



Psycho-Cultural Conflict of Women in Kashmir: A Study of Regional English Fiction

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Abstract

Jammu and Kashmir is world famous for its scenic splendour, requisite monuments, snow capped mountains, plentiful wildlife, hailed all over the world for its incredible natural beauty. Kashmir is cradled in the lofty green Himalayas and surrounded by mountain peaks glistening lakes, lush green valley's, temples and Mughal era gardens. Kashmir is rightly called "Paradise on Earth". But this paradise turned into hell since 1989. The armed conflict has lead to social disorder, disorganization, physical and mental health deterioration, mass psychological depression and cultural aggression; and due to the turmoil both the communities suffered in their own ways. By the end of 1990 about half a million pandits left their homes in Kashmir and the displaced people sought refuge in Jammu adjoining districts. They suffered a lot in migrate campuses and private rented accommodations in Jammu. Thousands perished due to mental sickness, heat strokes, hostile climatic conditions and nostalgia. Literature is always a product of circumstances and situation of society in which it is produced, so is the case with Kashmiri pandits whose literature is mostly impregnated by the pain and agony of loss of homeland and loss of cultural identity. Despite the constraints experienced, attempts were made by the displaced pandits to employ alternate way of participating in their cultural space in the new locals with the hope that one day they will return to their home land and restore their lost cultural identity. Such issues were raised by various uprising literary gems of Kashmiri origin through their writings especially novels- which is the easiest and effective medium of exploring the emotional and psychological conflicts- among the other genres. The proposed

research work will focus especially upon the psycho-cultural conflict of women of the region despite any race and religion.

Keywords: Splendor, Scenic Beauty, Exquisite Monuments, Armed Conflict, Cultural Aggression, Impregnant, Nostalgia etc.

Kashmir the valley of rustic beauty, wild scenery and giant grace has century's old tradition of linguistic, cultural, ecological, geographical traditions based on the ethics and morality of the place. Some places filled with the myths, some being the cradle of literature, some horror-struck wounds, places of faith, and places of deadly open secrets. A place where the words of need just sway in the air to the pretentious deaf ears. Kashmir has a good literary history and culture of literature itself reflects different aspects of valley's bounteousness and one among such could be traced from the book Raj Tarangny, ever old history written in Sanskrit.

The main inhabitants of Kashmir valley are Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus (called as Pandits) sharing common culture. The common culture and their peaceful coexistence have been used to describe Kashmiriyat. The main tenet of Kashmiriyat is the network of socio-culture and historical ties that bind all Kashmiris regardless of religion into an independent social collective. While Kashmiri Muslims and pandits follow the different religions, and share many cultural practices that are a fusion of the elements of their respective religion practices as well as uniquely Kashmiri devotional and philosophical norms. Communal harmony has been a strong social norm in Kashmir. Social harmony and close association between two communities has been regarded as one of the indicators of Kashmiriyat. The culture of the inhabitants of this picturesque land has been massively affected by the security situation.

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The land has produced a number of fertile and incomparable poets and writers who always tried to explore human sufferings and psychological issues raised due to the turmoil. The most among the writers are Mirza Waheed, Nitasha Kaul, Rahul Pandita, Nayeema Mahjoor, Siddharat Gigoo etc. In this research paper we have focused upon the psycho-cultural conflict of women of the region despite any race and religion.

The Post-Colonial English fiction of Kashmiri writers reflect on the situation of Kashmir of early 1990s, when Kashmiris took up arms against Indian rule and ushered in the era of a fully fledged militancy. All these writers mainly write in English as they yearn for a global audience to hear and read the narrations which tell the stories of their experience of a very complex lived reality. These new narratives can be seen as historiographies which sensitively bring fore many unknown or unexpressed dimensions of the Kashmiri conflict, thereby drawing attention to a long- neglected human story. Though the texts grow out of a specific and critical historical reality, they convey a multiplicity of versions and facts that armed conflict in Kashmir has stimulated. **Mirza Waheed** *'The collaborator'* (2012), set against the backdrop of 1989, written from the perspective of village teenager figuring out his own future, Mirza Waheed's debut novel captures the violence and fear that continues to tear Kashmir apart. The novel depicts how the paradise on earth (Kashmir) has changed into Wasteland. **Mirza Waheed** *'The book of Gold Leaves'* (2014) highlights a classic love story set in 1990s Kashmir. The story gives insight into how conflict affects normal life, even the love affair that ends in a tragedy. The book provides an account of history and experience related to Kashmir conflict. **Shanaz Bashir** *'The Half Mother'* (2014) writer speaks million innocents Kashmiri in his debut novel, which unveils torture, violence, trauma, killing, loneliness, agony and the high handedness of authorities in Kashmir valley. It is woeful story of a mother and her fruitless search to find her only son. **Shlhoub-Kevorkain** *'Militarization and Violence against women in conflict*

