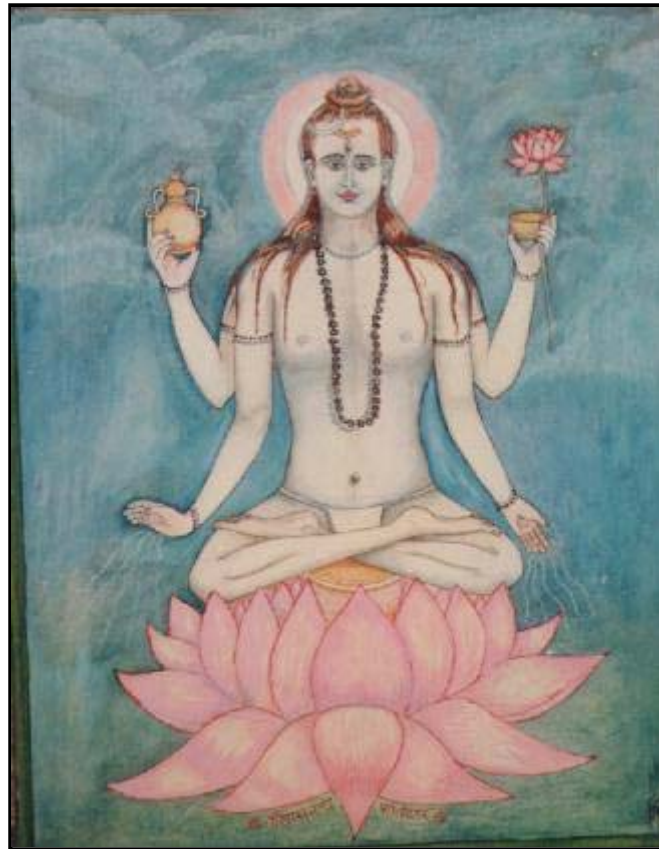


miltsar

Shivratri - Navreh, 1996 Issue



Letter From the President

I, on behalf of the KOA Executive Committee and the Members of the Board, wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year. This is the first issue of Miltsar after a long break. We hope you will like it. Please let us know your comments and suggestions. Although it has been about seven months since I was elected President of KOA, technically I have completed the first year

of the two year term. The theme for the past year has been communication, and my main objective was to make all members feel involved in their association. I feel we have made some progress.

You are all aware of the various projects we are undertaking. After much delay, the directory has been mailed to the paid members. I hope you will like it and enjoy it. We will provide periodic updates to the directory. Earlier during the year, we prepared the KOA calendar and mailed to every one. Since our mailing list was not updated at that time, some of you have not received it. For the next year, we have better plans for the calendar. We are also thinking of purchasing Jantari and mailing it to all the members. I hope you are enjoying the KPI Newsletter. To make it more interesting and successful, we need your input. We are also exploring the possibility of bringing artists from India to perform in most regions.

The East-coast camp has been very successful. We have strongly encouraged holding of similar camps in other regions.

Now, some things you, as a member, can do. We have a listing of almost 600 Kashmiri Pandit families in the United States. However, only 200 are paid members. Please renew your membership for 1996, and, at the same time, persuade others to become members also. This is the least you can do to keep your identity and the association alive. In addition, we need funds for various aid projects. I am sure you give generously to various charities. Why not include KOA in your list. Your donations will go a long way in helping unfortunate members of our community who have been the victims of ethnic cleansing .

Looking forward to serving you for another year. With best wishes.

Ashok Raina,
President, KOA

Miltsar

NEWS ROUND-UP

By Asha and Piara Lal Qusba

Annual East Coast KOA Camp

The KOA East Coast Camp '95 was held at the Sunset Resort, Connecticut. Sixty families from as far as Florida, Michigan, Indiana, Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Canada, in addition to those from the North East and the midAtlantic states, participated in this year's camp. Thirty one families camped in the tents at the exclusive and wooded "Arthur's Paradise" camp site. Others enjoyed the convenience of motels and cottages, nearby.

