

**Fears, Tears, Trauma and Violence: A Critical Study of Physical and Psychological
Fracturing Experiences in Mirza Waheed's *The Collaborator***

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Abstract

*Kashmir has been under the influence of militant forces for many decades. Violence, marginalization, and oppression at the hands of militants and the armed forces are common practices that have transformed the earthly paradise into hell. The plight of the people of Kashmir remained hidden from the world's eyes but in the first decade of the 21st century, many Kashmiri writers appeared on the horizon of the world literature to show the tormented picture of the valley to the world. Anglophone Kashmiri writings are characterized by the themes of violence and exploitative and coercive practices such as mass killings, disappearances, rapes, crackdowns, and uprootedness of the people. Mirza Waheed's *The Collaborator* is one of those dolefully poignant voices of Kashmir that tries to depict the true condition of the people of Kashmir. The present study intended to explore how the writer has portrayed the violent acts undertaken by the militants and armed forces resulting in traumatization and identity fragmentation of the oppressed masses. The multi-theoretical framework for this study was based on the power theory of Dennis H. Wrong (1995) and trauma theories of Cathy Caruth (1996), Jeffrey C. Alexander (2012), and Judith L. Herman (2015). These theories form a nexus and connect. The research focused on certain horrific events of the novel and traced the aspect of trauma resulting from violence, exploitation, and coercion. The findings of the study are eye-opening and add a contribution to the scarce body of research in the domain. It is a significant study because it highlights the condition of oppressed people that still need the attention of the world organizations, NGOs, and academic researchers for the alleviation of their trauma, misery, and excessive exploitation.*

Keywords: Violence; Coercion; Trauma; Memory; Indian; Kashmiri

Introduction

Kashmir, the earthly paradise (Khurshid, 2013; p. 1) known for her beauty, tolerance, and peace (Nabi & Khan, 2014, p. 20) and a battlefield since the decolonization in the subcontinent, was converted into “a bloody region, in 1989” (p. 20) when the peaceful resistance against the Indian atrocities took a very cruel and crucial turn. Kashmir has been facing political and military violence, through coercion and other types of force, causing the civilians' huge dislocation and harrowing experiences. This violence devoured the lives of more than seventy thousand people from Pakistan and India (Khurshid, 2013, p. 3), whereas other sources such as Dabla (2008) and Reuters (2008) (cited by Nabi & Khan, 2014) maintain that:

According to official data, about 47 thousand people have died during the conflict in the last two decades in Kashmir; however, Human Rights groups put the numbers at more than one hundred thousand. At the same time, around ten thousand people have gone missing, thousands of women have been raped and tortured, yet the conflict is still there; unresolved, taking the lives of innocent people (Nabi & Khan, 2014, p. 31) and contributing to their collective trauma.

Use of different modes of power by the Indian army and the resultant product—the traumatized people are always molded and manipulated by the Indian press (Shakoor & Waheed, 2016, p. 6; Shameem, 2016, p. 133), which stands for the ideological state apparatus through which the “[govts. strategically] employ strict censorship to control the flow of information to the general

