CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION
In this study we have examined the institutional development and the role of religion among the Kashmiri Pandit emigrants. The establishment of distinctiveness through the formation of ethnocentric groups provides a means for negotiating both personal and group identity. Emigrants are religious, by all counts more religious than they were before they left home - because religion, according to Williams, is one of the important identity markers that helps them preserve individual self awareness and cohesion in a group, (William 1988, 11). The re-establishment of their religious sects in Jammu, by some emigrant Kashmiri Pandits can be best understood in this context.

SECTION - I

REFLECTIONS

At the time of migration in 1990, each of the three sects under study was at a different stage of its developmental cycle. These sects had emerged in post 1947 Kashmir; at the time when the traditional religious beliefs and practices of the Pandits, were being increasingly marginalised due to the rise of modernisation as well as the rising domination of mass (Muslim) culture. These sects seek to revive the ancient tradition of scholarship, devotion, and individual's enlightenment under a charismatic guru. Each of these sects follows a specific tradition and rituals
that are transmitted by a hierarchy. The Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram is the oldest of the three sects, which will observe the first centenary celebrations of its guru’s birthday in the year 1997-98. The sect was set up in 1968 with the formation of a trust followed by the construction of an ashram in 1971 at Kharyar, Srinagar. Since its inception twenty eight years ago, the sect has not faced any schism. It was established around the charismatic personality of Gopinathji. During their twenty two years at Srinagar, the sect has also institutionalised the charisma of Gopinathji through social service (medical aid and pensions to widows) and education of poor children.

The Ishwar Ashram had its beginning in Srinagar, as an ashram for the study of Shaivism at Ishber, under the auspices of Lakshmanji who taught aspirants the principles and practices of Kashmir Shaivism for over half a century. In the post migration period the group is now preserved through his teachings of Shaiva texts and he is worshipped as the founder by the members of the sect. Despite the stress on Sanskrit learning, the sect functions as a devotional group.

The Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram, the youngest of the three groups was established in 1970s. In a short period of two decades, its members (mostly women) built two ashrams, one at Srinagar and another at Jammu, and organised satsangs and attracted a large following among the
householders. The sect is yet to make a formal trust, keenly favoured by a section of devotees. The cohesiveness of the group is primarily due to the presence and personality of its charismatic guru, Kamlawatiji. Each individual devotee has membership in the group by virtue of personal attachment to her.

The 'sectarian' development of religion among the Pandits can be seen to be an anchor to their main religious tradition, where the devotees gather around a guru, living or dead, whose teachings and/or person provides the focus for activities within the group. It is common in their congregations to gather around a photograph or statue or the physical presence of the guru along with the chantings or lilas by the group. All the three sects are devotional in the bhakti tradition, where a didactic relationship is established between each devotee and the guru. Detailed knowledge of sanskritic religion or presence of a professional priest is not necessary, at least in the everyday congregations.

CHARISMA

All the three sects, under study have arisen around the charismatic personality of an individual known as the 'guru'. In the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram, although Gopinathji has long ago given up his mortal body, his charisma lives on as his devotees believe that he still alive, residing in his
ashram(s) and communicates with them through his miracle (anugrih). Whenever these devotees talk about Gopinathji, what one hears is an account of their personal experiences of his miracle. In the life of a devotee Gopinathji emerges as a supreme lord - Bhagwan, who not only has the power to perform a miracle, but also a discretion to use or not to use this power in a given situation.

In the Ishwar Ashram, the charismatic appeal of Lakshmanji was in his role as a scholar-saint who was a wonderful orator and a teacher. According to his disciple, Dina Nath Ganjoo:

"The main reason for the non-acceptance of anyone else as Swamiji's successor is his charisma. All those who have seen, heard and interacted with Swamiji would find it difficult to accept anyone else as their guru".

In the Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram, Kamlawatiji is a highly charismatic woman. Though outwardly she is like any ordinary woman of her age yet to her devotees she is 'goddess Ragyna' incarnate.

Weber pointed out that leadership remains charismatic only as long as the followers are in small numbers i.e. at the beginning of a movement. With the creation of an administrative machinery and acquisition of the funds, possibility of applying coercion and providing remunerative
inducement open up. Moreover, the mere duration of hierarchy inculcates the habit of obedience to office which acquires a force of inertia independent of personal quality of the holder. A transfer of charisma to institutionalised leadership is called its Routinisation. In the case of the three sects we see that charisma of the guru has been on the rise long after these movements began, since charisma does not necessarily have to be direct and personal.

