

Lessons from Schools: Transition of Modern Education and its Technology in Kashmir (1846-1947)

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Abstract:

Education lies at the heart of the social reproductive process as well as material productive process, and remains one of the most prized and contested terrains of social life. Yet, the importance of education lies in not only that it serves, through its various agencies, to ensure material production and to reproduce equilibrium in societies, but also defines the boundaries of 'knowledge' and the 'content of truth'. The focus of this paper is on the transition of traditional education to modern education in the modern history of Kashmir, the challenges to the traditional educational system and the responses to perceived threats, all interwoven in the period from the 1850s to the 1940s. By using archival documents, personal memoirs, and other records of the period, this paper intends to understand this transformation.

Keywords: *Madrassas, Pathshalas, Education, Curriculum, Christian Missionaries, Colonial intervention.*

I. Introduction:

Education has its politics, but like pottery or cooking or any other production, it also presumes a technology which needs planned manipulation of tools and raw materials, attention to details of the productive process and reflection on its progress. The Technology of education consists, among other things, of the teacher, the space, the text, the teaching strategy and the rituals. It is based on a philosophy which, whether articulated or not, informs every little detail of what transpires in the school space. Every age and social formation has its philosophy and technology of education. In fact these matters are central to the history of education, and critical to anyone interested in educational reform. The challenge that appeared in Kashmir was similar to what other societies in the world faced somewhere in 19th century from the increasing power of the nation-state or the colonial state. In Kashmir until second half of the 19th century, decisions on what constituted knowledge, what were the best techniques of its diffusion and what was essential for a society to do with its children in order to reproduce itself were not regarded as the monopoly of one agency. Instead, in Kashmir education being traditional in character offered patronage to a variety of institutions and systems of teaching; of political coexistence and tolerance between them; and of discursive assumption of the legitimacy of multifarious learning practices.¹ One very important striking feature of this educational system was that it was dominated by elite class, and was almost exclusively male oriented. Religion and reverence for antiquity had been the dominant influences in shaping the course of education.² Education, as whole was interlinked with the structures and functions of caste groups, religious sects, and localities

From a parallel situation, a particular kind of transformation unfolded practically in the whole world. Across much of the Europe, the state assumed the role of a monopolistic agency that controlled the definition and dissemination of knowledge, rendering local truths, ways of life, cosmologies, epistemologies, logics and ethics progressively marginal. The colonial state did much the same as the new modern State. Examining the historical shift in France, it becomes evident that the change documented by Weber for the half century before 1914 was indeed as profound as any change wrought by the colonial state: "Historical Change rushing in headlong carried Maizieres not from one historical period to another, but into new age of mankind- an altogether different form of civilization".³

In Kashmir both the communities of Hindus and Muslims wanted their children to learn about their religion and culture so that they would be true heirs of the religion and culture of their ancestors. Education was imparted to local Hindu and Muslim boys by *pundits* and *movlis* in *pathshalas* and *madrassas* respectively. Not surprisingly, therefore, the goals, curriculum, organisation, and practises of education all expressed religious concerns. The education was also meant to build a moral society. That is why books like *Karima Nam'iHaq*,

¹ Shamla Mufti, Myeān Kath: *A Kashmiri Womens's Struggle for Empowerment(1925-2008)*, translated , Shafi Shauq, Srinagar, K.P.H, p.39.

² Nita Kumar, *Lessons from Schools: The History of Education in Banaras* , New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000, for a detailed discussion of this perspective, p.14.

³ Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Standford: Standford University Press, 1976, ix.

Gulistan Bostan, and *Pand Nama* were always taught to the upper classes, along with religious lessons.⁴ In the pathshalas the study of four *Vedas*, *vyakaran* (grammar), *mimasas*(system of philosophy), *nyay* (logic), *dharamshastras* and *mantarshastra*, formed the courses of study.⁵

Teaching was considered a specialized activity. It was something rather different from what came to be recognized as a means of employment or ‘service’ towards the middle of nineteenth century. The teacher was not the ‘meek subordinate of administrative officers’, as Krishna Kumar calls him, of the colonial times⁶. As a sole authority on the selection of the knowledge, the teacher himself shaped the curriculum. He decided on his own or on the basis of convention what to teach and how to teach. Often, the teacher was just the most religious and knowledgeable person in the community who was allowed to do religious tasks. Some of these jobs were to lead prayers, oversee weddings, circumcisions, funerals, trials, and so on.⁷ Education by and large discussed religion, morality, and language. Many of the myths and superstitions that made up the intellectual world were taught to students by the less experienced teachers.⁸