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public and the journalists exist as mouthpieces for the governments" (LaMay, 2007, p. 25). In such circumstances, when the voice of Kashmir was not heard by the outer world, when the prevailing ground realities and the violation of human rights in Kashmir were hidden (that are still persistent), and the cruel face of the Indian Govt. was veiled, some of the Kashmiri writers like Agha Shahid Ali, Basharat Peer and Mirza Waheed "irrespective of their language of expression" (Shoaib, n.d., p. 78), with their works, brought into limelight the use of violent force by Indian army and the conclusive sufferings of the Kashmiris (Khurshid, 2013, p. 1). Ali's poem *A Country Without a Post Office* depicted "a surreal world of nightmare, fantasy, incongruity... pain, sufferings and hope...tortures, disappearances, killings..." (p. 1). Peer's memoir *Curfewed Night* (2008) and Waheed's novel *The Collaborator* (2011) showcase the Indian violence which left unscratchable marks on the psyche of the Kashmiris. They gave voice to the tales of their "battered brethren" (p. 3). The two latter writers' works created ripples in the literary world; both have profoundly crafted the anguish of Kashmiris, making the world open their eyes to Kashmir's intense human stories." (p. 2). In the same way, *The Half Mother* (2014) and *Scattered Souls* (2016) focus on individual tragic voices resulting from and resisting against the Indian atrocities in Kashmir (Shoaib, n.d.; p. 79). However, among all works, the novel by Waheed presents a fresh perspective to see through the Kashmir conflict ignored or manipulated by the mainstream narratives (Shameem, 2014, p. 146). The same point of view has been given by Showkat and Zakaria (2016). They present their thesis that militarism believes in using power over others to resolve conflicts (p. 284).

Anglophone Kashmiri fiction presents the situation of the tearing violence and fearing coercion characterized through mass killings, disappearances, rapes, and crackdowns (Chandak, 2017) in Kashmir, and displacement and uprootedness of people from the region. This use of diversified sources of force instigated people to either fight for their rights or flight away for their lives. It is recorded that more than 100,000 Kashmiris sacrificed their lives in the 80s and 90s (Nabi & Khan, 2014, p. 31) during the freedom struggle and armed conflicts. These forcible practices by the Indian forces passed on the fractured traumatic experiences to the people of Kashmir. So, parallel to the publication of *The Collaborator*, *Curfewed Nights*, and other works, it is important to produce more and more critical scholarship on the power patterns experimented on the Kashmiris, and the outcome of those repressive exercises. Through this study, the Kashmiri stance on the Kashmir issue has been presented which is in inverse relation to the Indian stance on the Kashmir issue. In addition to it, following the idea of *Literature and Trauma* by Hunt (2010), Kashmiri literature also makes the readers understand the psychological impact of war and traumatic memories (p. 161). This research is of due importance because it may be accessible to the outer world. It is an important fact to know that there exist only a few novels and critical works available on the internet. It means either the scholars avoid working on Kashmiri novels or they become a victim to the politics of publication. Instead of such circumstances, the research is hopefully a linking ring in the chain of Kashmiri scholarship. It is not only beneficial for the academicians but also fruitful for the social workers, NGOs, and Human Rights Organizations to see through the ground realities of Kashmir.

The present research focuses on the novel *The Collaborator* by Mirza Waheed, a Kashmiri-British diaspora writer. After Agha Shahid Ali and Basharat Peer, his name resonates as a figure tearing the so-called Indian robe of humanism. His novel narrates how and what types of power were being used to control the territory and the public of Kashmir. The story dissects the armed, political, economic, and media policies and their role to influence the lives of the people of Kashmiri village Nowgam on LoC. This village represents the whole of Kashmir. The research also explores how violent acts are transformed into a traumatic memory and how the Collaborator and the other characters become traumatized souls. The exercises of violent acts by the Indian army and traumatic situations are shown through the character of Collaborator, an unnamed narrator who works for an inhuman Indian Captain Kadian. He is on duty to collect the ID cards of those militants who are killed by Indian forces. During his search for cards, he always feels fear of seeing the dead bodies of his lost friends.

Research Questions

- Q1. How does violence ignite the reactionary spirit of the subjugated?
- Q2. In what ways trauma impacts the notions of the self as subject/subjugated beings?

These questions will help in the investigation and observation of the structure of *The Collaborator* comprising three books—*Now and Then*, *Then and Now*. The first book is a mixture of

past and present; the second book *Then* describes nostalgic as well as bitter past of the protagonist that he spent with his friends; and the third book *Now* returns to the brutal present where paradise has been made a hell, friends are far lost, blood is here and there (Chandak, 2017).

