

## **Kashmir Towards Modernization: A Study of Changing Life Style (1857-1947)**

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**Abstract:** *Kashmir has a syncretic culture, where the indigenous culture assimilated civilisational influences, mainly Persian, Central Asian and Indian. European influence also gained prominence, particularly after the establishment of full-fledged British Residency in Kashmir in 1885. It facilitated visits of many European officials, professionals, tourists, missionaries and adventurers to the Valley. Consequently, various localities and lifestyles became prominent in the Valley. The European influence was clearly evident in the construction of official establishments, residences, and commercial establishments, which came up during this period, and catered to European tastes. Local elites within Kashmir also tried to imbibe these housing styles and lifestyles. The present paper attempts to explore these developments in detail, and describes the modernisation and transformation brought about by these contacts in everyday life in Kashmir, with special reference to housing, food and clothing.*

Each stage of the cultural history of Kashmir is marked by the innovations of profound importance which helped in accelerating the pace of its growth, leading to the formation of its present character. Several cultures which from time to time found their way to this land by way of political, religious, cultural and other contacts, contributed consciously or unconsciously to its evolution. Apart from retaining the basic features of their indigenous culture, the people of the Valley assimilated whatever appealed to them in the life and thought of the peoples with whom they came into contact. Therefore, the culture that at present exists in the Valley is a synthetic culture in which the deep imprint of Persian, Central Asian, Indian, and also European culture are markedly evident.

In 1846, a momentous era began in the history of Kashmir. It was the transfer of Jammu and Kashmir by the British East India Company to Maharaja Gulab Singh. It led to the

foundation of Jammu and Kashmir State. This historical event was also accompanied by transformations of profound importance in its cultural history. The English became the virtual masters of the state, especially since 1885 when a full-fledged Residency was imposed on Maharaja Pratap Singh, reducing the ruler to a mere figure-head. This opened the flood gates of the influx of Europeans in the Valley, a process that went on increasing day by day. Fascinated by its bounties of nature, attracted by its strategic importance and lured by her wealth, they entered the Valley as tourists, envoys, missionaries, fortune seekers and adventurers, apart from ruling the State through its Residents. Not only had the Europeans, the people of Kashmir also visited the European countries for trading and learning purposes. The mutual contact resulted in a profound impact on the culture of Kashmir. The European culture left its mark upon every sector of Kashmiri life and it is from this period that the history of the modernization of the Valley's culture begins. The Dogra period, therefore, was a transitional period of Western acculturation of Kashmir, through which it had to pass before reaching its present stage. The present study attempts to explore Kashmir's response to European culture with special reference to the changing life style in Kashmir.

Among the most crucial problems that immediately confronted the European visitor, who was either an adventurer or a missionary or a state guest, was the absence of suitable accommodation.<sup>1</sup> The problem was compounded by an increasing flow of Europeans into Kashmir, majority of whom belonged to the upper strata of society.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the primary requisite for ensuring their proper stay and utilizing their services was to arrange accommodation for them, preferably similar to ones to which they were accustomed. In this way, the housing of Kashmir was one of those primary sectors of Kashmir which felt the first hand need of remodelling its structure after the European fashion, at least

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<sup>1</sup> Bakshi, Shirin, *Kashmir's Response to European Culture*, M.Phil. thesis submitted to the Department of History, Kashmir University, 1986, pp. 6-7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, pp. 13-14.

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for that European population that visited the Valley every year in good numbers or stayed permanently, while holding various positions in the State administration. The European housing style, which was undoubtedly advanced, influenced the native affluent class who could afford constructing such expensive houses. In the introduction of these European style houses in Kashmir, the Europeans played a commendable role. They built hotels, clubs, churches, hospitals and house boats.<sup>3</sup> This way, there emerged a few quarters having European model houses which were exclusively inhabited by the Europeans.<sup>4</sup>

It is pertinent to mention that a typical Kashmiri house was built of unbaked bricks set in wooden frames of kail or cedar timber.<sup>5</sup> The houses of the masses had sloped thatched roofs whereas those of the elite were formed of layers of birch bark covered with a coating of soil where some greenery and flowers grew.<sup>6</sup> As late as 1875, the use of glass was unknown outside the palaces and mansions of the wealthy.<sup>7</sup> In 1890, Biscoe found only the Governor's house with glass windows.<sup>8</sup> The windows were merely wooden lattices pasted over with

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<sup>3</sup> Dermot, Norris; *Kashmir: The Switzerland of India*, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 42-43; Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir*, Chinari Publishing House, Srinagar, 1992, p. 38; Scott O, Connor, *The Charm of Kashmir*, p. 33; Younghusband, Francis, *Kashmir*, Edinburg, 1909, pp. 67-70.