NON-RENUNCIATION

One of the characteristics common in all the three groups is Non-Renunciation, a value cherished by the Kashmiri Pandit community as a whole. There is a marked absence of a renouncer (sanyasi) in all the three groups. Such sanyasis as one may encounter at the feasts organised by the sects are non-Kashmiris. None of these sects emphasises, in its philosophy or otherwise on the termination of householdership (grihasta) at any stage in one's life. The observation that, "In this sense formal renunciation is not merely postponed, as Dumont (1960, 45) points out, but its place in the life of the Pandit is denied." (Madan 1988, 41) remains true of these sects. At the level of an individual, these sects largely adhere to the traditional conception of socio-cultural identity of Kashmiri Pandits. This is expressed in the notion of
‘Bhattil’ or the Bhatta’s way of life. Bhattil constitutes a range of fundamental purposes of life or Purusartha largely centered in the domestic life and of appropriate procedures for their fulfilment. These have basis in tradition and consists of notions such as customs and conventions (riti), procedures (vidhi), rites-de-passage (samskars) and the everyday chores (nitya karma)\(^2\).

Gopinathji, who was a celibate (brahmachari), lived with his brother and sisters throughout his life. The literature of the sect and the devotees themselves, lay emphasis on his role ‘as a bachelor uncle’ who lived an everyday life of a Pandit householder. He was like a father to his sister’s children and likewise fulfilled the social obligation of marrying off his niece and performed the thread ceremony of his nephew according to the Pandit tradition. As one of his biographers says, "He never advised to give up household, wife and children in the quest of truth. According to him, the worldly man, grihasta could be a man of dispassion and reach the ultimate."(Raina 1992, 27)

Swami Lakshmanji, neither married nor did he live with his family. Having left his father’s house at the age of

---

1. **Bhatta** is the Kashmiri word for Pandit, a honorific term for the learned one, used to identify them from others.

2. Includes proper performance of ablutions (saucara), offering of water for satisfaction of manes (tarpan), prayers and offerings to the goddesses, (Isht Devi) observance of birth and death anniversary and fulfilling of social obligations (like visiting kith and kin to offer felicitations and condolences etc.).
sixteen, he went to stay in a separate ashram, though it was built for him by his father. Moreover, Lakshmanji inherited his share of property and wealth from his father on which he lived all through his life. In that sense, Lakshmanji did not give up or renounce social ties with his family members. Furthermore, after his death, a part of his property and money went to his relatives and close disciples as per his instructions in the will. One of his prime disciples, Dinanath Ganjoo points out:

"Swamiji believed in the traditional procedures of bhattil, following the routine chores of every day life like the saucacra and tarpan. He also performed the shradha of his parents as well as his gurus. He wore a Yagnopavit, the sacred thread and lived a life of a typical Pandit."

( Personal Conversation May, 1995).

Though himself not married yet Lakshmanji (and Gopinathji too) sought fulfilment in life through the affirmation of family and wider kinship obligations and through the willing acceptance of other social bonds.

Of the three gurus, only Kamlawatiji is married and lives with her family members. Even after she was formally declared a guru, Kamlawatiji continued to live with her husband as before, and after his death, with her sons and their families. Similarly earlier in her life during
her quest for spirituality, Kamlawatiji chose to follow the faith propagated by Swami Govind Kaul mainly because he agreed to initiate her without having to give up the family. As Kamlawatiji's chief disciple Parmeshwari said,

"This group is best suited for householders, it neither asks for giving up of one's family life (grihasta) nor to be a celibate (brahmacharya). (Personal Conversation; October, 1994)"

By and large, all the devotees in these sects live with families, most of them being married with children of their own. The gurus encourage their followers to perform their social roles as householders in consonance with the dharma as prescribed in Bhattil. In the philosophy of the Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram', for instance, the focus is to pay off the karmic debts of previous births. However, a renouncer, who lives off others, by depending on the householder for food etc. adds to these debts and has to keep coming back to life to pay them off.

**WOMEN AND RELIGION**

Women are present in these sects in significant numbers. In the 'Govind Kaul - Kamlawati' sect, women are in larger number than the men. These women are initiated into the Radhasoami faith which emphasises on the inner worldliness, evolving the spirituality from within and rejecting the ritualistic priestly tradition. A significant feature among these women devotees is the proclivity towards
composition of lilas loaded with esoteric passages. Generally these women are good singers who have developed a good sense of rhythm and music. Sometimes in social gatherings or celebrations of other groups, which they may happen to attend, it is not unusual for one or more of these women singers to sing lilas to the admiration of others.

