

Brutality and Sufferings: Exposure of Complex Trauma in Basharat Peer's Curfewed Night

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Abstract

The aim of this research article is to explore the brutality and sufferings of Kashmiris which lead to destruction of property and lives through militants, resulted an increase in graveyards where unknown killed bodies were buried. The exposure of complex trauma is highlighted in Basharat Peer's Curfewed Night. War and conflict zones have been serving as canvass for fiction writers but hardly the Kashmir conflict found expression in literature particularly in fiction. Curfewed Night is a story of a man's adoration for his territory, the agony of leaving home, and the delight of return, just as a savage and moving bit of reportage from a bold young columnist and journalist. This paper aims at finding out the complex trauma caused by war and conflict on the central characters. For the said purpose the theory of Trauma has been utilized. It unearths the recesses of the minds of the characters and how the course of their lives are moved and shifted from one anchor to the other. The valley of Kashmir which is consider as queen of lands, famous for beauty, is militarized and routine curfews suffered the lives of Kashmiris which is explored in Curfewed Night.

Keywords: Brutality, Sufferings, Complex Trauma, Militants, Conflict Zone

Introduction

Kashmir is a place on which India and Pakistan have fought three wars in which Kargil in 1999 is the recent one. This study is an interpretation of Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night* (2008). War and conflict zones have been serving as canvass for fiction writers but hardly the Kashmir conflict found expression in literature particularly in fiction. *Curfewed Night* is a story of a man's adoration for his territory, the agony of leaving home, and the delight of return - just as a savage and moving bit of reportage from a bold young columnist and journalist.

This paper aims at finding out the psychological traumatic impact of war and conflict on the central characters. For the said purpose the theory of Trauma has been exploited. It unearths the recesses of the minds of the characters and how the course of their lives are moved and shifted from one anchor to the other. Kashmir has been a cause of conflict between India and Pakistan since the time of partition of 1947. Both of the countries have fought nearly three wars.

The Kashmiris have been denied the right of self-determination for over a period of four decades. Basharat Peer is the son of the soil and is a journalist by profession. The novel under discussion is based on his actual experiences and encounters and he portrays a picture that real in its essence. Basharat Peer was born in 1977 in Indian Occupied Kashmir. He is a Kashmiri journalist, author, political commentator and script writer and he is currently based in New York. Presently he is working as an Opinion editor at *The New York Times*. He began his profession as a journalist at Rediff and Tehelka. In his initial vocation he was situated in Delhi. He has functioned as an Assistant Editor at Foreign Affairs and was a Fellow at Open Society Institute, New York. He was a Roving Editor at The Hindu. He has composed broadly on South Asian governmental issues for Granta, Foreign Affairs, The Guardian, FT Magazine, The New Yorker, The National, and The Caravan.

Curfewed Night, an onlooker record of the Kashmir strife, which won the Crossword Prize for Non-Fiction and was picked among the Books of the Year by The Economist and The New Yorker. *Curfewed Night* is a courageous and life-changing bit of scholarly detailing that uncovers the individual stories behind a standout amongst the most severe clashes in current occasions.

Since 1989, when the rebel development detonated, in excess of seventy thousand individuals have been murdered in the fight among India and Pakistan over Kashmir. Brought up in the war-torn district, Basharat Peer brings this little-known piece of the world to life in frightful, striking subtlety. Peer recounts stories from his childhood and gives awful records of the numerous Kashmiris he met years after the fact as a columnist. He accounts a young fellow's introduction into a Pakistani preparing camp, a mother compelled to watch her child hold a detonating bomb by Indian troops, a writer discovering religion when his whole family is slaughtered. He expounds on government officials living in repaired dungeons, pure towns fixed with land mines, and old Sufi sanctums wrecked in bomb impacts. Moreover, *Curfewed Night* is an excellent individual record of the contention. Companion has a heavenly vibe for dialect and episode.

Words, for example, "searching, crackdown, shelter, look, personality card, capture and torment," he lets us know, framed the dictionary of his youth. His town is shadowed by aggressors flaunting their Kalashnikovs; Peer and his school companions convey their cricket bats like firearms, "in impersonation and arrangement". In any case, however he was enticed, similar to one of his cousins, to join the aggressors, Peer became progressively suspicious of their strategies.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the complex traumatic effects of the Kashmiris portrayed Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night*?
- 2) How brutality and sufferings are portrayed in Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night*?

Research Objectives

- 1) To explore the complex traumatic effects of the Kashmir of the Kashmiris portrayed Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night*?
- 2) To highlight the brutality and sufferings are portrayed in Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night*?

Problem Statement

The contemporary South-Asian writers write about the issues which are a result of colonialism and the national oppressive government policies. In the present study the researcher has discussed the practice of Othering, the systematic marginalization of the Subaltern, homelessness, identity crisis and the Kashmir conflict which started with the end of the British Colonial Rule in the sub-continent. Arundhati Roy is a writer of not only India but of every country and society which suffers from oppression and exploitation at the hands of the powerful and manipulative social structures. She questions the social and political structures of India and raises voice against Colonialism too. The researcher has tried to explore the critical approaches and perspectives to properly understand Basharat Peer's fiction. This section deals with the scholarly works and research studies about trauma and conflict and Psychoanalysis. It aims for answer the research questions by collecting textual evidences from Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Nights*. With the help of these evidences the researcher discusses the instances of Indian army and elite suppressing the Kashmiris' voice and their efforts to be represented for fundamental human rights.

