

CONCLUSION

Women since ancient times had faced the wrath of patriarchy, hence subordination. She was also subjected to all types of exploitations. Though the forms of exploitation varied from culture to culture, but in all the situations it was women who were subjected to different types of tortures at all levels be it family, society or state. We do find that prostitution and trafficking of women were the direct outcomes of this setup. This is reflected from the texts that sailors and merchants of Athens demanded to have the prostitution centres for their entertainment. Similar references have been made about the port cities of Rome and China. Encouraged by the traders' state established many prostitutions centres in China and Rome but such institutions have never been given any recognition by any civilized society during the ancient and medieval times. In case of South Asia, prostitution has remained an organized and an established institution. This is reflected from the archaeological as well as historical sources. The discovery of bronze dancing girl from the excavation of Indus Valley Civilization at Mohenjodaro made scholars to believe that such institutions were found in Indian subcontinent since ancient times. The clear reference about the presence of prostitution is made in the Rig Veda where it is mentioned that slave girls were offered to the Rishis by kings as gift. From the texts of Buddhism, we have references of prostitution centres especially at Vaishali. Many females earned their livelihood by indulging in this wicked profession. Ambapali or Amrapali was a famous and the most beautiful prostitute during the time of Buddha. It is mentioned that prostitution was also practised during the Mauryan period and Pataliputra the capital of the empire emerged as a flourishing centre of prostitution. Vatsyayana, a noted sage and a writer of India during Gupta period gives us a detailed account on prostitution

and the activities of prostitutes in his work Kamasutra. According to him prostitutes were supposed to learn sixty-four arts of tempting and attracting the client like singing, dancing, make-up, expressions and many alike poses and techniques. The reference of such institution can be found in the medieval texts as well. Trafficking of women was considered as the hallmark of early medieval period. Wars and invasions were considered as the misfortune for the women. Not being the part of battle but emerged as the prize of the battles. Women's who were captured during battles were taken and were kept in the private harm of the ruler or the soldiers even some were sold in the markets and at times many of them were being kept in prostitution centres. This continued in India up to modern times and remained unchecked irrespective of the constitutional equality given to the women folk.

The situation of women in Kashmir was in no way different from the rest of the world as trafficking of women and the establishment of the prostitution centres were common in Kashmir right from the ancient times. Kashmir being a valley secluded by mountains had the most fair and lovely people living in its womb. The beauty of Kashmiri women has been praised by ancient and medieval chroniclers and poets. Foreign travellers like Albiruni and Bernier talked about Kashmiri women being attractive because of their beauty and soft nature. But such a lovely creature of nature, like its beauty has been praised much by the scholars/ writers on the one hand but unfortunately on the other side they provide us with their ugly picture of exploitation they were subjected to throughout the course of history. From the historical texts it is reflected that her modes of exploitation are seen in every walk of life, be it social, economic or religious. She had been subjected to hardship to live a life of discomfort. Equally she was very cheaply used as a symbol of entertainment. The European scholars praised the women in Kashmir for being slim which is true but one secret fact of being slim was the tireless jobs they were doing as a domestic chorus and not being provided a nutritious diet and other due care. If

we do a comparison, it is true in fact with today's women also. Few lines from *Payaam-i-Mehjoor* are fit for females of the Kashmir Valley:

Uninvited & Unsung, I came to this world. My near &
Dear ones felt Unhappy, why was I born without whisper?

The situations in Kashmir got further worsen when it came under the Dogra rule in 1846. The purchase and transfer of Jammu and Kashmir to Dogra Maharaja Gulab Singh resulted in the worst form of exploitation of Kashmiris as Maharaja considered Kashmir as his purchased property. The present research has explored various aspects of social, economic and ethical factors that were responsible to the unprecedented rise in the forms of exploitation against women prostitution being at the top during the period under reference. Heavy taxation on marriage imposed by the state had highly contributed for the rise in the number of prostitution centres. Profession of prostitution as an institution was protected by the State by legalizing it, as it contributed 25% of the revenue to the state. The observations and findings of our study are supported by relevant references from folk literature, which is now universally, accepted a reliable source of history of the people. During the course of study, it was found that the religious elite mostly (*Mullas* or Priests) who were supposed to protect and protest them against any odd social evil or non-ethical activity, in a fear of any action against them by the state and also to safeguard their selfish ends encouraged this ugly and evil practice by remaining silent about it in the society. The study also exposes that no effort was made by society in controlling such heinous institution and activities, members of the society kept their heads hanging in shame without sharing their agony with any second person because of the consequences, which gives us insights about the power and position of pimps and goons in the early Dogra period. Conditions continued to deteriorate and prostitution thrived on a large commercial scale, social disabilities and economic hardships of women made them an easy victim to the gangsters in the profession.

