Role of Religious Education during Pre-modern times in Kashmir

Islam attaches immense importance to the acquisition of knowledge and its extention which with all its scholastic accompaniments involved in the study of the Quran, Ahadith, and other sciences is the only way to seek truth. It principally aims at the right way of thinking a healthy mind, free from worldly desires.¹

Learning has been defined as the highest attainment of humanity, a way leading to right conduct and cultivation of virtue. But learning without putting it into practical use would be meaningless, teaching and imparting knowledge is considered to be the noblest occupation. As a matter, of fact, the first revelation that came to the prophet of Islam was about the reading and writing in Sura Alaq.

"Proclaim in the name of the lord and cherisher who created man out of A (mere) clot, of congealed blood, proclaim and the lord is most bountiful. He was taught (the use of) the pen, taught man that which he knew not."² The place assigned to education in Islam can best be

¹ Islam is a religion without any mythology and priesthood. Its teaching is simple intelligible and practical. It is open to every one and can approach the books of Allah directly. Islam awakens in man, the faculty of reason and exhorts him to use his intellect. It enjoines him to see things in the light of reality. The Quran advised man to pay to my lord. Advance me in knowledge (20:114). It asserts that those who have it. That those who do not observe and understand it are worse than cattle (7:179). That the meaning of revelation became manifest to those, "who have knowledge indeed has been given an abundant good (2:296). That basic knowledge or qualification for leadership are among other things knowledge and physical strength (2:247) and that of all things it is by virtue of knowledge that man is superior to angels and has been made vicegerent of Allah on earth (7:30).

² Al-Atiqad, December, 1988, p.6.
appreciated in the light of the importance attached to ink, pen and paper. The three indispensable instruments of acquiring and extending knowledge. The same Surah is also part devoted to the art of writing and its indispensable as a means to education, the teachings of Islam are meant for all human being. Muhammad (p.b.u.h) said education is meritorious in the sight of Allah. He asked every one acquire it. He stressed acquisition of learning and made it compulsory for all men and women of Islam. All through the times of the guided caliphs the days of the first four caliphs after prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) education continued rapid progress. The readers or Qaris of the Quran were mainly responsible for the spread of the Quranic teachings and the prophets traditions among the Arab and non-Arab muslims. For first time muslims started formalizing their educational system. Elementary have been established in the early ummayyed period, and developed in the newly conquered countries such as Iraq, Syria, Persia and Asia.

Islam as an ideology, a world view and a value system developed and expanded into an international and intercontinental religion with unparrelled rapidity in the annals of human history. Within hundred years of its inception it occupied large parts of Asia, Africa and Europe. In the Indian sub-continent Sind was the first province to fall to the military expedition of Arabs led by Muhammad Bin Qasim in 712 A.D. The valley of Kashmir did also attract the attention of muslim conquerers of Sind. But Muhammad Bib Qasim was called back to Damascus and then the ruler of Kashmir Chandrapida could save his kingdom by a mere stroke of luck. A later king Lalitaditya was not accepted the message of Islam said junaid. However, in the coming decades the king of Kashmir remained under the pressure of muslims. The muslims continued their military operations against the weak successors of lalidatya. However, these expeditions proved unsuccessful.

During the reign of Hindus and other non-muslim rulers. The valley of Kashmir has been endowed by nature that the cultural heritage of Kashmir is so rich and varied by virtue of the uniqueness of it's situation, the valley has remained a sanctuary of a mixed and harmonised culture. The Kashmiri's have derived full inspiration from their available surroundings and produced a galaxy of philosophers. In the time with the assimilative genices of Kashmiri people that had earlier brought about the relationship of co-existence between Brahmanism and Buddhism, a fresh school Islamic philosophy was now evolved in the shape of the Rishi order of

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3 Ibid.
4 Anir, Ali
5 Ibid.

Spirit of Islam, p. 360-61.
Kashmir. Instead of effecting any break with pre-existence system of thought, there was initiated a fresh process of assimilation in the sphere of religious experience contributed by the Sufis of outstanding stature the local rishis like Shiekh Noor-ud-Din and others, the system of Kanqahs, or monasteries emerged in the region. During the stay of Syed Ali Hamadani (R.A.) in Kashmir and Syed Muhammad Hamadani assisted by hundreds of scholars, established the net work of Kanqahs for preserving as well as spreading Islamic educational and spiritual culture of the society. Functioning as the centres of learning. These Kanqahs, Ziviyaz, Takia's and other kinds of monastries are still in tact at the principal towns of Kashmir, Srinagar, Sopore, Tral, Aishimuqam, Islamabad, Doru, Kulgam and Charar-I-Sharief.