Pleasant weather and Sunrise Resorts' excellent recreational facilities provided a wonderful backdrop for fun, enjoyment and a good time. Thanks to Raj Pahwa, Indian music added a unique spice to the environment of the camp. Young children and teen-agers in the gathering made the experience a memorable one. After a brief welcoming speech by the newly elected KOA President, Ashok Raina, the Washington KPs set the tone for the events by hosting a Kashmiri cuisine under the canopy.

Next morning began with a breakfast of bagels, omlets, donuts, tea, coffee and orange juice. To keep physically fit, some of us followed Bansi Bazaz for a five mile walk along Salmon river. Admittedly we neither saw salmon nor the river while trying to catch-up with Bansi. On our return, we were treated to a delicious chochi-maaz (bread and meat) hosted by Santosh Tikoo and her group.

While elders busied themselves in exchanging nostalgic memories of the days gone by, the teenagers were competing and building alliances at the basketball or tennis courts. The tiny ones were fascinated with our two dogs Agnew and Spirou. Poor Agnew had to leave the camp, because he could not keep-up with camping enthusiasm. Joug Ganjoo impressed us with his industrial engineering expertise, as applied to mass feeding us delicious Kashmiri cuisine.

Ashok Raina engaged us in lively discussions about our recent past, present, and future concerns. Discussion topics covered: KOA's charter; how and if, KOA as a cultural organization, can counter anti-Kashmir Pandit propaganda; KOA's affiliation with KPI, KOA's activities for alleviating the suffering of displaced Kashmiri Pandits; preservation of our language and cultural heritage; and setting up of a KP retirement center in the USA. Discussions were lively, and true to his somber nature, Ashokji kept his cool, no matter how hot the discussion got to be after a hot course of roganjosh. For his initiative and contributions in establishing KAO as the cultural organization of Kashmiri Pandits in North America, Surinder Nath Kaushik was formally recognized as the "Mother of KOA".

High school and college going young boys and girls also held many gatherings of their own and discussed means of strengthening and perpetuating their Kashmiri heritage. Monica Kaul delighted us all, not only with her artistic abilities, but also her organizational skills. She promoted the sale of Prathvi Nath Chaku's book " A Political and Social History of Jammu and Kashmir". The book has been dedicated by Mr. Chaku to the educational fund of the displaced Kashmiri Pandit children. Monica sold all the available copies of the book in a matter of hours.

Camp fire in the evenings was the high point of each day. Youg Ganjoo, in charge of the camp fire, kept the spirits of the artist high, who delighted us with the authentic and nostalgic renditions of Kashmiri compositions of Lali Shori and Zoon Begaum, as well as contemporary songs. Inder Bhat orchestrated the event professionally and entertained us all with gazals. The list of participants in entertaining the gathering is too long to be named individually, and all of them deserve our gratitude and many thanks.

The KOA camp '95 was really a great experience and joy for all of us. We are sure that many other families share our excitement and anticipation for the summer '96 camp. If the group decides to return to Sunrise Resort, we will be glad to do our share in arranging and facilitating the activities. See you at the next annual camp!

Annual West Coast '95 Picnic

By Maharaj Wanchoo

We had a wonderful picnic on July 1, 1995 at Bolsa-Chica State Beach. Our youngsters, Siddarth, Rohit, and Nishey scouted the beach early in the morning to reserve a pit. People started arriving by noon time and stayed at the beach until closing at 10 p.m. Over forty people showed up to spend a relaxing day at the beach. At sunset we lit a fire in the large pit that continued to the end. A wonderful game of pass the parcel, provided by Priti Khoshoo, kept

people guessing on what item they will have to act out in front of all the members. Late in the evening we sang songs, gazals and narrated jokes, and everyone had a good time. Our young bachelor Shivi Fotedar completed his Ph.D. in computer science and left for New Jersey to take up a job with Bell Labs. Our best wish to him.

Ah, Janki Ganju, We Miss You !

By Kanhaya L. Kaul

Janki Nath Ganju, the voice of India in Washington, died of a massive heart affack, on May 29,1995. In his death, our community has lost a great Kashmiri who has been instrumental in advancing India's national intersests in the United States, since 1961. In the last six years, Janki Ganjoo has immensely furthered the cause of Kashmiri Pandits in his own subtle ways.