The whole process of learning was a teacher-dominated one, with memory preceding understanding. As William D. Arnold, who was appointed Director of Public instruction in Punjab in 1858, in his second report found that pupils in indigenous schools were capable of reading but unable to drive any meaning out of it.⁹ A similar picture emerges out from Kashmir, if a common man here was educated at all he at best was able to read religious texts without grasping their precise contents.¹⁰ It seems that the prevailing perceptions of the reading were that of a process of sounding out the text without relating to it. The minds of the students thus were ‘passive receptacles’ as Helen M. Jewell in his study on the education of early Modern England terms them. The education that was desirable was pre censored and the ‘wholesome’ knowledge was selected from the drip feed.¹¹ The traditional society was predominately an illiterate society, with only a relatively small portion of the educated population belonging to the religious elite, who, due to custom and the existing economic, social, and political atmosphere, had monopolised education. The ecclesiastical elite viewed education primarily as a means to an end— making money and maintaining their hereditary social distinctions and gentility—while the common folk looked on it as *ach gash* (light of the eyes). Though the term *ach gash* signifies the ability to discriminate between right and wrong; however, in the popular phraseology of Kashmir it refers to an ability to read and write especially for keeping domestic accounts, reading and writing of applications or letters and monitoring the frauds committed by various intermediaries against the illiterate masses.¹²

Education was not the part of the State responsibility and the State did not invest in education as such. No doubt, the State endowed land grants to those who imparted education to the children, but these were out of pure philanthropy.¹³ The economic support for the teacher came from various sources but presumably a straight explicit cash nexus had not yet got established. The majority of the teachers, therefore, were supported by local community and the teachers themselves charged fee over the students. Being entirely a private affair, both the lower schools (*maktabs*) and higher schools (*madrassas*) were attached to the mosques and *Khanqahas*.¹⁴ The social composition of the schools, particularly of the madrasas, was the function of both location and wealth. Families who lived in the cities could easily afford the luxury of education than the agrarian population.¹⁵ This

⁴ Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *The blazing Chinar: Autobiography*, Tr. M. Amin, Srinagar, Gulshan Books, 2016, p.28.

⁵ Amar Singh Chohan, *Development of Education in Jammu and Kashmir State: 1846-1947*, New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1998, p.2.

⁶ Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education: A study of colonialist and nationalist ideas*, Sage publication, 2005 New Delhi, p.76.

⁷ Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *The blazing Chinar Autobiography*, p.28.

⁸ Walter Roper Lawrence, *The valley of Kashmir*, Srinagar, Chinar Publications, 1992, pp.286,293-294.

⁹ Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education: A study of colonialist and nationalist ideas*, Sage publication, 2005 New delhi, p.53.

¹⁰ C.E .Tyandale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, London, Seeley Service & Co Limited, 1925, p253

¹¹ Helen M. Jewell, *Education in Early Modern England*, p.14.

¹² Shirin Bakshi, *Social Change in Kashmir with Special Reference to the European Impact(1846-1947)*, unpublished thesis, Department of history, University of Kashmir, p.128.

¹³ During the period of the Muslims such grants were known as madad-i-ma’ash grants, the Sikhs and the Dogras named them as Dharmath. For details about Dharmath grants on the eve of foundation of the Jammu and Kashmir State see, *Dastur- ul-Amal- Kashmir*, (Anonymous), pp.189-208.

¹⁴ G.M.D Sufi, *Kashir: A History of Kashmir*, II, Lahore, University of Punjab, 1949 p. 349. C. E.Tyandale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.253.

¹⁵ The madrassas, it should be noted were mainly located in Srinagar. For instance, in 1872, there were five madrassas and all of them were located in Srinagar, For Details see, Muhammad Yusuf Ganai, *Kashmiris Struggle for Independence(1931-1939)*, Srinagar, Gulshan Books, 2003, p.66.