It is from these centres of mystic educational centres that there was evolved the new philosophy, of Rishi that combined the pantheism of Islam. On the authority of Abul-Fazal, who accompanied Akbar to Kashmir in 1589, there lived two thousand muslim Rishis at that time in the valley. These Ziarats of Kashmir, have been the source of psychological, solace for the masses at large. The existed Kanqhs for the intellectual and spiritual education of the people than these was established the system of Maktabs and Madrassas for the purpose of religious as well as modern education throughout the country. Following the practices during the early periods of local history Sultan Sikander, Sultan Zainul Abidin, Sultan Hassan Shah Chack, endowed large areas of land to these seats of higher learning. Sultan Zainul Abidin was himself, a scholar of Persian, Hindi, Kashmiri and Tibitian. Besides establishing a number of schools and colleges he founded the department of translation which made notable contribution to literature, under the joint guidance of Hindu and Muslim scholars like Soma Pandith, Budi Bhat, Jona Raja and Srivara, Mulana Kabir, Mullah Hafiz Baghndi, Mullah Kamal-ud-din and Qazi Mir Ali. According Srivara, there was not a branch of learning or arts or literature or fine arts which was not studied. By virtue of its excellency and brilliance, the system of education produced a galaxy of authors and poets among whom the Yaqub Sarfi, Dawood khaki, Mullah Fani and Mullah Tahir where considered also great teachers. During the Sultanate period the number of shrines within the valley was perhaps small with the passage of time the number of shrines

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6 Khian, Ishaq, Kashmiries transition to Islam, Pub. New Delhi, 60-62
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid

Kalhana emphasises the importance that people attached to learning when he says “learning "lofty homes, suflron, ice, water and grapes things that in heaven are difficult find are common here."
registered a marked increase. The Shrines which have been erected in the memory of Rishi and Saints are living testimonies of the fact. The memory of Rishi and Saints are living testimonies of the fact. There is hardly any locality which does not have a shrine. Even the hilly and elevated areas in the valley have each a shrine dedicated to one Rishi or the other. The 1971 census enumerated one hundred and thirty four important muslim shrines in the villages of the valley which numbered 2940 in 1971 A.D.\textsuperscript{11} The considerable increase in the number of shrines speaks of the faith and attachment of the Kashmiri muslims towards shrines. The faith of the people in Astans (Shrines) can be measured in the context of large masses of people who flock to them. It is curious and interesting to see devotees raising their hands collectively before a shrine in the hope of receiving the boon and bliss. The people in Kashmir would never do anything against a peer. Particularly those who were connected with the shrines.\textsuperscript{12} The people performed religious exercise called dhiker in the shrines. This method includes the method of reading of the Quran and reciting the prayers which the prophet (p.b.u.h.) used to recite. The devotees sing hymns mostly in Persian, in the same way as the Darvashes dances his head. The mind is thrown into a whirlwind and the dancer falls into a religious ecstasy. This exercise was mostly performed in the shrines out of faith and for invoking the Saints. One thing common among the Kashmiri muslims was conviction that saints would come to their rescue on the day of resurrection. The mystic poets of our period, out of love and devotion believed that any one, who visited the three important Rishi shrines situated at Char-i-Sharif, Bumzoo and Aislimaqam in one day journey on foot, would saved from the fire of hell. This indicates the amount of hope and faith of Kashmiri’s in the shrines.

During the muslim rule in Kashmir the religious education and learning were encouraged and promoted. Kanqahs,\textsuperscript{13} shrines and Maktabs were established to educate the people. However, in this endeavour the main role was played by the great missionary Mir Syed Ali Hamadani. It

\textsuperscript{11} Khan, Ishaq. Kashmir transition towards Islam. New Delhi 1997, p. 62
\textsuperscript{12} Mohammad Din Fouq says that in 1930 Mir Syed Maqbool Shah and his other friends Peer Hassan-ud-Din of Poonch, Zabardast Khan and he himself by chance proceeded to Verinage from Srinagar. No sooner did we reach the garden of Verinage then the greater crowd of devotees gathered round Mir Maqbool to show their faith. The main thing that attracted the people to kiss his hands and to rub their eyes with the hands of Mir Maqbool was that he was Mutauvali of the ziarat Khanqah.

\textsuperscript{13} Khanqah is a muslim monastery or religious institution where dervishes and other seekers after truth congregate for religious institution and devotional exercises. It is a muslim analogies in many respects to a math, where religious instructions is given according to the Hindu faith.
was at this (Syed Ali Hamadani’s) instance that maktabs were established in all the important villages and towns for the teachings of the Quran and hadith. That is why the credit of peaceful revolution (spread of Islam) in Kashmir goes to him. Mir Syed Ali Hamadani travelled widely in the valley. He left his deputies at a number of places to teach in the khanqahs, Maktabs and Madrasses which ultimately became important centres of preaching prose proselytisation. The Khanqah system established by Mir Syed Ali Hamadani continued to work from the period onwards and played very significant role in freeing the Muslims of Kashmir from Hindu influence. The Sultans besides patronising Khanqahs established colleges, universities and other institution were both local and non-Muslims used to come for achieving higher knowledge. Sultan Sikander is said to have built a college near Jamia Masjid. He bestowed Magam Pargane as waqf for the maintenance of the college and the hostel. Sultan Hassan Shah also found a famous college were religious as well as modern education were taught to the students. He succeeded in prevailing upon the pious and the learned to teach the inmates of the college. He gave Zaina Pora as jagir to the college which was known as Dar-ul-Shifa, and was constructed in the northern corner of Kohi-maran, near Khanqah Kubravi, Shiekh Hamza Makhdoom, well known saint of Kashmir was a student of this college.