Zones in the Middle East' (2009). The book concerns women in conflict. It inspects and talks about the torment that women experience as cruelty is committed against them during militarized conflict. The author argues that militarization not only contributes to the increase in the susceptibility of both men and women, but also at the same time contributes in imposing the Patriarchal hegemonic authority. This book depicts how women lives are turned into violence and conflict. **Syed Amin and A.W Khank** *'Life in conflict: Characteristics of depression in Kashmir'*(2009), reveals that due to continuing conflict in Kashmir during last 18yrs there has been a phenomenon increase in psychiatric morbidity. The result shows that the difference among the male and female is significant. Depression is much higher in rural areas (84.73%) as compared to urban areas (15.26%). In rural areas the prevalence of depression among female is higher (93.10%) as compared to males (6.8%). **Catrina Brown**, *'(Re) storytelling uncertainty and minimization and self blame'* (2013) argues that despite powerful stories of chronic multiple and severe trauma, women narratives of trauma reveal uncertainty, minimization, and self blame in this community based research. This paper also reveals that how uncertainty is reflected in women struggle with interpreting and lacking about their trauma experiences. **B. Hudnall, Hendry E Stamm, Amy C Hudnall, and Craig Hegson Smoth**, *Considering a theory of cultural trauma and loss*. Journal of loss and trauma (2004). The article depicts that if the injured culture lays claim the economic and social resources. Preferably with the support and encouragement of the hegemonic culture. The end result can be a form of bicultural or multicultural adaptation by the members of the original culture. **Michael B. Salzman**, 'Cultural Trauma and Recovery: Perspective from terror management theory by Trauma, violence and Abuse' (2001) examines an essential psychological function of culture and the consequences of its traumatic disruption from the perspective of Terror Management Theory. **Khalid Waseem Hassan**, *'Migration of Kashmiri pandiths*, Institute for social and economic change, (2010). Briefly discusses the concept of kashmiriyat and its conceptualization by Kashmiri nationalities and also look at the various narratives and pandith migration and to see how this migration challenges Kashmir. **Edited by Gert Buelen, Sam Dirrant and Robert Egliston**; *The Future of Trauma Theory contemporary literature and cultural criticism*. Reviewed by Amir Khadam university of Alberta. In the book's very first essay titled 'knowledge' Robert Eagle stone embarks upon a critical evaluations of the recent moves in trauma studies suggesting that "there has been some shift in the language at least of the west perhaps the world" as a result of the constant awareness of trauma at a global scale. **Phyllis Chester**, *The*