Research Methodology

The research presents a multi-theoretical framework to analyze the novel. Certain tints of power theory have been associated with the trauma theory. The term 'violence' bridges between the two diversified yet related concepts (details are written in the part of the Theoretical framework). Initiated by the classics like Aristotle and Plato, the concept of power was modified and further advanced by the 16th century Nicholo Machiavelli, 17th century Thomas Hobbes, 19th & 20th century Max Weber and Bertrand Russel (Sadan, 2004; Wrong, 1995). But we come up with the comparatively latest ideas of power in terms of public/social relations, Wrong considers it a skill or capacity (1995, p. 1), and Wartenberg takes it as a sort of capacity (1988, p. 3). Whatever the way has been adopted by each theorist, the core concern is the struggle between the powerful and the powerless which has been described by the theorists as the relationship between power actors. The role of the actors is further determined by his/her resources (p. 203). The same capacity (Wrong, 1995, p. 2) or ability (Poggi, 2001, p. 1; Wartenberg, 1988) is meant to control someone's behavior or situation. Power equalized with influence has certain subdivisions, out of which *force* with its subcategory *violent force*, and *authority* with its subcategory *coercion* have been engaged to describe the Kashmiri stance presented by Waheed in *The Collaborator*. The term *violence* works as a hinge between the power theory and the trauma theory. Certain key concepts from Wrong's book *Power: Its Forms, Bases, and Uses* (1995), Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996), Jeffery C. Alexander's *Trauma: A Social Theory* (2012) and Judith L. Herman's *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* (2015) have been chosen to design the theoretical frame to analyze the text through close reading. However, in many situations, the overlapping application of the concepts makes the research a bit complicated but interesting.

This research debates on the issues of how the concepts of violence, coercion, and trauma have been embedded in the novel, and how and why the Indian political and armed forces engage such strategic violence to legitimize their power in Kashmir. By answering these questions, the research tends to investigate the interconnections among violence, coercion, traumatized fractured experience, psychic and physical damages, and latency of conflicting memories woven in the plot of the novel. It aims to examine the account(s) of survivor(s) like the Collaborator (the protagonist of the novel) of this novel and the other major and minor characters related to the plot through the narrator. It is also meant for finding out the impact of oppressive suffering on the individuals and communities portrayed in the novels. Moreover, it provides the role of literature in a violent world. Besides that, the research also works as an eye-opener for the world powers.

Theoretical Framework

The concept of power, indeed the social power is so much controversy that it has included a good range of definitions and ideas within its scope. Due to a diversified multitude of definitions and ideas related to the concept of power, there occurs an intellectual debate concerning the exploration of the most suitable definition of power. Dahl defined power in terms of public/social relations, Wrong (1995) considers power as a skill or capacity (p. 1), and Wartenberg (1988) takes power as a capacity (p. 3). Whatever the way has been chosen by each theorist, the core concern is the struggle between the powerful and the powerless which has been described by Dahl as the relationship between power actors. The role of the actors is further determined by his/her resources. The same capacity (Wrong, 1995, p. 2) or ability (Wartenberg, 1988, p. 3) is meant to control someone's behavior or situation. Except for these theorists, there are many others like Hobbes, Machiavelli, Weber, Bachrach & Baratz, Lukes, Gaventa, Mann, Clegg, and Michel Foucault whose theses about power have been precisely discussed by Sadan in his book *Empowerment and Community Planning* (2004). In this study, we are not concerned with them, rather our major focus is on the concept of power described by wrong in his book *Power: Its Forms, Bases, and Uses* (1995), however, the cross-references at certain points are made to stretch and understand the scope of the present research.