In the 'Ishwar Ashram' the general focus of the religious activities is on reading and writing of Shaiva texts. While more men attend the formal classes on Shaivism that are held every sunday or deliver discourses on the philosophical and academic topics, yet some women, like Prabhaji, Kamla Bawa, Kamla Bagati and Bettina Baumer propound the intricacies of Shaiva philosophy, recite poetical compositions and sing lilas. Prabhaji, the lone surviving member of the original trio, Lakshmanji, Sharikaji and herself, is considered most proficient in interpreting and explaining the teachings of Lakshmanji.

In the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram too, women are present in considerable numbers. Infact, of the three spiritually evolved and 'sacred' members of the group, one of them Jai Kishori, is a woman. Women, then are fairly well represented in this sect. As this sect promotes the youth in a special way, care is taken to impart the values of the sect especially to the girls who are regarded as the holders and prospective transmitters of tradition in their future.
roles as garwajin or women - householders. There are some good women singers in this sect too, whose audio cassettes are sold by the trust and have found a big market in the Kashmiri Pandit community as a whole. Thus these women participate in all the activities of their respective sects, from congregation to managing feasts, holding meetings and organising the ashrams, as the members of the group or office bearers of the trust. The argument put forth by the feminists that "Women are excluded from formal religion and from participating in important public rituals……. Women are confined to the domestic spheres often in some form of seclusion" (Holden 1983,2) do not hold ground in these situations. By contrast, a large number of women in this study, committed to religion, are expressing their religiosity more publicly by seeking out these devotional and spiritual sects. It helps them to communicate, to commune and to connect by creating private networks of power and influences for themselves outside the traditional family setting.

The study focuses on women who occupy important positions in these sects, appearing as the head of the sect, (Kamlawatiji) as the ones who give spiritual initiation to followers (Sharikaji and Jai Kishori) and as potential gurus (Paremeshwari and Prabhaji). These women are 'exceptional' as they have diverged from their 'ordinary' roles (as wife and mother) to follow the '
extraordinary' calling. However, the pattern that emerges here shows that for these women there is no serious discontinuity or breaking away from their 'ordinary' roles as they become 'exceptionals' or saints. While Kamlawatiji, continues to be a wife and mother; Sharikaji, Prabhaji and Jai Kishori have only renounced marriage (and being a wife) but continue to be (like) mothers. The study shows that motherhood is an important aspect of the woman guru's personality. Kamlawatiji, for instance, is called 'Mataji' (Respected Mother), which Khandewal says is almost a universal term of address for mature sanyasinis, as well, on whom she has worked. In her article she highlights three interrelated themes of, emotional intimacy, food, and scolding as expirations of motherhood. (Khandelwal, forthcoming). In this study, too, we find these themes prevalent. Sharikaji, for instance, is remembered by her women devotees for her concern, support and advice in times of their personal crises. Often she would seek the intervention of Lakshmanji in favour of a devotee hesitant to approach him for blessings. In the feasts organised by the 'Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram, Kamlawatiji herself goes round to each invitee to ensure that they eat to their fill. In the 'Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram' Jai Kishori sees it as her prerogative and even duty, to scold the devotees (especially the youngsters), when necessary. These youngsters in turn interpret these scoldings as expressions of closeness and motherly love.
Our study shows that religion continues to play a crucial role in the lives of women. In the sectarian form of religion, the religious commitment is changing form, from a ritualistic approach to a more subtle form of inner-worldly spirituality. Unlike the Bhakta poets of medieval times who achieved a status equal to that of men by forsaking this worldliness (Kishwar, 1989), these women experience a sense of liberation by doing just the opposite - i.e. by realising their sociality, sexuality and spirituality and taking the path of non-renunciation.

SECTION - II
TOWARDS AN ETHNIC RELIGIOUS SECTARIAN IDENTITY

In modern India, religion is the social category with clearest meaning and acceptance in society. Emphasis on religious affiliation and identity readily enables an emigrant group/community to maintain self-identity and acquire acceptance in the place of emigration. Religion is one of the most powerful of value systems (ideologies) of social groups. In addition to its spiritual dimension, religion is a major force in social participation: it develops and at the same time sacralizes one's self-identity, and thus the religious bond is one of the strongest social ties.

