Bhatta {**Suh Bhatt**} } converted during Sikandar's reign, took the name of Saif-ud-Din {Meaning 'Sword of Faith'}, was appointed Chief *Vazir* and became leader of Muslim converts. He had his own axe to grind; to take revenge against his previous co-religionists, who had given him a short shrift after conversion. He {Suha Bhatta}, with Sikandar, planned obliteration of all the traces of Brahmins in *Kashmeere*. Significant detail chronicled about the conversions under Sikandar is that three *Kharwar's* (one *Kharwar* is approximately eighty kilograms) of ceremonial thread {*Jenev*; then called *Zunnar*) were burnt. ***Ironically the woman who gave birth to Sikandar was a Brahmin named Subhatta {Possibly Su Bhatten}***. Sikandar built the locality of *Navato* {Nowhatta; also called Iskandarpura} for his palace and a lofty and imposing *Jami* mosque {**Jamia Masjid**} in the middle of the city, where Id festivals are celebrated and congregations held ***after destroying temple of Maha Shri built by King Pravarasena II {6th Century AD}*** and ***another one built by Tarapida {11th Century}***. The material from these was used for constructing *Jami* mosque {**Jamia Masjid**}. Sikandar Died in 1413 AD and was succeeded by his son Ali Shah.

Ali Shah {1413-19 AD}, during his short reign of about six years, continued with persecution, conversions with greater vigour, tyranny and enforced *Jazia* for the stay of Brahmins as was done during his father's reign of 24 years and his steps by Sikandar's protégé Suha Bhatta's. While Sikandar's reign was of large-scale forceful conversions, Ali Shah's draconian laws, killings, destruction of religious places, scriptures and conversions forced exodus of a big magnitude. Jonaraja, in his *Rajatarangini* calls it ‘***Chandh-Dandh***’; which in *Sanskrit* means ‘**violent, cruel and horrible punishment**’. As the easiest way many Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* converted, those valuing self-respect and religion killed themselves and quite a number left *Kashmeere*. This was the **first exodus** of the community. Only ‘proverbial’ eleven families {***Kaah-Ghar***} remained. ***Kaah-Ghar*** acronym was more proverbial than indicating total number of families left in the valley, though numbers had dwindled due to conversions. Fair concentrations of our community continued in other specific parts of the valley and on the fringes of geographical limits of the valley. This is also borne by the facts that barely eight decades later 24000 more were converted again {Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi's and Musa Raina's time. *Read below*}. Such fast proliferation may not have been possible by only ***Kaah-Ghar's***. The acronym was coined as out of a big concentration, in the interior of then city, closer to present day Batyar/ Zainagir, only ten to eleven families stuck to their religion/home surrounded by clusters of Muslims and converttee's. This is based on the antiquity of certain religious places and can even now best fixed by various Muslim associated religious and other places in the area; *Suha Yarbhal* {*Suh Yar* - Waterfront named after Suha Bhatta - Saif-ud-Din}, *Masjid* next to *Ali Kadal* bridge and *Ali Kadal* bridge constructed during Ali Shah's reign and named after him. Ali Shah finally planned a *Haj* for thanksgiving for the

job done for Islam and appointed his younger brother Shahi Khan to look after *Kashmeere* in his absence but soon returned to retake his place by force and again ascended the throne. He was soon defeated by Shahi Khan, who mounted the throne took the name of **Zain-ul-Abdin** and there was **rebirth of Brahmins in Kashmeere**, not for long though; which will be touched upon in later part of this paper.

While *Ali Kadal* details have been enumerated above, interestingly first bridge, *Nav Setu* boat-bridge {*Nav* – Boat; *Setu* – Bridge} crossing over *Vitasta* {*Wyeth*} was built by King Pravarasena II {Gonanda Dynasty} in 6th Century AD at some distance from *Maksikasvamin* {*Maisuma*} closer to present day *Badshah Bridge* {*Kalhan's Rajatarangini* Verse 354 Book III}. Majority of the population was then restricted to the East side of *Vitasta* {*Wyeth*} and people used boats to cross the river. *Zaina Kadal* was named after Zain-ul-Abdin {1420 -74 AD}, *Ali Kadal*; named after Ali Shah {1413- 19}. *Safa Kadal*; {Originally called *Saifa Kadal*} by Saif-ud-Din {**Suh Bhatt**- Chief *Vazir* of Sikandar and Ali Shah}, who wanted access to his residence, *Suh Yar*, from either side of the river. Then *Fateh Kadal* during Fateh Khan's rule {1510-17 AD}, who wanted *Khanaka-i-Maula* {*Kalishree Temple*} and *Pathar Masjid* {Stone construction of an old *Baudh Vihara*, converted into a Mosque} to be connected. Yusuf Shah Chak {1576-82} constructed *Habba Kadal* and named after his wife, *Habba Khatoon*. She was a great *Kashmeeri* poetess; mostly rendered *birah* poems {A beloved's separation} in separation from her husband; Yusuf Shah Chak, who had got her divorced from her first husband and married her. He was kept in prison by Akbar many times and that is the time some of the heart rendering poems were composed by her. Read this: '**Nad ha Layei, Miane Yusuf Wallo**' {**I am calling you, do come my Yusuf Shah**} and **Katue Chuk Noond Bane Wallo Mashooq Miane** {**Where are you Handsome man, Come home my lover**} and of course '**Variven Saet Wara Chas No Chara Karu Meon Malineu Ho**' {**I am not happy at my in-laws place, Do something my parental home**}. From the accounts from various Mogul Chronicles, Yusuf Shah Chak was a tall, well-built and very handsome man and such men were generally called referred as **Noond Bane** {Tall, Well Built Handsome Man. Genesis of *Noond Bane* not known}. *Amra Kadal* was constructed during the reign of Maharaja Amar Singh; to connect *Shergarhi* Palace with eastern portion of the city. Houses constructed on either side of this route on Eastern side were referred as *Amra Kadal* while on the other side are called Hari Singh High Street after Maharaja Hari Singh.

Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi And Musa Raina. Pressure on reborn Saraswat Brahmin's of *Kashmeere* to convert to Islam, after death of Zain-ul-Abdin {1474 AD}, resurfaced with indifferent rule of Haider Shah {1474-76} followed by son Hassan Khan {1476 - 87 A.D}, with a clique headed by Shams Chak, Shringhar Raina and Musa Raina holding the real power. By now Brahmins had gathered some guts and sparks of revolt were seen and they even damaged *Masjid* constructed at the site of *Kalishree* {*Maha Kali Temple*}. Hassan Khan, given to drinking carouses could not bear 'rebels' damaging the *Mosque* of *Shah-e-Hamadan*, issued decree to '**chop off the noses and ears of all Kashmeeri Brahmins, wherever they be and whatever their status be**'. In the meantime Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi, of the *Sufi* order of *Naqshabandi's* arrived in 1477 AD, was in Kashmir for about eight years and was exiled in 1484 AD. His second visit came in 1496 AD, when Malik Musa Raina, then Chief *Vazir*, held almost all the administrative authority and for the next few decades Musa Raina became most dreaded tyrant, working under the instructions of Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi. Musa Raina, before conversion was Soma Chandra, a notable *Kashmeeri* Brahmin, who at the hands of Shams-ud-din Iraqi underwent second conversion to *Shia* faith. He was bestowed with title of Malik, made Chief *Vazir* and a granted *Jagir*. **Since the reign of Sikandar, no ruler or a Vazir in Kashmeere worked as much for the propagation of Islamic faith as Malik Musa Raina**; a convert. Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi, with Musa Raina's help used forcible methods for conversions; *Sunni's* forcibly converted to *Shia* faith or killed in spite of Fateh Shah, then King {1510-17 AD; in spurts} being a *Sunni*. Iraqi constructed a *Khanka* at *Zadibal*; which remains the centre point of *Shia* concentration even to this day. Bhatta's were his main target; about 24000 were forcibly converted to *Shia* faith, many killed or forced to migrate to *Hindustan*;

leaving their hearth and home. Under his and Musa Raina's instructions religious scriptures from Atri Gupta {7th Century AD} onwards, as many as eighteen big temples were destroyed, property confiscated and those allowed to live had to pay revived *Jazia*. He {Iraqi} had issued orders that everyday 1,500 to 2,000 Brahmins be brought to his doorstep, their sacred thread {*Zennev – Zunnar*} removed, administer *Kalima* to them, circumcise them and make them eat beef. Thousands of Brahmins braved this savagery and brutality by killing themselves, some migrated but there were many others who cried '*Na Bhatto Aham*' {'I am not a Bhatta'}, in pain and agony to escape death. This period was equally tyrannical and brought spate of conversions to *Shia* sect of Islam, **second exodus** and *Nasdiq* language {A variant of Arabic} as the vehicle of reading Islamic religious scriptures. However, there were sparks of revolt; ruling Muslim factions fought each other, bringing some respite for a while but renewed tyranny for a longer period. Fed up Brahmins desecrated certain converted *Khanka*'s. **Muslim Historian Hassan {Tarikh-i-Kashmir} writes; "The patience having reached the breaking point, they rose in a body and set fire to some mosques which were built with the material of the temples once demolished by Sikandar"**. Shams-ud-din Iraqi reacted thus to this revolt; '*This community of Idolaters {Brahmins} has, after embracing and submitting to the Islamic faith, now gone back to defiance and apostasy. If you {Musa Raina} find yourself unable to inflict punishment upon them in accordance with the provisions of Sharia and take disciplinary action against them, it will become necessary and incumbent upon me to proceed on a self-imposed exile and in that case you shall not stand in my way at the time of my departure*' {translated from Persian}. *Baharistan-i-Shahi* which enjoys the status of being the first fully detailed history of *Kashmeere* in Persian, written anonymously in 1593 AD and completed in 1614 AD, records this retribution as such {Translated from Persian}; '*Since the above-mentioned Malik {Musa Raina}, prior to his assumption of power and authority, had promised him that he would never deviate from or disregard his {Iraqi} wishes and injunctions, therefore, in deference to his wishes, he held consultations with his counsellors and administrative officers, and decided upon carrying out a wholesale massacre of the infidels. Their massacre was scheduled for the days of the approaching 'Ashura' {10th Day of Muharram}. Thus in the year AH 924 {Al Hijri; Muslim Calendar} {1518 AD}, corresponding to 94th year of Kashmeeri calendar, during the 'Ashura, about seven to eight hundred infidels were put to death. Those killed were the leading personalities of the community of infidels {Brahmins were called Kafirs {Infidels}} at that time: men of substance and government functionaries. Each of them wielded influence and sway over a hundred families of other infidels and heretics. Thus the entire community of infidels and polytheists in Kashmeere were coerced into conversion to Islam at the point of the sword" {Kashmeeri calendar was started by Zain-ul-Abdin in 1424 AD and is no longer in use. It was coined on his completing 50 years of his reign and started from the date of his ascending the throne}*. As a result of this ultimatum, massacre took place on 10th of Har {Asadh} 1518 AD. Iraqi then proceeded to Tibet {May be *Ladakh*} for similar conversions and it is certain that during this period he targeted Kargil; where *Shia* Muslims are in a majority till this day. He 'probably' died in the same year {1518 AD} on his return journey to *Kashmeere*. His protégé Musa Raina died in 1519 AD. As if this was not enough, in 1519 AD nearly ten thousand *Kashmeeri* Brahmins died during pilgrimage to *Harmukh Ganga* to immerse ashes; possibly of those who had been massacred a year before. 'They rose at midnight on top of *Mahalesheh Marg*, meadow closer to *Harmukh Lake*, following a call from '*the invisible*', moved along a wrong track leading to a steep precipice from which they fell down; one after another'. The dead included men, women and children. '*The invisible*' theory may not be true, as precipices surround *Mahalesheh Marg* and weather during this period is adverse due to monsoon, which could have resulted in this disaster by landslides and early snowstorms.. There have been many more such catastrophes in subsequent centuries, though not of this magnitude. **The massacre in 1518 AD and deaths in 1519 AD, after sometime, started collective community *shradha* ceremonies at various designated places, for those who lost their lives.**

Death of Mir Shams-ud-din Iraqi became a rallying point for *Sunni's* and remnants of Brahmins to revolt against *Shia's*. *Sunni's* plundered and persecuted *Shia's*, destroyed their houses, burned their *Khanaka's* and desecrated the grave of Shams-ud-din Iraqi. This enmity between two sects still exists till this day and predominantly in down town Srinagar. Brahmins decided to recommence pilgrimages to various religious places including Sharda, Gangabal {*Harmukh Ganga*} etc, which may not have been possible if Iraqi or Musa Raina were alive. This confirms that both of them died before *Ganga Ashtmi* of the year 1519 AD. This era became a tainted page in the history of *Kashmeere* and end of *Shahmiri* Dynasty, but clans of Chak's {Warlords and prominent Muslim clan} had succeeded in taking over and their sojourn lasted a brief span of 33 years (1553-86 AD). During Chak rule, Brahmins had no respite, but rule was not as tyrannical as the *Shahmiri's* as infighting amongst Chak's and other clans, forays by Moghuls kept them away from major nuisance.

Exodus's 15th Century. Nineties of the last Century {20th} saw major migration/exodus of Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* for the **third** time; **First** during the rule of Sikandar *But Shikan* and his son Ali Shah, **Second** at the end of 15th and beginning of 16th Century during Iraqi's foray in league with Musa Raina. Admittedly there have been more conversions and smaller exoduses during the remaining period of the second millennium. But those who left during the two exoduses and returned, earned a place of pride for their clan/family in the valley. Such families remained obscure due to various reasons; tyranny, nepotism, unsettled conditions and even lack of concern by the community.

The above narration brings home glaring instances of our own Brahmins converting for the lust of power and then becoming tyrants of the highest order; Suha Bhatta, Ravan Chand {Koteh Ren's Brother}, Soma Chandra {Musa Raina} and many others. Ironically the rulers had more trust in the mercenaries and Muslim preachers than their *praja*. Many Brahmins, mostly senior functionaries of the reign, remained untouched initially, yet they helped the rulers and converttee functionaries to torment the poorer segment of Brahmins. Very few of these had courage to stand up and it was the lower segment of Brahmins who revolted in 1518 AD, which talks volumes of their grit, when some of their co-religionists were divisive and even helping tormentors, inspite of being outnumbered. These exoduses bring home travails and triumphs of our ancestors, community, who maintained their identity in and outside the valley, persevered and survived against all odds and finally achieved places of pride in the community and *Kashmeere* as a whole.