Wrong (1995), like other power theorists describes certain concepts related to power. At some places, the terminology is the same as that of the others, and at some places, he coins his terminology. His theory of power is inspired by Hobbes' concept of "man's present means" (p. 2), and Russell's "process of intended effect" (p. 2). Thus, he talks about the idea of the *intentionality of power* that

describes that power is identical with intended and impact-oriented influence. If the intention to exercise power over the others is unsuccessful, it means that we are to face the absence or failure of power (p. 5). On the other hand, sometimes the intention of the power holder is fulfilled by the power subjects without any *overt* command. This type of power is *potential* or *latent* power (p. 7), but Sadan (2004) cites Lukes (1974) to describe the latency of power by using some political scenario. Contrary to this type of power is ‘actual power’ or ‘manifest power’ (Wrong, 1995, p. 7). Power, either *latent* or *actual*, presents an asymmetrical and unbalanced power-relation. It results in the control over the power subject (Poggi, 2001; p. 10; Wrong, 1995, p. 10), but this relation can’t be undone or reversed by the latter actor/agent of power i.e. the powerless.

Considering the issue of power, Wrong (1995) refers to Weber, and Lasswell, and Kaplan. The definition of power by Weber is *intention-based* which provides that “[power is the chance] of a man or several men to realize their own will in a social action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action” (p. 21). By using the word ‘resistance’, the implicit meanings can tend towards penalties or coercion (p. 21). On the other hand, Lasswell and Kaplan write that “power is a special case of the exercise of influence: it is the process of affecting policies of the others with the help of the (actual or threatened) severe deprivation for non-conformity with the policies intended” (p. 21). He also quotes Lasswell and Kaplan in terms of decision-making in the equation “with the capacity to compel obedience in the face of opposition” (p. 22). He further cites Gerth and Mills, and Weber by writing that “[power] can influence the conduct of others against their will” (p. 23).

Force, manipulation, persuasion, and authority are the major agreed upon forms of power. However, here our discussion is confined to *force* and *coercive power*, a type of *authority*. Wrong (1995) equalizes power with the *influence* that is further subdivided into *unintended influence* and *intended influence*. Wrong (1995) divides *intended influence* into subcategories—force, manipulation, persuasion, and authority. Force, according to him, is bifurcated into psychic and physical, where the latter consists of *violent* and *non-violent* types of force. This research focuses only on coercion about violent force.

Force indicates biological or physical force which has been more elaborated in the discussion ahead, and the same points out of many are applied to the novel. First, of all, the ultimate force of violence aims at creating physical obstacles restricting the freedom of another (power subject). Secondly, it inflicts pain, injury, or even the loss of life on the power subject. Thirdly, the frustration of basic biological needs (that must be satisfied) is created. This type of violence is the denial of food, sleep, or rest. Fourthly, confining someone in the four walls or otherwise removing him/her from the scene also typifies violence.

He also establishes a relationship between the ‘actual exercise of force’ and its intended threat (coercion). Coercion and violent force are in a reciprocal relationship with each other. If coercion fails, the actual power i.e. force is exercised that strengthens the impact of coercion in those power subjects who are non-compliant (Wrong, 1995, p. 26). Force does not only make someone avoid acting, but it also establishes in the minds of the power subjects the “future credibility of the power holder’s willingness” (p. 27). Wrong (1995) lists certain points as: first, men are subjected to physical and psychic punishment to deter them from the future repetition of prescribed acts; secondly, rebellions are suppressed to discourage their supporters; thirdly, prisoners are tortured to induce them to co-operate with their captors by providing desired information in the hope of avoiding further torture; and fourthly, the offenders may be removed by death or confinement to set an example for the others (p. 41). In all situations, the power holder must be vigilant enough to oversee and well informed about the activities of the power subjects.