Shellshocked women'. This work is profoundly feminist goes a long way towards restoring morality to a profession that has too often denied or minimized male violence at home and treated mental illness that the normal female response to what after all, are crimes against humanity. The basic motive depicted in this work is to study some of the representative studies poems and novels available in Kashmiri language as well as English. In relation to social, cultural and psychological factors responsible for the turmoil that engulfed the whole valley and shook up the whole foundation. **Shanaz Bashir's Novel**, *'the Half Mother; Kashmir in creative write'*. The novel highlights a heart breaking story of women who battles for life dignity and justice. The study attempts to explore all such themes embedded in the move, which gave a new interpretation to then Kashmir, paradise on Kashmir. **Basharat Peer's** novel *'Curfewed Nights'*(2009):A Memoir, the novel presents a heart-stirring tale of socio-political ambience of Kashmir in 1990s when a brutal violence and exodus took place. Curfewed Nights is a tale of a man's love for his land ,the pain of leaving home, and the joy of return-as well as a fiercely brave piece of literary reporting. **Kumar**, *'Women and Crime'* (2006) argues that violence also distorted the lives of women in Kashmir, as they became both indirect victims of arrest, torture and disappearance of their loved ones and direct victims of rape, kidnapping and murder. In particular, rape was used as a weapon to punish, coerce in conflict- ridden societies. **Tasmifa Bashir**, *'The Portragul of Human predicament in contemporary Kashmiri literature'*. Depicts how the list written in Kashmir in the period of historical crises and conflict portrays the women prediction of the affected populace. **Sonya Andermahr**, *'Compulsively Readable and Deeply Moving: Women's Middlebrow Trauma Fiction'* highlighted that literary trauma studies have provided a detailed account of the ways in which trauma of various kinds have been represented in literature. The majority of these accounts have highly literary fiction focused on both the fundamental unrepresentability of trauma and its deformed effects on narrative. **Awais Bin Nasi, Muhammad Sheeraz**, A case study of the Collaborator Politics and Poetic, Literary strategies of resistance in post 1989 Anglophone Kashmiri literature. Kashmir journal of language Research (2020). The study investigates the post-1989 Anglophone Kashmiri literature from the perspective of resistance literature. The paper attempt to bring the fire the patterns of literacy strategies embedded in the literature. The paper highlights key aspects resistance literature in the collaborator suggests that the English literature produced in the post-1989 content is predominated with the major treads of resistance literature thereby classifying to be a form of resistance literature. **Danish Mohan Nowsharan Singh, Pomela Phillipose and**

Tapan Bosh (2018) Dr Arshid Hussain professor of psychiatry institute of mental health and Neuroscience, Srinagar. Unending trauma: The heavy toll of ongoing violence on mental health in Kashmir. The paper provides us with an insight into how large a toll the current violence is taking on the mental health of the population a trends that was perceptible in the outpatient department of IMHANS which gets around ISO patients coming from all parts of valley every day. According to his estimates at least 11% of the population suffers from mental health morbidity currently. **Neelam Iqbal (March 2019). War, violence and the mental health crises in Kashmir** Study novels that the highest estimates of depression, anxiety and PTSD were significantly higher in women than men. Merely 30% of Kashmiri adults use tobacco. One person in half of all kashmiri households as coping strategy people were seen dealing with stress by isolating themselves or becoming aggressive which are considered typical coping mechanism when exposed violence. **Aehsan Ahmad Dar, Sibnath Deb, The Volatile situation in Kashmir and its impact on the mental health of common people: Upholding Justice; social, psychological and legal perspectives, 2020;** The focus on catastrophic effects on the health and well-being of individuals belonging to conflict ridden Kashmir.

Analyzing the works of post-colonial fiction writers of Kashmir through the lenses of Jaffary.C. Alexander's cultural trauma and collective, and K.T. Eriksons collective trauma theories, the major objective of the study to be conducted are, to explore socio-political forces responsible for traumatic conditions in Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri pandiths. To describe the transitional effect of exile on Kashmiri pandiths. To attempt a stylistic analysis of selected works of post- colonial English fiction writers from Kashmir. To explore the nature and content of trauma culture from 1989 till date drawing upon a range. To throw light on diverse range of psychological and cultural trauma works on Kashmir in general and post –colonial English fiction works in particular. To delineate, how ongoing Kashmir conflict has aggravated the agony of Kashmiri women who were already shattered due to domestic and many other violence's and efforts will be put into action to highlight the diverse issues related to women who make them suffer outside.

The research thoroughly analyzed the psycho-analytical theory by Sigmund Freud and the grounded theory of research given by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. We tried to highlight the widespread suffering of Kashmiri women both Hindu and Muslim either due to state terrorism or in the migrant campus in Jammu.

The English fictions of Kashmir explore many issues; however, one of its main themes is about conflict ridden women in Kashmir, who suffered at every perspective. Kashmiri English fiction writers more particularly Mirza Waheed has tried to portray the topography of mind of Kashmiri women who never manages to break free from the conventions. The novelists namely Rahul Pandita, Nitasha Kaul and Siddhart Gigoo have tried to explore the sufferings of Kashmiris in general and women in particular during the political turmoil of 1990's that had direct bearing upon the mental health of Kashmiri women.

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