**Aryan Saraswat Brahmins Of Kashmeere {Kashmir} Through
Two
Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity, Conversion
Trauma's,
Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th Century }**

Part III : Saraswat Bhatta's And Surnames

Saraswat Bhatta's. Genesis as to when generic address word Bhatta manifested, for Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere*, is not clear nor does any ancient scripture throw any specific light on it but definitely is derivative of Brahmin, which got modified to Bhatta; referring to a religious individual; Brahmin. Bhatta honorific as form of address in the plains of *Bharatvarsha {Hindustan}* and Nepal finds mention from BC era and even now is used as surname. First time Bhatta has been chronicled is that of Arya Bhatta, an ancient Brahmin writer on Algebra and Astronomy, born in Kusuma-Pura (Modern Patna) in 5th Century BC {His most famous astrological work is the *Arya-Siddhanta*}. *Brahma Purana*, which quantifies attributes of a Brahmin, dates around 1800 BC and Bhatta appellation could have come about around this time or even earlier. With the advent of *Sufi* cult in *Hindustan* during 2nd Millennium, counterparts of *Sufi's* from *Brahminical* order were also called Bhat's {Guru Nanak had *Sufi's* and *Bhat's* as disciples}. Bhat {Bhatt} surnames are found in Uttaranchal, Northern Belt, Central and Western parts of the country and is surname of sizeable Brahmins in Konkan, Maharashtra and Gujarat; where they had migrated in sizeable strength. Bhatta's who migrated to Gauda {Bengal} were called *Acharaya's* {Scholars} and thus *Bhattacharaya's*. In Nepal they became priests, ardent worshippers of *Bhadrakali* and spread *Kali* worship; mostly around *Pashupatinath* Temple. In Uttaranchal they became *Purohit* {Priestly} class, adopted surname *Purohit*, many changed profession but retained Bhatt surname. In northern plains, few became Bhatta's, many Bhatt's; in both cases *Purohit* {Priestly} class. In Central and Western parts, strict requirements of a Bhatta {*Purohit*} could not be sustained and to indicate their Brahmin roots they opted for surname only. Thus Bhatta and *Purohit* are surnames of the same category. Bhatta has shortened version, Bhat {Bhatt}; referring to same class of people. Surname Bhat {Bhatt} in *Kashmeere* can also be traced to short form of Bhatta. In *Kashmeere*, Bhatta honorific has been associated with many personalities, scholars of 9th and 10th Century's, scriptures and specific in many cases in 14th Century and later. Kings, Ministers and scholars from outside *Kashmeere* used '**Bhatta**' to refer to indigenous religious scholars, philosophers from 4th Century onwards. It is improbable that *Kashmeeri's* carried this honorific when they entered *Kashmeere*; 5080 years back {Current *Saptrishi Samvat* in 2003-4 AD}. This honorific may have trickled to *Kashmeere*, about 3500 years back, after *Brahma Purana* had manifested in *Bharatvarsha*, 3800 years back. First chronicled form of address of 'Bhatta' in *Kashmeere* exists in the name of a *Kashmeeri* Buddhist missionary, Shama **Bhatta** {5th Century AD}, who went to China and Tibet to preach Buddhism. In 10th Century, a 8th Century scholar named Vakhpatiraja of Laltaditya's period {697 to 733 AD - Kalhan's *Rajatarangini* Verse 144 Book IV}}, chronicled as Vakhpati **Bhatta**, gets mentioned in many accounts concerning a debate with Adi Shankara {9th Century}. During the same period we have Udhata **Bhatta** {774-813 AD}, teacher of the theory of the three *Vrittis*, worked on *Vedas* and developed *Rasa* aesthetics by adding ninth *rasa* with '*calm*' as its basic emotion. We have this form of address for Shaiva Philosophers Bhatta Kallata, Bhatta Pradyumana; Shakta worshippers Rama Kantha Bhatta and Mahadev Bhatta of 9th and 10th Century respectively, Bhatta Tota {10th Century}, the learned scholar who taught Dramaturgy to Abhinav Gupta {933-1015 AD} and Bikhshana Bhatta {14th Century}. By 11th and 12th Century, *Malechas*, *Turshkas* address was also used for reference to other denizens {**Turshkas is the name given by Kalhan to Muslims**}.

Bhatta form of address as prefix continued, but there are indications that scholars, for ease of differentiation from common people, were referred by this 'Prefix honorific' like Bhatta Kallata, Bhatta Tota etc. The 'honorific' was generic, referring to a community, carried when they migrated, used again on return and became synchronous with their caste. Dr Subash Kak in 'Kashmiri Hindus And The Caste System' writes about Bhatta form of address; **"Kashmiri Hindus call themselves Batta, from the Sanskrit bhartri meaning master. Such an appellation may be a reflection of the community's self-image that emphasizes success and excellence and it need not have any sociological implications. Two subgroups, that were sometimes considered to be separate, are Buher, and Purib: Buher {from the Kashmiri word for grocer} and Purib {for Easterner}"**. The second part of the above statement itself is somewhat contradictory. *Varna* {Caste/class} system was prevalent amongst Aryans also and is nothing new. In mythological literature there is mention of struggle between two *Varna*'s; Brahmins are said to have been led by Lord *Parasuram*, and the *Kshatriya*'s by *Kartaviraarjuna*. Aryan bards, singing hymns, became priests called *Arthvan*; their warriors called *Ratheshwar* {Charioteer- transited to *Kshatriya*}, their workers and herders of their cattle *Vastrayosh* {Transited to *Vaishya*} and their camp followers and slaves called *Hatoksha*, became *Shudra* later. It is incorrect to imply that it did not have any sociological implications for *Kashmeere* Brahmins, as mentioned. **It is that only Brahmin class got frequently mentioned but the class of followers, foot soldiers etc existed though considered shade lower than Brahmins.** Pandit Ram Krishen Kaul also writes; **'Pandits of Kashmir, popularly known as 'Bhatta' all belong to Brahmana 'Varana' {Caste/class}. Bhatta is the Prakrit form of the Sanskrit Bhartri which means 'scholar', 'doctor' or the same as Pandit'**. Though the meaning of *Bhartri*, qualitative application is well fitting to Bhatta's of *Kashmeere*, it was not self-image but the identity of the religion *Kashmeeri*'s practiced which brought the usage of this word. During ancient and medieval period usage of Bhatta was not confined to *Kashmeere* only but in *Bharatvarsha* also. *Vedic*, the ancient language of *Bharatvarsha*, is the origin of *Brahman Purana* from which word Brahmin and thereafter Bhatta is derived {Read Part I}. Word *bhartri*, in 'Classical' Sanskrit, sought to be source of word Bhatta is of later vintage than *Vedic* {'Classical' Sanskrit, like Latin in the West, was a language of courtly poetry and drama and as learned language for religious texts only}. **Recent decipherment of Indus Valley seals have somewhat changed the picture and perspective of ancient languages of Bharatvarsha including that of Vedic, Sanskrit, 'Classical' Sanskrit and Brahmi {Brahmi alphabet is the ancestor of all of the 200 or so modern Indian alphabets but is of later vintage than ancient Khartoshi Lipi. The earliest known inscriptions in Brahmi alphabet are those of the Emperor Ashoka {c.270-232 BC}}. The inscriptions on the seals found have been to be akin to Vedic language; though yet to be confirmed. But this does not affect the assertion made of the meaning and application of word Bhatta or Bhartri's.**

Frankly what baffles me is this *Vakh* of Lal Ded {*Lalleshwari* for Brahmins, *Lalla Arifa* for Muslims}, where word Bhatta, prevalent then, to refer to Aryan Saraswat Brahmin's of *Kashmeere* has **not** been used. Instead an appellation unknown to *Kashmeere* at that time, *Hyound* {Hindu} has been used; **"Shiv chuy thali thali rozaan, Mav zaan Hyound ta Musalman, Trukhay chukh ta pananuy paan parzaan Ada chay Saahibas zanni zaan"**. Meaning that; **'Shiva abides in all that is, everywhere; Then do not discriminate between a Hindu or a Musalman. . If thou art wise, know thyself; That is true knowledge of the Lord'**. These words of Lal Ded's wisdom must have been uttered somewhere between 1330 to 89 AD {Born 1320? – Died 89?}. However, three other dates of her birth are also talked about; 1300-01 AD, 1334-35 AD and 1346-47 AD}, when from all accounts word 'Hindu' was alien to *Kashmeere*; either it was Brahmin or Bhatta. Mention of Lal Ded for the first time, in any chronicle, is made in 1654 AD in *Asrarul - Abrar* {**The Secret of Pious**} by Baba Dawud Mushkati; nearly 300 later. She gets mentioned again, in 1746 AD in another chronicle, *Waqiate Kashmiri*; nearly 100 more years later {**Both these chronicles do not reproduce this Vakh in their contents only she is mentioned in some detail**}. While word Musalman had found its moorings in *Hindustan* right from 12th Century, with major invasions by Muslims, word

Hindu referred to class ridden society of transited Hindu religion but **not** in *Kashmeere*, where other appellations, Bhattas, *Turshkas*, *Malechas* etc, only were prevalent. *Hyound*, a *Kashmeere* derivative of Hindu is imported as invasion and spread of Islam progressed and inhabitants of *Hindustan* called Hindu's. The word Hindu {*Hyound*} and differentiation would have possibly come to *Kashmeere* after it had firmed in *Hindustan*, around 1654 AD, when she is mentioned for the first time; definitely by 1746 AD, when she is mentioned again in *Waqiate Kashmiri*. Could it be that effective portion of this *Vakh* was actually structured like '**Mav zaan Bhatta ta Musalman**'? This suggested *Vakh* has rhythm and rhyme or is it that *Vakh*'s, even other *Vakh*'s too, were modified with prevalent appellations like Hindu, when recorded / written later for posterity or are actually of some other scholar of later vintage. Both are possible; for there is no evidence of word *Hindu* being referred as generic term for Brahmins or Bhattas of *Kashmeere* during her time. This is also confirmed by her another Lal *Vakh*, where she uses the word Bhatta and not *Hyound*; "**Abhyaas' sy savikaa'sy layi vo'thuu, Gaganas svagun myuul samitsratta, Shunya gol Anaamay motuu, Yuhoy vopadiish chuy Bhatta**". Translated; "**By oft-repeated practice, the wide expanse of manifested universe is lifted to absorption; And the saguna world, of forms and qualities, merges in the vastness of the Void with a splash of water on water falling; Then the ethereal Void dissolves, and the Ineffable Supreme alone remains. This, O Bhatta, is the Truth to gain**". To add to this analysis are three words of distress expression, uttered in Sanskrit, at the end of 15th Century and much chronicled; "**Na Bhatto Aham**" {In Sanskrit, in a tone of distress, cried in pain and agony, meaning '**I am not a Bhatta**'} also points in this direction; sufficient indication that operative word was Bhatta and not Hindu {*Hyound*}, even after her *Nirvana*. This is not the first time these words { "**Na Bhatto Aham**" } of distress were uttered. During the reign of Rama Deva (1252-73 A. D.) some Bhattas (Brahmins) having been insulted by him, conspired to install somebody from amongst *Khashas* {People living closer to *Chandrabagha* River {Chenab} on the throne. Their conspiracy did not remain a secret and an orgy of destruction and plunder was let loose. Some were killed and others suppressed with atrocious mercilessness, and to save themselves the cry was raised everywhere 'Na Batto Aham. **This is the first recorded onslaught in history against the Brahmins of Kashmeere not by a Muslim but their own Brahmin ruler.** Over the last centuries her *Vakhs* have swelled and some being attributed to her as late as in 20th Century. Could attribution of some of the *Vakhs* to her be erroneous or composed or created later? It was a great pleasure to have similar views being expressed by late Professor Jayalal Kaul in his wonderful, exhaustive book 'Lal Ded', who also doubts authenticity of many *Vakh*'s attributed to Lal Ded including many from 75 sayings 'unearthed' by Late Pandit Anand Kaul. **Some just do not bear the characteristic Lal Ded stamp or use of then prevalent words of common usage.** In few cases verses from *Rahasyaopadesha*, well-chronicled verses of Rupa Bhawani, have been attributed to her. {Reference to Professor Jayalal Kaul will bring nostalgic memories to many of my generation, as he was Principal of SP College when I had just joined college as fifteen year old in late fifties}. Even a decade back, or may be even today, the two communities in the valley are called as '**Bhatta Ta Musalman**' and not '**Hyound Ta Musalman**'. In *Kashmeere* word *Hyuond* was used, even in recent times, for people coming from plains of *Hindustan*. The word even in *Hindustan* was used loosely and it is only 185 years ago Raja Ram Mohan Roy coined the word Hindu, to describe the huge variety of faiths and sects with similar but not identical philosophies, myths and rituals.

Surnames. In due course, in addition to Bhatta appellation, surnames started trickling. Chronicles touching our surnames are silent on aspects of origin and approximate dates, era when specific surnames started being used. Chronicles referring to surnames of some scholars from 6th to 13th Century AD refer to two types; those who migrated to *Kashmeere* from 1st Century AD onwards and carried their surnames like; Buddhist Scholar Ava Gosha {Kanishka's time {25 - 60 AD} who wrote *Buddhacarita*, a verse compendium of Buddha's teachings and first of Buddhist scriptures written in the valley}, Atri Gupta who came from Ujjain with Laltaditya {697 - 733 AD} to his descendant Abhinav Gupta {933-1015 AD} and

many others including Madhavacharya {1199- 1276 AD} from South India {Also referred as Vidhyaranya and an ardent devotee of Adi Shankara {9th Century AD}}. Then indigenous {*Kashmeeri*'s}; like Bhatta Kallata {Pupil of Vasu Gupta; during reign of Avanti Varman (855-83 A D)}, Bhatta Pradyumana, Bhatta Mahadev {9th-11th Century}, all referred as Bhatta's without any other specific surname. From this it is clear that there were no surnames, other than 'Bhatta', till about 12th Century. Late Pandit Anand Kaul {1870-1941 AD} in his book '**The Kashmiri Pandit**' writes; '**According to some authorities there were only three principal divisions viz., Bhat, Pandit and Razdan, from which are derived the distinctive appellations of Koul, Sopori Pandit and Raina. From these three families, as each took to a particular occupation or by adoption or intermarriage with other Gotras, other Gotras came into existence**'. Analysis of first part of this statement regarding principle divisions will also answer evolution of other *Gotra*'s and surnames in the valley. Till about 14th Century we do not find association of Bhat, Pandit, Sopori Pandit, Razdan and Raina with any surname of *Kashmeeri*'s. Even shortened version Bhat, for Bhatta, did not find full usage till other appellations came about in *Kashmeere*, as Bhatta continued to be generic form of address while Pandit appellation for *Kashmeeri*'s is only few centuries old.