Trauma and violence are interconnected; the former occurs when the people undergo a “series of painful events to which they are subjected” (Caruth, 1996, p. 2), or procedure of negative events including violence. Violence may be faced by one once or many times in one’s life. Violence can emboss or engrave long term effects on the psyche of a survivor. According to the document of *Public Health Agency of Canada* (2018), the trauma and violence informed approaches study the impacts of violence on the well-being of the people. It also studies how an association is developed between the past violence and the ongoing violence (Caruth, 1996, p. 8), which causes certain trauma responses. Trauma refers to “an injury inflicted upon a body...in Freud’s text, the term *trauma* is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind” (p. 3). In terms of the representation of trauma,

“the wound that speaks is not precisely [one’s] own but the wound, the trauma of another” (p. 8), so the trauma of others seems to be one’s own. According to Jeoffery Alexander’s (2012) *Lay Trauma Theory*, the trauma experience occurs when the traumatizing event interacts with human nature. Human beings need security, order, love, and connection. If something happens that sharply undermines these needs, it hardly seems surprising and the people will be traumatized as a result (p. 8). So, according to Casper and Westheimer, a traumatizing experience is defined by the mind’s response to an experience rather than its intrinsic properties (Powell, 2016, p. 441). Traumatic symptoms are divided into three main categories—*hyperarousal, intrusion & constriction* (Herman, 1997, p. 35) that follow each other in a sequence. *Hyperarousal* means a state in which a victim perceives threat existing everywhere. It also describes that the victim lives in a “persistent expectation of danger” (p. 35). *Intrusion* is the state in which a victim is unable to delete the image of the catastrophe from the mind of the victim whereas the *Constrictive state* shows the victim’s submissiveness and utterly powerless condition.

Analysis

The Collaborator (2011) is the debut novel of Mirza Waheed. It is set in a village Nowgam on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC) which separates Indian-occupied Kashmir from Pakistani Kashmir (Pirzadeh, 2018, p. 2). A young man working for the Indian Army is the protagonist of the story. He belongs to the only family that remains behind in Kashmir after mass migration caused by the violence exercised by the Indian Army. Kadian, the cruel Indian captain hires him as “an official accountant of the dead” (Waheed, 2011, p. 11) militants, killed in encounters with the Indian army. He also collects the “identification cards from dead freedom fighters whose corpses have been thrown in an open grave in a valley” (p. 2).

The novel consists of three parts—*Now and then, then and now*. Technically, the setting of the novel strengthens the depiction of the violent acts performed by the Indian troops, Kashmiris’ struggle for liberation, historical facts, and a chain of negative events that activate the memory of the collaborator, hence picturing the traumatized collective self of Kashmiris through the narration of an individual’s accounts. The story is as dedicated to the missing friends of the collaborator, as the author of *Curfewed Night* dedicates to the “[memories] of the missing boys who could not come home” (Afshan, 2020, p. 475). According to another research, about four to eight thousand people got disappeared whereas about seventy thousand persons were killed by the militants or the Indian army (Lone, 2015, p. 19). The novel speaks loud about the collective struggle of the Kashmiri people against the Indian political and armed forces that legitimized the Kashmiri identity crisis, marginalization (Afshan, 2020, p. 476), and use of force through soft and hard strategies e.g. military oppression (Afshan, 2020, p. 476; Shameem, 2016, p. 133) and media politics (Shameem, 2016, p. 135).

The narrative by Waheed functions as a documentary “composed of both sentimental stories and relevant environmental facts” (Pirzadeh, 2018, p. 3). The sentimental stories are more related to the narrator’s missing friends who have crossed the borders to Pakistan. Here, trauma lies in the sudden disconnection with his bosom friends that also damages the self of the loser (Herman, 2015, p. 52) i.e. the collaborator. The story expresses that the separation does not only affects the psychological structure of [the protagonist] but also the system of attachment that gives meaning to relations among individuals and society. As a collaborator of the Indian army, he is always fearful of seeing the dead bodies of his friends (Waheed, 2011, p. 10), but it is never materialized. The fear accompanies “a fresh stream of tears rolled down [his cheeks] (p. 162) when he thinks of his lost friends. The first part of the novel is replete with the stories of Hussain, Mohammed, Gul Khan, and Ashfaq. The ongoing violence in the valley triggers back the memories of bygone pleasant past with the enchanting songs of Hussain, the protection of the cricketer Mohammed, the charismatic personality of Gul Khan, and the melancholic figure Ashfaq (pp. 20-21). In this situation, the traumatizing events, as Alexander (2012) writes, interact with the human nature of the anonymous narrator. Like all human beings, he also needs security, love, order, and connection (p. 8). But unfortunately, he loses these basic human needs and commemorates his past companions frequently. Herman (2015) also asserts that such traumatic events breach the attachment with the family and friends, and fractures the self of a person that is sustained by the connections with the other fellow beings (p. 51). His current duty as the collector of IDs and other remnants belonging to the corpses lead his memory to his own friends’ past company (Waheed, 2011). In this regard, the narrator is