All the three groups attempt to preserve close
association with the Kashmiri ethnic identity through the use of Kashmiri language, arts, calendar, iconography, dress and cuisine. Moreover the sects try to keep alive their memories of the past in Kashmir. The Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram, for instance, networks with the other Jammu based migrant religious groups like the 'Khirbhawani Temple Association' and 'Sharikapeeth Temple Association' with whom some of the sacred places of Kashmir are associated. The Ishwar Ashram has been maintaining links with its ashram in Srinagar, by holding at Ishber the annual yagna on their guru's birthday, every year without fail. Despite the threats of terrorism, a group of devotees travel to Srinagar and carry all the things needed for a yagna from Jammu. Moreover, the three sects interact among themselves on important occasions by participating in one another's major functions.

All the important activities in these sects are conducted in Kashmiri. In the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram the daily aarti is conducted in Kashmiri, and so are the lilas that are sung at the satsangs held at the Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram. At the Ishwar Ashram although the sacred recitations on the Sunday Puza is in Sanskrit, for other occasions, like the lectures, discourses, meetings, salutations as well as the informal chats among the devotees, Kashmiri is spoken. The same, of course, is true of the other two sects. This makes it difficult for a non
Kashmiri to interact and participate fully in the various activities of the sect.

The basic literature of the Govind - Kamlawati Ashram is the *lilas* composed by Swami Govind Kaul. These *lilas* expound the philosophy of this sect in mystic verses. These were originally composed in the Urdu script, which were transcribed under Kamlawatiji's supervision into Devnagari script, for a wider readership especially among women. Apart from these *lilas*, the group recites the *lilas* of Lal Ded, Shms Faqir, Parmanand etc., all of whom represent the rich mystic tradition of Kashmir.

In the Ishwar Ashram, the literature produced is vast, mainly comprising the translations, annotations and commentaries of the important texts of Kashmir Shaivism. After the migration, these books are being published by the Trust, in English and Hindi languages, to increase readership. The lectures of Lakshmanji, which he rendered in Kashmiri for the understanding of common people, have been recorded on audio cassettes and are sold by the trust of the sect.

Traditional Kashmiri music, classical or *SufianaKalam* as well as popular or *chakri*, occupy an important place in the 'Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram'. Every evening, after the *aarti*, youngsters gather to play musical instruments and sing Kashmiri devotional songs or *chakri*. On Sunday, the
chakri is performed till late in the evening. On the important festivals professional singers are invited to sing devotional songs throughout the day while on the Hur Atham the chakri and SufianaKalam goes on all through the night. The daily aarti of the group has been put to the tune of SufianaKalam. On the initiative of the trust, verses from traditional Kashmiri Shakta texts like the Panchastavi, Bhawani Sahaaranama etc. have also been put to SufianaKalam music and are sung by the women devotees of the ashram. These have been recorded on audio cassettes and are sold by the trust. On various festivals that are celebrated in the ashram, these cassettes (alongwith other cassettes of Kashmiri devotional songs) are played on the loudspeakers.

Nobody leaves the ashram without taking the prasad i.e. food in some form. At the 'Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram' usually some devotees get offerings which are distributed after the aarti as prasad. The offerings here are the Tahar or yellow rice with either charvan i.e. cooked lamb's kidney or liver or chaman i.e. home made cheese. At the 'Ishwar Ashram' Shirin i.e. sugar balls, is distributed as prasad together with the offerings that may be made by the devotees. These offerings like sweets or fruits are usually not home made and are not always offered. At the 'Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram' the prasad is in the form of roasted gram or channa which Kamlawati herself gives to all those who are present. Kehwa or Kashmiri tea made without milk, is also served
after the satsang as prasad and no one leaves the satsang without having it. Prasad can be distinguished from the Naveed. Naveed is a feast comprising a proper meal, consisting of cooked white rice and a variety of traditional vegetarian dishes, followed by a sweet preparation cooked in a typical Kashmiri way. Traditionally in Kashmir, Naveed was organised after a hawan or fire rites which were either organised at sacred sites like the Tulmula or at home on occasions like the thread ceremony etc.. Naveed is different from a saal or a general feast which is organised on auspicious or happy occasions like a marriage, birthday etc. The difference lies in the Naveed being associated with the purity (sudha) rather than auspicious (subha), on being strictly vegetarian (even in the 'Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram' which does not otherwise practice vegetarianism) and on being open to all irrespective of whether any personal or formal invitation has been sent or not. All the three sects hold feasts or Naveed on their important functions when outsiders are invited or expected to partake, irrespective of affiliation to other religious group. The food for the Naveed is cooked on a large fire place, made of brick and mud (wur) firewood burning as fuel, by the professional cooks (waza) who are Pandits. When the food is ready, small portions of each dish are taken out in separate vessels, Khos, and put in front of the statue or photograph or the guru herself. (In case of Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram,
Kamlawatiji is fed a little sample from each dish that is cooked. After it has been blessed, each sample of food is put back into the main vessel from where it is distributed as Naveed, to the people. Another significant thing about the Naveed is its quantity. While the prasad is usually distributed in small quantities, as a token, the Naveed is served to the full satisfaction (trapti) of the guest. The serving of the Naveed is another interesting aspect. Anyone can serve the Naveed, though usually the devotees take an initiative in this, being involved in the cooking, serving and eating of the Naveed.