As it was mentioned earlier that the Rishi system of education built up its own philosophical and educational tradition, which existed quite independently without the official control and government encouragement. Attached to the tradition of simple living and high thinking practise by the Rashi saints, their system of education became highly popular among Kashmiries. As a result of constant effort put in by the Rishi saints in terms of educating the Kashmiri people a fresh educational programme was launched in the valley which was

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14 Prior to Mir Syed Ali’s arrival in Kashmir Muslims were in minority and were not aware of true spirit of Islam. Since it was the mission of Mir Syed Ali’s to see right the Muslims of the land. He deputed many of his friends at different places to educate or to provide religious knowledge to the people. Syed Ali Tarild-I-Kashmir.

15 A. Q. Rafiq, Sufism in Kashmir, p. 28.


17 The Muslims sages and priests trickled into Kashmir from Turkistan as well as from the Indian Sub-continent and created small cells of learning at and around their places of sojourn. As time advanced these cells took the forms of MAjad, Khanqah and Tafi in Gh. Hassan Khan Kashmiri Muslim
Journal of Annamalai university of Vol. II, p. 9,34 for Maktabs and Madrasses of Muslim India.


characterised by the novelty of its approach. This programme aimed at educating the disciples with definite purpose in view. It also trained the followers in the spiritual sense of the term. The scheme can be needs non-formal, in its muslim content. The (Rishi) believed that the basic purpose of self-mortification and spiritual concentration was to bring man close to the understanding of the universal reality. Being a purely personal scheme of learning and training Rishism had no specific centres for imparting their instructions. Therefore, the place where the Rishi saints resided became the centres of their education these could be divided into three categories viz, caves, khanqahs, shrines. The Rishi scheme made direct and healthy influential. It became possible through the use of Kashmiri language (native) as the medium of instructions are Sufies from central Asia and Persia imparted education in Arabic or Persian which was the language of the elite and beyond the comprehension of the local population. Contrary to this the message of Rishi's was understandable to the illiterate and common people of the valley. The muslim rule in Kashmir saw the promotion of the learning both in Sanskrit and Persian.

The Khanqahs, Shrines and Mosques played a great part in the dissemination and growth of knowledge both religious and general. The patronage of sultanes, queens and nobles to the cause of time. The Rishi system of education which was not naturally non-formal proved instrumental in promoting the cause of education. The growth in number of educational institutions and promotion of learning in every nook and corner of the valley, were generated by three main agencies vize, Maktabs (private houses which were generally attached to mosques) Khanqahs (convenient for holy man) and Madrasses (formal institutions of higher akin to became present day colleges). During the muslim period great scholars devoted mainly to propagation of religion. They compiled the biographies of the saints which not only speak of the Khanqah performed by the saints but through light on social, political, economic, educational and cultural activities of the period. These works are considered reliable sources for the period. Muslim children were usually given education with formal ceremony known as Bismillah Khwani.

20 Khan, Ishaq, Dr. Kashmiries Transition to Islam, pub. New Delhi, p. 63
21 The muslim sages and priests trinkled into Kashmir from Turkistan as well as from the Indian Sub-continent and created small cells of learning at and around their places of Sojourn. As time advanced these cells took the forms of Masjid, Khanqah, Maktab, Tdfqid and Madrasses.

22 The Bismillah Khwani or otherwise, the ceremony of putting a boy to school for the first time, also known as Maktab ceremony, was performed amidst a show of acclamation and good wishes for novice
This ceremony was performed when a boy was five years, four months and four days old. They were mostly taught Arabic and Persian by the teacher (Moulvi) who were occasionally paid by the parents when the student started new books or got married. The Muslims called their teacher Ustad, Moulvi Sahib, Munshi Sahib and the Hindu called them Guru on entering the students was provided with a slate and Sura Alaq a chapter of the Holy Quran written on it. The student was asked to repeat it a number of times. After completing the primary formalities the student was called Talibin, the subjects to be taught were Karima Nama Haq, Gulstan Bustan of study besides this Skinder Nama was taught.

After Muslim rule the patronage of Muslim Institutions by ruling class ended automatically. The end of the Mughal rule witnessed further decline ever, therefore, the Khanqahs and shrines which were reduced to places of festivity. A practice of which ultimately deflected these from their main purpose. After Mughals, Kashmir came under the rule of Afghans, Kashmir which had been pioneered of progress and beacon of enlightenment decline under the tyranny of the Afghan rulers. Sikh rule, which was both short and cruel did not witness any progress in Socio-Religious educational fields in Kashmir. After Sikhs Kashmir came under the rule of Dogras. The majority of the rulers of Afghans, Sikhs and Dogras dynasties when he attained the age of four years, four months, and four days, when at an auspicious hour fixed in consultation with an expert astrologer, he received his first lesson from his tutor.

A complete satire on Afghan aristocracy and highheadiness is depicted by the poet in the following lines:

(Tr. I enquired of the gardener the cause of the destruction of garden, drawing a deep sigh, he replied "it is the Afghan who did it ".