Education as a whole, favoured the male gender and the girls were educationally a disadvantaged group. There were few *maktabs* or *madrassa* for girls and a few *ulema* taught their daughters to read the Quran.¹⁶ So it was no surprise that the majority of Muslim women in Kashmir didn't even know how to pray, let alone to have a fundamental understanding of the religion that pre-modern schooling centred around.¹⁷

The traditional education saw basic training in the rudiments of the faith as the essential for souls of the individual students. This training in basic tenets of the religion, however, did not necessarily extend to literacy, and could remain compartmentalised, so that an individual learned very little from religion to apply to other aspects of experience. In the *maktab*, the student learned how to read the Quran and get some basic training in religious rituals, such as how to lead the prayers in the village mosques.¹⁸ However, at the *madrassa* level, theology and law, mostly *tafsir* (commentaries on the Quran), the Hadith (quotes from the Prophet), the *Fiqh* (the study of religious laws and customs), the language (mostly Arabic and Persian), grammar and syntax (*sarfva Nahv*), and worldly science mostly logic (*mantaq*), were taught. Books contained morals lessons through stories like *Gulistan Bostan*. The 'masnavi' of Maulana Rumi and the poetry of great Persian poets like Hafiz, Saidi, and Jami also formed part of school curriculum.¹⁹ It seems that the kind of religious and moral teachings of the time certainly expressed a just and humanistic way of life.

Early Dogra State and Education

On 16 March 1846, the treaty of Amritsar²⁰ was signed between the British East India Company and Gulab Singh and the different territories stripped by the English from the Sikh kingdom of Punjab were drawn together to bring into existence the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir.²¹ Unlike the Princely rulers of Mysore and Baroda, who set up institutions of higher education, the early Dogra rulers placed at the apex of the newly established State of Jammu and Kashmir, followed the policy of non-intervention in educational matters.²² Gulab Singh (1846-57), the first Dogra Maharaja, was too busy in consolidating his territories to pay any attention to educational status of his subjects and no noteworthy progress in the field of education is noticed in his reign.²³

The son and successor of Gulab Singh, Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-85) was the first to take an active interest in education. He was gifted with a scholarly bent of mind and was a munificent patron of education and literature. It appears that his personal interest in the progress of education went beyond the boundaries of the State. He is supposed to have donated generously to Sanskrit institutions in Banaras, and established a big *Pathshala* at Kashi for which all expenses were borne by him.²⁴ The educational system that prevailed under his rule remained governed by indigenous functional concerns, although Ranbir Singh encouraged religious education through a study of classical languages—Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. But in accordance with the religious tenor of his rule, Ranbir Singh's ultimate goal was to disseminate classical Hindu learning among his Dogra subjects.²⁵

Thus, the shrine consecrated to the worship of Rama or Ragunatha, known as Ragunath Temple became a centre of extensive classical Sanskrit learning, where hundreds of Brahmin pupils were trained in various branches of Sanskrit scholarship.²⁶ The Temple institution also had a translation department where, with the aid of *moulvis* (Muslim priests), Arabic and Persian philosophical and other works were translated into Sanskrit, and a staff of Pandits translated the entire spectrum of Dharamashastras into Hindi and Dogri.²⁷ Ranbir Singh revitalized old system of education on the pattern of madrasa and *Pathshala*. *Pathshalas* for

¹⁶ Matin- Uz-Zaman Khan, *Census of India, 1911, Vol. XX, Kashmir Part-I*, Lucknow : Nuwul Kishore Press, 1912, p.213.

¹⁷ Shamla Mufti, Myeān Kath: *A Kashmiri Womens's Struggle for Empowerment (1925-2008)*, p 39.

¹⁸ Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar Autobiography*, p.28.

¹⁹ Charles Girdlestone, *Memorandum on Cashmere and Adjacent Territories*, Calcutta, Foreign Department Press, 1874, See also Shamla Mufti, *Myeān Kath: A Kashmiri Womens's Struggle for Empowerment (1925-2008)*, Pp. 80-81

²⁰ For details of the Treaty of Amritsar See, Km Pannikar, *Gulab Singh- 1792-1858- founder of Kashmir*, Martin Hopkinson Limited, London, 1930, p.112.

²¹ M.L Kapur, *Kashmir Sold and snatched*, Srinagar, Jay Kay Books, 2014, p15

²² For details regarding the nature of Dogra State, See Muhammad Yusuf. Ganai, *Kashmir's Struggle for Independence*, Srinagar, Gulshan Books, Pp.7-19.

²³ Chitrlekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging" Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*, New Delhi, Permanent Black, 2003, p.172.

²⁴ Sukhdev Singh Charak, *Life and times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh*, Jammu, Jay Kay book House, p.240.

²⁵ Sufi, *Kashir*, vol. II, p.791.

²⁶ Sufi, *Kashir*, vol. II, p.790.