First; Sopori Pandit; literally meaning 'Pandits from Sopore'. Sopore is a transitory name of 9th Century Suyapur town, **founded by Suya**, at the point where river *Vitasta* {Wyeth – Jhelum} leaves *Mahapadamsar* {Wular Lake} basin. Suya, a great engineer during Utpal Dynasty {9th Century}, cleared obstructions in *Vitasta* {Wyeth – Jhelum} from *Sar* {Wular Lake} basin to Varhamulla {Baramulla}. After Suya's effort, it is claimed that the *Sar* {Lake} was also named as *Mahapadamsar*, named after then ruler Maharaja Avanti Varman {Utpal Dynasty; 855- June 883 AD also called *Mahapadam* {**The devotee of the lotus feet; Vishnu**}}, who founded Avantipur, build two temples of Shiva and Vishnu, now in ruins, hence name *Mahapadamsar*. Present day town of Pampore, then named *Padampore*, is also claimed to be named after Avanti Varman {Some chronicles claim *Padampore* was founded by Padma, during the reign of King Ajatapida {813-850 AD}; just before Avanti Varman's reign. *Padampore* also gets mentioned by **Nund Rishi {Sheikh Nuru-Din of Chrar -e-Shariff {1376 – 1438 AD; while talking of mystic Lal Ded says; “ Padamporeich Lale, Yem Gale Amreth Chev, Shiv Tshorun Thali Thale, Tyuth Me Var Ditam Devon”**. Meaning; **“Lala of Padampore {Pampore} drank the nectar and perceived Shiva in everything. O God, give me similar boon, so that I see the divine in similar way”** {Lal Ded's in- laws lived in Pampore {Born in *Pandrethan*; on the outskirts of Srinagar. Also called *Pantachhuk*} where she composed and recited majority of *Lal Vakhs*}}. Less than two centuries later, the same *Mahapadamsar* is referred as **Bolor** by Al-Biruni {960-1031 AD}, an Arab Scholar who came to *Hindustan* with Mahmud of Gazni in the beginning of 11th Century, visited *Kashmeere* in 1030 AD and in his book has written about *Kashmeere* including Sharda Temple. Al-Biruni is also credited with giving a new appellation to *Hindustan* for the first time in recorded travelogue- *Land Of Snake Charmers*. This puts in doubt association of Avanti Varman name with *Padam* as well as the lake, as nothing had materially changed to force a change of the name in the intervening period. The other mythological origin of the name *Mahapadamsar* is *Sindhu Ganga* {Lower Sindh} emanating from snow clad mountains of *Nandishetra* {Dras, Amarkanth and Baltal}; a tributary of *Mahapadamsar* {Wular Lake} and is mentioned thus in Verse vv297sq – *Nilmat Purana*; **“Ganga Sindhu tu Vijneya Vitasta Yamuna Tatha”**. *Nandishetra* is associated as abode of Shiva in *Kashmeere* and Kalhan pays tribute to *Nandishetra* thus; **‘There even to this day drops of sandal ointment offered by the Gods are to be seen at Nandishetra, the residence of Shiva’ {Verse 36 Book I Rajatarangini}**. Apart from *Sindhu Ganga* {Lower Sindh}, *Vitasta* {Wyeth – Jhelum}, sacred river *Madhumati* {*Nilmat Purana* Verse 1261sq. Now called Bandapore Nala and marked now as *Bodh Kul* on maps} and many other sacred rivulets emanating from *Harmukh* are also tributaries of *Mahapadamsar* {Wular Lake}. The name could have found origin from *Mahapadam* {*Maha*-Giant; *Padam* - Feet} or Lord Shiva {*Mahadev*}, also referred as *Neelpadam*. Surprisingly the lake as seen from the mountains around it, looks like a Giant {*Maha*} Foot {*Pada*}. The name

Mahapadamsar, therefore, is of earlier vintage, connected with *Nandikshetra* {Shiva's abode} than attributed to Avanti Varman. There is also a folk story that there was a big town where *Wular* stands, where Raja Prahlad had built *Prateshwara* temple and was called *Bosangiri* {Between Khuihama and Sopore on a hillock {*Giri*} called *Bosan*}, which got submerged. The other name of the hillock given in later *Kashmeere* chronicles is mentioned as *Sherehkot*. Interestingly *Wular* Lake and existence of this temple figures during Zaina-ul-Abdin's time also. **He wanted to raise an artificial island in the lake on which a *Lank* {Island} could be created, as he had done in *Dal Lake*. He ordered the boatmen and the divers to locate a spot of minimum depth in the *Wular*, where it could be raised without much effort. All of them suggested the spot where the temple existed, as when water receded in the lake to its lowest level in winter; the stones of the temple became visible through the crystalline waters of the lake. He took a boat and personally examined the spot and ordered the divers to make an attempt at finding any relics inside the temple in the water. The divers plunged into the lake and with utmost care made their way into the temple, wherefrom they pulled out two bronze idols. Zain-ul-Abdin then selected the very site for developing an island and a palace {Now in ruins}**. It is apparent that the two idols had to be that of God and his consort {One cannot be sure of which one, but possibly *Shiva* and his consort *Parvati*; as *Shiva* is also called *Partheshwar*, *Prateshwar*}. There is no mention of the existence of a temple and its bronze images in Jonaraja *Rajatarangini*, which covers Zain-ul-Abdin's period in detail. It has not been possible to find final disposal of these idols but these could possibly have been installed in nearby town of Suyapur {Sopore} in a *Mandir* or a new *Mandir* constructed. None of the *Mandir*'s in the area have bronze idols of such antiquity nor is the location of these idols known, however, legend in Sopore says that the *Shiva* temple constructed on the banks of *Wyeth* {Jhelum} dates back to time when idols were found from *Mahapadamsar* {Wular Lake}. Since two idols, not a *Shiv Linga* were recovered, this temple of *Shiva* could not have these very idols. The area of this *Mandir*, called *Shivpur* by many residents of this area, gave surname of *Shivpuri* to the denizens of the area. Fallacy that *Sihvpuri*'s came from *Shivpuri* {Near Gwalior - Madhya Baharat} is wrong. Many residents of Sopore, identifying themselves as residents of this apple town, adopted transited name *Sopori* as surname and it was not the original surname or appellation.

During 17th Century Suyapur {Sopore} was also associated with Miru and his descendant Bulaqi Pandit, who were made in-charge of forts in the area of Varhamullah and Suyapur as border defenders against *Bombas* etc. Even then name, as recorded in many chronicles, was Suyapur. During 17th and early 18th Century names of many places in *Kashmeere* changed during the process of Islamisation of *Kashmeere*; *Suyapur* to Sopore {Pronounced in *Kashmiri* as *Sopur*}, *Varhamullah* to Baramulla, pronounced in *Kashmeeri* as *Varamull*, *Padampore* to Pampore. Even Anantnag was named as Islamabad and it is only during Dogra rule that the name of Anantnag was restored in official papers. This is the time Shankaracharya Hill was called *Takht-e-Suleman*. etc. Thus *Sopore* or *Sopori* could not have been associated as surname so early; say 9th or 10th Century or till even end of 16th Century. *Baharistan -i- Shahi* {Persian} which enjoys the status of being the first fully detailed history of *Kashmeer* in Persian, written in **1614 AD**, however, mentions name *Sopur* {Sopore} and is also indicative of changes in name of place around 17th Century. Also this chronicle seldom uses place names connected with Brahmins or our Gods by their original name, being purely a Muslim history {Three Historical works in Persian which were written before *Baharistan-i-Shahi* were those of *Mulla Naderi*, *Qazi Ibrahim* and *Mulla Hasan Qari* but these are lost}. If *Sopur* or *Sopori* had any connection with any of our community divisions then it would have been *Suyapur Pandit* and that too from 9th or 10th Century onwards. This is not borne by any record, scripture, scholars name or chronicle of the period. In fact *Sopori Pandit* and *Sopori Bhatta* address is 'sarcastic' mention of social behaviour than surname; for *Sopori Mazrath* {Hospitality} or *Sopori Bhatta Mazrath* refers to lip service hospitality. *Mazrath*, a mixed word from Persian, also indicates its later vintage.

Secondly; Pandit appellation as ‘**Suffix**’ came about in the plains of *Hindustan* after 15th Century and as ‘**Prefix**’ in 18th Century, thus ruling out *Sopori Pandit* being earlier or basic appellation of surname {more about it later}. The origin of Pandit appellation is in the plains of *Hindustan* and there is no evidence of it being indigenous origin or used in *Kashmeere* before ex- migrants imported this honorific. It may also be interesting to note that *Sopori Pandits*, as a surname, are only found under *Paldeva Vasagargya Gotra* and not under any other *Gotra*. This indicates that this group was miniscule, found amongst *Malmassis* only, did not constitute sizeable portion of the community and were restricted to a particular place only; possibly portions of Sopore. Similarly Pandit or Pandita appellation is found all across the *Gotra* board, restricted to generally unattached, isolated areas and selective villages and towns of early centuries. Some names in later chronicles of 15th Century and later, even of recent vintage, have used Pandit appellation as suffix for some of our scholars of 15th Century, especially those during Zain-ul-Abdin’s time. Like Soma Pandit {Dramatist, musician and who was in charge of the Translation Department. Not to be mistaken with Soma Chandra *alias* Musa Raina} who held distinguished position in the royal court of Zain-ul-Abdin. Soma Pandit author of ‘*Jaina Charitra*’, gives account of the Sultan’s reign Since Pandit appellation had manifested in *Hindustan*, it appears that Soma Pandit, was possibly one of the returnees to the valley with this suffix, for he was well versed in Persian, Tibetan and Sanskrit. He translated many Persian books into Sanskrit and for the first time *Mahabharata* and *Rajatarangini* were translated into Persian under his supervision. Pandita form of address is also not borne by authentically recorded chronicles of that era. Pandit or Pandita addenda’s apparently have been added for names which did not have any suffix or prefix in later chronicles when lineage and surnames were flouted. Even today you will find members of the same family having different surname; one Raina another Pandit {Pronounced in conversation by Punjabi’s, Dogras etc ; Pandita}. In later centuries some learned *Brahmins* in the valley had also got this addendum, in fact many addressed their family *Guruji’s* as *Pandit Jee*. This is what Jia Lal Kilam writes in ‘A History Of Kashmiri Pandits’; **“Thus the Kashmiri Pandit took his birth in his modern shape, though till then the name Kashmiri Pandit was not coined to describe this community which was described as Bhatta. Even now a Kashmiri Pandit at home describes himself as a Bhatta and it is by this name that he is described by others in Kashmir”.**

Thirdly; *Razdan* during Zain-ul-Abdin’s time meant ‘Royal Palace’. Actually he had constructed a palace called *Zoon Dub*, but was referred to as *Razdan* {*Raz* or *Razah* – King; *Dan* – Hearth {*Dan* – money is not applied here as the money was called *Dyar* or *Diar* in *Kashmeeri* and *Dan* is Sanskrit word}. Later *Razdan* also referred to ‘Keeper of Royal Secrets’, which is more of an occupational nickname {*Reche*} for services rendered to ruling class during Muslim rule and not an ancient appellation. *Razdan’s* belong to many *Gotra’s* and are found amongst *Malamssis* as well as *Banumasis*. First time any surname other than Bhatta {*Kaula*; *Kaul*}, gets mentioned is in the chronicles of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin {1420 -74 AD}. Even during this time Bhat, short for Bhatta, also was not being commonly used. We find **Shriya Bhatta** {Not Shri Bhat} is the name mentioned in Jonaraja’s updated *Rajatarangini*, when Jonaraja’s was alive and witness to Shriya Bhatta’s feat of curing Zain-ul-Abdin and vividly recorded his impressions, quoted later in this paper. Another name Tejeh Bhat, foster-brother of Koteh Ren also finds mention during Rinchen’s time. Shrivara’s *Rajatarangini* {Covering 1459-1486 AD}, mentions surname Bhatta’s {*Simha*, *Ruppa*, *Karupar*; who held most of the ministries during reign of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin} and *Kaula* {*Kaul*} in his chronicle. Even **Praja Bhatta** {Updated *Rajatarangini* 1486 – 1513 AD} was known Bhatta **{This *Rajatarangini* by Praja Bhatta has been lost forever, though its existence finds mention in various chronicles and excerpts mentioned or quoted in few chronicles of 17th Century}**. It appears that Bhatta honorific address continued even in 17th Century, where we have famous Shaiva philosopher of the period; Bal Bhatta.

Fourthly; during the later part of the first millennium AD a custom prevailed in *Kashmeere*. Title *Rajanaka* which later transited to *Renu* {Kalhan’s *Rajatarangini* Verse 489

Book IV} was granted and appended to names of few as a mark of respect and distinction. Families subsequently carried title ‘*Renu*’ when other surnames started sprouting. In 1325 AD, *Renu* was the appellation Rinchen bestowed to Ravan Chand, after marrying his sister Koteh Ren. Raina {Master and Possessor} is the later appellation of this *Renu*; names like Shringhar Raina {Malik Shankar Raina- Commander of Fateh Shah’s army {1517 AD}}, Sehej Raina {Nephew of Koteh Ren} and Musa Raina {Converted *Kashmeeri* notable, Soma Chandra before conversion, after he became Chief Vazir bestowed with title of Malik and a *Jagir* was granted with *Renu* bestowment, which subsequently became Raina}. ‘Malik’ was an honorific granted to many Muslims and one odd Brahmin amongst high-ranking officials of then regime for their services especially for fighting opponents of the regime with valour, like Malik Sehej and Malik Avtar {Nephew of Koteh Ren}. This appellation of Malik was subsequently carried as surname by both communities from around 14th Century.