Literature Review

Review of literature is the third chapter of the current study. This section is like a brief survey of the research studies done about the topic of the present research work. This chapter would enable the readers to understand the purpose, context and background of this research. The researcher has made attempts to evaluate and describe the scholarly works about Psychoanalysis, trauma and conflict. These efforts will clearly unveil the unexplored aspects of Basharat Peer's fiction and some notions about the theory of Psychoanalysis. This chapter has been divided into three sections. The first section is a brief summary of Basharat Peer's Contribution to the contemporary psychoanalysis literature; the second section is a comprehensive review of the research studies on the selected text, *Curfewed Nights*.

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Curfewed Night is a novel written by a Kashmiri American journalist Basharat Peer. The form of this novel is a memoir that describes the conflict between India and Pakistan in a manner that it shows all the injustices on the Kashmiris. It gives a brief account on the situation of them and the living styles that what are the consequences which are coming in their way to live an easy life. The novel has deeply focused on the lives of Kashmiris. It shows the struggle for the identification. Kashmiris are suppressed one who are not getting freedom and have a merciful life under the reign of Indians. Indian military attacks them, kill them and treat them as the insects. The novel is the complete description of a family whose grandfather is in administration but yet they are tortured and they have to leave the house just because of being Kashmiri Muslims.

Agha Shahid Ali is a well-known American Kashmiri poet who has got fame in the world on English literature by depicting the true face of Kashmir and Kashmiris. He writes about the past events of his life, memoir, the arrival of death and the way to live the life, history of the motherland, the dreams of himself, and different experiences with the Hindus as well. His poetry focuses on the

living style of Indians, Muslims as well as westerns. A very famous work of Agha Ali is *A Nostalgic Map of America* (1991). In this work, he has explained the events of his boyhood. This work depicts that he is talking about America yet he has not forgotten to mention his homeland, Kashmir. This work shows that whatever he is writing, he always drags Kashmir in it which also reflects his personality. He links his life in America and Kashmir including his past and present life, the deserts, the oceans and colors as well. His works are full of oxymoron and paradoxes including the lyrics which are too much fancy.

Another major work of him is *The Country Without a Post Office* (1997). The title itself is a strong depiction that Kashmiris think their homeland already a country not a part of any other country. They think themselves as a power, which is occupied by the others. It shows that they have strong patriot feelings regarding their country. It is a symbol that they think themselves as free. It shows the exile and the loss of the country in the form of a lockdown upon the Kashmir. Whether his writings are Diaspora yet these are full of feelings and emotions. His works depicts different themes of exile from the home, the way of communication in terms of emotions and knowledge and the major concept of post colonialism. All this is happening in Kashmir is just due to the wrong partition of colonialism. He has talked about every aspect whether it is in Hindu community like he addressed pundits, the tourist who was captured, politics, and the life after the lockdowns in the Kashmir.

It is a continuous struggle for identity. Identity is the major aspect of anyone's personality. If there is no identity, there is no personality. The family of peer is struggling for the identity. The struggle is for the homeland. The Kashmiris has to sacrifice their hundreds of lives for the sake of homeland, freedom and identity. These sacrifices are for the next generations. The most courage character is of grandfather of Peer who is an officer yet betrayed by rivals.

It is a song which praises the beauty of Kashmir as well. Different scenes describe the variation of beauty of Kashmir. It also shows the past struggles of them and how these struggles will effect on the future in this beloved valley. The bad thing is that everyone knows this struggle and the situation of Kashmir yet no one is there to take a peaceful decision for the sake of solution. Kashmiris are also Muslims who have the right of a peaceful life full of freedom yet this is only their dream yet. The novel also comprises the childhood of peer and all the peace that was witnessed by himself in his motherland but when a militant attacked, the things became worse and then there was a brutal cold war. Environment always affects the mind states of the community. Peer also wanted to be a freedom fighter and love to fight for Kashmir but his father took the decision to send him abroad for studies and that is why he became a good man who fights from his pen but not with weapons. A huge volume of the story is on the sub stories of the people who were interviewed by Peer after his return and all the stories have same themes of struggles.

Sameer Rahim describes *Curfewed Night* in his review as a story on the edge. Peer is especially great on how the scene has been befouled by the nearness of 500,000 Indian troopers. Srinagar, the capital of Indian-controlled Kashmir, was once made out of "rich latticed houses, mosques and sanctuaries respecting each other from the banks of the River Jhelum"; presently it is secured with solid dugouts and checkpoints. "Heavily clad autos and warriors watching streets or keeping an eye on check focuses had moved toward becoming piece of the Kashmiri scene, similar to the willows, poplars and pines." Another vile advancement is the expanding unmistakable quality in the contention of Pakistani-supported radical gatherings, for example, Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, which do suicide assaults in Kashmir, India and even in Pakistan itself against Sufi and Shia mosques. These gatherings likewise regularly have joins with the Taliban. The book finishes in April 2005, with the confident resumption of a transport course among Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. Be that as it may, five years on, regardless of incidental signals from the two governments, opportunity is as yet a removed prospect for the general population of Kashmir ("Book Review").