²⁷ Sufi, *Kashir*, vol. II, p.790

learning of Sanskrit, Hindi scriptures and law, grammar, logic, science and medicine were established at Jammu and Uttarbehani, on the principles of ancient *mathas* and *ashrams*. These institutions were residential and also admitted day students and were maintained by donation from the Maharaja, the ruling family and well-to-do-citizens.²⁸ Education at all levels was made free and stipends in the shape of free books and free boarding and lodging were made available to all the students. For the teaching of Hindi and Sanskrit Ranbir Singh founded a well-equipped *Pathshala* in Jammu in 1857, known as Ranbir Ragunath *Pathshala*, in the premises of Ragunath temple Jammu. It appears that the teaching of Sanskrit was put on a special footing and in addition to the best available local talent the Maharaja went to India personally to request erudite Pandits to man his *Pathshala*.²⁹ As centres of high Hindu learning these pathshalas were thrown open to students from all over India, like Punjab, Tran-Sutlej territory and other parts.³⁰ Syllabi taught in those *Pathshalas* was comprehensive and included all types of Indological studies. In this regard these institutions were remarkably different from the traditional Pathshalas. In addition to four *Vedas*, *vyakaran* (grammar), and *shastras*, the subjects included mathematics, astrology, demonstrative science, and occult science. Both the *mimamsa* (system of philosophy), *nyay* (logic), *sankh* and *yog*, *vedant*, *dharamshastras* and *mantarshastra*, *gyotish* and *chikista* were included in the *shastric* studies.³¹

Two institutions of higher learning were also established one in Jammu and one in Srinagar with 400 and 500 scholars on rolls respectively. These institutions were affiliated to the newly established university in Punjab. The courses of study included English, *shastris* or Sanskrit, law, vernaculars, Persian and medicine, both *ayurvedic* and *unani* system.³² Maharaja Ranbir Singh established the first printing press in the State. It was known as Vidya Vilas Press and was located at Jammu. Maharaja also founded a Translation Bureau for the translation of books from various languages.³³ The idea behind it was to prepare readymade books for the students reading in various educational institutions which he opened in the State. In this way books, on geography, geology, history and other subjects were translated into Hindi and Sanskrit. Arabic books were translated in to Hindi as also in Persian. Many Sanskrit texts in *Sharda* script were translated in to *devangri* script.³⁴

My lengthy treatment of education under Ranbir Singh underscores two key points. One education, as envisaged by Ranbir Singh, was to be the sole preserve of the ruling class and religious elite. Second, because of his attachment towards traditional education, Ranbir Singh did not pay much attention towards modern education. From the available sources on the period, it appears that modern education did not exist in Kashmir till the advent of the European Christian Missionaries.³⁵

Christian Missionaries and the Spread of Modern /Western Education

It was because of the efforts of the Christian missionaries that education system in Kashmir began to be reorganized on the pattern of the West. These missionaries initially faced stiff opposition from the people as well as the State. But this official antagonism encountered by them was slowly and gradually overcome by a combination of tact, good will and determination.³⁶ In the long run the years of useful services rendered by the medical missionaries in a land where pestilence was very common, made them popular among the people and undermined the hostility of the State authorities.³⁷ By and large the beneficial results rendered by the missionaries were clear even to the most illiterate. The proposals of the Christian Missionaries to establish schools in Kashmir were approved by the C.M.S in London. The arrival of the Rev. J Hinton Knowles in 1880, therefore, really marked the foundation of the school on the hospital premises in Srinagar.³⁸ Conscious of how precarious was the foot hold that they had gained for the first 12 years, the missionaries sought to run the school

²⁸ Sukhdev Singh Charak, *Life and Times of Maharaja Ranbir Singh*, p.240.

²⁹ S.L. Seru, *History and Growth of Education in (Jammu and Kashmir) 1872 A.D to 1973 A.D*, p34.

³⁰ Amar Singh Chohan, *Development of Education in Jammu and Kashmir State: 1846-1947*, New Delhi, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1998, p2.

³¹ Chohan, *Development of Education in Jammu and Kashmir State: 1846-1947*, p.4.

³² Report Majmui (Urdu), Government of Jammu and Kashmir State, 1882-83.

³³ Sl Seru, *History and Growth of Education in (Jammu and Kashmir) 1872 A.D to 1973 A.D*, Srinagar, Ali Mohammad & Sons, p.33.

³⁴ Stein quoted in S. L. Seru, *History and Growth of Education in (Jammu and Kashmir) 1872 A.D to 1973 A.D*, p.33.