Lastly; advent of Islam came to *Kashmeere* during mid 14th Century and in its wake brought various types of clans {Persian, Afghan, Iraqi and even few Arabs}, who used clan names, origins or religious beliefs, order, followings for their own form of address or identification and as surname; like *Naqashbandi*’s {Named after the cult order}, *Shahmiri* {Descendants of Shah Mir}, *Hamdani* {Descendants of Mir Ali Hamdani {Shah-e- Hamdan}}, Bamzai {Afghani clan} etc. The process of using surname amongst Muslims peaked during end 15th Century, when nearly 90 percent of the converter’s had surname depending on their following of Muslim religious order, sect beliefs and vocation. Most of the neo-Muslims {Converted Bhatta’s}, who did not have any addendum surnames simply opted for shortened version of Bhat {Bhatta}. Muslim selective methodology of identification affected the broad spectrum of form of address of our community and slowly surnames based on vocation, residence, physical features etc started creeping. Most of the time it was the form of address used by his fellow religionists or ex-coreligionists {Converters}, respectful or even in disdain, which stuck. Those who had maintained their reputation and respect continued to be addressed as Bhatta, Bhat or Kaula Bhatta {Kaul}. A three word expression of distress, uttered in Sanskrit, at the end of 15th Century and much chronicled is; “***Na Bhatta Aham***” is another indicator. These words have side connotation; Bhatta as a common address referring to our community during this period {13th and end 15th Century}. We also find Bhatta and Kaul surnames associated with some noted personalities of our community, other than those who were associated with administration during this period. One such was Keshava Bhatta, a scholar, poet and logician who went to Calcutta, where he had a discussion with Lord Gauranga {**Chaitanya**; Also called **Chaitanya Mahaprabhu**}, subsequently became his devoted follower and later established his head-quarters at Vrindavan {Mathura} to spread teachings of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Similarly Purhotam Kaul was head of an institution where training in all branches of Sanskrit learning was imparted to students free of cost. Kaul’s were specifically mentioned during Zain-ul-Abdin’s reign; “**Madho Kaul, in charge of Northern province Ganesh Kaul in charge of the Southern; both were responsible to an inter- provincial head known as Sadar Qanungo by name Gopala Kaul. Under their supervision huge irrigation schemes were undertaken. Lal Kuhl, Shah Kuhl exists even up to this day**”. This does not mean that Bhatta honorific continued for long **or** Kaul surname came around during Zain-ul-Abdin’s reign only. By early 16th Century both appellations were common and few other surnames, mostly by converting *Khitahbs* {Honour Titles} into surnames, had surfaced in the community in *Kashmeere*. Though Bhatta honorific in *Kashmeere*, dating at least to 9th Century, is ante surname Kaul, but Kaul surname chronicled during Zain-ul-Abdin’s time indicates that Kaul surname already existed, may be from few centuries earlier.

Two
Aryan Saraswat Brahmins Of Kashmeere {Kashmir} Through
Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity, Conversion
Trauma's,
Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th Century }

Part IV: Surname Roots From Shakta Worship - Re- return And Rebirth :
Gratus Shriya
Bhatta {Shri Bhat } - Conversions and Re-Exodus - Stars Rise
Under Moghuls:
Pandit Honorific

Kaula From Shakta Worship. From available scriptures, Kaul surname is related to Shaivite beliefs, which peaked around 10th Century. Once Shaivism took roots, *Shakta* and *Kali* worship {more so in her form of ***Bhadrakali***}, started upwards during the time of Abhinav Gupta, an ardent *Shakta* worshipper and *Kali Bakhta*. The followers of *Shakta* worship, being Shaivites to the core, were called as *Kaulas*. Brief enumeration of *Shakta* philosophy, genesis of *Shaktamata* worship will throw direct light on the genesis of Kaula {Kaul} surname. Abhinav Gupta, Somananda and Jayaratha, ardent *Shakta* and *Kali* worshipers and many other scholars were the torchbearers and founders of *Shakta* worship, *Tantric* by nature, in *Kashmeere*. **There are two broad forms of Shakta worship viz the *Shri Kul* and *Kali Kul*. *Kularnava Tantra* {Defining *Shri Kul* worship} is the authoritative *Agam* {Doctrine} for *Shri Kul* and the *Mahanirvana Tantra* for *Kali Kul* {Defining *Kali Kul* worship}. It is well**

known that Abhinav Gupta and Sidha Natha {alias Shambu Natha} eulogized '*deities of Karmanya*' {Gods and Goddesses who shape destiny} mentioned in *Kularnava Tantra*. The practitioner and *Sadhaks* {Preachers} of this doctrine reach top of spiritual climb and becomes a *Kaul*; an *Aghoreshwara* {Enlightened}. He cuts off all *Karmic* bonds {Worldly duties}; there is no death or rebirth; neither *Mangal* or *Amangal* {Good or bad}; no pain or pleasure for him. In his mortal body he is *Shiva* and when he dies he remains on the '*astral plane*' and carries on his wishes from this plane through the medium of other persons. *Shastra*'s {Scriptures} are full of praise for *Kaulas* {Enlightened} and line of such *Kaulas* continued in *Kashmeere*, with few advanced *Sadhaks* {Preachers/Scholars} directing the *Karma* {Worldly duties} while people in general carried on general *Kulapuja* {Worship of *Kul Devi*'s {Family Deities}}. One of the Yoga systems popular and propounded in *Kashmeere* is also called *Kaula Yoga*; other being *Trika Yoga*. In the process of transition and refinement of Shaivism in *Kashmeere*, *Kali Bhakti* and *Shakta* worship followed, after initial burst of devotion, with admixture *Tantra*. Basically *Tantra* theology is 8-fold; **"Right view, Right aspiration, Right speech, Right behaviour, Right livelihood, Right effort, Right thought and Right contemplation"**. With advent of Islam *Sufi-Rishi* order also took roots making a strange combination of Shaivism, *Tantra*, *Shakta* Worship with admix of *Sufi-Rishi* cult. {Readers interested in *Shakta* Worship should read papers written by Pandit Laxman Joo, Justice Katju, Acharya Dinanth Shastri, Jankinath Kaul, and Dr Kaw etc}.

Sir John Woodroffe, pen name Arthur Avalon, an authority on *Shakta* {*Tantric*} worship says; **"Moreover, though this does not seem to be recognised, it is never-the-less the fact that these *Kauli* {*Tantric*} rites are philosophically based on monistic doctrine. Now, it is this *Kaula* doctrine and practice, limited probably, as being a secret doctrine, at all time to comparatively few, which has come to be known as the *Tantra*"**. Since majority of then Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* had Shaivism and *Shakta* worship as their belief, when it peaked around 11th Century AD; *Kaula*'s formed bigger chunk of the population, more so after feat by Abhinav Gupta, which can be termed as the beginning of *Kauli* rites; an *Aghoreshwara* {Enlightenment}. Abhinav Gupta was instrumental in creating a tradition, remembered in *Kashmeere* to this day. He entered a cave while reciting the *Bhairavastava* along with 1200 disciples never to be seen again. This cave, which received the mortal frame of Abhinav Gupta, is situated at *Birwa* village, some five miles from Magam on the slopes of Pir Panchal range closer to *Tosa Maidan*. This feat, not commended initially, laid foundation of *Shakta* worship though it had just started spreading. It is only later that he was glorified and immortalised in a folk verse in *Kashmeeri*; **'Bahshat Chaat Heth su Brahmchari... Sari Heth Khot Shivlokas... Yete khot deh heth... kus deh di dari....Abhinav Gupta Achara zan'**. Translated: **'With his 1200 disciples this Brahmchari went to Shivlok with all of them in mortal form. Who dares such a feat! Remember only Acharya Abhinav Gupta could do it'**. This feat, followed by more scholarly works, religious scriptures by other scholars, Shaivism and *Shakta* worship peaked to give foundation to the appellation cum surname, **Kaula**; around 12th Century. 9th to 12th Century is considered most blessed from religious point of view not only for *Kashmeere* but also for *Brahmanical* order of *Hindustan*, when new appellation of Shaivism and *Shakta* worship found roots, followers and worshiper.

Shaivite Roots For Surnames. The other origin of **Kaula** surname is associated with word *Mahakaal* {*Mahakoul* for Shiva. Shiva in Shiv Temple at Ujjain is referred as *Mahakaal*}, word probably imported during Laltaditya time, Atri Gupta and Vasugupta who belonged to this region. Since Shaivism peaked few centuries later {9th to 12th Century} *Mahakaal* {Shiva} followers were called *Kaulas* { Followers; of *Mahakaal*!}. In fact *Kaula* is more inclined to *Shakta* worship than *Mahakaal* and if **Mahakoul** appellation is the source of surname Kaul then all the Brahmins around Ujjain would have been called Koul's or Kaula's! Pandit Ram Krishen Kaul in 'Sociology of names and Nicknames of India' with Special Reference to *Kashmeere* writes; **"The use of surnames in ancient Kashmir is negligible, Present Kashmiri surnames have more or less evolved during the Muslim and Sikh rule.**

It is stated that almost all the Kashmiri Pandits were Koul's and they were later on subdivided according to different nicknames and with the passage of time, these nicknames became permanent surnames. There seems to be some truth in this statement primarily because all the Kashmiri Pandits are Shaivites and *Mahakoul* is one of the names of Lord Shiva, and secondly because the number of nicknames even now attached with the surname Koul is largest of all. Moreover, in recent years the use of nicknames is being progressively discarded and the surname Koul is being adopted more than any other surname by almost all such people". The first part of the statement is well carried, as the appellation then in use was Bhatta; a generic honorific. However, the connectivity of *Mahakaal* to the surname **Kaul** gives way to more convincing *Shri Kul* form of *Shakta* worship. Dr Subash Kak in 'Kashmiri Hindus and the Caste System' writes; "**The dominant philosophical and religious system current in Kashmir is that of Shaivism. According to the texts of the Shaivites all those who accept the *Kula* (Shaivite) *dharma* become Kauls, irrespective of their background**". Here '*Kaula*' with '*Kula*' {Shaivite} *dharma* has been somewhat loosely associated and could have been amplified to mean *Shri Kul* form of *Shakta* worship.

Surname Kaul. As time passed *Shakta* worship took firmer 'terrafirma', a new class of *Kaula Bhatta's* from other than *Dattatreya Gotra* came up; some kept this surname but majority had to shed it as invocation of *Gotra* during religious ceremonies gave up the game, when curiosity for flouting lineage took over and there is the rub. *Dattatreya's* introduced a modified appellation; *Dattatreya Kaula Bhatta's* to ensure 'other *Gotra*' *Kaula Bhatta's* remain at a lower *Gotra* lineage pedestal than their own. This tinge of 'lineage vanity' still exists amongst *Dattatreya's* who would make it a point to mention and flout *Dattatreya Gotra* etc in their *Kulawali's* till today; they feel it gives them added weightage! With time other surnames in the form of nicknames within *Dattatreya Kaula Bhatta's* and other *Gotras* came about, in most cases because of vocation; some a century old. Few surnames amongst *Dattatreya Kaula's* which came about this way; Bamzai {P N Kaul Bamzai son of Anand Kaul, Writer. His father was Tota Kaul Kardar}, Kak {There are many *Gotras* for Kak's}, Muhtasib {Ram Nath Kaul Muhtasib; writer of 19th Century}, Pahalwan {Anand Ram Pahalwan, carried forward history written by Narain Kaul}, Sahib {Sahib Kaul; writer} etc. Many Kaul's would like to associate origin of the Kauls and surname to particular places in *Hindustan* like Kolhapur or to the temple city of Lord *Dattatreya* at Phandarpur {Both Maharashtra}. There are *Dattatreya's*, not necessarily Kauls in *Hindustan* also and location of temple always does not indicate the place of origin. It would have been pleasure to analyse other surnames like Dhar's etc; a subject itself which I reserve for later effort. The genesis in outline is that Dhar was the honorific given to a village head, strongman or a warlord of smaller *jagir/estate*; called *Dara* pronounced as *Dhara*. This honorific was prevalent during 12th Century {Jaisimha} and continued to be used till about 14th Century. With the advent of Islam many such *Dara's* had converted and to differentiate themselves from Brahmin *Dara's*, convertee's modified it to Dar while Brahmins persisted with Dhar. First time Dhar {Dar} is mentioned in any chronicle as a surname aree Malik Bahram Dar and another Saif Dar; both during the time of Musa Raina {16th Century}. A recent article by a *Kashmeeri* writer has propounded that Dhar's were those who migrated to Gauda {Bengal} and retained their Dhar surname once they returned to the valley; difference being Dar's are *Malumasis* and Dhar's are *Banumasis*. Dhar's {Dar's} not only are found in Bengal but also in Gujrat, Konkan, many places in Maharashtra and all are not Brahmin's. It is essential to understand that Dhar and Dar is question of writing these in then prevalent script Sharda {then *Upbrahmabasha*}, which could have introduced this subtle discrepancy in pronunciation more so if it was uttered in Sanskrit, which got distorted while speaking in *Kashmeeri*. The other reason is mentioned above i.e differentiation between two communities.

Thus between 12th and 13th Century transition from Bhatta to selective *Gotra's* and general class as *Kaula's* and few surnames in the shape of Honorific's had come about in *Kashmeere*. Ideally it was time for religion to take deep roots, refinement and transition of

surnames but turmoil due to conversions in 14th Century put this on the back burner. After continued onslaughts on Brahmins from mid 14th Century till the defeat of Ali Shah from the hands of Shahi Khan, his brother, in 1420 AD there was no hope to Bhatta's of any respite from the tyranny of the Muslim rule in 15th Century either. One of the reasons of Ali Shah's defeat was tyranny and his successor, Shahi Khan, was aware of it. He was around when his brother had unleashed and had understood the negative aspects of these measures. Even then, during initial period of his reign, there were no indications of his being softer or harsher than his brother. The time and circumstances could possibly change attitude of Shahi Khan, which it did; who took the name of **Zain-ul-Abdin**.