Parshant Chabak describes the book as a horrible tale. This is an extremely powerful book on Kashmir. The creator catches the excellence of caution torn Kashmir with help of a ton of charming stories spreading over two or three decades. A phenomenal bit of Journalistic work which gives experiences into what it resembles to live under steady dread of being the inadvertent blow-back in the war between the military and the aggressors. He clarifies why the present Prime Minister went out on a limb seemingly the greatest political danger of his vocation by attempting to shape an alliance with PDP (A party whose position on Kashmir is especially unique in relation to that of a large portion of his dedicated supporters). Maybe, he conceives that it merits tuning into the individuals who can't help contradicting him for the general population who have spent better 50% of their lives under dread and brutality. Ideally whatever is left of the nation additionally pursues the PM's precedent and figures out how to tune in to individuals who can't help contradicting them. ("Book review; *Curfewed Night* by Peer)

Kamila Shamsi regards *Curfewed Night* as a tale of multipronged experiences. Peer's *Curfewed Night* is an uncommon journal that completes a lot to bring the Kashmir struggle out of the domain of political talk among India and Pakistan and into the lives of Kashmiris. Friend was just 13 out of 1990 when Indian troops let go on genius autonomy Kashmiris and, as he puts it, "the war of my youthfulness began". It is a war that hasn't yet finished, however it has changed shape extensively over the most recent 20 years. One of the most grounded areas portrays how it felt to be a youthful young person cleared up by a development with "Opportunity" as its cry. Friend composes of how every one of the humiliations and disappointments of immaturity fall away when you participate in a parade and feel yourself part of something bigger; how the aggressors who crossed into the Pakistan-controlled piece of Kashmir for guerrilla preparing would return as legends; how "like almost every boy, I wanted to join them. Fighting and dying for freedom was as desired as the first kiss on adolescent lips." ("*Curfewed Night: A Frontline Memoir of Life, Love and War in Kashmir*").

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness is a story of intersex person and the supervisor of intelligence service. The story revolves around Delhi then Kashmir and the woods in central India. This novel also focused on identity. After colonialism, round about every novel has the theme of identity crises. It is an obvious thing that after every devastating situation, there is a conflict of identity. Same is the case with this novel. It seems that the writer Arundhati Roy herself is seeking for her identity. The story revolves around the persons of India, Pakistan and the valley Kashmir. It deals with the theme of injustice that how Indian

government and corrupt politicians have portrayed a wrong impact of Kashmir in the minds and they just forget justice in the case of Kashmir but brutally killed the innocent and do not care about the streams of blood they flew. They just cared about their positions. It focuses the problems regarding religions, caste system, and the superiority inferiority complex, hatred for the brothers of different religions, blood and death. It also highlights the gender discrimination, love, loss and grief. The form of the novel is very interesting as it gives humor in the situation of horror with full of imagism and beautifully lyrical prose as well. It is a masterpiece in itself in its form.

There was a birth of the character of Aftab in New Delhi and he was an intersex. He was sent to the community of transgender and has learnt to live like them. He was not allowed to go to his parental home. In his young age he became the most popular transgender known as Anjum. He then adapted a girl named as Zainab. Then there are the tragedies in Kashmir. Here the writer showed the Kashmiri literature. He has shown the way how the government and the officers are treating Kashmiri in brutal ways. Everyone has his own story which is heart wrenching to another. This is the way how Kashmiris are living there. Anjum was also traumatized there due to some incident and this was the point where he has turned his life for good. He built a rest house upon a graveyard and starts too brought up the babies without any discrimination of blood, caste or religion. The way in which the writer has explained the consequences happening in Kashmir is very much effective that it automatically grabs the attention on the reader in two ways. Firstly, the attention goes towards the beauty of Kashmir and secondly towards the brutalities which the Kashmiris are facing.

Englebrecht (2016) observes King Lear's mental state after his disastrous fate. King Lear has lost his prestige as a king. His madness brings destruction for his family. He cannot get rid of his mental state and he always reacts in anger when his desires are not fulfilled. The reaction of Lear on the unfulfilled desires is very bad. The deterioration of Lear and his family seems absurd. The happenings in the family shock King Lear again and again. Due to madness of Lear, he was deprived of Kingship. Psychoanalysis provides light to study Lear's psyche. The condition of King Lear was same as the patients with psychological complexities. The unconscious behavior of King leads him to destruction later he wants to improve the situation but it was too late as his impression of madness overcame on the thinking of people and his offspring Freud discusses the same mantle stages which causes the displacement of human beings.