<sup>4</sup> Newell, H. H; *Topre and Turban or Here and There in India*, London, New York, pp. 22-23; Norris Dermot, *Kashmir: The Switzerland of India*, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 42; Biscoe, Tyndale, *Autobiography*, London, 1951, p.53; Lawrence, op .cit; p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Lambert, Cowley; *A Trip to Kashmir and Ladkh*, London, 1877, p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 25; Bates, Major Charless Ellison, *A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kishtwar, Baederwah, Jammu, Naoshera, Poonch and the Valley of Krishanganga*, Calcutta, 1873, p. 353; Biscoe, *Autobiography*, p. 49; Knight, E. F; *Where Three Empires Meet*, p. 36; Younghusband, Francis, *Kashmir* p. 52; Petro Cokino, A; *Kashmir-Three Weeks in a Houseboat*, Bombay, 1920, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Lambert, Cowley; *A Trip to Kashmir and Ladkh*, London, 1877, p. 25; Doughty, Marion, *A Foot Through the Kashmir Valley*, p. 122; Bellew, H. G; *Kashmir and Kashgar*, London, 1875, p. 62.

<sup>8</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale, *Autobiography*, p. 49; *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p. 108.

transparent paper.<sup>9</sup> In all the houses, there was an absence of chimney and the smoke passed through a hole.<sup>10</sup> The condition of a Kashmiri house can be inferred from the following observations of Ernest Neve (1882) who made it in the context of the first hospital built by the State for the Christian missionaries in 1874. It is worthwhile to quote his observation:<sup>11</sup>

Although Nownes (a missionary doctor) had made a great reputation, the buildings were quite unsuitable for surgical work on a large scale. These were low, mud-walled, mud-floored, mud-roofed sheds, leaky in winter and dusty in summer . . . One so called ward was a large barn, with walls only 4ft high, the upper 2ft open all round to the upper winds of heaven. This was set any rate, better in summer than other narrow wards in which there was only ventilation when the doors were open. The string charpoys (bed-steads) were hopelessly insanitary, but most of the patients lay in their own garments upon mats on the floor. It is little wonder that with such surroundings there was a good deal of septicaemia.

The condition, however, changed during the last quarter of the nineteenth century with the construction of European style buildings both by the state and the Europeans themselves. While referring to the Christian Missionary Hospital built in 1888, Earnest Neve observed:<sup>12</sup>

The new buildings are most picturesque, with their towers of rather an Italian type broad verandas, red roofs and gables, they extend some hundreds of yards

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<sup>9</sup> Lambert, Cowley; *A Trip to Kashmir and Ladkh*, London, 1877, p. 25; Doughty, Marion, *A Foot Through the Kashmir Valley*, London, 1901; P. 122; Bates, *op.cit*, p.38; Younghusband, Francis, *op.cit*, p. 53; Neve, Earnest, *Beyond the Pirpanjal*, London, 1915, p. 241; Bellew, H. W; *op. cit.*; p . 62.

<sup>10</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale; *Autobiography*, London, 1951, p. 4; Wakefield, G. R. C, *Recollections-Fifty years in the Service of India*, Lahore, 1943, pp. 203-204.

<sup>11</sup> Neve, Earnest; *A Crusader in Kashmir*, London, 1928, p. 26.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p.90.

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along the hillside embroidered in the spring in almond blossom, or showing in the summer pretty glimpses of form and colour between the masses of varied foliage.

The Nedous Hotel, which was for the most part built after European fashion to cater to the needs of the European visitors, came up in 1900.<sup>13</sup> Writing about the European quarters at Gupkar in Srinagar, H. A. Newell (1894) writes<sup>14</sup>, “To the right of the winding lie a few modern bungalows; the majority are adaptations of old English cottage style”. Dermot Norris also refers to the European adaptation of housing construction in Kashmir. While making a mention of the European residential quarters at Gupkar road, he says, “the houses are nearly all half-timbered and are surrounded by attractive gardens, so that they appear extra-ordinary English. Indeed, one of the most striking features of Srinagar is the amazing mixture of scenes that are essentially English with others that are entirely oriental”.<sup>15</sup> As a matter of fact, a big area of Srinagar extending from Ram Munshi Bagh to Gupkar road to the present Residency road was a replica of European quarter with European type houses, Church, Residency, Club, shops, Post Office, a State Guest House designed in the European style and a hotel owned by a European, Nedous.<sup>16</sup> Gulmarg was also strikingly famous for European huts.<sup>17</sup> A number of dak bungalows were constructed by the state on the main routes of the Valley to facilitate the travel of European visitors.<sup>18</sup> These dak bungalows contained beds, chairs and tables.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Bakshi, Shirin, *Kashmir's Response to European Culture*, p. 27.