found narrating the “last memory of [Hussain] shaking hands with [the narrator]” (p. 22). He had so much emotional attachment with Hussain that he feels himself alone in the valley. Like, Hussain, the other three friends also cross the borders in reaction to the militancy of the Indian troops. The violence compels the youth to become militants that leave nonerasable marks of misery on the souls of their families, friends, and community.

The traumatized situation affects many people. Even the narrator's mother looks fearful of losing her son when she says about Farooq, "Such a gentle boy, such a handsome boy, curse on those who misled him, curse on this cross-border drama" (p. 40). This statement reflects how post-traumatic stress disorder i.e. (PTSD) trauma symptoms—*hyperarousal* and *intrusion* (Herman, 2015, p. 35) co-exist with latent potential power, actual power, and coercion. *Hyperarousal* indicates the persistent imminence of danger whereas *intrusion* refers to the indelible impact of the traumatic moment. The latent or potential power (Wrong, 1995, p. 7) and coercion or intended threat fulfill the intended purpose (p. 2) of the Indian army when the narrator's mother advises him that “this gun-shun business” (Waheed, 2011, p. 40) is worthless and the Indian army beat up and kill the people. Here, the trauma of displacement boosts up fear of loss and punishment among the others. After Hussain's departure, everything has changed (p. 67), “the universe of the village had changed” (p. 109), and the collaborator wants to reconnect with the lost friends by crossing the border (57) but later on his ardent desire disappears due to the exercise of coercive power. For example, he whispers to himself, “Go home, go home ... sad soldier. Someday, you might die in these parts and no one will claim you” (p. 74), and while passing through the valley of corpses he is more traumatized and curses Kadian for landing him in this state (p. 74, p. 152). Here, the responsive categories *intrusion* and *constriction* (Herman, 2015, pp. 37-38) are being exercised. It means being so much traumatized, he is not happy with his present job but he is forcibly put into it by Kadian (Bashir, 2012, p. 1). His dialogue “in [his] sleep” (Waheed, 2011, p. 149) with the dead body of the militant Rouf Qadri is the result of hyperarousal response in which “the traumatized person startled easily...sleep poorly” (Herman, 2015, p. 35) and undergoes nightmares (p. 35). This response to trauma also stops him from crossing the border as Rouf Qadri was “caught in an encounter on the LoC” (Waheed, 2011, p. 149) and was brutally killed by Captain Kadian (152) which the Captain celebrates with his high official Mehrotra Sir. These types of violent acts are misquoted through media and other sources to legitimize the prevailing situation in the Kashmir valley.