Methodology

This is a qualitative research. For the data interpretation the primary text is *Curfewed Night* by Basharat Peer. The textual analysis of the novel has been done by taking insight from the literary theories of Trauma, War and Conflict. In the present study the researcher has followed the parameters of qualitative research and has focused on the text of Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Nights* as a primary source of data. The research is based on a close reading and a thorough analysis of the selected text. To reach at the findings, textual evidences have been interpreted in the light of the concepts involved in the Psychoanalysis. The relevant passages have been used as a reference to support the researcher's argument and assertions. The available literary critical writings, reviews and commentaries published in national and international press regarding the fiction of Basharat Peer have been referred to and utilized to support and understand the research findings. The interviews of Basharat Peer, published in the magazines and available on web will definitely help to get a clear glimpse of the author's mind and intentions and to reach at a conclusion.

Research Instrument

The study follows the parameters of qualitative research, and a close reading of Basharat Peer's works will be done to examine the representation of the voiceless Kashmiris and the socially sponsored mechanism of oppression either in the form of war victimization, exploitation of an ethnic minority and religious persecution.

Theoretical Framework

The current study follows the theoretical framework of Psychoanalysis. Lois Tyson (2006) in her book *Critical Theory Today* states that French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) says that writing about unconscious should be ambiguous and difficult to understand because the unconscious is complex to understand. Caruth is of the view that history is made up delayed and suspended responses, it is not something following linear empiricism but is made up of the phenomenon of intrusive nature. In the light of this approach towards history one can try to fill the gaps in the unconscious of those who have been subjected to traumatic effects. The collection of suspended responses orients one's consciousness and can enable the victim to understand the manifestation of the traumatic effects which trigger the hallucinations in the one who suffers. The victim, if unable to understand the effects of trauma, can understand it peripherally. Caruth raises the questions like the traumas and their nature determine which events one has to record, which sufferings need to be acknowledged and what is the way to reconcile them. "Testimony marks the absence of events, since they did not register on, let alone become integrated into, the victims' consciousness." So testimony is not about the history of the event, so much as it is about the effect of the event on the victim. Setting this within the framework Caruth has laid out, testimony is about the act of departure, of walking away, and what happens when one manages to walk away, what one can recover after walking away. Furthermore, testimony is an act of asking recognition for the fact that the testifier has managed to walk away, and acknowledgement of what it is they walked away from.

Traumatic Effects of Brutality and Sufferings

The book is a depiction of the author's rather personal tale of his life in the militant 1990's of Kashmir. Despite his family's pleas, the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front insurgents attack an Indian convoy close to their village. The army's reprisals are expected to be swift and the family quickly grabs its possessions and leaves. In the end they return home to find only a few bullets stuck in the walls, which Peer's grandfather pulls out with pliers. A few years later Peer's father survives a militant attack on him, justified by the fact that he is a civil servant in a government seen to be run by Delhi. He was, according to rumour, betrayed by a jealous rival at work. After becoming a journalist for an Indian newspaper, Peer reports on other wars far away from home but is inevitably drawn

back to Kashmir. The second half of his book records his interviews with the victims of the army occupation. Another sinister development is the increasing prominence in the conflict of Pakistani-funded militant groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, which carry out suicide attacks in Kashmir, India and even in Pakistan itself against Sufi and Shia mosques. These groups also often have links with the Taliban. The book ends in April 2005, with the hopeful resumption of a bus route between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, the capitals of the Indian- and Pakistani administered regions of Kashmir. But many years on, despite occasional gestures from both the governments, freedom is still a distant prospect for the people of Kashmir.

Peer in his accounts does not call the freedom fighters as freedom fighters rather he names them militant throughout the text. This might be the confusion on the part of the writer or his text may have undergone publisher's sensor. This kind of confusion, conflict, and trauma runs throughout the text on thematic level.

There are numerous incidents and textual accounts in the novel that express and exhibit the traumatic condition of the protagonist and other characters. Nearly character in the story undergoes terrible trauma, confusion, and conflict. War and conflict literature is chiefly related to the said issues. The first incidents that speaks volumes is Pakistan- India Sharja cup in which Pakistan needed 3 runs on the last ball and Miandad hit a famous historical six. The Kashmiris cheered that victory of Pakistan and it was before 1990. Peer gives a detailed historical account of the freedom movement of Jammu and Kashmir, right from 1947 and later from 1985. He gives chronological.

The novel is written in first person narration- the author himself is the narrator and the whole novel is based on his experiences which he lived through and which are fraught with trauma and conflict. According to the narrator the organized movement for separation started in the year 1989 under the leadership of Yasin Malik a young leader then. "*Yasin Malik kidnapped the daughter of the Indian home minister. Malik and his comrades demanded the release of their jailed friends.*" (10) Later, the Indian government gives in and fulfills the demand of Yasin Malik and the people of Kashmir cheered the tactic of the young guerrillas. Even at this point the population is divided in taking sides which reflects the conflict going on in the minds of the people.