<sup>14</sup> Newell, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Norris, Dermot, *op.cit.*, pp. 42-43;

<sup>16</sup> Doughty, *op. cit.*, p. 133; Newell, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23; Norris, Dermot, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43; Biscoe, *Autobiography*, p. 53; Lawrence, *op.cit.*, p. 38; Younghusband, Francis, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70,

<sup>17</sup> Wakefield, *op.cit.*, pp. 222-223. Younghusband, Francis, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-102; Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir (1894-95), p. 61;

<sup>18</sup> Neve, Earnest, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22; Noris, Dermot, *op.cit.*, p. 78.

<sup>18</sup> Wazir, Tarachand, *Autobiography*, (unpublished) p. 104.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

Thus, European architecture had a profound influence on the style of construction in Kashmir. Slowly and steadily, old type houses got replaced by European type bungalows with corrugated tin sheets or shingle roofs.<sup>20</sup> The nature of the material for the construction of buildings also changed. Cement in different proportions began to be used with sand for construction purposes.<sup>21</sup> Raised plinths became the order of the day.<sup>22</sup> Chimneys were built for the outlet of smoke from the hearths.<sup>23</sup> The houses were constructed with arrangement of rooms for different purposes like drawing room, dining room, dressing room and bedroom, etc.<sup>24</sup>

Till the late 1930s, the houses did not contain any sanitation. Even Nedous Hotel did not boast of this amenity.<sup>25</sup> By the 1940s, only one or two houses had sanitary fitting including *Shergari*, the palace of Maharaja.<sup>26</sup> The insanitary conditions and the haphazard way of constructing houses were pronounced features of Kashmiri social life. Even the capital city, Srinagar was no better placed in this respect. It was in 1886 that the first Municipality Act was passed to overcome the problem of sanitation in Srinagar.<sup>27</sup> But, it was greatly hampered by conservative people. However, by 1922 some wise and intelligent citizens joined the Municipality and supported the President in his arduous task of tackling prejudices and age old customs.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the construction of colonies away from the densely populated areas, with sanitary and other amenities of life, a common feature of present day Kashmir, owes its introduction to the Europeans who built their quarters

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<sup>20</sup> Hassnain, F. M, *Heritage of Kashmir*, Srinagar, Gulshan Publication, 1980, p. 182.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Neve, Arthur, *Picturesque Kashmir*, London, 1900, p. 16; Milne, James, *The Road to Kashmir*, London, p. 109.

<sup>25</sup> Wazir, Tarachand, *Autobiography* (unpublished), pp. 330-331.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 178, Younghusband, *op. cit.*, pp. 44, 57-58; S. Sanyal, *The Boats and Boatmen of Kashmir*, p. 26.

<sup>27</sup> Ganga Nath Report, p. 309 vide Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar*, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale; *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, London, 1922, p. 151.

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around Srinagar. It is evident from the fact that various quarters that exist to the present day, were established by the Europeans away from the main city, with all the amenities to ensure a comfortable living.

The European impact on Kashmiri housing was also increasingly visible in the boat building of Kashmir, which provided, as it does today, shelter to a sizeable number of the Kashmiri population viz *Hanjis*. As a matter of fact houseboat is a European introduction. The first house boat was constructed by Rev. Kennard in 1888.<sup>29</sup> He built the famous two storied *Victory* in 1919.<sup>30</sup> Strangely enough, the first Kashmiri to construct house boat was a Kashmiri Pandit Naraindas, who felt that houseboat building was a better business than running a European store that he possessed, as Europeans had a fancy for it.<sup>31</sup> These European houseboats contained all the amenities of a Thames house boat. They were decorated in Western style and provided comfort. The house boat possessed a drawing room, a dressing room, a bedroom with comfortable beds and an upper deck.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, many new items were added to the household articles like sofa sets, arm chairs, and tables by upper class Kashmiris.<sup>33</sup> Also, coaches, writing desks, and table-lamps made their entry into the houses of the rich.<sup>34</sup> Door mats began to appear on the entrance<sup>35</sup> and the use of beds, bed sheets, curtains, towels and soap-cases was initiated. Till the 1920s, the use of electricity was unknown in Kashmir. It was Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925) who engaged the services of Lotbiniere, a Canadian, in 1904, to carry out a scheme of

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Sanyal, S.; *The Boats and Boatmen of Kashmir*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Milne, *The Roads of Kashmir*, p. 109; Neve, Arthur, *Picturesque Kashmir*, p. 116.