³⁵ Brain Holmes edited, *Education Policy and The Mission Schools: Case Studies of the British Empire*, London, Routledge, 1967, p.152.

³⁶ Brain Holmes, *Education Policy and The Mission Schools: Case Studies of the British Empire*, p 158

³⁷ E.D. Tyndale Biscoe, *Fifty Years Against the Stream: The Story of School in Kashmir 1880-1930*, Mysore, Wesleyan Mission Press, 1930, p 1.

³⁸ C.E. Tyndale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p 260.

on lines that would give no offence to the people and local authorities. From 1880 to 1883 it was under the Reverend J. S. Doxey and from 1883 to 1894 under Hinton Knowles its founder. In 1890, he was joined by C. Tyndale Biscoe who had the great and congenial task for helping the former to develop the school in Srinagar.³⁹ In 1894, Knowles passed the responsibility of the school to Biscoe who remained its Principal and supervised its branches for the next fifty years.⁴⁰ Every year the missionary school turned out men gifted with an entirely novel outlook on life. Later these young men spread far and wide in the country as teachers, officials, traders, etc. The products of the Mission school were talking a distinct language and acting in a novel, unorthodox and non-conformist manner. Thus, as Bazaz rightly remarks "an intellectual revolution born in the classroom of the C.M.S was slowly and gradually travelling in diverse directions and was imperceptibly bringing the whole society in its vortex".⁴¹

Colonial Intervention, Dogra State and Modern Education.

Regarding the role of the State in education we find that for a long time it was not interested in providing modern education to its subjects, though it did patronise a few madrassas and pathshalas.⁴² The fact that there was only one state run middle school in 1890 amply demonstrates it.⁴³ Even though this institution was established in 1874, however, it was not modernised until 1885, when the curriculum of the Punjab University was implemented in the State run schools.⁴⁴ Why the State did adopt an indifferent attitude towards education in general and modern education in particular? The contemporaries give various plausible reasons in this regard. First, it seems that the Maharajahs were apprehensive of the dissemination of modern education among the masses because it was likely to foster political consciousness among them. This is also substantiated by Arthur Brinckman, the author of *Wrongs of Cashmere*:⁴⁵

The rajah will not allow education there but to blind us sends a few thousand rupees occasionally to our Punjab schools. The Cashmeres are not allowed to improve in anyway by the rajah, Keep them grinding for our benefit is the sole thought of their rulers.

This fact has been rather avowedly corroborated by Prem Nath Bazaz, To quote him:

The awareness that they (Rulers) were Hindus and the overwhelming majority of the Kashmiris professed Islam, constantly made them apprehensive; they disliked the idea of making their subjects politically conscious and thought that imparting of education was only an effective way of awakening the people to their political and human rights ...Even when, belatedly, a few boy's schools were started in the city to meet the repeated charges of anti-progress, no steps were taken to make them attractive or to get students enrolled in large numbers.⁴⁶

Beginning in the 1890s, however, the State's interest in education seems to have increased with time. From the contemporary sources of the period, it becomes evident that this perceived interest in education was as a result of the deposition of Maharaja Pratab Singh from the throne in 1889 and the establishment of British Residency and State council.⁴⁷ As a result of colonial intervention, education now became a central component of the state's drive towards centralization and bureaucratization along the lines of British India. Apart from bringing the education system under its purview, the colonial State ensured that the Dogra State presents itself as the promoter of education among all its subjects.⁴⁸ Translated into actual practice, this meant the rapid creation and consolidation of a state educational bureaucracy and reorganization of the school curricula in the state on modern lines. Pertinent to mention here, that the role played by the Kashmiri Muslim educated youth (who had obtained higher education from various Indian universities in early thirties of the twentieth century) in persuading the government to provide educational opportunities to the Muslim masses, cannot be underestimated.⁴⁹

³⁹ E.D. Tyndale Biscoe, *Fifty Years Against the Stream*, p.1.

⁴⁰ See, Brain Holmes, for the contribution of Christian Missionaries, pp.155-172

⁴¹ Prem Nath Bazaz, *Daughters of the Vitasta: A History of Kashmiri Women From Early Times to the Present Day*, New Delhi, Pamposh Publications, 1959, p.21.

⁴² Muhammad Yusuf Ganai, *Kashmir's Struggle for Independence*, p.66.

⁴³ Annual Administration Report of J&K 1891, State archives Srinagar, p.85.