Re- return : Gratis Shriya Bhatta { Shri Bhat }. The place of settlement of those who migrated to *Hindustan* had itself been active between the marauders and defenders and as word spread of the benign rule of Sultan Zain-ul-Abdin {Shahi Khan} {1420 -1470 AD}, they opted to return to their roots, around 1430 AD. Many families returned to the valley, probably around 1450 AD. Credit for their return goes entirely to Shriya Bhatta {Commonly referred as Shri Bhat}, who cured Zain-ul-Abdin from a poisonous boil. Jonaraja, the historian, records **Shriya Bhatta's** feat thus; **"As flowers are not obtainable in the month of Magha on account of the mischief by snow, even so physicians who knew about poisons could not at that time be found in the country owing to Governmental oppression. The servants of the King at last found out Shriya Bhatta who knew the antidotes of poisons and was well versed in the art of healing, but out of fear he, for a long time delayed to come. When he arrived, the King gave him encouragement and he completely cured the King of the poisonous boil"**. As a *gratus* Shriya Bhatta requested Zain-ul-Abdin to be kind to Brahmins of *Kashmeere* and allow those who had left to return. Zain-ul-Abdin agreed and also gave land to returnee families in Zainagir/Zainapur {Between *Ali Kadal* and *Zaina Kadal*; remembered as 4th and 5th Bridge}. Bhatta's {Bhatt's; Simha, Ruppa, Karupar} held most of the ministries during his rule, apart from Shriya Bhatta {Shri Bhatt}, Tilakacharya and Shrivara {Historian}; while Kaula's {Madho, Ganesh, Gopala} held important administrative posts during the reign. By now Persian had become the official language and the desire of Brahmins to share assignments in the Sultan's administration with others could not be fulfilled without study of Persian. They took to study of Persian and in a brief span of a few years acquired mastery over this language. This is well chronicled; Avtara Bhatta had remembered *Shah Nama* {In Persian} by heart and used to recite it to Zain-ul-Abdin. However, Sanskrit and religious ceremonies were not forgotten, being distinctive feature to keep separate identity. Even then they were mostly addressed as Bhatta's or Bhat surnames Kaul {Kaula}, Renu, Razdan, Malik, Raina were found amongst the gentry, though not common.

Transition During Benevolent Rule. Zain-ul-Abdin had established a translation department, where important works were translated from Sanskrit and Sharda into Persian and vice versa. This opened the portals of Sanskrit and Sharda {*Sidhamatrika*} learning to Muslim savants also, while Bhatta's learnt Persian. Many religious, poetic and devotional scriptures and philosophies of 10th to 14th Century AD were retrieved, rewritten and few translated into Persian. *Mahabharata* and *Rajatarngini* were translated into Persian under the supervision of Soma Bhatta for the first time. None of religious scriptures/treatises translated into Persian during this period have been traced except Jonaraja's updation of *Rajatarangini* {Upto 1459 AD}. Even later translations of Sanskrit histories, scriptures into Persian including Prajya Bhatta's *Rajatarngini* {Covering 1486-1513 AD} have been lost. It is matter of conjecture only that *Baharistan-i-Shahi* includes history of Brahmin period based on Sanskrit and Sharda chronicles of that period. *Kashmeeri*, a variant of *Nastalique* {script used for Persian and Urdu languages} adopted with a few modifications as a script for *Kashmeeri* tongue also appeared as language of the common people though it had an appropriate and precise script of its own in Sharda. A **systematic** literature in *Kashmeeri* of this period starts from '**Mahanay Prakash**' written in 13th Century by Siri Kanth in *Vakh* form, which was later used by mystic Lal Ded to convey her *Vakhs*, referred as *Lal Vakhs*; a mix of *rishi-sufi* cult sayings. **Lal Ded was disciple of Sidhi Kanth {Also Siri Kanth, Sidhi Sri Kanth, Sidha Mol } and from all accounts;**

name, era and mastery over *Vakhs*; Sidhi Kanth is same as the author of 'Mahanay Prakash'; master in *Vakh* form of writing. He was also the family priest of Lal Ded's parental family. Probably Lal Ded carried his mastery in *Vakhs* to convey her mystic sayings; called Lal *Vakhs*.

Many returnee families settled for a short while in Zainagir/Zainapur before circumstances forced them to move out again. They, from all accounts had got recognition of their administrative and literary acumen during their short sojourn outside and got similar assignments on return to the valley. In fact their land and other assets, left behind were returned. During exile they had picked up Persian and were well versed with Sanskrit and *Upbrahmabasha* variants also, as used in the plains of *Hindustan*. With knowledge of many languages they found their way into various departments established during the reign and continuing their scholarly profession. It did not last long as on the demise of Zain-ul-Abdin in 1474 AD the sword of conversion again hanged over them. *Baharistan-i-Shahi* {Persian} {Unedited translation from Persian to English} describes benevolence of Zain-ul-Abdin, with disdain, thus; **"Whereas the Sultan showed considerable favour and regard to the Muslim nobles and their learned men, he also undertook the re-construction of the monuments of the infidels and the communities of the polytheists. He popularised the practices of the infidels and the heretics and the customs of idol-worshippers and the people ignorant of faith. All those temples and idol-houses of the infidels, which had been destroyed totally in the reign of Sultan Sikandar, may God bless his soul, were re-built and re-habilitated by him {One such temple was that of Jyesthwar - Zethyer}. Most of the unbelievers and polytheists, who had fled to the lands of Jambu {Jammu} and Kathwar {Kishtawar} because of the overwhelming strength of Islam, were induced by him to return to Kashmir. The sacred books of the infidels and the writings of the polytheists which had been taken out of this country were brought back, and thus the learning of the unbelievers and the customs of the polytheists were revived by him".** Copies of *Vedas* and *Shastras* were procured from *Hindustan* and got translated into Persian and many Arabic and Persian books were translated into Sanskrit. Particular mention can be made of Mulla Ahmad's translation of *Rajatarangini* and *Mahabharata*. However, there were detractors who criticised Zain-ul-Abdin for his favours to Brahmins as recorded in *Baharistan-i-Shahi*; **"He {Zain-ul-Abdin} helped the community of the misled idolaters to prosper. In every village and town, blasphemous customs connected with spring or temples were revived. He ordered that in every town and locality, celebration of special feasts and festivals by the infidels be revived in accordance with the customs prevalent in the past. He himself attended many of these festivities"**. It is chronicled that Zain-ul-Abdin visited *Amaresvara* {*Amarnath*} , could be another shrine of the same name i.e present-day *Amburher* near Srinagar, as Jonaraja does not describe the *Amaresvara* {*Amarnath*} *Linga* in great detail as he did with Sharda Temple at Shardi during Zain-ul-Abdin's so called visit .

Conversions Under Draconian Sword. Pressure on Hindus to convert to Islam, after death of Zain-ul-Abdin, resurfaced with indifferent short rule of a year of Haider Shah followed by his son Hassan Khan {1475-1487 AD}. Iraqi, who had left *Kashmeere* returned again, used forcible methods for conversions duly assisted by Musa Raina with Bhatta's as main target; about 24000 Bhatta's were forcibly converted to Shia faith, many killed or forced to migrate; leaving their hearth and home. As many as eighteen big temples in the city of Srinagar and in the rural areas were destroyed. There were thousands who cried *"Na Bhatto Aham"*; 'I am not a Bhatta', in pain and agony to escape death. The rule equally tyrannical, brought spate of conversions, **second major exodus**. However, there were sparks of revolt against the tyranny, when the ruling Muslim factions fought each other, which brought some respite for a short while but renewed tyranny for a longer period {See Part II above}. **Muslim Historian Hassan {Tarikh-i-Kashmir by Pir Ghulam Hasan Khuihami} writes; "The patience having reached the breaking point they {Bhatta's} rose in a body and set fire - to some mosques which were built with the material of the temples once demolished by Sikandar"**. With a civil war raging all round, Bhattas took to the peacetime occupation of writing books on

history, philosophy and poetry. Practically there was only one caste, Bhatta, that of the 'Brahmin' which represented Brahmanism in *Kashmeere*. In 15th and 16th Century when Islam made sizeable inroads into the community, essential measures were taken to preserve their entity and religion to the extent they could. Bhatta's did not forget Sanskrit learning and their religious ceremonies, because this was the only distinctive feature to keep them alive as a separate group. They separated spiritual and temporal seats and were divided into two sub-castes, the *Karkuns* {Derived from word *Karinda* {Persian- literally meaning white collar workers who studied Persian and entered Government service} and the *Bhasha Bhatta* or *Bhacha Bhatta* {Those who studied *Bhasha*- Religious Language i.e., Sanskrit/Sharda} who took charge of the religious affairs of the community. Daughter's son was made to study *Bhasha* {*Language/scriptures*} to administer religious needs of his maternal family. Since grandchildren were very young to learn *Bhasha*, they were called *Bhacha* {Kids} thus *Bhacha Bhatta*. This system started a chain of future generations of *Bhasha Bhatta*'s and also started bringing daughter's husband into the fold and if one carefully scrutinises Kulawali of *Bhasha Bhatta*'s, you will find *Gar Zamtur* ratio high and more prevalent amongst them. This system introduced one more aspect of giving respect to our family Guruji { *Gor*}. Irrespective of anything Guruji {*Gor*} was given pride of place when he visited the house of the host {*Yazman*}. It was because of the fact the Guruji's {*Gor*} basically belonged to daughter's in-law family, hence the special respect, which is adhered to even to this day.

Oh God : Move Back Again. Return to anarchy, tyranny and forceful conversions forced majority of Brahmins to move back to their old destination. After all they would be welcome in the plains of *Hindustan*, where they had earned name and respect. *Hindustan* was also going through upheaval of various battles, invasions during this period, till Babur {Founder of Moghul empire- 1526 AD}, Sher Shah Suri {1531- 40 AD} and later Akbar {1556-1605 AD} came on the scene. Establishment of firm Mogul rule by Akbar opened new vistas for them also; like it did for other *Hindustani*'s. They were now linked again with the mainstream in *Hindustan*, which provided them rich and fresh field in many spheres of intellectuality, knowledge and even coveted posts in running administration. Gradually there sprang up *Kashmeere* colonies in Agra and Delhi, where they maintained separate identity and came to be known as *Kashmeere* Bhatta's or Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* had variety of surnames, cross names, based on vocation etc surnames; mostly Kaul's}, Renu, Razdan, Malik, Raina etc. In course of time their *Bhacha Bhattas* /*Basha Bhatta*'s {Priests / *Purohits*} also migrated and settled alongside them. By now 'Aryan' address, which had come into disuse, had been dropped though number of surnames had increased by adopting *Takhalus* {Honorific} as surname. These proliferated during 18th and 19th Centuries and stabilised by beginning of 20th Century. However, Saraswat and *Gotra* oriented assertions continued.

Star Ancestors Under Akbar And later Moghuls. Moghul rule under Akbar {1556-1605 AD} extended to *Kashmeere* in 1578 AD and Akbar visited *Kashmeere* in 1579 AD. During his reign, his Finance and Revenue Minister, Raja Todar Mal, made revenue settlement of the valley, where land belonging to those who had left due to persecution was restored. Aditya Pandit {Not a Kashmeeri} was appointed to effect distribution of these lands. During his stay, Akbar participated in the festivals of our community. On 13th of *Bhadoon* {Vikrami Samvat}, also known as *Vitasta Triyodashi* {*Truvah*}; celebrated as birthday of *Vitasta* (Jhelum- *Wyeth*), he ordered illuminations all over the city and participated in the festivities. All this was a great and a decisive step taken towards recognizing their distinct existence and they came again into prominence. Akbar, as part of establishing strong seat of his Government in the valley, selected land around *Hari Parbat* {*Chakreshawari*}. A fort was constructed around the hill and a town founded there; named *Nogar Nagar*. The place was also called as 'Nogar', meaning 'new home' which seems to be more appropriate, as Akbar was famous to adapt local names, clichés for such ventures. Trade also flourished with outside; *Hindustan* and neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, Central Asia, Tibet, Ladakh. Traders from all these places visited *Kashmeere*. The habit of taking tea, which is now common in *Kashmeere*, was imbibed during this period, following contacts with *Tibetan* traders, who had themselves taken

it up from Chinese. This is the time one of the families of Raina's of Budhgair/Cawdor, who had been bestowed with the title of Renu {Raina} took to financing of the trade in wool; *Shahtoosh* {Wool from Chiru Goat and now most endangered animal in the world} and *Pashmina* {Wool from *Pashmina* Goat}. They would go to far off places of Ladakh area, bring caravan of wool and distribute it amongst the shawl makers, by making a *Fheri* {Going around with their wares and finally collect finished product} in far off places in *Hindustan* and even places like Kabul, Persia etc. That is how they got the surname of *Fehrists*. This clan of Fehrists had much to do with the activities of the community for the last few centuries; *Pokhribal* shrine is credited for its inception and construction to this clan and their descendants; Harjoo Fehrist and Sansar Chand Fehrist and renovated in 19th Century. Of course Pandit Harjoo Fehrist had his own standing and with another illustrious member of the community, Pandit Bhawani Kaul, was active in religious congregations and organisation during Dogra rule till he lost his life while crossing Kishanganga River, on his pilgrimage to Sharda Temple.

Akbar's efforts put across a signal to the other community members in the plains to return to their roots. One of the families, which returned again, was the *Banumasi* ancestor of Narain Kaul {1640 – 1712 AD}. His descendants are *Banumasi*'s and is indicator of the fact that they had picked up rituals and astrological calendar of plains called Solar Ingress method, had imbibed *Mukhimanana* system of counting lunar months but on their return they had to readopt original *Gaunamana* method of the valley. Things in the valley had changed for better and these repatriates established a colony in Mohalla Gulshan, close to the royal palace and at *Soore Teng* {Meaning a mound of ash; Present Rainawari}, close to the *Nogar Nagar* {*Hariparbat* – *Chakreshawari* Hill} where the seat of the Government existed then. Khatri Hindus, who had also moved in from plains of Punjab and Delhi, also established a colony close to Mohalla Gulshan. It is not correct to attribute establishment of Mohalla Gulshan to them. Had they been in this area, they or their descendants would have been found in that area at least till 19th Century. On the contrary quite a number of pockets of these Khatri Hindus existed close to Maharajganj {Latter Appellation} and *Buher Kadal*. From all accounts they settled mostly on the southern outskirts beyond the limits of Srinagar City, on the either side of *Wyeth* {Jhelum}; generally in the arc formed by *Chonth Kol* {Outlet of Dal Lake's water, starting from Dal Lake Gate join *Wyeth* at *Ram Munshi Bagh* and *Gaw Kadal* and *Kuta Kol* {Off take from *Wyeth* near *Shergarhi* Palace and joining at *Chattabal* Weir}. *Soore Teng* got its name at the end of 15th Century, when during the clashes between the communities and burning of houses of Aryan Saraswat Brahmins, a mound {*Teng*} of ashes {*Soore*} was formed. Rainawari gets its name from reclaimed garden clusters belonging to Raina's; both Muslim as well as Brahmin nobles. Incidentally during Zain-ul-Abdin's time a small island {*Lank*} close by was used for accommodating *Jogi*'s {Sadhu's, Hermits} and a free royal *Langar* {Kitchen} was established; named of *Jogi-Lank* or *Jogi-Lanker* till this day. It is recorded in *Tohfatu'l-Ahbab*, a chronicle in Persian covering this period, that Zain-ul-Abdin built an alms-house for *Jogis* on the *Dal lake* which gave name of *Jogi Lankar* to the locality {Also called *Zooj Lankar* or *Zooj Lank*} in present-day Srinagar. Narain Kaul's ancestors, like other prominent returnees constructed a house on a raised ground or a mound in the area close to *Vaital Mandir*; closer to *Kathi Darwaza* {*Hariparbat* – *Chakreshawari*} {The reason why the gate is known as *Kathi Darwaza*, then known as *Delhi Darwaza* is that the condemned people were hanged there; the word in *Kashmeeri* for a scaffold being *Kathi*. The colony had excellent view of the fort and Western Slopes of {*Hariparbat* - *Chakreshawari*}. This family had God given gift of intellectuality; were dubbed as 'eccentrics' by commons Kashmiri's. It may be of interest to know that during the 7th to 15th Centuries many of Aryan Saraswat Brahmin philosophers, religious philosophers of *Kashmeere* were dubbed as eccentrics {*Maet*} and even dubbing their places of residence as *maet purni* {Residence of Eccentrics}. Even Abhinav Gupta, our top *Shavite* religious philosopher {933-1015 AD}, was dubbed so, for entering caves in *Birwa* {Magam}, never to return but after his feat he was deified with a verse in praise of his *antardhyan*. This is also borne by surname *Mattoo*, most being denizens of Rainawari, and have their own separate waterfront {*Yarbal*} on the inland waterway {*maar*} known as

Moteyar {*Maetyar* short for *Maet Yarbal*}. Brickbats are expected including from my *Matamals*!

