

# Expression of kashmiri women plight through female protagonists in post 1990 kashmiri novals

<sup>1</sup>Muthareen Ali,<sup>2</sup> Dr. Chaitanya

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English , Bhagwant University Ajmer India.

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of English , Bhagwant University Ajmer India.

**Abstract :** Conflicts are long lasting aspects of human behaviour and social relationships. Conflicts always exist in the human world with certain degree of levels and vary across the regions, countries. In this paper we bring the concept who the armed conflict in Kashmir started in 1989 have inflicted a devastating impact on the well- being of the civilian population particularly women. Among the high number of civilian casualties in contemporary wars, a large proportion of these casualties are women. In the times of conflict, women are subjected to rape and prostitution. Present research is an attempt to understand the impact of conflict on Kashmiri women and their significance in post 1990 Kashmiri novels.

**IndexTerms - Conflict, Women, Violence, Sufferings, Novels**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Kashmir conflict has wreaked havoc to all people of the valley but women folk has suffered the most. Men are often thought as protectors and women as people who need protection. One of the stories that have been told throughout history is that men fight wars to protect women. Thus, they are the worst hit due to the conflict. The dimensions of the conflict have been many and it has been difficult, due to research in these sensitive areas, to get holistic ideas about the problems faced by the women. Their problems have been multiplied over time. As the conflict raged on for more than twenty years, it has left them physically, socially, psychologically and economically distressed. Kashmiri women have been killed in cross firing, blown up in grenade explosions, shot dead or killed in tear gas shelling.

Violence to Kashmiri women takes different forms; they are bruised, beaten, tortured, maimed, mutilated, molested and sexually abused. Even most of them have been jailed for years together for political dissent. The Kunan Poshpora mass gang rape and the Shopian rape and murder case are undeniably the worst examples.

Kashmiri women over the last two and a half decades have undergone terrible shocks, gifted to them by the conflict. Their sons have been killed, their children orphaned, husbands disappeared, and thus are widowed. Very surprisingly , the term “Half Widow” is applicable only to women in Kashmir as their husbands have been subjected to ‘enforced disappearance’ and there has been no evidence of them since their missing; thus their sons become “Half Orphans”. As the world was unaware about the atrocities faced by the women of Kashmir, the reason being that Kashmir did not had the rich tradition of story telling in that contemporary situation, which could portray the agony and pain of Kashmiri people. It were travelers and writers from outside who told stories about this salubrious land to the world. Orphans”, a term again used for Kashmiri children alone.

In the literary history of Kashmir (2011) proved an important milestone. In this year, “The Collaborator” by Mirza Waheed, first major novel in English by a native telling Kashmir story with all its pain caused ripples in the world of literature. After that in (2014), two novels “The Half Mother” by young Shahnaz Bashir and “Shadow beyond the Ghost Town” by Shafi Ahmad were published.

Much has been written about the female protagonists in prose and poem in Kashmir. Hundreds of brochures have been published, thousands of theories punched, tens of thousands of blogs written, at individual and institutional capacities post (1990). ‘Conflict creates art, someone said. Over the previous hundreds of years, countless writers, poets, researchers, priests, artists, deeply influenced by the ‘Kashmir struggle’, have written countless accounts, fictitious and non-fictitious, of the raging spirit of its inhabitants. There were many novels written in Kashmir with females being the central theme, written post 1990 these novels highlight the sufferings of women in Kashmir with most of them still longing for their loved ones to come back, who are either lodged in jails or are lost due to the enforced disappearances. With the hope that they are still alive they move from pillar to post to look for them.

“There were people dying everywhere getting massacred in every town and village, there were people being picked up and thrown into dark jails in unknown parts, there were dungeons in the city where hundreds of young men were kept in heavy chains and from where many never emerged alive, there were thousands who had disappeared leaving behind women with photographs and perennial waiting, there were multitudes of dead bodies on the roads, in hospital beds, in fresh martyr’s graveyards and scattered casually on the snow of mindless borders” By Mirza Waheed, The Collaborator. “Srinagar hunches like a wild cat: lonely sentries, wretched in bunkers at the city’s bridges , far from their homes in the plains, licensed to kill....while the Jhelum flows under them, sometimes with a dismembered body. On Zero bridge the jeeps rush by. The candles go out as travelers, unable to light up the velvet void. Agha Shahid Ali, The Country without a Post Office

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The main objectives of research paper are:-

- To examine the issue of women folk in Kashmir since the resurgence of militancy after 1990s.