The nature of the Sikhs are as rulers described by young husband, who says that Sikhs were, "Rough and hard master," young husband, Kashmir, p.160. According to Lawrence, "the sikhs seem to look upon the Kashmirians as little better than cattle", the Valley of Kashmir, Lawrence, p. 199.

Gulab Singh (Dogras) wrote cononal torrent as for as book 1863, went for beyond his predecessors in the gentle acts of undue taxation and extortion. They had looked heavily, it is true but he sucked the very
were oppressive by their nature, they defended upon loot and plunder Kashmir became a
milking cow for them and they wanted to get as much money from the valley as they
could. They were not willing to give the people any thing in return the foreign officers were
corrupt and unsympthyic oppression of the rulers, which they ruled bore without a murmor
earned them (people) the title of Zulum parast (worshippors of tyranny)\textsuperscript{28}. It is interesting to note
that the pathans, although muslims were also against any enlightenment of the muslims of
Kashmir and were far ahead of Sikhs, and Dogras in perpetrating oppression and darkness.\textsuperscript{29} In
this state of oppression no one could expect development in the field of education which it had
during the regime of native rulers. It is now for us here to determine they extent to which the
shrines were able to serve the cause of educatiuon and bring about an awakening among the
people. As a matter of fact Shrines and Khanqahs, Mosques , Maktabs and Madressas played a
very important role during the muslim period. Islam in Kashmir had spread through khanqahs and
shrines. But since the time Kashmir lost freedom and non local rulers came to rule this land
education received very little attention of the rulers. However, there are references to the effect
that the Peers and Gurus were engaged in teaching the Quran and Hindu Scriptures. The verses of
Lal Ded and Habba Khatun come to us as evidence of women too having received the benefit of
education.Lal Ded mystic poetess of Kashmir says in one of her scriptures

\begin{center}
\begin{minipage}{0.45\textwidth}
لاير دايرم انرر ارتن
\end{minipage}
\begin{minipage}{0.45\textwidth}
لیس بیوم نتک نشن
\end{minipage}
\end{center}

" ( tr. The mentor taught me the only lesson of with drawing into myself. That was the
lesson and dictum which established direct communion between my maker and myself.)"
Habba Khatun said with devotion :-

\begin{itemize}
\item life, blood of the people. They had laid violent hand on a large proportion of the fruits of the earth, the
\item profits of the loom and the works of the mans hands, but he skiemd the very flincts to fill his coffess."
\item Colonel torrent travels in Ladkh's tartar Kashmir, p. 301.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid, For the rulers of these dynasties, Kashmir became a colony like Bengal for east India Company. It
had to survive physical and economic lust of their masters.

\textsuperscript{29} The non local rulers would never think in terms of the betterment of local people.
Thus we know Akhanoon and Gour continued to be the main source of education with the ouster of local rulers, the oppressive authorities did not pay any attention to the need for preservation of native culture and institution. Education became a personal monopolised by Peer and Gour who saw to it that only beneficiaries of their profession were their own families, this profession was almost hereditary one. The credulous masses considered their Peers and Goures as their friends, philosophers and guides. The Peers exploited them a good deal and extracted money from them. Gh. Hassan Khan has thus rightly remarked that the real knowledge remained confined, as a rule, to a selected few families of Peers, Qazies, Mufties and Waizeen. The muslims during the period under survey received education, but not of that healthy kind which would bring aking to their minds. The muslim boys were taught to read Arabic so that they may be able to recite the verses of the Quran, but not necessarily to understand it. As there was no system of education in the valley having for its object, either mental training of social reform. The people had to content themselves what the moulives dished out to them. There were Maktabs were muslims were taught. The boys were imparted parrot like lesson of the Quran and no attempt was made to improve their morals. The muslim boys used to read Quran in the

31 Sofi Gh. Mohi-ud-Din, Kashmir mean Samaji Aur Sagafati Tabdiliven; p. 52.
32 Peers are religious people and have a good command on theology, Qazies, a judge especially one who has been appointed by the state to decide cases according to the laws of Shariah.Mufli ; head of the department of Fatwa, the person qualified and authorised to issue a Fatwa.Waizeen; Deliverer of sermons, religious leader and preacher, a term of more general application.
33 Ibid.
34 The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) has stated the foremost purpose of his being sent down in this world and the method of his call to the people in these words:
mosques, which worked as maktaba and were only place of education. The Moulves who used to teach in mosque had not the proper and adequate knowledge of their religion. Consequently the people could at best learn and read just the alphabet of Arabic and Persian grammar, Arithmetic and accounts were quite neglected. No doubt there were some knowledgable people who were institutions in themselves and contributed a lot. They alone were able to produce some scholarly people. But the majority of the Moulves never favoured the idea of spreading, true religion. They for their own vested interests always wanted to keep the people in dark. If any reform movement appeared at any time in our period of study it was greatly opposed by the Mullahs. They never thought in terms of seeing the society reformed along healthy lines. Once an Anjuman-i-Talahuzz-i-Namaz-wa-Satri-Musturaj in 1923 came into being in order to fight to the evil practices. The reformers were greatly opposed and criticised by Mullahs. That is why the muslims remained in the state of woeful ignorance in the early stage of Dogra period. The Mullahs and Moulves told people that the christain missionary propaganda carried conviction with credulous masses. English language was suspected to induce idolotory among them that is why the muslims did not send their children to government schools still less to the mission schools but continued to educate them in their own idigeneous institutions. The maktabas which otherwise had become less useful in the changed circumstances. The muslims were conservative in their attitude and showed enthusiasms only for religious