Pandit Honorific: Kashmeeri Pandit {KP} Born. This era and for sometime after Akbar, was somewhat similar to that of Zain-ul-Abdin's reign. In the Moghul Durbar, Akbar's learned Brahmins and scholars were referred to as Pandit's; which was used as a generic term. Many *Kashmeeri* Brahmins who had migrated to the plains of *Hindustan* were also generally referred to as *Pandits*, for their literary and religious knowledge, as majority of them had not carried their family surnames when they migrated. This was due to the fact that during the exodus of 14th Century surnames had yet to catch up with the community in the valley and many did not have one. They had peculiar religious routines; applied *Teok* {*Tika*}, morning and evening read religious scriptures and were well versed with religious activities, peculiar of a *Brahmin*; generally referred to as *Pandit*. This form of address was not prefixed but **suffixed** with the name; like Narain Kaul Pandit, Miru Pandit etc. This honorific was not only used for them but also for many others in *Hindustan*, who had excelled in literature, art, culture and religion. For many it became surname; prevalent even today with Brahmins all over *Hindustan*. This honorific proliferated at local levels and did not meet the specific aspirations of separate and distinct identity for Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere*. On representation by Jai Ram Bhan Pandit in 18th Century {Direct descendant of Chandra Bhan Pandit; a great scholar ranked with first class poets of the day and favourite of both Shah Jehan and Dara Shikoh} to distinguish Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* from the Brahmins {*Pandits*} of other parts of India, then Moghul King Mohammad Shah {1719 - 1747 A. D} bestowed 'Pandit' honour title on them as a **Prefix**. Interestingly this prefix Pandit title was initially restricted to Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* living in the shrinking Moghul Empire of *Hindustan*; more so for those connected with Mughal Durbar, in Delhi {Called then as Shahjahanabad} and Agra. Since such *Kashmeeri's* had their roots from *Kashmeere*, this honorific got tagged as *Kashmeere* Pandit's {*KP's*}. However, many artists, *Gharana's* and intellectuals were also bestowed with similar honorific; but it was different suffix of '*Pandit*' and NOT '*Kashmeeri Pandit*'. Even today we have many of this class like Late Pandit G B Pant, Pandit Ravi Shankar {Famous *Sitar* maestro} etc. During last two centuries Pandit form of address was used in the valley as a form of respect, selectively though, by Dogra establishment and Hindus who were either visiting or were operating from *Kashmeere*. **Thus the *Kashmeeri Pandit* took his birth in his modern shape, though till then the name *Kashmeeri Pandit* was not coined to describe this community, which was described as Bhatta. Even now a *Kashmeeri Pandit* at home describes himself as a Bhatta and it is by this name that others describe him in *Kashmeere*.** Muslims or even Bhatta's themselves, sometimes, used Bhatta form of address, in disdain, and the womenfolk referred to or called as ***Bhatten***. Pandit honorific, Not Kashmiri Pandit {*KP*}, came into more usage after 15 August 1947, when Prime Minister sworn at midnight was **Pandit** Jawahar Lal Nehru; yet every *KP* in the valley was Bhatta. From here onwards Bhatta's have generally been referred as *Pandits*.

A noted *Kashmeeri* writer, however, writes; **"Before grant of Pandit honorific to *Kashmeeri's*, both Hindus as well as Muslims used to be called as *Khujjah* {*Khwajah*} in the Moghul Durbar"**. *Khujjah* {*Khwajah*} honorific was exclusively used for Muslims and not for any Hindu or Saraswat Brahmin of *Kashmeere*. *Khwajah* was specific title for the learned Muslims and *Sufi's* of the era, of which we have many examples; *Khwajah* Chisti, *Khwajah* Nizamudin etc. *Khujjah*, in *Kashmeere*, was used for reference to learned and affluent Muslims, who had become powerful families and force to reckon with in later centuries. The word *Khujjah*, of Persian origin, {*Khojeh*, *Khojah*} became more prevalent in *Kashmeere* during Muslim rule. The architect of Jamia Masjid constructed during Sikander's time was *Khwajah* Sadru'd-Din who had come to *Kashmeere* from Khurasan {Persia}. *Khujjah Saab* was used by Dogra establishment and Britisher's to address older affluent and learned Muslims during last two centuries and is used even today {*Saab* is later appellation for *Sahib*}.

Two
Millenniums Of Triumph, Search Of Identity, Conversion
Trauma's,
Exodus's To Pandit Bhawani { 18th/ 19th
Century }

Part V : Controversy Pandit Honorific – Under Later Moghuls, Afghan's And
Later Dogra Rule :

Star Pandit's : Narain And Bhawani

Erroneous Impression of Pandit Honorific Origin. There is an erroneous impression that Miru Pandit was first to be conferred with Pandit suffix, first to return during Akbar's rule with a contingent of Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere* settled outside and also the founder of *Banumassi* Dhar clan; being from Dhar {Place in Madhya Bharat; near Indore}. Miru Pandit's ancestors after migrating during the time of Sikandar /Ali Shah {14th Century}, had settled in the *Brahmani* kingdom in the South during Feroz Shah's reign {14th Century} and he returned to *Kashmeere* with Jehangir only in early 1600 AD. We must also remember that Rupa Bhavani was born in 1621 AD and her father was Madhav Joo Dhar; that means that Dhar surname and Dhar's, both *Sahibi* as well as *Pakamonde*, were around when Miru Pandit entered the valley. Miru's family was generally referred to with Pandit **suffix**, for their known and carried knowledge of literature and religion and he was actually in charge of Golkanda Fort {Present day Andhra}, while his family was at Ellichpur (Deccan). Having left the service of the Golkanda Chief, Miru came to Delhi, where he was appointed to command Nur Jehan's bodyguards and soon got a chance of showing his military skill by being part of the group, which freed Jehangir from Mahabat Khan's captivity; who had taken Jehangir as prisoner at Jhelum {Now in Pakistan}. As a mark of royal favour, Jehangir took Miru with him and permitted him to settle in *Kashmeere*, granted Jagir and was made the Governor of Kamraj {Areas of Kupwara, *Suyapur* {Sopore}, *Varhamullah* {Baramulla}} to build and supervise forts on the borders. Miru and his sons built Forts at Suyapur {Sopore}, *Varhamullah* {Baramulla} etc and recruited people from Muzaffarbad, *Uttara* {Means Northern Area; Titwal, Kupwara, Tilel Valley and Lolab} to man his forces. Bulaqi, fifth descendant from Miru, in course of time was also in charge of border defence but by then Mogul rule had considerably weakened. Bulaqi's son Mukund, who could not pull on well with then Subedar of *Kashmeere*, left Kashmir in stealth, leaving his family at Kishtwar while he proceeded to Delhi. Mohammad Shah, then Moghul King {1719 - 1747 A. D} put him in charge of the revenue administration while command of forts was taken away from him. It is Mukund, 6th descendant of Miru Pandit, who had honorific of Pandit Mukund.

Later Moghuls. During Akbar's rule Brahmins of *Kashmeere* had achieved apical level of re-recognition and comfort. With his death in 1605 AD, accession of Jehangir, the empire stepped into first step of decay. Jehangir, Shah Jehan and later Aurangzeb had little or no contribution to *Kashmeere* except pleasure trips and back to tyrannical ways. Jehangir's visits to *Kashmeere* were more of pleasure trip's rather than administrative. Jehangir seemed to be tolerant because of influence of his Hindu mother {Jodha Bai} and maternal uncle {Man Singh} and dichotomy for Noor Jehan was a Shia but soon got tag of an iconoclastic. During his reign Itqad Khan, Mughal Subedar of *Kashmeere*, further marred and tarnished his already sullied image. The subedar, harassed and persecuted the Brahmins of *Kashmeere*, forcing many of them to convert to Islam {Moghul Subedars {Governors} came to be deputed from

Hindustan, who came to *Kashmeere*, followed by a retinue of their trusted men}. Noor Jehan got sculptured and chiselled stones from flight of steps linking Shankaracharya temple to the river Vitasta {Jehlum} near the temple of Goddess *Tripursundari* {Now called Durga Nag} dismantled and reconstructed *Pathar Masjid* with these stones. This *masjid*, an old *Baudh Vihara* was converted into a *sunni masjid* during Fateh Khan's rule {1510-1517 AD} but *sunni muslim's* did not use this mosque, as it had been rebuilt by a Shia woman. Sikh commander, Phula Singh, during brief rule of Sikhs {Early 19th Century} declared *Pathar Masjid* as the property of the state, as it was built out of the dismantled material of a temple of a high architectural merit. That is how it passed on as a state property till this day. One must also be clear that though Miru Pandit exercised considerable influence over Noor Jehan as well as Jehangir, with tongue in cheek and apology to Dhar's, who claim Miru as their ancestor, he failed to restrain Noor Jehan from dismantling the old and carved steps leading to of Shankaracharya Temple.

On the death of Jehangir in 1627 AD, Shah Jehan ascended the throne and was equally responsible for indulging in iconoclastic activities in *Kashmeere*. Though Shah Jehan vested *Kashmeere* seven times, these again were pleasure trips and his religious inclination was against Brahmins. At his behest a number of temples were profaned and desecrated, but also ravaged and demolished. English Historian and writer Bernier records; **'The doors and pillars were found in some of the idol temples demolished by Shah Jehan and it is impossible to estimate their value'**.

Historian Narain Kaul. Amongst this all when Narain Kaul was born in 1640 AD, his family, which had established a name in the sphere of literature, governance and writing had to face indifference. He was barely eighteen when Aurangzeb executed his brothers, imprisoned Shah Jehan and ascended the throne in 1659 AD, which had tremendous effect in *Kashmeere* in the years to come. A beginning of another cruel phase of Islamic persecution through Mughal Subedar's {Governor's} had started. However, then Mogul Subedar Ali Mardan Khan (1650-1657 AD) was a cut above them all. Ali Mardan, originally an Iranian, had taken shelter in the court of Shah Jehan, as he was reluctant to handover treasure-trove he had come by in Qandahar {Kandhar - Afghanistan} to the ruler of Iran. As Moghul Governor of *Kashmeere*, he proved quite tolerant and felt attracted to the monistic philosophy of *Shaivism*. He was a poetic genius, had mastery over Persian language and his lofty and sublime eulogy of Lord Shiva, in Persian, and his praises galore of the *Hariparbhat* is laudable. Even today a locality close to *Hariparbhat* is known as Ali Mardan and his poems used to be sung during various religious congregations as *bhajans*. There is no denial that many Brahmins of *Kashmeere* held high places during the reign of Moghuls but it was mainly for their acumen. Mahadeo Pandit was the *Peshkar* {Chief Minister} of Ali Mardan Khan. Judges decided affairs of administration and legal cases according to *Shastras*; one such Judge being Srikantha Pandit. Deeds were written in Sanskrit, not polished grammatical language, but a dialect; admixture of Sanskrit and Persian, which became court and literary language of that time. Many were granted *Mansabs*; Chaudhari Mahesh Shankar Das was a *Mansabdar* during the Subedarship of Saif Khan {1668-1671 AD}. He laid an extensive garden on the banks of Dal Lake near Nishat Bagh, constructed a road across Dal Lake over a distance of four miles, connecting the garden with his residential house at Rainawari, which exists till this day. His garden got acclaim from then Subedar Saif Khan, himself a great builder, who remarked bitterly; **'Choudhari Mahesh bag na kard Dar Dili Saif Khan dag kard'** {Persian-Translated: **Choudhari Mahesh did not lay a garden but simply created a scar in the heart of Saif Khan**}. Descendants of Choudhari's of Rainawari should feel elated!

Narain Kaul, the Historian, may not have been commended in *Kashmeere* chronicles like great *Kashmeeri Shaivite* Philosophers Rama Kantha Bhatta or Pradyuman Bhatta of 9th Century and many others; but who remembers even these or their enormous contribution to our religious philosophy today? Narain Kaul {17th / 18th Century} and his sixth descendant Bhawani Kaul's {18th / 19th Century} and that of many other sons of the soil achievements, in multitude spheres, got only brief mention, nearly negligible, in our chronicles and community

due to circumstances, adverse rulers and Subedars of Moghul Empire, Bhatta *Madhurmilans* {Prime Ministers during Afghan Rule} who played shrewd politics with ruling class for their own personal benefit. It is because of their written works, some of which survived the orgies of time, rulers and even envy, that they earned a place for themselves. There are similar breath taking accounts of achievements from other clans of Brahmins of *Kashmeere*; *Dhar's*, *Bhatt's* etc; unsung and many un-chronicled. Narain's ancestor left the valley during the terrible reign of Ali Shah {1413-1419 AD}. Not much is known about the place of their initial stay outside the valley after migration, but it appears that they initially settled in the plains closer to Shivaliks / Kurukshetra; and were called Brahmins of *Kashmeere* or 'Bhatta's' of *Kashmeere*. At the time of conversion turmoil in the valley, *Hindustan* itself was under invasion from Muslim marauders with uncertain climate lurking around. Over a period the group moved to places of concentration of *Kashmeeri's* and found their moorings, mainly due to their administrative and literary acumen. They were much sought after by the ruling King's and Court's and on return of the family, during the rule of Akbar, re-established their credentials in the sphere of intellectuality, governance and writing. The family had yet to completely imbibe the *Shaivite* philosophy of then *Kashmeere* and during their stay outside they had been influenced by *Cakrin* {*Vishnu*} philosophy; Narain being another name of the God *Vishnu*. A star was born in the family around 1640 AD and named Narain.