On the following years Yasin Malik was arrested and badly tortured. But he finds much hero worship from the side of the Kashmiris. The long suppressed hatred against the Indian government and the treatment of Kashmiris erupted like a big unconsumed volcano. These freedom fighters were challenging the Indian rule and were seen as heroes. They were trained between the years 1988 and 1989 and consequently they trained many younger Kashmiris. But the Indian government came very hard upon Kashmir and in the pro-independence protest Indian army opened fire and ruthlessly killed hundreds of Kashmiris. At that time the narrator was a teenager. He is the central character and his traumatic conflicted confusion begins in the novel from this point. He puts it in the following:

"The war of my adolescence had started. Today, I fail to remember the beginnings. I fail to remember who told me about *azzadi*, who told me about militants. Who told me it had begun. I fail to remember the date, the time, the place, the image that announced the war of my adolescence, a war that continues. Time and again I look back and try to cull out from my memory that moment which was to change everything I had been and would be" (Peer, 14).

This inner voice of the narrator explicitly indicates his inner conflict and blur mind. He is not clear in his thought that how everything started and led to what turmoil. This conflict intensified turns into trauma rendering the people confused. If his voice is the representative voice of the youth of Kashmir then it can be well imagined that the amount of anguish, resulted in the atrocities and pain inflicted by the Indian army, that the Kashmiri youth went through was enough for the inner conflict and trauma. This monologue of the narrator speaks volumes. The struggle for independence becomes more intensified day by day in the novel.

In January 1990, Jagmohan is appointed the new governor of Kashmir. He is notorious for his hatred for the Muslims. He is a racist and vindictive kind of character. Upon his orders the Indian army in January 1990 started operations and killing of unarmed innocent youth of Kashmir whose only fault was the demand of the right of self-determination. In reaction many more bands of freedom fighters emerged across Kashmir. The people of Kashmir launched organized protests against India. It was when the protestors were crossing a bridge in Maisuma when the Indian army opened fire and killed fifty Kashmiris.

"It was the first massacre in the Kashmir Valley"... later that night I lay in my bed imagining the massacre in Srinagar" (Peer, 14-15)

Success is not without suffering and freedom is not without sacrifice. "By February 1990, Kashmir was in the midst of full rebellion against India" (16). The Valley was burning and the Kashmiris were undergoing a series of trauma and conflict. Throughout the narration killing and clashes, fire and curfew, protests and shelling are painted in a real historical manner. If fiction is truer than facts then *Curfewed Nights* is a narration of burning Kashmir and traumatized youth and age of Kashmir.

"'War till victory' was graffitied everywhere in Kashmir. It was painted alongside another slogan: Self-determination is Our Birthright!" (peer, 17).

To intensify the conflict, the Indian government increases the number of troops across the burning Valley to crush the rebellion. The soldiers of Indian army patrolled all the time in every village and town of the Valley. They violate the sanctity of the home and house and slam every door to drag the young boys out. They walk with a mixture of aggression and nervousness in the streets of the valley with their fingers close to the trigger.

The films like *Pahadoonka Beta* or *Lion of the Desert* were quite popular among the Kashmiri youth and they view themselves as Rambo of Kashmir who, one day, will gain freedom for their people by sacrificing themselves. The young Kashmiri stop reciting Indian anthem at schools. They are clear about their identity but the ideology setters i.e. teachers are confused. The Hindu Principal of the school is confused and says to the children of school,

"If you don't want to sing it we can't force you to. Singing a song does not mean much, if you don't believe in the words you speak" (Peer, 23).

The narrator wants to be a freedom fighter. He has seen many guerrillas in his village with Kalashnikovs and few of them even stayed in the boarding schools where he has been studying. His parents and family members love him and want him to be a great man like his father and grandfather but he bears a strong but confused desire in his heart to become a freedom fighter. He has heard the stories of many young Kashmiris who crossed the LOC and got training from Muzaffarabad camps. His parents are not totally unaware of his desire of becoming a hero i.e. a militant.

“Mother looked at me for a long time and said nothing, and then grandfather fixed his watery eyes on me. ‘How do you think this old man can deal with your death?’ he said. His words hit me like the burst of water cannon”. (28)

His family members cannot bear the fact that their son is going to be among the militants. His father and grandfather served as government servants and they are confused to rise against the government. On the contrary, they are deep down in favour of freedom. They want to contribute in freedom struggle but they have inner conflict that divides them. They want to educate their son but they need right guidance. The best way to guide the young narrator of the novel is to bring him close to the religion. His father one morning sorts out his books and picks up a commentary on the Quran in English. “You must read it. You must understand religion and improve your English.” (30)

Confusion on the part of his father brings little and great together-religion and language skills. Every new day brings new stories of atrocities of the burning Kashmir. The conflict intensifies. Fear and chaos rules Kashmir. Almost everyone knows who has joined the militants and has been arrested, tortured or beaten by the Indian army. Fathers wish to have daughters instead of sons because sons are killed every day. Mothers pray for the safety of their daughters. People fear the knocks on their doors at night. Men and women who leave home for day's work are not sure they will return; thousands do not. Graveyards begin to spring up everywhere and market places are scarred with charred buildings. And people always seem to talk about border and crossing border; it has become an obsession among the Kashmiris or an invisible presence (p. 31).