- To explore Kashmiri women's political experience of militarization, demonstrating how the struggle for freedom "centres" on women's conventional role as mothers, wives and sisters".
- To examine the role of fiction written post 1990 on the sufferings of Kashmiri women i.e, the sorrowful journey of mothers, sisters and wives who are in a tormented state after being separated from their loved ones during the armed conflict in Kashmir.
- To see how the novelists voice the sufferings and protest in the novels written post 1990 about Kashmir.

### III. REVIEW OF WORK ALREADY DONE

- **Iqbal Lone**, provides the superficial study of current day Kashmir and the widespread impact on the entire society and especially women. In his paper, "Impact of conflict on women in Kashmir" he writes about the experiences and their everlasting impact of violence and trauma on the women folk in Kashmir. This paper touches the issue of psychological disorders among the victims of insurgency.
- **Paro Anand**, gives a fictional, if somewhat simplified, account of the different events that happened in the valley. In her novel, "No Guns at My Son's Funeral" she gives her perspective on the different dimensions of the events of that period- the creation of a terrorist, the foreign hand and its influence on the youth in the valley.
- **Iveshu R. Bhatia** gives an account of Kashmir history and the creation of two nations. In her paper "War and Peace: An analysis of the Kashmir issue and a possible path to peace" she accounts the impact of terrorism and the proxy war situation in Kashmir.
- **Shafi Ahmed**, gives an important addition to the handful of historical fiction novels that have portrayed the troublesome lives, in recent times, of the residents in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The novel "Half Widow" proceeds to depict the plight of the half- widows (women whose husband have disappeared and cannot be traced). The author has used the tools of a historical fiction novelist, admirably, to blend in the story of a fictional Half Widow.
- **Ouffee Maqbool**, depicts the impact of conflict in Kashmir, started in 1989 this paper shows the devastating impact on the well-being of the civilian population particularly women. This paper touches the most sensitive cases of conflict, violence, sufferings, vulnerability, and gender equity. The paper is also an attempt to understand the impact of conflict on women in Kashmir and challenge the myth of civilian immunity to women in Kashmir.
- **Shahnaz Bashir**, in his debut novel, "Half Mother" has attempted to address the issue of involuntary disappearances in Kashmir. The novel circulates around the protagonist, Haleema, and her struggle to locate her only son Imran who was taken away by the relentless men in uniform. The novel is a depiction of reality in Kashmir which is under illegal occupation of Indian forces since past several decades. The author sums up as "Our sympathies should be with the oppressed and not the oppressor".

### IV. PRELIMINARY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The preliminary results shows the impact of the armed conflict in Kashmir which is complex and wide ranging and is experienced by people of all ages mostly women. The authors in their respective works have shown that in a raging conflict, women whether if she is a mother, a daughter or a wife she is the worst sufferer. Discussion of the result will be supported with the works of Paro Anand, Rahul Pandita Mirza Waheed, Shahnaz Bashir, Shafi Ahmed, Basharat Peer, and more. Final analysis will definitely bring out the genuine study of these writers. The specificity of the subject would tend us to analyse the problems faced by the women folk in Kashmir. Lastly our study would help us in understanding the Kashmir conflict and the role of women from a writer's perspective. It is a theoretical study and would involve a deep study on research done in the domain using factors such as conflict, war, gender and suffering of people of Kashmir. To comprehend our study properly we will take the help of various sources such as, books, articles, references and works of previous scholars and also the internet. Lastly we will try to analyse the collected notes and survey of post 1990 Kashmir conflict and the role of women and their suffering.

### V. CONCLUSION:-

Kashmiri , novelists through their female protagonists uncover the catastrophes conferred upon Kashmiri women by the deadly conflict . Every nook and niche of Kashmir comes out brimming with unceasing chain of tyranny and tears. These novels try to unfurl the silent agonies and emerging anxieties in Kashmiri women , compelling them to come across horrible life experiences. Laconically , all these works display the true colors of war hit territory like Kashmir.

