

The Forgotten Genocide of Hindus in Kashmir: A Tragic Tale of Suffering and Silence

In the picturesque region of Kashmir, known for its breathtaking landscapes, snow-capped mountains, and pristine lakes, a dark chapter in history remains largely unnoticed. While political turmoil and violence have often made headlines, there is a forgotten tragedy that the world seems to have turned a blind eye to – the genocide of Hindus in Kashmir.

The Beautiful Kashmir We Knew

Once hailed as a peaceful paradise, Kashmir became a melting pot of cultures and religions. Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs coexisted harmoniously for centuries, sharing their traditions, festivals, and joys. The region's rich history and diverse heritage were a testament to the idea that people of different faiths could live in unity.

However, this harmony shattered in the late 1980s when religious extremism and militant insurgency infiltrated the peaceful valleys of Kashmir. The minority Hindu population became the target of unspeakable horrors, forced to flee their ancestral homes, or worse yet, face a grisly fate.

Hindus of Kashmir - A Genocide Forgotten

by Bansi Pandit (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

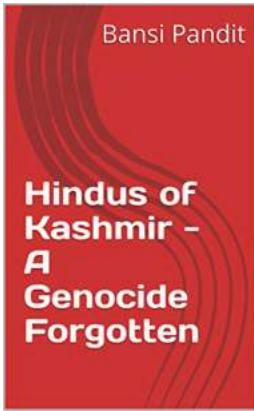
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The Escalating Violence: Unthinkable Atrocities

As the insurgency gained momentum, radical Islamic groups led a campaign of terror against the Kashmiri Hindus. These innocent civilians were subjected to targeted killings, rape, abduction, arson, and torture. The objective was clear: to cleanse the region of its Hindu population and establish an Islamic state.

Entire neighborhoods were set ablaze, forcing frightened families to flee overnight, leaving behind their belongings and cherished memories. Temples were vandalized and desecrated, as centuries-old symbols of cultural heritage were reduced to mere ruins.

The haunting memories of these atrocities are etched in the minds of the survivors, who still carry the scars of the past. Yet, their plight remains largely unrecognized by the international community, overshadowed by other conflicts that have dominated the global news agenda.

Silence and International Apathy: The Betrayal

One wonders why the world continues to ignore the suffering of the Kashmiri Hindus. Is it because their story doesn't fit neatly into the geopolitical narrative? Is

it because they are a minority whose voice is drowned out by the cacophony of competing interests?

Unfortunately, this indifference has allowed the cycle of violence to persist. The perpetrators roam free, and justice remains elusive for the thousands who lost their loved ones, their homes, and their sense of security. It is a betrayal of humanity's moral duty to stand up against injustice and protect the vulnerable.

The Struggle for Justice and Return

Despite the years of silence, the survivors of the Kashmiri Hindu genocide have not given up hope. They have formed organizations, both within India and in the diaspora, to raise awareness about their plight and seek justice for the crimes committed against them.

Efforts are being made to preserve the cultural and religious heritage that faced annihilation. Temples have been rebuilt, and initiatives have been taken to revive the festivals and traditions that were on the verge of extinction. These acts of resilience and defiance against erasure serve as a reminder of the strength of the human spirit.

Remembering and Acknowledging the Forgotten Genocide

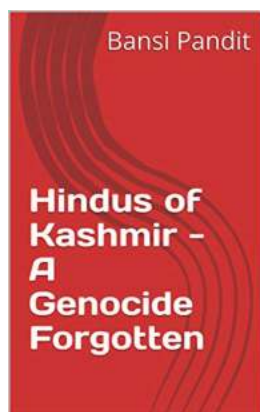
We owe it to the victims of the forgotten Kashmiri Hindu genocide to remember their stories, to acknowledge their suffering, and to demand justice. Their voices must not be silenced any longer, for their struggle is our struggle, a fight against hatred and violence.

Human rights organizations, international governments, and global citizens need to come together and shine a spotlight on the atrocities that occurred in Kashmir.

History should not repeat itself, and the world must learn from the mistakes of the past to prevent future atrocities.

By amplifying the voices of the Kashmiri Hindu survivors and demanding accountability for the crimes committed against them, we can contribute to the healing process and ensure that the memory of this forgotten genocide remains etched in our collective conscience.

The genocide of Hindus in Kashmir remains a tragic tale that has been overlooked for far too long. It is time to break the silence and shed light on the untold suffering of the Kashmiri Hindus. By acknowledging their struggle, demanding justice, and standing against the forces of hatred and violence, we can help rewrite the narrative of Kashmir and ensure a brighter, more inclusive future for all of its people.



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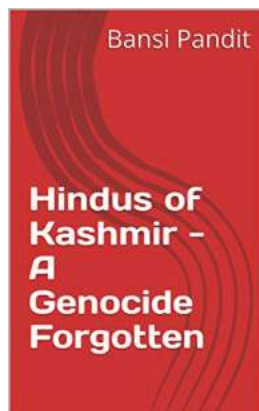
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The present-day Kashmir valley, according to Nilmat Purana, the sixth century Sanskrit Classic, was a large lake called Satisar surrounded by gigantic snow-peaked mountains. Geological findings confirm that the Valley was once