<sup>33</sup> Hassnain, F. M; *Heritage of Kashmir*, Srinagar, Gulshan Publication, 1980, p. 182.

<sup>34</sup> Khan, Muhammad Ishaq; *History of Srinagar*, p. 84.

<sup>35</sup> Hassnain, F. M, *Heritage of Kashmir*, Srinagar, Gulshan Publication, 1980, p. 182.

harnessing the waters of river Jehlum.<sup>36</sup> Younghusband gives a detailed description of the installation and transmission of electric current to Baramullah and Srinagar.<sup>37</sup>

The cultural influence of Europe is also marked in the food and drinks of Kashmir. It is visible not only in the introduction of new food items, but also in the methods of cooking and table manners. The European meat dishes could not compete with Kashmiri *wazwan* which has been famous all over the world for its taste, yet some new items like *double roti* (English bread), cakes, biscuits, pastries and rolls owe their introduction to the Europeans.<sup>38</sup> Though the Europeans could not introduce any dish more sumptuous than the Kashmiri dishes, but the preparation of the European dishes was quite contrary to those of the local ones. Whereas the Kashmiris deep roasted spicy food, the Europeans would generally take boiled food.<sup>39</sup> The Kashmiris who were accustomed to taking spicy and hot food did not imitate the European dishes, but they learnt how to cook these as the Europeans usually employed Kashmiri cooks.<sup>40</sup>

Europe, as already mentioned, also left a deep impact on the mode of taking meals. The Europeans had a fixed routine for taking meals such as bed tea, breakfast, lunch and dinner. Unlike Kashmiris, they ate at the dining table and used spoons, forks, knives and napkins. This style of taking meals influenced the well-to-do natives. Tarachand Wazir, who visited England in 1920 and was unaware of their table manners, wrote with avowed boldness that he had to cut a sorry figure when he was asked to dine at a table.<sup>41</sup> Tarachand wrote, “the very first day when I went to sit on the dinner table in the common dining hall of the ship; I cut a sorry figure by my clumsy way of handling the fork and knife . . . I

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<sup>36</sup> Younghusband, Francis, op.cit, pp. 222-223; Neve, Earnest, *Beyond the Pirpanjal*, p. 43; Report on the Municipal Administration of Srinagar, 1920-1921, p. 7

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Doughty, *op. cit*, p. 56; It is also based on my personal interviews with Kashmiri cooks who had served the British.

<sup>39</sup> Based on interviews with Kashmiri cooks who had served the British.

<sup>40</sup> Lambert, op.cit, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Wazir, Tarachand ; *Autobiography* (unpublished), p. 151.



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became an adept in the art of handling the fork and knife. Rev. Burger introduced me to the etiquette of the table so much so that I could give points to fellow diners in table etiquette by the time we came to the end of the voyage on or about the 19th March, 1921". Some age old customs and practices hindered the process of imitating the process of newly introduced table manners.<sup>42</sup> Writing about a feast honoured by the Maharaja Ranbir Singh in the honour of Bellew (1873-74) the latter says, "The dinner was served entirely after our European fashion excepting only the absence of our host from the head of his own table in difference to an absurd prejudice. The natives of India ultimately adhered to this unjustifiable refusal to eat with us. It is a great stumbling block in the way of that social intercourse which we strive to cultivate with our native fellow subjects and will never be removed until the native Princes and their sons to be educated in English colleges where they may learn how to associate with us on equal terms".<sup>43</sup> Biscoe also observed the excessive obsession of Kashmiri Hindu boys with regard to physical contamination<sup>44</sup>; he says that they would not take a meal over which the shadow of a non-Brahman would fall.<sup>45</sup> With the passage of time the modern educated Brahman boys, no doubt, sloughed off this practice.<sup>46</sup>

Potable water supply was introduced in the capital city in 1900.<sup>47</sup> Till then people drank river water. Drinking was not unknown in Kashmir. But, as a result of the European impact, new varieties of fruits were grown and wine was manufactured in Kashmir under the patronage of the State.<sup>48</sup> We are told that the State vineyards and distillery were put

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<sup>42</sup> Bakshi, Shirin; *op.cit.*, pp. 88 and 55.