Janki Ganjoo was an easy going, down to earth person, who immensely loved cooking Kashmiri delicacies and entertaining guests at his house. He was well known in the congressional circles as the "best chefin Washington" His engaging and warm conversational style was able to win the hearts of even his most formidable foes. Janki Ganjoo was as well connected in the political circles in New Delhi, as in Washington. In April 1995, hc helped launch the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in the United States.

Ganjoo sahib will be especially missed by the Washington Kashmiri community. Despite his busy schedule, he always made it a point to attend the community functions and events.

We all miss you!

An Appeal For the Educational Scholarship Fund For Kashmiri Students

By Tej N. Kaul

The community of Kashmiri Pandits is a conglomerate of intellectuals who have contributed signihcantly to various helds, including science and education We are proud to be a community of educators, professionals, and scientists who have excelled in their respective helds. The unfortunate circumstances, culminating in the mass exodus of our community, have forced our brotheren to live under subhuman conditions in the refugee camps in Jammu and other parts of India. The avenues for Kashmiri youth to pursue the goals of higher education in their home state of J& K are nonexistent.

In order to help deserving and financially deprived students to pursue their goals of higher education, we have organized an educational fund under the auspices of KOA. You will be pleased to know that by the generous donation of our baraderi members, we have been able to sponsor 45 students for the academic year 1995-96. There are many more deserving candidates who are desperate tor help. Please help by investing in the future of Kashmiri Pandits as a community. Donate your tax deductible dollars and sponsor a deserving Kashmiri Pandit student. The checks (payable to KOA) should be sent to: Tej N. Kaul, 35 Spicer Creek Run, Grand Island,

NY 14072.

Need For A Youth Group

By Monica Kaul

At the July '95 KOA camp, held in Connecticut, many youngsters expressed a desire to develop a organization that would cater to their needs and interests. At an informal meeting around the camp hre, ideas were exchanged for creating such a forum and guidelines for its functioning were established. Becallse our numbers as a community are small, it seems only appropriate to set short-range and attainaible goals. As a result, our hrst project is to develop a foundation upon which this organization can grow. Creating a detailed directory of Kashmiri youth would give us such a base. Information from this directory can be utilized to organize annual meetings, regional get-togathers, and educational events etc.

The organization has been proposed to consist of a national committee and regional directors around the country. The national committee would serve as a repositior!y and distribution center for all information. The regional directors would be in direct contact with the young adults in their geographic regions and would be responsible for collecting and updating information about the youth. Additionally, the regional directors will also coordinate any social and educational activities relating to youth in their respective areas.

Because the participants in this program are in school most of the year, I fully understand that it is difficult for all of us to devote an extended amount of time for this extracurricular activity. But it is my hope that many parents in the community will be willing to guide the youth until we have established ourselves as a self-sufhcient organization.

You may call me with your comments at (716) 773-4316. My e-mail address is kaul@acsu.buffalo.edu. Snail mail address: 35 Spicer Creek Run, Grand Island, NY 14072.

Following is the list of volunteer regional directors: Gautam Bazaz (VA), Amit Kaul (WI), Jhonny Kaul (CT) Nalin Kaul (NY), Nisha Kaul (NJ), Ramji Kaul (MI), Rashi Kaul(MA), Sanjay Kaul and Sunil Kaul (Canada) Amy Labroo (NJ), Reva Labroo (NJ), Renu Moza (TX) Aron Quasba (MD) Mala Sheykher (FL), Sandeep Tickoo (IN) Sumit Tickoo (IN) and Neil Tiku (MA)

Editor's Column

Almost six months ago, I was asked by Ashokji to help him put out Miltsar. In order to define the character of the publication, I reasoned about its basic purpose. The two pncipal purposes of having a newsletter, like Miltsar, that I could come up with are: 1) dlsseminate news of the community, and 2) to serve as a vehicle for examining and understanding our own culture, customs and identity. Since K.P International serves as a timely and an appropriate forum for discussion of political issues, I have not felt the need to dwell on this aspect in Miltsar, at least for now.