According to Cathy Caruth trauma is “an overwhelming experience of a sudden or catastrophic event within which the response to the event occurs within the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (Caruth, p. 11). In *Beyond the Principle* (1953), Sigmund Freud argues that trauma is characterized by the absence of integration of the traumatic event into consciousness at the time the event occurs, which it can only be assimilated belatedly. In its disturbed and disrupted temporality, therefore, trauma for Freud represents the haunting of the individual by a picture or event and testifies to the profoundly unresolved nature of the past. Trauma fiction not only dramatizes the experiences of the survivors but also provides for his or her cathartic effect of rehabilitation. As a recent body of literature Trauma fiction depicts trauma, neurosis and other psychological complexities as dominant themes.

In the history of Jammu and Kashmir the time period beginning from 1989 had been of significant concern. This era is marked with the Kashmiri's struggle to get their right of freedom and democratic system for their region and the militant retaliation against the Indian army. In this era there has been massacre, murder, robbery, disappearance and rape resulting into traumatic psychologies of the Kashmiris. Victoria Schofield writes about these events as,

“A large number of the Kashmiri population suffered from the ill-effects of spending lives under siege... No historical record has been able to record the suffering and pains of these people” (Peer, 182).

Literature, being responsible to delineate a very transparent picture of life and very vivid description of the events having socio-political significance, has many specimens to mirror, translate, and relate the life in Kashmir. The contemporary literature about Kashmir is imbued with the instances of the neurotic conditions of the Kashmiris in the context of their helpless state before the Indian army.

The Country without a Post Office and Rooms are Never Finished, are the pieces of literature produced by Agha Shahid Ali (1949-2001). These pieces too offer a picture of the destruction and death in the valley of Kashmir. Agha Shahid's description of the chaotic life in Kashmir and states that he is able to hear the grieving mothers sitting before the windows, the snow falls like ash, the snowfall seems like flames, the Kashmir is set on fire by the midnight soldiers of the Indian army” (p. 179). Suvir Kaul is of the view the writers in the contemporary age have a sensitive soul and a sense of responsibility to voice the traumatic experiences of those who were deemed to be born in Kashmir. Kaul is of the view that,

“the life conditions in Kashmir demand for a particular kind of response that can register the psychological and emotional mechanism of the Kashmiris” (Peer, 72).

A list of such literary ventures aiming to portray the psychological dimensions of the burning Kashmir and the suffering Kashmiris includes Mirza Waheed's *The Collaborator* (2011), and *The Book of Gold Leaves* (2014), Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night* (2008), Siddhartha Giggo's *The Garden of Solitude* (2011), Shafi Ahmad's *The Half Window* (2012), Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* Rahul Pundit's *Our Moon Has Blood Clots* (2013), Shehna Bashir's *The Half Mother* (2014), and *Scattered Souls* (2016). These names are the very well recognized literary souls who have used their pens for raising voice for Kashmir.

Curfewed Night was written by Basharat Peer in which he depicted the point of Kashmiris and what are the actual issues and problems Kashmiri people are facing and how Kashmir looks like. This novel can be called semi-autobiographical. Though this novel he depicts his village life how beautiful Kashmir is and how Indian army is going bad these people. Through the reading of this novel, we came to know about the separation movement which is running in Kashmir. And how Kashmiris are being crushed between India and Pakistan. Through this novel Basharat Peer is giving us a new perspective like which we have seen in news or media is showing us but Basharat Peer's point of view is different he gave us the real picture and views of Kashmiri. He wrote about the sufferings of people. *Curfewed Night* was written through the Kashmiri Muslim point of view. Through the reading of this

novel, we came to know that after the start of separation movement how people of Kashmir are being crushed between two different forces one is the government of Kashmir and the other one is Indian Army. Leaders of this movement are resting in their houses and Indian army is crushing the poor young Kashmiris.

Curfewed Night was written by a Kashmiri Muslim and *Our Moon has Blood Clots* was written by a Hindu Kashmiri both writers have different religions but both have same point of the view about the issues of Kashmir. Both have same perspective about the suffering and pain of Kashmiri. Peer used to say in his novel that most of the people used to think that Kashmiris want a different just because they are Muslims or they have support of Pakistani government but actually they want a different place just for their own sake because they want to be a free nation because under the rules of Indian army they are being killed and being raped by them without doing any mistake.

Another thing is happening in Kashmir that they don't have their personal place to live because people who belonged to Indian Army have right to come in Kashmiri's house anytime of the day and questioning them for nothing and even, they raped if women are at home alone if they want to. So, we can say that Kashmiris have lost their identity, lost their dignity. Indian army can go at any home at any time without any legal order and if someone tries to raise his /her voice it means that he /she is not going to see his family again. Basharat Peer also mention this that all people who belonged to the Indian army are not bad some of them are good as well.