The three sects follow their own yearly calendar, celebrating at least the birthday and the death anniversary of the guru. Not all these calendars are elaborate; the 'Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram' celebrates only three functions in a year, on a big scale. All the three relate to events associated strictly with the sect. The other two sects, however follow more elaborate calendars holding celebrations on the major Kashmiri Pandit festivals, also, apart from the shradha and birthday celebrations. The annual calendar of the three sects begins with the Pandit's new year day, Navreh.

It is interesting to note that members of all the three sect hold the view that the message of their religious sect, in each case, is universal truth for persons of all cultures and religions. The Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram seeks to spread
Gopinathji’s message of Universal Love and Brotherhood, with the aim of awakening higher level of consciousness among the masses, called the ‘Bhagwan Consciousness’, for the betterment of the whole world. ‘Kashmir Shaivism’ which is the focus for scholarship, practice and dissemination of Lakshmanji and the ‘Ishwar Ashram’ has attracted scholars and seekers from far and wide. The devotees of ‘Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram’ assert that their focus is on journey of the ‘atma’ to ‘anamidesh’ through the guru. In this respect they claim that the sect transcends time and space, bringing it in the realm of universality. Moreover, as a proof of universality, these three groups refer to the presence of Muslims and other Non-Hindus, especially the foreigners who are associated with them. Moreover, the emphasis on universality is coupled with a tolerance of other religions. Any criticism of other gods or religion is not encouraged. However, a close scrutiny reveals that these claims to universality are at best grounded in philosophy. Despite this claim, all the three sects mainly attract Kashmiri Pandits to a tradition which is tied to its language, mores, texts, leaders, sacred places and ethnicity with a basis in Kashmir.

The preservation of ethnic identity is a major concern among the emigrants, which provides the impetus for the activities and aspirations of the members of each of the three sects. From building activities which dot the urban
landscape of Jammu, and the re-establishment of their organisation in which they gather in large numbers, these sects attempt to preserve their individual identity by associating with the Kashmiri Pandit ethnicity through the use of Kashmiri language, art, food etc. Not only has this evolved as a strategy which has been useful in adapting to the new place, as well as in successfully maintaining group cohesion.

Hitherto, the strategy for preservation of this ethnic, religious identity has been successful. Language is for Indian's the main symbol of regional and ethnic identity (Williams 1988, 184). Kashmiri language as the medium of all ritual and communication in these sects, creates a major boundary that excludes participation by non-Kashmiris. In the context of migration, these religious sects, as the primary social groups outside the family that require and support the use of Kashmiri, maintain close ties with all aspects of Kashmiri ethnicity. This union of ethnic and religious elements in personal and group identity has a powerful emotional attraction for these immigrants.

However, the strategy that has been successful till now may create problems for the future generation in the long run. These problems could arise in any of the sects examined in this study. Some of these problems are:

1. What this Kashmiri ethnic identity, stressed by these
emigrants, will mean for the future generation, the children is unclear since the continuing relationship of regional linguistic identity to religious commitment remains to be decided. The children receive their secondary socialisation outside the home in contexts that make the preservation of both ethnic and religious identity difficult. Will they have to learn to be fluent in spoken and written Kashmiri (and Sanskrit). At the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram and Ishwar Ashram some of the publications of the sects have been translated into English and Hindi in order to encourage younger generation to read them. At the Ishwar Ashram, classes are held to teach Sanskrit, especially the transliterations of texts of chanting in rituals, for the school going children. At the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram young boys and girls are encouraged to participate in activities like debates and declamation where speaking in Kashmiri is encouraged. The members of Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram believe that if their group is not successful and attaining the allegiance, commitment and support of the parents of the first generation, little chance exists of reaching the children of future generation. These tentative steps however are not adequate to meet the problem in the long run.