"I have been sent only for the purpose of perfecting good morals". That great message which has left an indelible impression on the history of life and for propagating which and for bringing people under whose influence Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) worked ceaselessly. Its purpose was nothing else but to strength the moral character of the people so that the world of beauty and perfection may be illuminated before their eyes and they may try to achieve it conciously and with knowledge.

35 Mosque literally a place of prostration, i.e., before Allah. Besides if mosque remained the main place for muslim education till the establishment of madrasa.

36 A muslim religious scholar; also used as equivalent of Mr. Or a learned man, a graduate in theology.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 The Mullahs were always opposed to give modern as well religious knowledge to the people.

40 Mullah, the Persian form of Arabic Moulavi, learned man, a scholar; often used for the rural priestly class who also work as Maktab teachers.

41 Ibid. Maktab is a muslim primary school. A place were reading and writing is taught. Also the classes commonly held in a mosque by its Imams.
instructions. The muslims after going through the rudiments of the Quran and Persian language and sentence wise reading of the relevent text took up the Karima “Nam Haq” an excellent Persian poem, which treated of the morality. But as such students neither recognised the letters well nor did they understand, what they learnt at that time. After “Karima” they at once took up Bostan and Gulistan. After going through about half of it, revised it. With explanation in their own Tongue. Next to these two books Hurkam and Sikandar nama were read and an ordinary student ended his study with these books. Some inquisitive and interested people went beyond and used to read, Saki Nama, Sheerin Khusran, Inshnish Tahir, Wahid and a few other books. Persian was preferred much by the Kashmiries. Their maktab syllabus mostly included the Persian texts. The muslims preferred the mosque schools or the system of private tuition, where Arabic and Persian were taught. Lawrence says that the muslims “can read and write Persian” even now we come some of the age old people speaking Persian very fluently through their knowledge of grammar is scant. After the end of muslim rule in 1819 A.D., when Ranjit Singh of Lahore defeated Afghans in Kashmir valley. Thus we see a virtual transformation of Kashmiri culture under five hundred years continuous rule of muslims. A new socio-religious educational and cultural paradigm entailed a new idiom and mode of expression. Accordingly Persian replaced Sanskerit as the new script. In course of time, Urdu became popular, Kashmiri language and literature developed under the overarching influence of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Consequently, a new out look, a new world view and a new value system became the deriving force of Kashmiri people. New Soci-Religious educational trends of thought emerging as muslim intellectuals of the time pondered over the eternal beliefs and values of Islam and tried to integrate them with Kashmiri are ethos, genius, history and culture. However, the evolution of religious educational Islamic culture got a severe jolt after the defeat of Afghans by Sikhs in 1819 A.D. Sikhs ruled over Kashmir upto 1846, in which year it was handed over to

42 All the muslim religious educational centres have the same medium of instruction is Arabic. The lecture and other discussion were instructed in Arabic language. Mother tongue is used very little.

43 Among the means of correcting boys the severest punishment was “falak “, it was as follows a strong was hung up in the room and to it the delinquents feet were fast tied and they were allowed to hang these with their heads suspended down ward. They were kept in that position for some minutes and some times flogged in the bargain.

44 Lawrence, R. Walter, The Valley of Kashmir.

45 Contemporary Urdu is recognised official language of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

46 After the cruel rule of Afghans Kashmir passed into the hands of Sikhs. In 1814, a sikh army advanced by the Pirpanjal, Ranjit Singh watching the operations from Punch. This expedition miscarried; but in 1819
Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu by East India Company started a technical school and taught Brahmin boys carpentry. Miss Hallen Barges taught the school staff the Kindergarten system. The commencement of such a system created difficulties. Several parents removed their sons from the school for they said, "we send our children to school to learn and not to play."

Times changed, so that in 1881 A.D., he soon gathered a number of boys and youths who displayed some eagerness to learn to read English under him provided they were not converted to the faith of Christainity, the opening of Catholic Mission schools was a red letter day in the annals of modern Kashmir. Rev. Tyndale Biscoe joined the school in 1891 A.D. to assist Mr. Knowles in the school there were 250 students. Never shall I target my feelings of surprise and amusement to speak truth, distrust also surprise to see Bundles of human beings squatting on the floor. Most of them with mouths open. Amusement on account of their ugly costumes, for every one seemed to be wearing a dirty night gown and foreheads were plastered with red paint and number of them wearing huge golden earnings,distrust at, says Biscoe. The offensive smoke that pervaded the school rooms, for every one had concealed fire pot full of charcole emitting fumes of carbon mixed up with unwashed bodies and dirty clothes. Biscoe continuously speaking that he worked hard to make his mission successful. He worked day and night to dispel ignorance and fight prejudice and spread literacy among the masses of Kashmir. Biscoe faced many hardships in introducing new type of education in the school, which included games and athlecties. The reason was that the people of Kashmir were simple and superstitious. The boys refused to play games and athlecties in the school. Why did they do so, for said they, we shall grow muscles on our bodies and then we shall have to run about and be energetic and people will laugh at us for gentle man must not hurry. One of the parents writes, "I must humbly and respectfully, be to bring to your kind notice that my son, student of lower school, is strictly prohibited by astrologers, who have examined his horoscope from joining any playing