⁴⁴ Annual Administrative Report Jammu and Kashmir, 1889-90, State archives Srinagar, p.87.

⁴⁵ Arthur Brinckman, *Wrongs of Cashmere: A Plea for The Deliverance of that Beautiful Country from the Slavery and Oppression Under Which it is Gone*, London, Thomas Bosworth, 1868, p.24.

⁴⁶ Prem Nath Bazaz, *Daughters of the Vitasta*, p. 215.

⁴⁷ Annual Administrative Report Jammu and Kashmir, 1889-90, pp.23-26.

⁴⁸ Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging" Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*, p.173

⁴⁹ Mirza Shafiq Hussain, *Kashmiri Muslimanu ki Siyasi judu jehad Dastawaizat Muntakhab Datawezaat*, Sringar, Sheikh Mohammad Usmaan & sons, 2015, pp.430-433.

Cumulatively, with the coming of Christian Missionaries, the colonial intervention and the outside pressures, the traditional system of education gradually lost its prestigious position and modern education with its technology and philosophy got established in the State. This waning of traditional education was more conspicuous among those sections of Kashmir society (like Kashmiri Pandits) who tried to acquire education for employment purposes, as with the modernization of the State administration, the new education seemed to offer better employment avenues.⁵⁰ Thus the traditional education lost its economic base once modern education, however meagre, made its appearance on the social fabric of Kashmir Society. The State, moreover, took the control of this education and correspondingly bore the responsibility of its costs. As in other parts of India, in the traditional system of education in Kashmir, the teacher was remunerated by the community he served. Under the new system, he became a paid servant of the State government. Similarly, once the State interest in running the schools was established, locally available financial support began to dry up, permitting the State to bring all aspects of School education under its control. Modern education with its codified procedures for the recruitment of the teachers, its elaborate machinery for inspection, and its norms of evaluation for the award of the scholarship and certificates, got entrenched in the State, and a new pedagogical culture emerged in Kashmir.⁵¹

The basic norm of this culture was to treat the prescribed text book as the *defacto* curriculum, rather than as an aid.⁵² The text books were prescribed by the State, and the teachers training institutions worked very hard to make the teacher familiar with it.⁵³ As Nita Kumar, argues in the context of Banaras that “as single agency colonial State, in progressive bureaucratic stages, wrote a government syllabus that all subjects of the empire were expected to learn”.⁵⁴ In the similar manner in Kashmir, once the State became the agency for disseminating education, the knowledge that was being diffused became homogenised. It was no longer differentiated for each distinct social group, be it Muslims or Pandits. It also seems that the content of textbooks had no other meaning for the teacher and the student except as material to be mastered, which in the case of most subjects meant memorization for reproduction at the examination. What meaning the lessons in the textbooks could have had for the student was inextricably linked to the urgency to pass in the examination.⁵⁵ The text book, therefore, was the curriculum. They were seen as containing the only knowledge which mattered in the sense of having been approved by the government as the basis of examination.⁵⁶ All other forms of knowledge were invalidated by this text book culture.

Modern education, thus tried to exclude the spectrum of traditional knowledge about traditions, religions, folklore, crafts, arts and sciences from its definition of education. Being familiar with this knowledge or even having mastery over them, did not count as education. Moreover, in sharp contrast to traditional education as mentioned earlier, modern education was seen as a means of acquiring government employment. Emphasising how education was seen as a channel to employment in the context of British India Lord Curzon noticed that people viewed modern education “not primarily as the instrument of culture or the source of learning, but as the key to employment, the condition of all national advance and prosperity and the sole stepping stone for every class of the community to higher things”.⁵⁷ Similarly, in the context of Kashmir, as the modernization of administration especially from 1885, offered job opportunities to the English educated youth. It motivated people for seeking Western education and the popular mind saw education an individual acquisition leading to a stronger position in the labour market.⁵⁸ Moreover this new type of education brought an entirely different curriculum in the educational institutions of the State. Moreover, in sharp contrast to traditional education as mentioned earlier, where the focus of education was on religiosity, modern education was dominated by the subjects like English, Mathematics, Geography, and Arithmetic. Besides the history of India and outside world and general knowledge were taught to the students.⁵⁹ Such a type of education made the youth of Kashmir conscious about their rights and the power they possessed to change the character of the

⁵⁰ It may be noted that it was only with the establishment of the British Residency in Kashmir in 1885, that the process of the modernization of the Kashmir administration and technology started necessitating the man power well versed in western education especially in English.