2. Religious tradition is transmitted through various
media-rituals, teachings (oral and written form), and by attachment to a person. Cultural performances and instruction in ethnic music and arts are variations of the rituals that preserve in powerful form, elements of the religious tradition. Teaching in the form of translation and interpretation is another medium of transmission. Emphasis on intense personal devotion to a religious leader who provides a point of emotional bonding between the devotees of various generations is yet another medium. Each of these media has value and although the three sect under study have all the three, it is difficult to predict which of the three or what combination will be most effective as a strategy of transmission to the future generation in the long run.

3. The immigrant religious sect tend to be relatively stable, however, their members are always on the move, changing their status, commitment and beliefs. It is seen that generally immigrants are moving all the time: their length of residence is short in any location in the first few years. Another dimension to this movement is the passage of time which brings individuals and families to the new stages of lifecycle. Students become householders and children that are born need to be socialised. These changes in the socio-economic make up of the members affect the
goals of these religious sects.

4. Communalism has become a major issue in the Indian subcontinent in the post 1947 years, with an ongoing tussle between a secular democracy and a religious republic. This often creates internal friction so great as to cause conflict and tensions. For example, the demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992, led to a large scale destruction and desecration of Kashmiri Pandits temple in the valley. Similarly the displacement of Kashmiri Pandits from the valley in 1990 has been made a major political issue by the B.J.P. All this has the potential of making the problems of a religious community degenerate into the problem of communalism.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

In this study we have reviewed the religious life and practice among the emigrant Kashmiri Pandits through two domains - the institution of sects, and the context of diaspora.

At the time of emigration, the Bhagwan Gopinath Ashram was the most organised sect, having functioned under an experienced trust for over a period of twenty two years. In no time, the members of the sect, re-grouped and resumed their religious activities, celebrating their major festivals in the year of migration itself. In June 1991,
they set up an ashram in Jammu. The Ishwar Ashram however was faced with a two-fold problem. Externally the migration dislocated most of the devotees in 1990, while internally the members felt an emotional crisis when Lakshmanji passed away in 1991. The administration of the sect now passed into the hands of a formal Trust which helped the group to set up an ashram in Jammu on the property donated by a prominent devotee. The Govind Kaul - Kamlawati Ashram was the only sect which was well established at Jammu, at the time of migration. They had an ashram which was managed by a group of Jammu based devotees of the sect. This group had been active since 1979, especially Kamlawatiji absence, when she would be away during summers at Srinagar, where the bulk of her devotees lived. With the increase in the number of devotees, two more floors were added to the ashram.

This study shows that in the context of diaspora religion is carried on mainly by the religious sects. In contrast with the stability and fixed social routine in their native place in Kashmir, some emigrant Kashmiri Pandits have now become more active in the religious affairs. These people have been instrumental in the re-establishment of the sects by building ashrams and carrying on its religious traditions. Instead of focusing merely on the philosophy of these sects, we have provided ethnographic details of the rituals and practices in the everyday life of these emigrant Kashmiri Pandits. This work makes no great claims
for generality, nonetheless, it attempts to give an insight to the study of religion in diaspora and suggest some questions for future explorations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AARTI</td>
<td>Waving of a lighted lamp before the deity or guru's photograph or person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACHARYA</td>
<td>Spiritual teacher or scholar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRAHARAS</td>
<td>Land grants given to brahmins in ancient Kashmir.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMRIT</td>
<td>Nectar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANAMI DESH</td>
<td>Region of the merciful. In the Govind Kaul - Kamlawati sect, the topmost of the three levels of creation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANUGRIH (K)</td>
<td>Divine blessings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APARA</td>
<td>The objective energy of lord Shiva.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASHRAM</td>
<td>Hermitage: A place of penance, sadhana, education etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASANA</td>
<td>Seat: A steady posture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASHTADASBUZI (K)</td>
<td>Goddess with eighteen arms, reference here is to goddess Sharika at Hari Parbat, Srinagar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATAHAHARU (K)</td>
<td>Decorative ornament made of thin silver foil, worn in the ear by married Kashmiri Pandit women, as a sign of auspiciousness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>