Basharat Peer used to say that when people used to listen word Kashmir the first thing which comes to their mind is that young people having guns but actually this is not the real image is totally different. They are totally being crushed on one hand by government and on the other hand by Indian army. Peer used to say that if you want to think about us you have to imagine Kashmiri brides and Kashmiri children because according to him, we should not be divided on the basis of religion or on the base of guns.

In his novel he mentioned that once at the time of attack on India Parliament in 2001 no one is willing to allow Kashmiri at their home and then Kashmiri Pandit lady allow him to stay at his home and she has statue of her god in the same room and asked from Peer is he comfortable with it or not and the Peer said that we Kashmiris believed in humanity not on based of religion.

Basharat Peer used to say that at his young age he wanted to join army because he wants to change the condition of Kashmiris but his father suggested him not to join army but you must have to be a writer to change the condition of his nation. Because according to the Peer so many Kashmiri young boys want to join army and for this sake, they sometime cross border line and enter in Pakistan to join army because they want to save their country and they want to stop the brutality in their country. His grandfather tells him that

“Being a militant isn't only about getting arms trained and fighting, it is also about excluded from the joys of life. Being a militant is also about near certainty of arrest, torture, death, and killing” (Peer, 212)

When Basharat Peer is depicting the beauty of his village he wrote when he was young and cricket match was going to take place among India and Pakistan how he and other Kashmiris are always on the side of Pakistani team even his Grandfather used to sit on prayer mat to pray for Pakistani team and all young boys dance on the victory of Pakistani team. He depicted these types of incidents in his novels which that Kashmiris also want to enjoy a peaceful life.

If we talk about the treatment of Kashmiris by Indian out of the context of this novel in 2021 when a cricket match was happening among the Indian and Pakistan and Pakistani team won, the match and three Kashmiri boys who are living in India and they started to celebrate the victory of India and Indian police put them to the jail that why they are celebrating the victory of Pakistan. On depicting the incidents of brutality of the Indian army he depicted that in 1990 a bride was on her way toward the village of her husband after her nikah, was raped by an Indian security person on border and spoil her whole life. Another event he depicted that three to four hundred people after being arrested disappeared no one knows about their lives and when people used to protest for the investigation of the people but the government used to say that they were going to Pakistan and were killed on the way.

The idea of the Kashmiris' re-presentation and functional transformation can be understood through Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* in which character Aijaz, a Pakistani Mujahid is introduced to Naga. Ashfaq, an army officer tells Naga that Aijaz is now reluctant to again join Lashkar and he wants to live in the prison to be safe. But Aijaz negates this statement while talking to the journalist who can tell the world about his truth, “If you write about me you must write truth. It's not the truth what Ashfaq Sahib said”, they in fact tortured Aijaz, gave him electric shocks and with violence made him sign a blank sheet and he does not know what they later write on that sheet. Aijaz is being represented by the one who controls discourse because of his powerful position. All his sacrifices for his cause are marred by the oppressive power structure,

“The truth is that I honor those who trained me in Jihad more than I honor my parents. I was the one who searched for this Lashkar and this Lashkar didn't force me to join them” (Peer, 381).

The Kashmiris being a minority become a victim to such hegemony and dominant discourse. In Tilo's files there is a collection of weird pictures with horrifying narratives. One of these narratives is about the Kashmiris betraying Kashmiris, but this betrayal is what STF forces upon their conscience. Two Kashmiris are forced to sign a witness against an Afghan terrorist, who actually is not a terrorist but a laborer from Bandipur whom the STF persons tied and stuffed into the manhole.

“The Indian government, being a hegemonic power not only exploits the minority but divides them through their functionally transformed narratives and re-presentation, “The Kashmiris stop talking to one other to better understand one other. They betray and wound one another, and they do terrible things to one another but they understand one another” (Peer, 332).

To understand any member of the society one has to understand his culture and community and language is a tool to present this culture. The subaltern's struggle for acknowledgment and acceptance is futile if the society can't understand his language. Arundhati

Roy gives a dictionary of Kashmir where she offers an alphabetic list of the most commonly used words in the life of the Kashmiri minority, “K; Kills/Kashmir/Kashmiriyat”, D; Disappeared/Deadbody” “H; Hizb-ul-Mujahidin (half-widows/half-orphans)” (p. 355). The collocations of Kashmir and Kill and half-widow and half-orphan initiate some debates. It actually draws attention towards the practice of kidnapping the young *Kashmiri jihadis* whose wives and children remain half-widowed and half-orphan till the time their status is of Disappeared. How such a group of victimized people be represented in a language which lacks the terms equivalent to the real-life blood freezing experiences of the Subaltern. The world can neither understand the meaning and pain of being half-widow and half-orphan nor it finds any linguistic expression capable of capturing this pain. The paradoxes in the common language are in fact the reality of Kashmir, “these days in Kashmir you can be killed for surviving” (447).