Aurangzeb visited *Kashmeere* only once, granted some land to the *Pandas* of *Martand Tirtha* (Mattan) under his royal seal. Outwardly there was some religious tolerance as Akbar's rule had brought in some relief and stability, which though on waning side had some semblance. However, remnants of powerful Muslim families like *Shahmiri's*, *Chak's*, *Magre's*, *Raina's*, *Malik's*, *Bhat's*, who for nearly three centuries had been masters to shape destiny, fell from their high pedestal and within a short span became unknown, but inwardly were defiant and waiting in the wings. By the time Narain Kaul reached adulthood *Kashmeere* had been blessed with *Rupa Bhawani* {1621-1721 AD}, Poet Ghani, *Rishi Pir* {Also revered as *Pir Pandit Padshah*} and scores of many *Sufi's*. *Rupa Bhawani's* verses *Rahasyaopadesha* were being passed on through the word of mouth, medium of her father *Madhav Dhar* and chronicled later. Poet Ghani was more of *Sufi* than a muslim poet, who declined Aurangzeb's invitation to visit his Court. He would close all doors and windows when he was in his house and leave them ajar when he was out. His explanation was that the most precious item in his house was he himself. Rightly the inscription on his tombstone, in Persian, even quoted during last Century by *Kashmeeri's* for 'could not care' reads; **'Chy Shama Manzile Ma Ba Payi Mai'** {Translated: **Like a burning candle my destination is under my feet**}. *Rishi Pir* {*Pir Pandit Padshah*} by his admix of *Sufism* and *Brahminical* thoughts, had created a place across all the segments of the population of then *Kashmeere*. Unlike many of his contemporary *saint's* / *sufi's*, he had no political advisors, was not interested in mundane affairs, never converted people to his faith, yet helped men of all hues in going up the ladder of spiritual elevation. Aurangzeb, however, had not taken kindly to his close relations with *Akund Mullah Shah*, teacher of his late brother *Dara Shikoh* and ordered his detention; which remained unimplemented. The Brahmins say; 'same night *Rishi Pir* appeared in a dream to Aurangzeb, demanding to annul imperial order of his arrest' but fact remains that stoutly convinced of *Rishi Pir's* spiritual attainments, Muslims interceded to deter then Subedar from arresting him. He {*Rishi Pir*} had no rancour against Aurangzeb and even went to the extent of solacing him when Aurangzeb was remorse for having executed *Samrad*, a *Sufi*, whom Aurangzeb considered a heretic. *Sufism* was not acceptable to Islam and *Sufi's* were rejected as heretics because their thought content was more or less monistic or pantheistic akin to *Brahmanism* and Buddhism while Islam is deistic. Somehow *Sufism* thrived in *Kashmeere* mainly due to the fact that the believer Muslim's had *Brahmanical* base and many Bhatta's also were devotees of these *Sufi's*. During this period another *sufi*, *Mansur* {*Sayed Ali Mansur*}, was beheaded when he proclaimed, **'I am the Truth'**. **{A locality near Raghunath Mandir is still called after this *sufi*. This *Sufi's* utterances, in Persian, heard by me as a child still ring my ears, but unfortunately I cannot recall them - Author}.**

As Narain Kaul grew so did his interest in reading of old chronicles, scriptures and writing and translations of various scriptures. Lal Ded's *Vakhs*, which so far had been passed on by the word of mouth were written for the first time, in 1654 AD in *Asrarul - Abrar* {**The Secret of Pious**} by Baba Dawud Mushkati. *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, first fully detailed history of Kashmir in Persian, written anonymously in 1593 AD and completed in 1614 AD; Abul Fazl's *Aine-e- Akbari* covering Akbar's reign; Prajya Bhatta and Shuka had updated *Rajatarangini* and these had gained eyes and ears of the learned *Kashmeeri*'s. As a first thought he must have been impressed by the language used in these chronicles and would have had inclination to follow Shuka to continue *Rajatarangini* series from 1587 AD onwards, who {Shuka} had described Akbar's visit thus; ***'Now Jalaludina {Akbar} came to see the kingdom of Kashmeere, decked with saffron, walnut, fruits and flowers. The wives of the citizens hastened to have a glimpse of the King. One woman pointed out the King to her dear female friend who was quite eager to see him; another exclaimed with a flutter that she had seen the leader of the army; another woman with threats to her child covered her bosom and went. After the people of Kashmeere had seen the King, a continuous festivity was held in every house'*** {***Rajatarangini by Shuka***}. *Rajatarangini* started by Kalhan, had its own charm of narration of the rule of Hindu Kings of *Kashmeere*, updated from time to time; Jonaraja upto 1459 AD, Shrivara upto 1487 AD {Both under orders of Zain-ul- Abdin} and later by Prajya Bhatta and Shuka. An analysis of the Kings, after the advent of Islam in *Kashmeere*, will show that the Kings, who opted and were interested in updatation of *Rajatarangini* were only two; Zain-ul- Abdin and Akbar, both known for their tolerance and been benevolent *Rajas* {King}. It is also evident that *Baharistan-i-Shahi* was written about advent of Islam, eulogising muslim rulers, critical of Zain-ul- Abdin and possibly as a counter to *Rajatarangini*. The contents were never complimentary to Bhatta's or their religion. After the death of Shuka no one had updated *Rajatarangini*; one of the reason being that Abul Fazl's *Aine-e-Akbari* had covered Akbar's rule. The other reason was dark era of rulers from mid 14th Century was no cause celebre to write about and equate to narration of Kalhan's *Rajatarangini*. From Jonaraja onwards narration was not as flowery and lacked frank expression and tyranny underwent by Bhatta's. Many important events were either left out or put in mildly, for they too, perhaps did not want to antagonise then Kings, who had commissioned them. On the other hand *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, eulogy of Islam and Muslim Kings, which unfolded during Narain Kaul's time would have dissuaded him to continue with *Rajatarangini* series. He, therefore, must have decided to write more in detail, penned truth, travails and triumphs of the period separately. Absence of royal patronage may have also encouraged this decision-making. About Aurangzeb; 'through his Subedar Iftikar Khan (1671-75), a cruel and tyrannous, the Emperor being a religious bigot re-imposed *Jazia* (poll tax) and other levies on Bhatta's'. This tyrannical order got stopped when a delegation of Brahmins of *Kashmeere* assured Aurangzeb that they would accept Islam ***'if Guru Tegh Bahadur {1621 –75 AD; 9TH guru of Sikhs} was first converted to Islam'***. The history records of a delegation of five hundred Brahmins of *Kashmeere* led by Kirpa Ram, a learned Bhatta, calling on Guru Tegh Bahadur at the village of Anandpur Sahib. The Guru was informed of the Mughal Governor's immeasurable hostility towards Bhatta's of *Kashmeere* to coerce them to get converted to Islam and wanted Guru to plead their case with Aurangzeb. Guru Tegh Bahadur was categorical in informing them, , that it could be stopped at the cost of a great sacrifice and was silently lending succour and moral help to them. Guru Govind Singh, then only twelve years old, exhorted his father to undertake the sacrifice for the noble cause of preserving and conserving the religious faith of Bhatta's. Guru Tegh Bahadur was already under the surveillance of the Mughals, who doubted his bonafides as a saint. Ultimately he was imprisoned and executed on 11 November 1675 at *Gurudwara Sis Ganj* {Delhi} for refusing to embrace Islam. His head was cremated At Anandpur Sahib by his son Guru Gobind Singh and other mortal remains cremated at *Gurudwara Rakab Ganj* {Delhi} On receiving the news about the sacrifice Guru Gobind Singh said: ***'tilak janju raakhaa prabh taakaa keeno bado kalu mahi saaka'***. From the recorded details of the meeting with the Guru, it is apparent that Narain Kaul was part of this delegation. Narain Kaul and later Anand Ram Pahalwan have vividly

recorded tyrannical rule of Subedar's; when *Jazia* was reimposed in 1679 followed by other restrictions; **'No Bhatta should be allowed to ride a horse, wear Jama (Mughal dress), bear arms, participate in fairs and festivals, put on a Teok {Tilak mark}, receive education and visit a garden'**. The history further records that the conflicts in *Kashmeere* were not restricted to Bhatta's and Muslims, but struggle between Hindu Khatri commercial class and the Muslim commercial class of *Kashmeere* also. Muslim traders would approach Muslim masses, inflame in the name of religion against the '*Kafirs*' {Infidel} traders. It is only after the brief incursion by Sikh Army in early 18th Century things started looking better. There was no denial that these traders, flourished much to the anguish of Bhatta's as well as Muslims and was one of the reasons for deep rooted hate Muslims developed against them. Aurangzeb died in the year 1707 AD.

Narain Kaul did not restrict himself to writing history only but went through regular religious rituals at the ancestral *mandir* close by constructed one of his ancestors, now called *Ram Kaul's Mandir*, closer to PokhriBal / Kathi Darwaza {Ram Kaul Mandir was re-renovated in later centuries by descendants of the family}. He was deeply impressed by *Shaiva* philosophers Ratna Kantha and Bal Bhatta and ardent devotee of Abhinav Gupta's *Shaivite* writings. His writings, incorporating religion scriptures, translations, papers had the imprint of the grammarian Shiv Varma. His admiration of Somadeva, Sahib Kaula was well known though himself did not practise *Tantra*. **It is difficult to assess, analyse and write about literary or attributed works of Narain Kaul but he created a place for himself in that era, where due to circumstances, talent of Bhatta scholar's had been curtailed after Akbar's death and Islam having taken stronger roots in the valley. Like many other scholars of that and earlier time, most of his works would have been lost, ravaged or over a period of time remained closeted forever.** He died in 1712 AD, year as Aurangzeb's successor Bahadur Shah Zafar died. However, he died as Narain Kaul or Narain Kaul Pandit; for Pandit honorific as prefix was bestowed later. His descendants did not immediately take his writing baton; it was Anand Ram Pahlwan who carried the history from 1712 AD onwards to 1785 AD. However, Narain Kaul would not have been disappointed for one of his descendants, Bhawani, took the baton of writing during the next century.

Moghul Rule On The Wane. While Mohammad Shah conferred Pandit Honorific on Aryan Saraswat Brahmins of *Kashmeere*, his subedar's were either indifferent and incapable or cowed down by religious fanatics. History records tyranny of Muhatta Khan, Sheikh-ul-Islam of *Kashmeere* {Muslims then had a religious head on the lines of *Mir Waiz* called Sheikh-ul-Islam} thus; **'The Empire started cracking and crumbling and as a consequence *Kashmeere* witnessed cruel Muhatta Khan asserting his political hegemony over the head of the Deputy Governor, Mir Ahmad Khan and instructed him to execute the insensate measures against the Hindus. Muhatta Khan {Sheikh-ul-Islam of *Kashmeere*} deposed Mir Ahmad Khan {Moghul Subedar} and assumed the reins of government under the title of Dindar {Upholder of Faith}. Muhatta Khan credited with a deep knowledge of Islamic laws, somehow or other found fault with the policy followed by Mir Ahmad Khan towards Bhatta's and had made it plain that ascendancy of the Bhatta's was intolerable from every point of view'**. The tyranny was not restricted to Bhatta's only but engulfed other sect of muslim's; Shia's also. *Shia- Sunni* riots, brought untold miseries upon Shia's, followed by murder of Muhatta Khan, the *Muslim Dindar*. The Subedar {Momin Khan} found himself unable to cope with the disorder rampant in the country. Two sons of Muhatta Khan were killed at the instigation of Abdullah; a local *Rais* {Richman} and as ill luck would have it, some of the participants in the murder were *Shias*; themselves a hated class because the *Shawl* manufacture was in their hands and the factory workers were mostly *Sunni* Muslims. The Subedar, as a stroke of policy, named Sharafuddin, son of Muhatta Khan, as successor to the office of Sheikh-ul-Islam. The son improved upon the methods of his father and inflicted various kinds of tortures; mental and physical upon the Bhatta's and did not even spare Muslims who had sympathised with Bhatta's. Subedar Momin Khan failed to establish order and had to make room for another Subedar {Samad Khan}, **who came with a strong force, captured Sharafuddin and along with his fifty confederates was hanged publicly. The orders against the Bhatta's were mercifully**

withdrawn and it was after an agonising period of a number of years that the Bhatta's were permitted to use a turban, to put on good clothes, to put on *Teok {Tilak}*, send their children to schools and to perform their religious ceremonies'.

Bhawani Kaul Takes Over Narain's Baton. Around the time Bhawani Kaul was born {1790 - 1867 AD}, Rupa Bhawani {Died 1721 AD}, had started to get recognition of her supernatural powers. Afghani's had hoisted flag on the ramparts of Nogar Nagar Fort in 1752 AD. The family having been now in the valley for couple of centuries had readopted their religious philosophy to *Trika* (Triple) *Shastra* {Shiva School of thought} pertaining to three vital matters {Man, universe and fundamental principle of restoring self order, equilibrium and harmony}, as against what they had imbibed of *Vaishnavism*, then prevalent thought process in *Hindustan* **{Awantivarman is the first Vaishnavite King of Kashmeere and it is during his reign that temples were dedicated to Vishnu. He was succeeded by his son Shankara Varman {883-902 A D}, an ambitious and oppressive ruler and it was his feud with Brahmins of the valley that Vaishnavism did not go far}**. After his ancestors had shifted to Gulshan Colony, *Hari Parbat* and *Sharika* was close by and the family got attached to *Sharika*, a custom his descendants still follow {Generally *Sharika* remained the Kul Devi of majority of the community living in a round Srinagar}.