Keeping these guidelines in mind, I have given a slightly different slant to this publication; some

of these changes are cosmetic and in style, while others are substantive and philosophical. I know that our community is rich in its resources of talent and it is my hope that each of us will begin to think of at least one literary, cultural, historical or religious contribution in the next two years. I also know that there is enough good news of our community that can be shared. This includes awards, promotions, kids' achievements; and yes, lottery winnings too! Let the entire community be a part of your celebration and joy.

The present issue of Miltsar is being published after a long interlude and the number of news items submitted this time was, rather, small. Consequently, the journal looks a little thin and bare. I hope that we will pick up the volume in the next issue. As a reminder, I must mention that the material for publication in Miltsar does not have to be exotic, or complicated, but it must be short and interesting. The manuscripts can be hand written, but providing the material on a disc would be helpful.

At this time, KOA plans on publishing two issues of Miltsar every year; perhaps, one should coincide with Shivratri and Navreh and the second one be timed with Diwali. Your manuscripts, event photographs, suggestions, and even admonitions are always welcome and should be addressed to:

Kanwal K Kher
3608 Cherry Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031

History & Religion

Nund Rishi

By Pran Nath Wanchoo

Nund Rishi, a contemporary of Lal Dad, with whom he had mystic rapport, was the first Muslim saint of Kashmir to assume the title of Rishi. Nund Rishi was born in a Hindu family in the year 1377 AD in the village near Bijbihara (Kashmir). His Hindu name was Shajanand, later he converted to Islam and adopted the name Nur ud din. Nund Rishi propagated tolerance and respect for other religions. Severing his family ties, he performed penance for twelve long years and lived in a cave. His shrine at Chra-i-Sherif, where Nur-nama, the collection of his writings was preserved, attracted both Hindu and Muslim pilgrims. Nund Rishi is remembered for his pithy sayings, maxims and prophecies. He died at the age of 63 years. It is said that Sultan Zain-ul-Abidin also attended his funeral and expressed the loss that Kashmiris has suffered in the death of Sheikh Nur ud Din Wali (as Muslims called him).

Char-i-Sherief, the site of Nund Rishi's shrine, is located at an elevation of approximately 6000 feet on the Srinagar-Yusmarg road, in the Badgam district of Kashmir. Geographically, the entire landmass of this part of Chadura tehsil is an upland dry plateau strewn and broken with narrow gorgy vales. Char is famous for a local variety of pears, walnuts, and Kangris. In the higher elevations (7000 feet) lies Yusmarg, a tourist resort surrounded by Gogji Pather and Aele Pather areas close by. The Pakistan-held areas of Poonch lie just a roll down distance from the surrounding heights.

There in those halls dazzling with the glitter of nobles and lords,
where even the great were refused permission to enter,
where I saw houris singing and dancing,

or dusting them with brooms made of yak's tail
 Now, there I have seen cotton being grown,
 O, Nasar, I have seen better,
 thou goest and see-est for thyself

Char-i-Shareif shrine was burnt down by the terrorists in 1995. The shrine was taken over by the terrorists, who were led by Mast-Gul, an Afghan mujahideen. He escaped alive after a fierce fighting with the security forces and gave a daring press conference in Srinagar after the burning of Char-i-Sherief: Mast-Gul was last seen in Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

Update: Mast-Gul was recently arrested by the Sindh Government near Karachi on December 29 for inciting violence in Pakistan.

Adi Shankara and Kashmir

- Birth of Taranga

By Kanwal K Kher

About twelve hundred years ago, Adi Shankara was born in Kalati, a small village in Kerala, South India. His father, Shivaguru, passed away when Shankara was very young. His mother (Aryamba) and his relatives did the sacred thread ceremony (yagnopavit) for Adi Shankara when he was five years old. Young Adi Shankara was religiously inclined since a very young age. It is said that he learnt all the Vedas before the age of seven years (of course from his teachers). He became a sanyasi at eight years of age. It is said that he extracted the promise of his mother to let him be a monk during a life-threatening event. One day he was playing in a pond and his leg was caught by a fierce crocodile. He shouted for help and his mother responded. At that time he told his mother that if she would not object to him becoming a sanyasi, the crocodile would let him go. Since her son's life was in jeopardy, she said, "Yes". At the same moment, the crocodile released Shankara's leg. His mother kept the promise and Shankara became a sanyasi.