<sup>43</sup> Bellew, H. W, *op.cit.*, pp. 75 -76.

<sup>44</sup> Bakshi, Shirin; *op.cit.*, pp. 55 and 38; Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, pp. 265-266.

<sup>45</sup> Bakshi, Shirin; *op.cit.*, pp. 55

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55 and 88.

<sup>47</sup> Neve, Earnest; *Beyond the Pirpanjal*, pp. 271-309.

<sup>48</sup> Younghusband, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197; Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir (1894-95), p. 134; Doughty, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

under the charge of Italian and French experts.<sup>49</sup> As a result new kinds of wines like Barsac, Medor, red and white wine and apple brandy were produced.<sup>50</sup> Earlier there were no wine shops in the city, but with the opening of the State Distillery in Srinagar during Ranbir Singh's time, several wine shops were established.<sup>51</sup> Liquor was sold to the public by licensed vendors at rates fixed by the *darbar* (Government).<sup>52</sup> The fact that people started drinking in large numbers is borne out by the resolutions passed by the Srinagar Municipality and *Anjumans* and *Sabhas* (religious organisations) from time to time, who expressed concern at growing intemperance.<sup>53</sup> Even a Temperance Society came into being, though it was short-lived.<sup>54</sup>

The European dress, which generally comprised of a coat, waist-coat, pant, shirt with collar, tie and patent leather shoes, had immense influence on the dress code of Kashmiris.<sup>55</sup> The traditional male dress of the Kashmiris was *pheran* (a long loose garment), *qamiz pajama*, wooden clogs called *khraiv*, local leather shoes and straw sandals called *pulhur*.<sup>56</sup> With the passage of time, the educated class of the society took fancy to the European dress and adopted it in full. It was not uncommon to see Kashmiris wearing a coat-pant, tie, etc., after the European fashion.<sup>57</sup> Kashmiri tailors enthusiastically imitated European cuts and fashions.<sup>58</sup> The imitation of the European dresses by the Kashmiri tailors have been lauded by the Europeans.<sup>59</sup> Apart from adopting

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<sup>49</sup> Newell, *op. cit.*, p. 22; Doughty, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid; Newell, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>51</sup> Lawrence, *op. cit.*; p. 281; Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p. 127.

<sup>52</sup> Administration Report of J&K (1894-1895), p. 134.

<sup>53</sup> *Ranbir*, Sep; 21, 1936; June 3, 1940, vide Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar*, p. 93.

<sup>54</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, London, p. 127.

<sup>55</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, London, pp. 142-143; Wazir Tarachand, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-118.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Muhammad Ramzan Bhat R/o Audsoo, Anantnag, (age-95 years), Feb., 2015.

<sup>57</sup> Biscoe, Tyndale, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, pp. 142-143.

<sup>58</sup> Winburne, T. R; *Holidays in the Happy Vally: With Pen and Pencil*, London, 1907, p. 3; Lambert, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

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European dresses, the local people also used different types of cloth imported from Europe.<sup>60</sup>

The dress of the women folk, especially the educated section, also revealed new changes. Biscoe discarded Kashmiri dress for girls and put them in uniforms by asking them to wear the clothes *Raj putane* which were flowing silken garments of rich beauty without “the primitive savagery of the Kashmiri”.<sup>61</sup> It was in the thirties of the twentieth century that Pandit Kashyap Bandhu, a great social reformer crusaded against the use of *pheran*.<sup>62</sup> The change of outlook was the result of modern education and opening up of the Valley to the Western influence. As a result of Kashap Bandhu’s efforts, the *pheran* disappeared among many Pandit families.<sup>63</sup> The *purdha* (veil), which was observed by upper class Muslim women, was also discarded by many of them as we find many women leaders belonging to the upper class participating in the freedom struggle.<sup>64</sup> Even those who did not part with the *purdha* were not immune to European influences. Fashionable *burqa* (veil) made of silk was worn as a challenge against the *purdha* system.<sup>65</sup> Thus, imperceptible changes were taking place in the dress code of the women folk also.

Among the most important aspects of life which got highly enriched by the Western influence were those related to amusement and recreation. Many new means of entertainment were introduced in Kashmir. Games like football, volleyball, cricket, hockey, boxing, golf, polo, tennis,

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<sup>60</sup> “Cotton piece-goods were the chief imports into Kashmir. Most are the products of Manchester and are worn by the Srinagar and other towns peoples”, Younghusband, *op. cit.*, 219.