Bhawani Kaul had a namesake during the same period, Bhawani {Das Kachru}, also referred as Munshi Bhawani Das Kachru, who had earned a name in his job but disdain in his personal standing. Arnimal, his wedded wife, immortalised her pain for Bhawani {Das Kachru} in her soul rendering love and *birah* poems; sung even today by our older women, when nostalgia and memories spruces them intimately; thus lighting up Bhawani name. **Arnimal rendered her birah poems in Sufiana Kalam thus formalising ragas of Sufiana music** like; **'Arni rang goam Shravanin Hiye, Kar yeyay darshun mey diye'** {Translated: **The blooming colour of Arni's wait {Arnimal} turned into dull hues of Shravana, when will he {Bhawani Das Kachru} come and am blesses with a glimpse of his}**. Bhawani Das Kachru finds mention in many chronicles and word of mouth for leaving behind a wailing Arnimal, while many other illustrious sons of the community of that era remained obscure. Admittedly Bhawani Das Kachru, who left *Kashmeere* and Arnimal to serve the ruling family of Kabul {Afghanistan} was a Persian scholar and administrator, known for his long poem in Persian; *Bahare Taaweel*. In *Kashmeere* words '*Bahare Taaweel*' came to be used sarcastically to cut short a meaningless long drawn discourse or explanation; like 'do not give me this '*Bahare Taaweel*'.

Under Afghan's And Later Dogra Rule. Ancestors of Narain and Bhawani Kaul had got recognition in the Moghul *Durbar* in *Hindustan* and later in *Kashmeere*, but Bhawani remained somewhat unsung for a long time; for born during tyrannical Afghan Rule he carried Kaul name. It was only in the later part of his life, during Sikh and later Maharaja's Gulab Singh and Ranbir Singh rule, which brought Bhawani acclaim and recognition for his philosophy, intellect, writings, social causes and service to the community. His achievement in many spheres in his later life was more significant. His father had continued with his scholarly profession, had acquired fair knowledge of Persian before the Moghul rule faded away and would have implored Bhawani in the rudiments of the hereditary gift. His father had been amply rewarded by Raja Sukh Jiwan in what is called '*Zamanai Sukhju*' or in daily parlance referred to as '*Waqti Sukhju*' meaning thereby **" The good old days of Sukh Jiwan"**. However, feuds and in fighting kept them away from the Dhar's, Afghan Rulers and Pandit's notables of that time had to pay a collective fine of fifty thousand rupees annually for their freedom. This fine came to be known as *Zari-dud* {Smoke money}. Alas when around Bhawani was born, '*Zamanai Sukhju*' had ended and replaced by feudal Afghan rule significant for intrigues and nepotism by well placed Pandit's prevalent and brutal killing of Kailas Dhar in 1770 AD, then Bhatta *Madhurmilan*; two decades before he was born, vitiating the general environment. In 1766 AD services of a large number of *Bombas* were enlisted from the neighbouring hilly districts with the sole purpose of teasing, tormenting and tyrannising Bhattas. Thereafter a systematic process was adopted for the extermination of Pandits with various were the methods adopted for their killing. "Thousands of them were killed, many more

were put in sacks and drowned in the Dal Lake, and those who survived were harassed. Pandits were strictly forbidden to read Persian and the penalty for the infringement was certain death. Consequences of this order can well be understood when we bear in mind that the Persian was the court language". Whatever comforts or standing his ancestors had, were hard to come by and he had to work in a hostile environment. Amply the situation was what Lalitaditya Muktapeeda (697 AD to 733 AD) had impressed upon **" when the villagers have clothes; wives eatables, ornaments, elephants, horses and houses like the citizens. When soldiers are raised from one district only when Government officials establish marriage alliances with each other, then you should know that the lot of the people turns worse."** A terrible famine also had occurred in Kashmir during those very days. On 20th of June 1819 A D Sikh army made a triumphant entry into the city. Sikh rule lasted for only 27 years with calamities, premature snowfalls, which would destroy a ripe rice crop leading to famines followed by diseases. Thousands migrated to *Hindustan* during these hard days and the population of the valley came down to two lakhs from 8 lakhs. However, Sikh General Akali Phula Singh left an impression by reversing certain tyrannical trends of the Afghan Rule. During war between the British and the Sikhs 1845 AD, Gulab Singh, although a feudatory of the Sikhs, had not taken sides. The British recognized him as the independent ruler of Jammu, Poonch, Ladakh, and Baltistan in a treaty signed in 1846 wherein he purchased the Valley of *Kashmeere* for 75 lakhs of rupees, accepted British paramountcy which meant the British right to control his foreign relations. Maharaja Gulab Singh entered Srinagar on 9th November 1848 at 8 in the morning and died in 1857, after a rule of 11 years. These 11 years may have sounded less but he was on the scene ever since Sikhs had defeated Afghan's in 1819 AD. Maharaja Ranbir Singh, who ruled from 1857 to 1885, succeeded him.

Bhawani hardly, a teenager, was religiously inclined and as was routine for *Kashmeeri* notables of that time, regularly went for the *Parikrama* of *Sharika* and day would start only after that. His father had made it a point that not only he excelled in Sanskrit but also in Persian, *Kashmeeri* and Sharda. His *Parikrama* gave him opportunity to listen to the words of wisdom of his father with other scholars of that time; Taba Ram Turki (1776- 1847 AD), Daya Ram Kachru (1743 - 1811 AD), Gopal Dar (1735 - 98 AD), Rugh Nath Kaul {1735 to 1807 AD} etc ; who had excelled in various spheres of literature and most of them were in the same Gulshan Colony.

The scholarship of the Pandits in Persian, Sanskrit, Sharda reached its high watermark during this period. They wrote exquisite poetry and were master writers in prose. The knowledge of Persian had stood them in good stead even in the early days of the British presence in the form of agent. All of a sudden *Kashmeere* became active for British adventurers, explorers, historians and even few missionaries. These visitors had to deal with records maintained in Persian language. The result of all this was that Pandits came to be employed in large numbers where a knowledge of Persian was necessary for the interpretation of documents, written mainly in Persian. Bhawani earned a place for himself during the reign of Maharaja Gulab Singh, later under his successor and was held in high esteem for his intellectual and writing acumen. He, amongst others was a regular companion in the troupe of the Maharaja for various pilgrimages and visits. In quest of spiritual enlightenment, Bhawani had visited many religious pilgrimage centres like Sharda, Bhadrakal, Gangabal etc. It is during this period he had come into contact with Harjoo Fehrist and Tota Kaul Kardar {Father of another Historian Pandit Anand Kaul} and many others {In later years this closeness was cemented between the two families by marriage of Fehrist daughter to Bhawani's descendant}. His knowledge of the scriptures, languages, areas were of immense help to many of the exploratory visitors to the valley. A large number of works were produced under the patronage of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, with the object of spreading knowledge of classical Brahmin learning. *Kashmeeri* scholars, including Bhawani, prepared not less than 38 different works. His work was also to pen down the history as part of his assignment in later years and help in creating a bank of ancient religious scriptures. His literary works on the *roop* and *akar* of *Sharika* and praises in her honour, thoughts on the lack of values, as prevalent then in the

community, paeans of his pilgrimage to *Sharda* and in praise of Goddess *Sharda* in the form of devotional *bhajans* / poems. The other literary works in the sphere of poetry are translations of many ancient scriptures, mostly extinct now. His circle would have also included Mahmud Gami (1765-1855), Rasul Mir (d. 1870) for understanding the nuances of *Kashmeeri* poetry before he could himself dabble in it. It is, however, known that intermingling between scholars of the two communities, Bhatta's and Muslims, was uncommon. However there is no evidence of his having composed poetry in *Kashmeeri*, which can be attributed to his attention to other spheres; namely art, history and philosophy. Bhawani had seen his ancestor's art in the form of vegetable paintings depicting various events of their times and which concerned them. The prevalent Kashmiri art then was basically devoted to religion, which remained in the domain of *Guruji's*. The Moghul, Rajasthani, Kangra and Bhasoli miniatures were not much in vogue then in *Kashmeere* but added to it was something new; Sukh Jiwan had brought some artisans from Gujrat who passed on various designs and art to *Kashmeeri* scholars and artists. Bhawani seems to have been impressed by these and the few works of art, are basically miniatures but the subjects are *Kashmeere* oriented; Gods and Goddesses in various forms, nature and abstracts with vegetable colours; mostly bright.

After Gulab Singh, Maharaja Ranbir Singh will be remembered as an ideal king because of his interest in Hindutva, Sanskrit and the Indian culture. He opened many centres for the teaching and study of Sanskrit, built libraries and made efforts for re-establishing the values of Brahminical life. Under his guidance a Dharmarth Trust was set up for the construction of many temples. As a result of these efforts a wave of religious fervour swept the state. The society too started to get up and the people of *Kashmeere* became impatient in restoring to the state of its ancient glory. **Maharaja asked the Pandits about the reconversion of their relations {Muslims}, Pandits clearly refused to accept them back inspite of expression of this intent by Muslim's themselves. It was our own community members who had not allowed Rinchen to adopt Brahmin religion {Read Part II} which led to Muslim rulers for 500 years. History never forgets blunders but these get magnified as the time passes by.**

Pandit Bhawani Kaul's family continued to be blessed with God given gift of intellectuality and continued to live in Mohalla Gulshan till Bhawani's son Satram Kaul shifted to interior of the city in later half of the 19th Century. Interestingly, it was a whole group of residents of Gulshan Mohalla {Kaul's, Wali's, Raina's, Zarabi's and Moza's} who shifted to this inner part of the city. This area was next to a canal constructed during Zain-ul-Abdin time, which connected the large expanse of marsh {*maar*} and overflow of Dal Lake to *Vitasta* {*Wyeth* -Jhelum}. This group constructed a *yarbal*; River *Ghat* named as '*Bade Yarabal*' {Riverfront for 'big' people}. The etymology of *Yar*, as per some chronicles, is associated with Buddhist *Vihara's* called *Yar* for short, in then local language. However, this is not borne by other facts. **Firstly**; present Srinagar City did not exist during Buddhist era. **Secondly**, though Buddhism flourished during its time, it is improbable that they would have constructed *Vihara's* in such high density {There are score of *Yar's* in the Srinagar City}. **Thirdly**, it is known that Laltaditya Muktapeeda {{697 to 733 AD} though a *Vaishnavite* by faith did not allow destruction of any *Vihara's* into temples. Almost all of these *Yarbals* have ancient *Mandir's* of deity's for which these *Yar's* are famous. **Lastly**; *Yar Bal*, if it connotes *Vihara* on a hillock, these places did not have hillocks and were the banks of *Vitasta* {Jhelum - *Wyeth*}. Interestingly river *ghat's* then were named after a clan or in case of *mandir*, after the deity. Close by to this *Yarbal* is *Ganpat Yar* {*Ganpat Yarbal*} named after Lord Ganesh, whose famous *mandir* exists there. *Malla Yar* {*Malla Yarbal*}, *Khar Yar* {*Khar Yarbal*}, named after *Malla* and *Khar* clans, who lived nearby, used these *Yarbal's*. Similarly *Somyar* {*Som Yarbal*} named after the temple on its bank. Other *Yarbal's* too have similar story like *Batta Yar*; then used by Bhatta's who were, in a pocket amidst muslim dominant area. The other *yarbal* opposite to *Bhatta Yarbal* was named after *Suha Yar* {*Suha Yarbal*}, used by Suha Bhatta who got converted to Islam during Sikandar But Shikan's {14th Century} time.

Acknowledgements. It is difficult to pen down detailed acknowledgements for a work, which are the impressions of plethora of material, manuscripts, translations, word of mouth and family anecdotes over few decades. The circumstances preclude specific reference

to MS's held at various places {Srinagar, Delhi, Jammu etc}. This article would not have taken shape without further study, consulting and analysis of plethora of books, accounts, scriptures, articles; not only on *Kashmeere* but connected with *Hindustan* ; institutions, scholars, myths, lores; accounts of Narain Kaul , Pandit's Bhawani Kaul and Harjoo Fehrist and many known personalities of the era. Many other histories and works of scholars, with authorship, have been appropriately quoted in the text itself. Others are; works of chroniclers- Translation of *Rajatarangini* {Kalhan, Jonaraja}, *Rajatarangini* by Stein; Persian chronicle *Baharistan-e-Shahi*; Biographical accounts of Kalhan, Abhinav Gupta and many others etc; Works of Lal Ded {Prof Jaya Lal Kaul and plethora of material on her}, *Nund Rishi*, *Makhdoom Saab* and *Hamdani*; Arnimal, her husband Bhawani Das Kachru; Habba Khatoon and other poets and writers of the era. Bundles of material on *Kashmeeri* Shaivism; History of Kashmir and Aspects connected with Kashmir {JL Kilam, Prof L N Dhar, PNK Bamzai, Pt Anand Kaul Bamzai, Dr Kak, Ram Krishna Kaul and others}; Histories of Moghuls {Translations /excerpts *Akbar Nama*, *Aine-Akbari*}, History of Dogra Rule and references/excerpts of material held; Scholarly commentary on various known or attributed works/scriptures. Last but not the least, it is the humility of our scholars and their remaining unsung to near anonymity, being givers than seekers, which made me ponder that I owe it to them to bring them to the eyes and ears of GenX.

Brigadier Rattan Kaul

Brigadier Rattan Kaul was born and had his initial schooling in Srinagar. After Military Training he was commissioned in 5th Royal Gorkha Rifles [Frontier Force]. Barely eighteen, he was deployed on J&K Border, fought 65 War and during 1971 War was seriously injured in first ever helicopter operations in Bangladesh. He was amongst first ten to be selected for Staff College at Wellington in 1974. Apart from foreign assignment, he has served in all corners of the country and held prestigious assignments. He commanded his brigade during militancy in Punjab. HRD and Management expert, Defence Analyst, he has been Instructor in Army's teaching institutes and IMS Indore' with four books and plethora of articles to his credit. He left Army in 1996 to side step into Industry as Vice President Birla's. Soldier to the boot he has been awarded 14 medals and decorated with COAS award for exceptional work in Punjab insurgency. His earlier research article titled 'Goddess Sharda's Abode At Shardi' has been widely acclaimed and available worldwide on the Internet. This article is his research effort to bring home

**important facets of our community during the last two
millenniums apart from travails and triumphs of two stalwarts
of the community.**

* * * * *