Shankara walked his way to Gujrat, where he was formally ordained by his guru Govindapada on the banks of river Narmada. Shankara refined his intellect during his stay with the guru. He then traveled further to the northern city of Kashi (Benaras). Here he wrote several important texts and commentaries on Vedic and Upanishadic literature. He wanted to establish maaths or places of religious training throughout India. With this intent in mind, he walked to Kashmir.

Upon reaching Kashmir valley, it is said, he was not welcomed by Kashmin Pandits. He was not even allowed to enter the city of Srinagar and had to camp outside the city limits. The Pandit community argued that there was sufficient knowledge of religion in the valley that they neither needed an outside teacher, nor the establishment of a maath in the valley. After several days of his camping outside the city limits, the hearts of the local elders melted, but they did not want to give in easily. A debate was arranged between the religious leaders of the community and Shankara. At the end of the debate, Shankara concluded that Kashmir valley was a repository of Shaivism and did not need any outside help. He gave up the idea of establishing the math Kashmir. Later on, Shankara was ceremoniously taken into the city of (what would be now) Srinagar.

Adi Shankara was so impressed with what he had learnt in the debate with Kashmiri Pandits that

he literally called Kashmir a place where goddess Saraswati lives. He immortalized his experience in a famous prayer to Saraswati, the goddess of learning. The beginning verse of the prayer is as follows:

Nameste Sharede Devi Kashmir purvasini
Tavaham prartheye, nityam vidya danam ch dehi mae.

Translation (of Swami Chinmayananda)

Obeisance to thee, O effulgent Sharada,
worshipped in the city of Kashmir, I always
beseech Thee to vouchsafe to me Pure Knowledge.

Before his departure from Kashmir valley, Shankara presented Kashmiri women a cloth cap, symbolically representing a crown from the ascetic. Soon Kashmiri Pandit women of the valley began using the cloth cap on their head, and thus began the custom of wearing cap or raranga by Kashmiri Pandit women. Later on, decorations such as, zari, starched white cloth, transparent plastic sheets, pins and other ornaments were added to it as time went along. Use of Taranga has dwindled in the last five decades. Despite these changes brought about by time, Taranga is still worn by the young Kashmiri brides at the time of marriage.

It needs to be remembered that Taranga is not worn by Kashmiri Muslim women, who put only a cloth over their head - known as pooch.

Adi Shankara died at a very young age of thirty two years.

Author's Note: The above account of Adi Shankara's life are recorded in various religious texts. The incident related to Kashmir is not available in most history books. I remember the above given version from an oral rendition. For history buffs, this could form a good project to work on, and document a historically accurate version.

Talking To Young Boys

Yagnopavit: What it Means

Yagnopavit or Mekhala is also known as Upanayana in Sanskrit. In the modern vernacular, this ceremony is also sometimes referred to as "thread ceremony". Upanayana means "bringing near" (the young boy to his guru, and eventually to God). The ceremony is intended to introduce the young boy to his guru and impart him education and knowledge. This ceremony also begins the stage of Brahmacharya for the young disciple. According to Rishi Manu (the author of the book of conducts called Manu Smriti), Yagnopavit ceremony should be held at one of the following ages (in years): five for Brahmins, six for Kshatriya, and eight for Vaishya. On the other hand, Yagnavalkya recommends eight years, eleven years and twelve years for a Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya, respectively.

The most important aspect of Yagnopavit ceremony is initiation of the boy into reciting Gayatri

Mantra. He also wears three strands of cotton thread (usually woven by his guru's wife). These three strands symbolize various triads our lives: Trimurtis (Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva), three qualities of existence (satva, rajas and tamas), and three phases of existence (creation, preservation and destruction) .