### VI. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We feel grateful to the referees for their valuable suggestions that have helped immensely in preparing the revised manuscript.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. Anand, Paro. 2012, No Guns At My Son's Funeral, New Delhi: Roli Books. Waheed, Mirza. 2011, The Collaborator, United Kingdom: Penguin UK.
- [2]. Ahmed, Shafi, 2012, Half Widow, Kolkata, India: Power Publishers. Bashir, Shahnaz, 2014, Half Mother, Haryana, India: Hachette India.
- [3]. , Shahnaz Khalil Khan "Discerning women's discursive frames in CyberKashmir" (2015) 23(3) Contemporary South Asia 334 at 334.
- [4]. Dr. Ayesha Ray "Kashmiri Women and the Politics of Identity" (paper presented to SHUR Final Conference on Human

- Rights and Civil Society, Rome, June 2009) at 2.
- [5]. Dr. Ayesha Ray “Kashmiri Women and the Politics of Identity” (paper presented to SHUR Final Conference on Human Rights and Civil Society, Rome, June 2009) at 3.
  - [6]. Dr. Ayesha Ray “Kashmiri Women and the Politics of Identity” (paper presented to SHUR Final Conference on Human Rights and Civil Society, Rome, June 2009) at 14.
  - [7]. Showkeen Bilal Ahmad Gul and Dr. Zebun Nisa Khan “Interventions for promoting gender equality at elementary education level in South Kashmir: An evaluative study” (2013) 4(3) *Researchers World – Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce* 130 at 131.
  - [8]. , Showkeen Bilal Ahmad Gul and Dr. Zebun Nisa Khan “Interventions for promoting gender equality at elementary education level in South Kashmir: An evaluative study” (2013) 4(3) *Researchers World – Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce* 130 at 131.
  - [9]. Showkeen Bilal Ahmad Gul and Dr. Zebun Nisa Khan “Interventions for promoting gender equality at elementary education level in South Kashmir: An evaluative study” (2013) 4(3) *Researchers World – Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce* 130 at 131.
  - [10]. Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, Fouzia Khurshid and Nazmul Hussain “Gender disparity and policies of inclusion: A case study of women’s education in Jammu and Kashmir” (2011) 2(3) *Researchers World – Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce* 135 at 146.
  - [11]. Jasbir Singh and Anupama Vohra “Citizenship Rights of Women in Jammu and Kashmir: An Uncertain Future” (2007) 14(1) *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 157 at 157.
  - [12]. Nyla Ali Khan “Negotiating the boundaries of gender, community and nationhood: A case study of Kashmir” (2011) 18(1) *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies: Alam-e-Niswan* 1 at 13.
  - [13]. Jasbir Singh and Anupama Vohra “Citizenship Rights of Women in Jammu and Kashmir: An Uncertain Future” (2007) 14(1) *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 157 at 165.
  - [14]. Jasbir Singh and Anupama Vohra “Citizenship Rights of Women in Jammu and Kashmir: An Uncertain Future” (2007) 14(1) *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 157 at 167.
  - [15]. <http://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/main-article-kashmir-vs-women-1374449>
  - [16]. Swati Parashar "Gender, Jihad, and Jingoism: Women as Prepetrators, Planners, and Patrons of Militancy in Kashmir" (2011) 34 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 295 at 298.
  - [17]. Swati Parashar "Gender, Jihad, and Jingoism: Women as Prepetrators, Planners, and Patrons of Militancy in Kashmir" (2011) 34 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 295 at 298.
  - [18]. Swati Parashar "Gender, Jihad, and Jingoism: Women as Prepetrators, Planners, and Patrons of Militancy in Kashmir" (2011) 34 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 295 at 302.
  - [19]. Swati Parashar "Gender, Jihad, and Jingoism: Women as Prepetrators, Planners, and Patrons of Militancy in Kashmir" (2011) 34 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 295 at 303.
  - [20]. Swati Parashar "Gender, Jihad, and Jingoism: Women as Prepetrators, Planners, and Patrons of Militancy in Kashmir" (2011) 34 *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 295 at 303.
  - [21]. “Negotiating the boundaries of gender, community and nationhood: A case study of Kashmir” (2011) 18(1) *Pakistan Journal of Women’s Studies: Alam-e-Niswan* 1 at 7.
  - [22]. Mishra, Yogesh (June 27, 2018). "Women and Resistance in Kashmir". *Gender and Feminist Geographies Research Group*. Retrieved November 30, 2018.
  - [23]. Khan, Nyla Ali (2010). *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 134.
  - [24]. Sewak, Manjiri (2004). "Women's Initiatives for Peace between Pakistan and India". *Pakistan Horizon*. 57 (3): 121–126. JSTOR 41394062.
  - [25]. Sewak, Manjiri (2004). "Women's Initiatives for Peace between Pakistan and India". *Pakistan Horizon*. 57 (3): 121–126. JSTOR 41394062.
  - [26]. Khan, Nyla Ali (2010). *Islam, Women, and Violence in Kashmir: Between India and Pakistan*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 142.