No doubt society in general saw it as an evil but as discussed above the consequences of wrath from the state forced them to close their eyes and shut their mouth. The inactive attitude of the people further contributed to the development of such activities in Kashmir. The people living in Maisuma and Gow Kadal particularly the Hanjis (boatmen) were mainly working in these centres and acted as the brokers who took the task of women trafficking in Kashmir. The study reveals that poverty due to heavy imposition of taxes was mostly responsible for the growth of such immoral profession among the people under reference. The condition of women in these prostitution centres was extremely bad, although they looked attractive as they were wearing charming dress and appealing ornaments. But in real sense they were ill-treated at all levels, be it a pimp, a client or any second person involved in this activity either way. There was no respect for them in the society, which is very much reflected in the folklore. The health condition of many prostitutes was seen getting deteriorated and there was no one to look after them.

The institution got further imputes with the arrival of the European travellers who too were fond of Kashmiri women. The rise in the number of prostitutes, prostitution centres and the heinous crime of women-trafficking in Kashmir particular after 1885 became a matter of concern. But it never attracted either the masses or the religious authorities who had already started the task of reformative programmes on social and religious fronts. The reason for such silence was none other than the economic interests of the state and the reformative groups.

In the second half of the nineteenth century many missionaries had started social reform in India and were working for the emancipation of the women. Kashmir too did not remain immune from such voices of the Christian missionaries who entered Kashmir prior to the establishment of the Residency in 1885. These missionaries started giving education to women and also began to talk against the patronage of the crime against women. But as far as the

movement of women emancipation is concerned, we did not find any such group in Kashmir during this period. In the backdrop of such facts the study claims that steps against such activities were taken on individual levels. From the records it is clear that a few people worked for the emancipation of women in Kashmir, like Shamla Mufti, Taj Begum, and Naseem Shifai. With regard to the efforts at individual level the work highlights the role of Muhammad Subhan Hajam, a barber by profession hailing from Maisuma raised his voice against such evil activities and centres. It is pertinent to mention that these prostitutes, pimps, goons and brothels had created such a fear that no one was ready to give daughter in marriage to such areas. People like him with the help of few British officials and Missionaries tried to eradicate this practice. Their hard and courageous efforts persuaded the Maharaja to take measures against this evil practice and accordingly a law was passed by the state that came to be known as *The Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act 1934*. Even after the passing of such laws by the State the prostitution was not totally banned as the reports suggest that it continued officially as well as unofficially. However, it brought some changes as it at least curtailed the regular activities of pimps, prostitutes and clients. Various laws were introduced to curtail the evil practice but in framing the rules the state did not designate prostitution as illegal. As a result of this ambiguity within the legislations and law this evil is still surfacing as we witness the Pattan sex scandal in 1980 and a bone chilling Habbakadal Sex Scandal that was exposed in 2006.

This ugliest practice had its negative impacts on the people of such areas as even today people do not prefer their daughters and son's marriage at Maisuma, Gowkadal, Dalgate and Sonwar. The fashion of wearing nose rings and numbers of ear rings and nail paint to which every female is used to, but when this class of women hailing from the said areas underwent such costumes the people whisper badly and look them in some different way. Even a normal walk of girls and boys in today's age from the side of Abi-Guzar Bund is not

seen a good habit. It is only because these areas have earned a bad name during the period under study.

Having investigated and discussed various aspects of the exploitation of women at length by the State and cool reaction of the society, the position of women had deteriorated to a greater extent, which had a direct bearing on the overall conditions of the women including her status in the society. As a result, she could not come out from the backwardness; she had faced throughout the autocratic regime.

It was only after the intervention of a section of the British people, popularly known as missionaries, who worked for the upliftment of the women of Kashmir particularly those who had suffered a lot at the hands of vested interests and selfish elements working for State as the agents of exploitation. As a result of this intervention, we came across the emancipation of women in various sectors of life like – education, society, health, politics, dress and hygiene. All these developments went a long way in rehabilitating the Kashmiri women and also sounded a death knell to the evil institution of prostitution in Kashmir.

I have tried to address all these aspects at length in the text of this research work to the best of my capacity. However, it cannot be a final finding for all times to come. It may open up several other aspects for further research with diverse ideas and new trends that may emerge in future.