Once worn, the yagnopavit thread (known as yonya in Kashmiri) is not supposed to be taken out, except when one enters Sanyasa. Of course, you cannot get married without a yagnopavit thread in place. After marriage, you get three more threads in your yonya to remind you of your responsibilities as a married man.

Our Pledge, Our Hope and Our Prayer

Asi chu Tarun Kashmir

Asi chu tarun Kashmir
 Asi chu tarun Kashmir
 Asi chu Tarun Kashmir sar-i-nye
 Azl pagah, sul-i-cheer
 Az, pagah, sul-i-chir sar-i-nye
 Pamposhan hund yaarl bonyen hund shehzar
 Soont havah gulzar, sar-i-nye
 Asi chu tarun Kashmir sar-i-nye...
 Tulmul, Kaunsernag - Gangbal, Verinag
 Amreeshwar sanz raag - sar-i-nye
 Asi laj sazan zeer....Az, pagah...
 Vuonye ase varah muyed - pathkunh kah gare rudh
 Asi chaleravan rudh - sar-i-nye...
 Asi chu karun tadneer... az, pagah.. .
 Armanav kudh vaash...sangran pev pragash
 Nov-variah chuu aash, sar-i-naye
 Davahan hundh taseer... az, pagah,sule...

LITERARY CORNER

Snow in Srinagar

By Subhash Kak

The radio says it has snowed in Srinagar.
 The first snow is cause for celebration:
 mother lighted the wooden stove in the kitchen
 and unwrapped packets of beans and dried vegetables
 and hsh to make the feast.
 And we hurried into the backyard
 dragging our wooden slippers through the snow
 throwing balls until it was time to take

packed boxes of steaming food and gifts
to the neighbours and relatives to spread merrymaking;
and we received similar things in exchange.

After the hubbub had died down we watched
from the window the boatwomen hurrying
across the embankment to the kulcha shop
and heard the labourers pushing the overloaded carts
to mutual exhortations
across the slush of broken pavement.
Down a flight of steps in the kitchen
the samovar was ever ready
with hot mughal chai and sweet kulchas.

In the evening in the big room by the kitchen,
wrapped in the blankets over our pherans,
new kangris with painted wickerwork were started,
and as we waited for father to return from work
we listened to grandfather's tales
and conversations from the kitchen.

The dinner done by faint light of electric bulb
we heard the day's accounting
as thalis were cleaned with sawdust
When my feet were cold
my father took them under his blanket
and warmed them with the warmth of his own feet.

Who knew that decades later a terror will come to Srinagar
and I will be unable to see my home where I was born
where we played cowries and many new snows.
The terrorists want us to cover our past
forget the stories of our ancestors.
We are banished because we remember
tales that grandfather told us
because we remember our history.

This poem is a part of the soon-to-be published collection of poems by the author.

Nuw-Warih

By "Mastarji" Zinda Kaul

Nuw wariah aaw!
gulsahanan naiv drai poosh,
poosh-noolaw
nuw karun haut bool-boosh.

Achh muchar nyandri-hachaw
 yamber-zalaw,
 pomperew val rang ratai
 swargaik palaw.

Nargisaw bar-e Sumblas
 kith lola jam,
 gupiyav zan dup
 valiv garoan Shyam.

Aye bhayaw! Aisti bagas
 manz samav,
 nuw-warih chavav
 t'a naviruk mas chamaw.

Prain mashravit gosa
 nrv mitrut karaw,
 nut vicharaw rut banav
 tai nut karav.

Nuw-warih gav zindagani
 nav karain,
 zanmachai Geetai
 nov adhay paran.

(The New Year)

Translation also of "MasterJi"

The new year has come!
 New flowers have bloomed,
 song birds
 have begun their warbling.

Nargis flowers have opened
 their sleepy eyes,
 butterflies put on their
 fine colored celestial garments.

They lovingly filled cups
 to be offered to Sumbul,
 as if the gopies said:
 "Come, let us call Shyam"

Come brother!
 Lets us gather in the gardens,
 enjoy the new year's day,
 and, drink the wine of freshness.