Basharat Peer’s father was a government officer in Srinagar and Peer said once the Curfew was imposed not only at night time and day time as well. Peer’s father was unable to come home and one day he came to know that five students have left but actually they did not leave they were forced to leave before military tortured them and they were Kashmiri Pandits. And this incident happened on 19 Jan 1990. As the situation becoming worst all parents want their children to leave Kashmir and same thing was done by Basharat Peer’s parents as well and Peer was sent to Aligarh for studies because his parents also want like other parents that their children should live a happy life and this only happened when they leave Kashmir.

In the light of the above discussion, it will be true to say that in this novel Peer depicted the real picture of Kashmir and their real feeling about the Curfews imposed by the Indian military. Through the study of this novel, we came to know the real picture of Kashmir and its beauty and the real suffering of Kashmiris are facing without doing anything. Peer used to say that in media and news people never know the reality and, in this novel, we can see so many events which are real.

“The situation in Kashmir seems the same, as the people have been denied of their basic human rights, because there seems hardly any scope in terms of improvement, and the situation becomes so grim day by day. The problems of a Common Man are same everywhere but the differences arise when these problems are solved in a different approach to each other. The ‘Common Man’ of Kashmir therefore is obsessed with the deficiency in the efficiency of the government, and has therefore lost all its faith in the administration system. Therefore, on humanitarian ground we can say that the government should look after the needs and aspirations of a common man in valley” (Ahmad, 36).

This discussion can be closed with Arundhati’s perspective about the voices of the Kashmiris. These voices are just a message of hope and light for the downtrodden and marginalized strata. She is very much aware of the world and its atrocities but she diverts her readers’ attention towards the nature which works on the principle of justice and inequality. She never portrays a utopian world where the poor weak manipulated outcast can fight against the Elite. But she lauds those who always look at the social hierarchies with dissatisfaction. If the protagonist Musa dies at the end the antagonist never lives to see his manipulation going on till the end of the world. Amrik Singh after torturing, murdering, cutting, and ripping the bodies of numberless Kashmiris finally kills himself and his family too. Musa voices the helplessness of the Kashmiris with a hope that there will be a time when the India will self-destruct itself. He knows that the Kashmiris can be weak but the nature can’t be weak and the Kashmiris will throw the Indians in the ditch of self-destruction,

“One day Kashmir will make India self-destruct in the same way, You may distort our bodies, you may make us disabled, you may try the strength of your pellet guns at the bodies of the Kashmiris but you will one day see that your weapons are not destructing us, but they are constructing us. It is not the war of Kashmir but war of India in which you are meant to be destroyed” (Peer, 711).

Arundhati Roy ends her novel with the message the Subaltern’s voice never goes futile and there is always a hope for them of being heard and acknowledged. The human beings who suffered in Kashmir in various dimensions may not be related to specific religion, they may be Sikh, Muslim, Hindu or any other religious group, they are only Kashmiris who are suffered. It can be say that everyone suffered irrespective to religion creed, colour, sex and nationality.

Conclusion

In the literature of Kashmir trauma and its impacts have been of crucial importance. Different writers have been delineating the portraits of struggling victims of the Kashmiris whose lives are an instance of matchless courage to compete whatever is evil and cruel. These tales are a narrative of boundless suffering and collective unconscious of the Kashmiris whose personalities are marked with undaunted courage and bravery. The current research has attempted to explore and analyze the struggle for freedom, the characters going through the traumas inflicted upon them in the form of violence and atrocities by the Indian militants.

The study concludes that *Curfewed Night* is indeed belonging to war conflict. It is the first narration in English language which tells the recent tumultuous history of Kashmir, the blood shedding, massacres, torture, and burning as lived experience of the narrator. It is an account of trauma and conflict experienced by the central characters. It is indeed a glimpse of an insider- the son of the soil. Contemporary war literature is no less vivid and troubling—even if it is less grand in theme and less demure in detail. *Curfewed Night* is a real. Chronological picture of the burning Kashmir the reader sees from the eye of a Kashmiri- the narrator himself.

The present study can be helpful for the future researchers because it gives an insight into the trauma, victimization of the Kashmiris and the challenges to the Kashmiris in the war ridden world marked with oppression and violence. It deals with the psychological mechanism of trauma and representation of the Kashmiris whose right to speak and to be heard is snatched with ideological justifications. The study is a positive contribution to understand, appreciate the South-Asian writers who offer a real account of the marginalization of the weak strata of human societies. The research aims to promote the Muslim writers like Basharat Peer who offers counter narrative and his efforts have been internationally acknowledged. His work is an appreciation of the Kashmiris’ struggle a selflessly dedicate struggle which despite no hope never ends anywhere.

The researcher here offers the recommendations which can be a way forward for the guidance for those who intend to venture in the domain of literature. The present study has confined itself to war, brutality, sufferings and traumatic condition. But the same can be analyzed with the lenses of Neo-colonialism, double colonization of women and commodification of women etc. The researcher recommends to explore all these problems. In addition to, the present study can be done in the light of Psychoanalysis, and an offshoot of psychoanalysis; trauma. But there are many other aspects of Psychoanalysis which can be explored in *The Curfewed Nights*. It can be suggested that Basharat Peer's novels can be studied in the light of Racism, Feminism and the theory of Deconstruction.

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