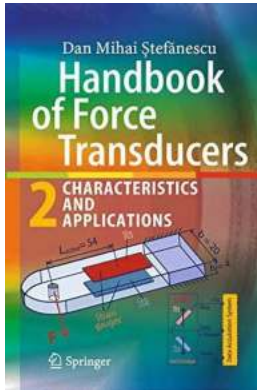
submerged underwater. There is a tradition that the lake was drained by an ascetic, named Kashyapa Rishi (sage) by cutting the gap in the hills at Baramulla (Varaha-mula). Hence the reclaimed land was called Kashyap Mar. In the people's language over a while, Kashyap Mar became 'Kashmir,' the present name of the Valley. The Hindus of Kashmir Valley, popularly known as Kashmiri Pandits, are the aboriginal people of the Valley. Their ancestors (Saraswat Brahmins) settled in the Valley over five thousand years ago after the original lake was drained and the land became habitable. The Valley inhabitants were principally Hindus until the 14th century when Islamists entered the Valley and began converting Hindus to Islam. Seven mass exoduses of Kashmiri Pandits from the Valley have occurred in the past 600 years. In the mid-1980s, the Islamist radicals, with the help of the local Muslim majority, began a militarized crusade to Islamize the Valley. Throughout the summer of 1989, armed radical Islamists intensified their jihad in Azadi's name (freedom) to Islamize the Valley. Explosive and inflammatory speeches broadcast from the loudspeakers installed on the mosques became frequent. Thousands of audio cassettes, carrying similar propaganda, were played all over the Valley to instill fear into the already frightened Kashmiri Pandit community. There were open calls for the establishment of an Islamic order. Various Islamist groups like Jamat-i-Islami and its militant wing Hizbul Mujahideen, women's wing Dukhtaran-i-Millat, Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen, Allah Tigers, Jamiatul-Ulemmi Islam, etc. proclaimed the objective of their struggle as Islamization of the Kashmir valley and its merger with Pakistan. The Islamic extremists launched a malicious campaign against the Kashmiri Pandits through sermons in mosques and via the local Urdu newspapers by publishing materials derogatory to Pandits and by denigrating their history, customs, and traditions, with an object of spreading hatred and disinformation about this ancient indigenous community amongst the ordinary Muslim masses in the Valley. On January 4, 1990, a local Urdu newspaper, Aftab, published a press release issued by Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, asking all Pandits to leave the Valley

immediately. Another ultimatum was given to the minority Pandit community through the local press on April 14, 1990, asking them to leave the Valley within two days or face death. This announcement was published in a popular local newspaper Alsafa, Srinagar, on April 14, 1990. These warnings were followed by Kalashnikov-wielding masked Jehadis carrying out military-type exercises openly. The elimination of the entire Pandit community was deemed necessary to rid the Valley of its un-Islamic elements. To achieve their goal, Islamists began a campaign of killing Hindus in cold blood. From late 1989 to mid-1990, over 1000 Hindus were massacred – a genocide forgotten. The Hindus' atrocities led to the exodus of the entire Hindu population from the Valley to Jammu and other cities in India. Over 350,000 Pandits became refugees in their own country and are still waiting to return to their homeland. The account given here is an abridged description of the ethnic cleansing and the subsequent exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir Valley in 1989-90, who became refugees in their own country. Not only has this human tragedy been forgotten by the world community, but a campaign of disinformation coupled with misguided and misinformed narrative has been perpetuated for years by Pakistan, Muslims, and the media. The author, whose family has been a victim of this human catastrophe, hopes that this text sets the record straight for future generations of the uprooted Pandits.



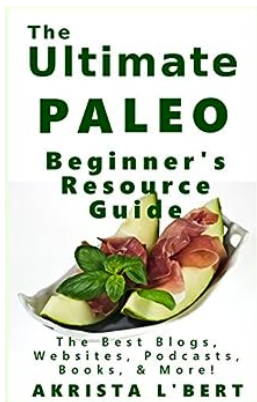
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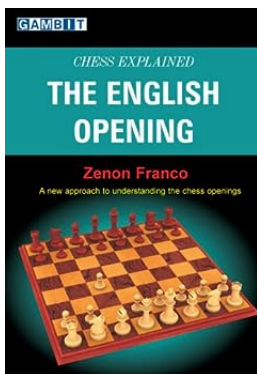
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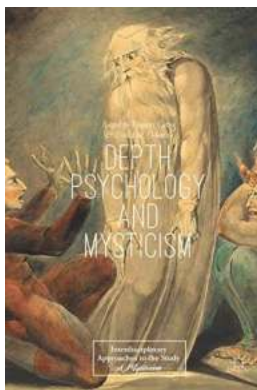
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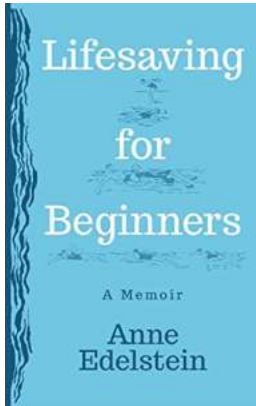
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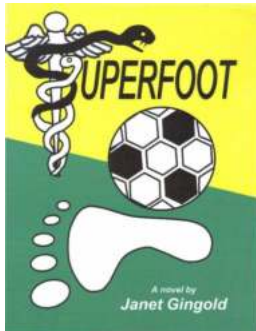
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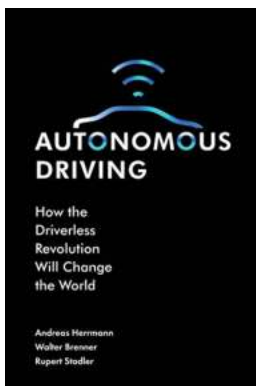
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