Let us forget old displeasures
 and be friends afresh,
 think kind thoughts, speak

kind words and act kindly.

For, the new year festival
means living a new life,
and turning a new leaf
in the holy Geeta of life.

This poem of Masterji and the translation was provided by Raj and Rita Kachroo of Scarbrough Ontario, Canada. They had used the text on their New Year's Greeting in 1994.

CD Review

CD Title: The Rubab of Kashmir: Pakistani Music

Artist: Mohammad Subhan Rathore on Rubab and vocal Abdul Ghani on Tumbakhnari

Record Produced By: King Record Co., Ltd., Tokyo. World Music Library, Record # KICC5109

Recording Date: Aug. 10, 1980.

CD Available at: Best Buy

This is the first digitally recorded CD of Kashmiri music that I have encountered in the local music stores. The only thing wrong about the label is the fact that it is listed under Pakistani music. The music was actually recorded by the Pakistani Kashmiri artists in Tokyo. Listening to the tracks, it felt as if there is a slight Panjabi accent blended in with the lyrics. The melody is charming but not as good as the real Kashmiri artists can, and do produce.

As a community, we have many established recording artists. Additionally, many Kashmiri Pandit singing groups have emerged in Jammu, in the last hve years. They are quite unique in their contemporary style. I wonder if we can persuade any of the smaller recording labels in India or elsewhere to preserve the music of Kashmiri Pandits on CDs. My optimism stems from the fact that the "World Music" section of the music stores has more exotir., musical recordings than one can even imagine. Also, my guess is that most Kashmiri families in the US would like to have their favorite Kashmiri songs on CD. Any volunteers for pursuing the projects or even entrepreneurs who may have more technical knowledge or interest? Please call the editor, Miltsar.

Books About Us

Title: Self Realization in Kashmir Shaivism. The Oral Teachings of Swami Lakshmanjoo.

Author: John Hughes

Publisher: State University of New York Press 1994.

ISBN # 0-7914-2180-5

This book is a sequel to the previously published title on Kashmir Shaivism by the SUNY Press (Kashmir Shaivism. The Secret Supreme by Swami Lakshmanjee). Foreword of this 139 page

paper cover book is by Lance E. Nelson of the University of San Diego. He has traced the history of Shaivism in Kashmir, and his association with Swami Lakshmanjee in quite an intriguing and an interesting manner. The photographs of Swamiji's parents (father Narain Dass, and mother Arinimal), Swami Ram and his own guru, Mahtabkak, in this section are fascinating. They bring to life a brief glimpse of the life in Kashmir in their respective times.

John Huges recounts his initial contact with Swamijee in 1971 in the introduction of the book. The main text of the book consists of five chapters that represent talks given by Swamijee in the course of teaching the author and other Western devotees, during the '70s and early '80s. Chapter one focusses on the "Fifteen Verses of Wisdom" (Bodhapancadasika) of the great Kashmir Shaivism philosopher, Abhinavgupta, to whom Swamijee's own lineage can be traced. The second chapter deals with the practice of meditation, and passages from Bhagavat Geeta and various other Upanishads are discussed. Swamijee discusses one Kashmiri meditative saying (unfortunately only English translation is provided) that reveals his own quest and, in a way, his aspirations:

Let me have the power to do where there is nothing to be done. Let me have the power to contemplate where there is nothing to contemplate.

Teachings of Ksemaraja, the principal disciple of Abhinavgupta are discussed in chapter three. The discourse is very intense and requires an alert mind, even to read it through. Discipline of a devotee is discussed in chapter four and the subject of Kundalini is explored in the fifth and the last chapter of this book of discourses.

The pictures interposed in the main text of the book are neither reflective of the mood of the discussion, nor do they convey the personality of SwamiJee. This gives a poor finish to, an otherwise, superb text.

Reviewed by Kanwal K. Kher

Books by Us

In Search of the Cradle of Civilization:

Subhash Kak and David Feuerstein.

(Quest Books. ISBN 0-8356-0720, Price: \$24.95, Hard Cover.

(Unreviewed)