⁵¹ Political Department 101/P-102/1907, Jammu State Archives.

⁵² Old English Records, F. No. 73/P-49/1911, Jammu State Archives.

⁵³ Annual Administrative Report, Jammu and Kashmir, 1918-19.

⁵⁴ Nita kumar, *Lessons from Schools: The History of Education in Banaras*, p.72

⁵⁵ C.E .Tyandale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.256.

⁵⁶ Old English Records, F. No. 73/P-49/1911, Jammu State Archives.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Aparna Basu, *The Growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898– 1920*, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1974), p.6.

⁵⁸ C.E .Tyandale Biscoe, *Kashmir in Sunlight and Shade*, p.256.

⁵⁹ Old English Records, F. No. 73/P-49/1911, Jammu State Archives, p. 20,

Government with the support of oppressed masses. This eventually led to the emergence of political consciousness in the early thirties of the 20th century.⁶⁰

It is pertinent to mention that traditional education had such a delicate importance that the State could not afford to ignore it while crafting its educational policy. Thus, in addition to financing modern education, the State also supported *madrassas*, *maktabs*, and *pathshalas*. It was only in the 1930's that the significance of traditional education had all but vanished under the weight of the sweeping wave of modernization, that the government began to withdraw its patronage from traditional educational institutions.⁶¹ However, to avoid hurting the susceptibilities of the religiously oriented population, *Maulvis* and *Pandits* were recruited for imparting religious education and teaching of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian.⁶² Moreover, with a view to improve the educational system, the State of Jammu and Kashmir appointed two Educational Commissions one in 1916 under the Chairmanship of Mr. Sharp and another in 1938 under K. G. Saiyaidein. Besides, in the annals of the Glancy Commission (1932) the educational problem figured prominently. These commissions, investigated the complex problems of school education in the State like, religious disparity in educational institutions, problem of inspection, pay anomaly of teachers, problem of teacher training and so on. However the State paid little regard to the recommendations of these commissions.⁶³

In 1925, after Hari Singh succeeded to the throne, the government took unprecedented interest towards the educational welfare of the State. The new Maharaja took the initiative of opening several new schools in the *mofassil*, such as the Hari Singh High School in Baramulla, and raising the standards of several others, such as the Hanfia Middle School in Anantnag, which became a High school in 1926. The education department even began to take steps to provide Muslim teachers in schools situated in localities with a preponderantly Muslim population.⁶⁴ Within a year of his rule, the number of government and aided institutions in State increased from 782 in 1925 to 961 in 1926 and the number of pupils enrolled in these institutions rose from 47,792 in 1925 to 54,829 in 1926.⁶⁵ This was obviously the result of the growing consciousness among the Muslims of Kashmir from the twenties of the 20th century.⁶⁶ In 1930, the State passed the Compulsory Primary Education Act which emphasized free and compulsory primary education.⁶⁷ In 1932, the Act was also applied to the girls of Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, and Sopore.⁶⁸ As a result of this act the number of educational institutions witnessed a significant increase. As per the Glancy Commission report (1932), there were 842 Primary schools (inclusive of 35 aided schools) and 59 Middle schools (inclusive of 6 private schools), 76 High schools and two colleges in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir.⁶⁹ According to the same report in the whole of J& K State, there were 144 girl's schools, of which two were high schools, fourteen middle schools and 128 primary schools.⁷⁰

By 1941 there were 1888 educational institutions⁷¹ (1143 Primary schools, 311 Middle schools 89 Secondary and 3 Colleges, and 342 other institutions) in the State as compared to 1246(848 Primary schools, 270 Middle schools, 81 Secondary schools and one College) in 1931.⁷² It is worthwhile to mention that it was in

⁶⁰ M.Y Ganai, *Modern Education and the Rise of Political Consciousness in Kashmir*, ICH : Proceedings, 65th Session, 2004, p. 897.

⁶¹ To quote the Census of India, 1931, pp. 261, 262, "The number of these indigenous institutions is on the decline as the people realise the futility of sending their children to such institutions and prefer to send them to state schools where education on modern lines is imparted. In harmony with the public sentiment His Highness Government has sanctioned a new set of rules refusing grant-in-aid to such Maktabs and Pathshalas as lie within a radius of two miles of a Government school and as have no arrangements for providing education in the three Rs.

⁶² Bahadur Chandhri Munshi Mohammad Khan, *Census of India, 1921, Vol. XXII, Kashmir Part-I Report*, Lahore : Mufid-i-Am Press, 1922, p. 110. During the period of Mr.Glancy the total number of Arabic teachers was 97, Glancy Commission Report, p10.