Miss Diwan Chand, Ranjit Singh's great general, accompanied by Gulab Singh of Jammu, over came Mohammad Azim Khan, and entered Shupiyan. The Sikh rulers were harsh and oppressive for Kashmir muslims the Jamia Masjid srinagar were locked and the Azan was forbidden.

47 The first modern school in Kashmir was established in 1881 by Rev. J.S. Doxy. This first mission school had to face still opposition by the Marajah the ruler of Kashmir. But their main aim was to convert the people.

48 Tyndal Biscoe, Kashmir Sun Light and Shade, p.25.

49 Ibid.

party. I would request you to kindly keep him exempt from joining the playing teams and boating. Parents were against what they called waste of time in sports. The boys were sent to school to pass the examination and that was supposed to be the main aim of school life. Games were useless to them where as passing examination meant employment in government services as Biscoe, says.

But on the other side people in general and ulama of the time were doubted that the Christian Missionaries and their efforts were not purely humanitarian. They always employed education as a means through which they could come into contact with the people and convert them to their faith. In this connection schools became very important as means of communication with different classes of people, with children and parents and with men and women. School houses also became important as places for becoming acquainted with the people, for social intercourse and religious worship. School houses became chapels under the control of missionaries. Their use for their purpose is often more important than for education. When the ulama observed this ideology they opened various Socio-religious educational and reformative Anjumans for safe guarding the muslim faith. These reformative Anjumans have done a very considerable role in the last decade of the 19th century in the Jammu and Kashmir. These reformative Socio-religious, education and political movements brought about a revolution in thought. These reformative Anjumans were, Anjuman Nusatul Islam of Kashmir which we are discussing in the next chapter, Anjuman-i-Hamadrd Islam, Srinagar, Anjuman-i-Tahaffuz-i-Namaz-wa-Satri-Masturat.

51 Ibid.
55 Anjuman Hamadrd Islam, Srinagar was established by a few Punjabi Muslims just after the first world war. The main figure behind this Anjuman was Mohammad Ibrahim. The Anjuman-i-Hamadrd Islam was to encourage the muslims of Kashmir in their pursuit of education. It urged upon them to develop the habit of self help by raising funds for this purpose stress was laid on the learning of technical and commercial as well as religious education.
56 Anjuman-i-Tahaffuz-i-Namaz-wa-Satri-Masturat was founded in 1923 A.D. by Azad Quresh, Hakim Quresh, and Ghulam Mohammad Alvi. The Anjuman was purely a religious body. The chief object of the Anjuman was to acquaint the muslims in general and those living in villages in particular with the tenets of Islam and also to help them in eradicating social evils prevalent among the muslims.
The Maktabs of Srinagar city and of other parts of the valley where the Muslims ummah got education were generally, affiliated to the mosques in order to teach Arabic for reading the Quran. But so far as the shrines of Srinagar city were concerned, there is no reference to show that the maktabs and madrassas where connected to them. As already mentioned the Sikh rule was very disastrous particularly for the Muslims. After taking Kashmir in their hands, the sikhs, tried their utmost to put an end to the Muslims. To that end the shrines the Sikhs attached the mosques and shrines, which were citadels of Muslim faith. Secondly, the doors of holy places like Khanqah-I-Mualla and Jamia Masjid were not only closed during the time of Sikhs, but were turned into stables. Besides some mosques like Pathar Masjid, Mullah Akhhoon Mosque and Khanqah-I-Madin Sahib remained closed during the period of Dogras too. In such a state of affairs it became very difficult to have educational development through shrines but this does not mean that shrines lost all their role. The 19th century and the beginning of 20th century was a period of darkness because of their cruel rule, attitude of rulers. Nevertheless, Kashmir, possessed such preachers, waizeen, mubaligeen and scholars who were embodiment of many good qualities and it were they who led the Muslims of Kashmir, as a millat alive in that period of darkness. The main role in imparting education in the shrines and mosques was played by the members of Mirwaiz dynasty. They made the shrines particularly Jamia Masjid as the centre for preaching the Quran, and Hadith. The ancestors of Mirwaiz dynasty were initially residing at Tral. For certain reasons Salam Baba (alias) Salam