<sup>61</sup> Sinclair, Gordon, *Khabir Carvan through Kashmir, Waziristan, Afghanistan, Baluchistan and Northern India*, London, pp. 57-58.

<sup>62</sup> Bazaz, P. N; *Daughters of Vitasta*, p. 250.

<sup>63</sup> Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar*, p. 87; *Ranbir*, Dec., 19, 1932.

<sup>64</sup> *The Khidmat*, Feb., 11, 1948; Bazaz, P. N; *Daughters of Vitasta*, p. 243.

<sup>65</sup> *Baurqa* was a veil worn by the Muslim women to observe *purdha*; Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar*, p. 90.

regatta and skiing were introduced by the Europeans.<sup>66</sup> These games formed an integral part of the curriculum of the Christian missionary schools.<sup>67</sup> With the passage of time they became very popular among the people. Apart from the matches played by the schools, we also find matches organised by the State as public entertainment.<sup>68</sup> For instance, Maharaja Hari Singh organised various football matches in the newly opened playgrounds where hundreds of spectators witnessed the game.<sup>69</sup> Football, thus, became the *hashish* of the city people.<sup>70</sup> There were golf clubs and polo grounds both in Srinagar and at Gulmarg.<sup>71</sup> Swimming and boating received a fresh fillip at the hands of the Europeans who organised competitions in these.<sup>72</sup> Initially, Hindus showed reluctance in participating in these matches, but with the passage of time they discarded the old notions opposed to the playing of such games.<sup>73</sup>

Clubs, which provided another facility of recreation of the rich class, were also an European legacy. It was during this period that many clubs like the Golf Club, Hari Singh Club and Amar Singh Club, emerged in Srinagar.<sup>74</sup> Amar Singh, the father of the last Maharaja, Hari Singh was very fond of cricket. Therefore, Amar Singh Club, which was a cricket ground was named after him.<sup>75</sup> A large number of people in Srinagar would come to watch Maharaja Hari Singh while playing polo.<sup>76</sup> The schools in the city began to organise various debates and lectures. Extracurricular activities such as

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<sup>66</sup> *Administrative Report of Jammu and Kashmir (1901-1904)*, p. 554; *Administration Report of J&K (1913-1914)*, p. 108; Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, pp. 280, pp. 296-297.

<sup>67</sup> Bakshi, Shirin, *op.cit.*, pp. 53.

<sup>68</sup> *The Ranbir*, Sep., 16, 1924, Sep., 30, 1924; Sep., 07, 1926; Aug., 30, 1927; Sep., 20, 1927.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *History of Srinagar*, p. 45.

<sup>71</sup> Bakshi, Shirin, *op.cit.*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 88 and 102.

<sup>74</sup> Scott O, Connor; *op.cit.*, p. 34; Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *op.cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>75</sup> Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *op.cit.*, p. 95.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

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picnics and scouting were also encouraged.<sup>77</sup> During the times of Maharaja Pratap Singh and Maharaja Hari Singh, parks were laid out in the city of Srinagar where the people spent their leisure time.<sup>78</sup> Some of the affluent families in Srinagar also possessed radio sets in the late nineteen thirties.<sup>79</sup> But the most important addition to the existing avenues of amusement and recreation was the introduction of the theatre. By 1946 three cinema halls came up in Srinagar.<sup>80</sup> Various *Anjumans* and *Sabhas* are said to have expressed their concern at the growing popularity of the cinema among the public.<sup>81</sup> Resolutions were passed against the new means of entertainment.<sup>82</sup> The local press also referred to what they termed “moral degradation” caused by the cinema.<sup>83</sup>

The above discussion leads us to the conclusion that even if the nature of the State was largely feudal and as such it lagged behind in overall modernization in comparison to the Princely States of Mysore and Baroda, yet the Valley, particularly the capital city of Srinagar witnessed a considerable modernization. The British intervention, especially since 1885, when a full-fledged Residency was established in Kashmir, gave a fillip to the process of modernization and thereby transformed the style of housing, food, dress and amusements along Western lines.

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Bakshi, Shirin; *op.cit.*, pp. 53.

<sup>79</sup> *Census of India*, 1931, p. 141.

<sup>80</sup> Tarachand, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>81</sup> Based on an interview with a contemporary senior citizen.

<sup>82</sup> Khan, Muhammad Ishaq, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>83</sup> *The Ranbir*, Sep. 21, 1936.