⁶³ See , Mirza Shafiq Hussain, *Kashmiri Musلمانu ki Siyasi Judujehad kay Muntakhab Datawezaat*, pp.90-101.

⁶⁴ General Department 1190/Misc 35/1930, Jammu State Archives.

⁶⁵ Annual Administrative report of Jammu and Kashmir , State Archives Srinagar, 1926,

⁶⁶ For the demands persistently made by the Muslims of Kashmir for their educational advancement See Memorandum submitted by Anjuman-i-Nasratu' l-Islam in 1923, G. H. Khan *Freedom Movement in Kashmir 1931-1940*, Srinagar, Gulshan Books, p. 106

⁶⁷ Annual Administration Report of J&K, 1940-41, pp.42-43.

⁶⁸ File NO: 39/18, Year 1931, Jammu Archives.

⁶⁹ See Glancy Commission Report, p. 9

⁷⁰ See Glancy Commission Report, p.10.

⁷¹ Annual Administration Reports of J&K, 1941, p188.

⁷² Pt Rai Bahadur, Pt Anant Ram, *Census of India, 1931, Vol. XXIV, Kashmir Part-I Report*, Jammu, Ranbir Government Press, p. 254.

1940 that Sri Pratap College was split into two separate colleges- S. P. Intermediate College and Amar Singh Degree College.⁷³ In the whole of Jammu & Kashmir State there were 140 girls schools in 1931 and 241 in 1941.⁷⁴ The Ganganath Report also gives some information about girl's education in J&K in 1944. According to this Report there existed 5 High schools, 41 Middle schools and 190 Primary schools for girls in Jammu and Kashmir.⁷⁵ However, in spite of all the progress in education sector only the fringes of actual educational needs of the people had been touched by 1947 and at the time of independence the literacy rate in the State was just 5%.⁷⁶ Though the expenditure on education increased from Rs 58610 in 1872-73 to Rs 3752500 in 1947, it was only 7% of the total revenue.⁷⁷ Despite all the arrangements for the training of teachers, a large percentage of them were still without any training for their profession. The problem of accommodation remained throughout the period; consequently classes were held under trees and rented buildings.⁷⁸ The higher education too remained confined to only a small section of people. It is no wonder that the number of autobiographies and memoirs written by educated people who experienced Dogra rule, the period is overwhelmingly categorized as one of backwardness and illiteracy.⁷⁹

II. Conclusion:

In a panoramic gaze, then, that encompasses over 100 years, we see a process of homogenization and modernization of education did occur with irreversible inevitability. While the educational practice in Kashmir for most part of the 19th century was dominated by traditional functional concerns. The indigenous *madrasas* (for Muslim boys) or *patshalas* (for Pandit boys) imparted basic religious education to the students. While Gulab Singh, the first Dogra ruler, was more concerned with consolidating his newly acquired territories, his successor, Ranbir Singh encouraged religious education and especially stressed the spread of Hindu learning. It becomes obvious that in this period the State did not consider education either its responsibility or a priority and a very little infrastructure was set in place. But the period, following the death of Ranbir Singh under the influence British intervention, coupled with strenuous efforts of Christian missionaries and the external pressure of outside Muslim organisations, educational system of Kashmir underwent a considerable change. As a result of the complex interplay of these actors, the traditional system of education lost its earlier prestige and modern system of education with its technology and philosophy got established in the State.

⁷³ Due to the unprecedented increase in the enrolment of S.P. College, Srinagar, which had become totally unmanageable the State Government bifurcated it. Annual Administration Reports of J&K, 1941, p188.

⁷⁴ Annual Administration Reports of J&K, 1941, p.188.

⁷⁵ Ganga Nath Report on the J&K Administration, Nov. 1944, State archives Srinagar, p.191.

⁷⁶ Madhav Godbole, Report of the committee on Economic Reforms for Jammu and Kashmir. Aug, 1998, p. 245

⁷⁷ Annual Administrative Report of J&K Government, 1873, and 1947.

⁷⁸ File no, 141-HR-27-05-1937, His Highness records, State Archives Srinagar.

⁷⁹ See Abdullah, *The Blazing Chinar*; Mufti, *Myeān Kath*; Aga Ashraf Ali *Kuch toh Likiye ki Log Lahengay*, Srinagar, Kashmir Times Publication.