57 The Anjuman-i-Islamic-Jammu was a semi political body. Its mission was to protect the rights of the Muslim subjects, to work for their educational advancement and to free them from social evils.
58 Mir, Saiyid, Mustaq Iqbalani, Kashmir Islam Kay Sayaqeen, p. 106.
59 During the time of Sikhs, some new courts and departments came into being. The Muslims of Kashmir had to play fee Nikah and conflicts. The maharaja for managing the courts and for looking after these deptt. Requested Moulana Mir Qazi Ghulam-ud-Din Hussaini Jamii (a great Muslim scholar) to take the charge of these deptt. But he refused. The Maharaja was annoyed and with the result issued orders for the closure of Khang-i-Mualla and Jamia Masjid srinagar and turned them into stables. Alama-Mufli-Mohi-ud-Din Pandani, Tarikh-i-Zakhayer-ul-Muneeer, p. 163.
60 Alma-Mufli-Mohi-ud-Din, A history of Kashmir, Jammu, p. 149. Besides these mosques were used as shali stores and store houses for gun powder. During the period of Sikhs and Dogras.
61 It was also because of the maltreatment and oppression of their rulers and officials that the people generally were gripped in ignorance and backwardness.
Baba left Tral for good and settled at Qalamdanpora in Srinagar. Salam Baba had a spiritual bent of mind and as such he spent his whole life in worship and acts of piety. He died at Qalamdanpora on 18th jamadi-us-Sani 1223 A.H. He was survived by five sons one of them names Lassa Baba received religious education along with a co-student named Syed Hassan Shah Gilani under the supervision of Buzerg Shah, from Qazi Mir Mohammad Rasool Hussain Jami. He also received training from Sheikh Ahmad Tarabali and it was under his guidance that he committed the entire Quran to memory. It was Sheikh Ahmad Tarabali who selected him for the job of preaching. Lassa Baba became famous in Sopore of IIm-i-Din (Theology). He was the first among to the Mirwaiz dynasty to start waiz khani (preaching). This job he did with great ability and dedication. Thus Lassa came to be called Mirwaiz. He throughout his life gave sermons and explained the real spirit of Islam to the muslims.

The condition of muslim ummah during the period of understudy was very bad. No doubt, the muslims had embraced Islam long before over period of study, but into the heart of hearts they were not the muslims. The customs and traditions of Hindus and Muslims had intermingled and the true spirit of Islam was over shadowed. They had complete faith in saints and scarified in their name and paid Nazar-u-Niyaz in Brahiman tradition. The muslims were performing such practices which were un-Islamic in character. Some evil practices and bad customs were prevalent among the muslims of the time. The muslim children, like non-muslim children, used to have Shikha on the crown of their heads. And it was showed off on a particular day with great celebrations. There was no such institution which would enlighten the people about the principles of Islam. However, the preachers and waizeen used to give sermons on Islamic theology on particular days like Friday, (Juma) and other Holy days at the shrines. In order to make the people to understand Islam. The sermons doubtlessly, helped the people to understand the reality. As we know that it was due to the sermons of Hafiz Lassa Baba that the custom of having Shikha on the crown of the heads of muslim children was put an end.

64 Ibid. p. 163
65 Ibid.
66 Mohhamd Din Fouq, p.143
67 Ibid. p. 431.
68 It is a matter of common knowledge that most of these shrines have been constructed in memory of some pious and holy men. On the auspicious occasion of the birth and death anniversaries of these holy people, the Mubaligeen used to give sermons on the teachings of life history and their achievements in the light of Islam. (Mohd-Dn Fouq, p. 1137).
Meanwhile the Mirwaiz dynasty was split into two branches and their followers also got divided into two groups. The first group followed lassa Baba and this group subsequently concentrated their activities at Jamia Masjid. The other group followed Salam Baba whose line came to be called Hamadani Moulvis. Their centre of activities was khanqah muallah. However, the Hamadani Moulvis, like Bralvi school of thought believed in shrines as they were dervishes and sufls. Mubarak Baba, son of Naba Baba got training from Moulana Mir Amir-ud-din jami and started preaching sermons at Khanqah-i-Muallah which benefited a large number of people. The first group of Moulves who occupied Jamia Masjid for purpose of sermons greatly opposed the Peers (the worldly ulama) as they were a great threat to Islam. As a matter of fact the number of worldly ulama (those peers who were interested in the mundane activities was indeed very large. This fact becomes clear from the remarks of Shiekh-Noor-ud-Din, popularly known in Kashmir as Alamdar-i-Kashmir. This celebrated saints of Rishi movement in Kashmir says, "Hardly one amongst the thousand ulama will be saved from the wrath of Allah". We get a detailed account about the worldly ulama from the sayings of Shiekh Noor-ud-Din while thoroughly observing the selfish, hyprocretic, conceited and ambitious activities of the ulama. The Shiekh has vehemently criticised and exposed them to posterity. Quote the Shiekh.

"These ulama were parasites on the society and lived a life of luxury without contributing anything to the society”. They wore big turbans and long garments; they carried sticks in their hands and went from place to place bargaining their prayers, and fasts in return for

69 It is said that Shia Muslims wanted to construct a Moaque outside the torme of Madin Sahib. But Salam Baba son of Nab Baba objected it and the sunnis at the instruction of Salam Baba destroyed the walls of the Mosque. This ultimately led them to conflict. However, the Shia’s who were less in number than Sunnis were supported by wazir Panun (during the time of Maharaja Ranbir Sing). This ultimately led Sunnis to travel in number of difficulties. Salam Baba was banished but soon after the maintenance of peace, he was permitted to come back. He died in Jamadi-ul-Sani, 1300 A.H. and was buried in the compound of Khanqahi Mullah - Gh. Mohi-ud-Din Pandam.

70 Ibid.

71 Moti, Lal Saqi, Kullyat-i-Shaik-ul Alam.
food. The nature and activities of these Mullah’s have undergone no change since the time of Shiekh Noor-ud-Din. Instead of being guardians and interpreters of Muslim law, they became its worst destroyers. They acquired the knowledge of Islam only to obtain their living and other objects of the world. They exploited the ignorant and simple masses in order to have complete hold on them. This becomes clear when once an Anjuman-i-Nusratul Islam criticised the people (Mullahs) for their attitude. The mullahs by exploiting the ignorant masses got so much support that the followers of Anjuman were nick named as Yazar Peers and the Anjuman fizzled out. It is very important to note about peers that at least some of them were institutions in themselves and they performed very useful service to the cause of Islam. They led the people towards spiritualism, manliness and piety. They used to have good following, so far as the real peers are concerned, the Muslim community of Kashmir is and shall be indebted to them for all times. Names of Shiekh Ahmad Tarabali, Shiekh Khalil Alunad Gratabal, Qazi Mir Amir-ud-Din, Qazi Ghulam-ud-Din Jami, Qazi Nizam-ud-Din Jami, Alama Qazi Rasool Janti and Moulvi Mohi-ud-din Mattoo are shining stars of recent past. These peers of Srinagar who bargain religion for their interests. Moulve Mohammad Yehyah used to give sermons at important shrines particularly at Jamı Masjid for forty eight years. He also used to teach the different kinds of students in the premises of his house. It may not be out of place to mention

72 Ibid. Similarly many others also criticised the role of Mullah, i.e., worldly ulama as it is evident from a journal Al-Atiqad. To name few illumunaries are sheik Abdul Qadir Jilani, Moulana Rumi, Mir Syed Ali Hamadani, Khaviaja Boari Wali-ullah, Delhi and Mujadid-i-Al-Fisani-Al-Atiqad. Dec. 1985, p.3.

73 Yazar in kashmir means pyjamas. Since the inception of the movement, reformers stressed the priority of wearing pyjamas. They came to called Yazar Pirs Gh. Hassan Khan. P.75

74 Ibid.

75 The first two great preachers of Mirwaiz dynasty namely lassa Baba and Yehyah Sahib received training from Shiekh Ahmad Tarabali. Alama Mufli Mohi-ud-Din Pandami. p.163,170

76 A large number of people namely Shiekh Mohammad Saiyid Tarabali, Saiyu-din-Munteki, Waiz Yehyah, Baba Khalil Trumbo, Gh. Nabi Shaefi etc, received education from Qazi Mir Amir-ud-Din. p.159-160.

77 He taught many people like Mohi-ud-Din Gundroo, Hafiz Yehyah Baji, Waiz Salam Bayn, Moulvi Habibullah Mattoo etc. who became great scholars, p. 168-170.

78 Ibid.

79 There were two main causes for this criticism. The pirs were great obstacle in the way of spreading Islam. They did not hesitate in giving false fatwas (decrease). Secondly the Mirwaiz Moulvis were having their own interests. As a matter of fact Mirwaiz dynasty was not basically of the city of Srinagar and where not having their own murids at beginning. That is why, they criticised the pirs of the city in order to gain the support of simple people. Naturally the pirs became the great opponents of Mirwaiz dynasty. This became
here that these moulvis also were having their vested interests. They were paid by the people in lieu of their services, when they used to give sermons in shrines on some particular days like Shabi Mehraj, Shabi-Barat, Idd-I-Milad, and on the achievements of different saints like Makhdoom Sahib, Shiekh Noor-ud-Din etc, whose birth and death anniversaries were celebrated with great pomp and show. Maharaja Rambir Singh also used to give tora, shawl, gown, fart etc, as khilat to most of the ulama on the auspicious occasion of Idd.80

In brief Kashmir was considered as the highest seat of religious knowledge and practice from ancient times. During Hindu period and Buddhist times world scholars and thinkers were received education in the seats of learnings in Kashmir. During the reign of muslim rulers and patronage the Islamic education were flourished with modern sciences and technology. The highest seats of learning during muslim rule were the maktabs, madrasses, ziyaza, taqias and ulama of the time also established home schools at their residential quarters. The ulama and other Islamic scholars. The Islamic instruction and languages courses were introduced at residential schools. The mosques, attached Darasgahs with them which played an important role in the Socio-Religious education of Kashmir. The preachers and mubaligeens played a credible role in spreading of the Islamic tenets of Islam. But after the emergency of cruel rules like Afganis, Sikhs, Dogras and then Christains Missionaries try to christains the muslim society of Kashmir.

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80 Mohammad Din Fouq. p.432. Ibid.