Force indicates biological or physical force that aims at creating a physical obstacle restricting the freedom of another (power subject) by inflicting pain, injury, or even the loss of life on the power subject. In the previous section, it has been discussed concerning Lasswell and Kaplan that power is a capacity used to influence others or compel others to be obedient in the wake of opposition. In the novel, there are many instances of such type of violence just to control the actions of the Kashmiris. As it has already been described that border crossing becomes a permanent cause of torture for their families and the neighborhood. On a Monday morning, army troops with "a full caravan of vehicles, with LMG-mounted windowless jeeps at the front and a menacing, dark grey tank-like truck at the rear" (Waheed, 2011, p. 183) raid the village. These artillery items, according to Hobbes, are “man's present means” (Wrong, 1995, p. 2) to produce an impact-oriented influence on the power subject. The raid is a reactionary act to stop the youth drain across the borders. Noor Khan, the BBC Sa'eb (Waheed, 2011, p. 77) assumes that how the crossing border of four boys could have been kept a secret “under the very nose of the Bharti Fauj (Indian Army)” (p. 183). He is right in his presupposition and the army raids Gul's house and interrogates Gul's parents and Farooq. They also shout at Farooq, “You want Azadi (freedom), right? We will give you Azadi (freedom)” (p. 185) and take him “bound in ropes” (p. 186) with them. The scene is very pathetic when,

Gul's mother came out with hands raised to the skies, crying. She was a short, stocky woman and, looking into the receding vehicles, gave a piercing cry beckoning them to stop. Gul's father, Sharafat Khan, stood motionless near her, gazing at the storm of dust from the departing military vehicles. Noor Khan turned to me. He looked sick (p. 185).

The story proceeds on with the account of the third-degree interrogation methods applied on the suspected or confirmed militants. All who visit Farooq after he has been released are curious about how Farooq might have been tortured. Farooq “lift[s] his *kurta* (long shirt) up and show[s] us the area above his groin. There were small, etched black pits all over his pubic area” (p. 186). After it, Farooq is never seen walking (p. 188). This all happened to Farooq because he is the brother of Gul (p. 191).

The narrator's mother describes the dilemma brought about by Gul as: "It's all he's doing, this thing, you know—his brother is suffering now, his mother, his whole family, everybody, all because of them"(p. 191). This incident strengthens the coercive power of the Indian forces and people talk about the horror of torture and pray for the safety of their loved ones from such torment and disastrous situation. The trauma of Farooq once again becomes a source of agony for the narrator's mother and she starts spending more and more time with him (p. 189). Here, the exercise of coercion and the other's trauma mold the actions of the would-be militants by going through the trauma responses i.e. *intrusion* and *constriction* (Herman, 2015, pp. 37-38). Later on, Farooq is taken from his bed by the Indian troops in a predawn raid (Waheed, 2011, p. 190) and three days after it, his head was hurled over the fence into the garden of their house whereas his "bloated, headless body [was found] lying near a narrow stream running down from the mountain" (p. 196). At this time, "a lot of people had cried over Farooq's death, even an otherwise stoic Baba [the narrator's father] had appeared moved, and Ma [the narrator's mother] had wept almost as much as Farooq's mother" (p. 200).

The story of Rahman, the son of Shaban is also one of the examples relevant to this theme of changing the flow of the actions of the others through violent acts. However, this time, the torture is not at the hands of Indian forces, rather it is by the Afghan militants who cut his right wrist, his father's nose, and his mother's tongue and ears (pp. 208-211) based on the doubt that Shaban, the Khoji Gujjar (p. 206) had informed the Indian forces about their secret existence in the valley and the presence of their lost piles of ammunition. In the same way, Khadim Hussain, the father of Hussain, is also killed by the Indian forces on account of his support for the militants. It is considered that he informed the Mujahideens about the expected crackdown (p. 222) by reciting *Ulti Azan* [reversed call for prayer] (pp. 213-214) which he never did before. In the same way, the story of the crackdown in Poshpur has been narrated with minute details. A man is dragged out of the ID parade i.e. the queue of men passing by the informer. With the setting sun, the violence gets worse than before. The rifle butts and batons are hovering and falling on the heads of the men coming and going (p. 275). The collaborator also thinks about the wailing of the "mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, fiancées" (p. 276) of those who will disappear or die at the hands of forces. It all brings Khadim Hussain's dead body before his eyes. So, the ongoing events correlate with the past bitter memories. Caruth records that such situations bring infliction to both body and mind (1996, p. 3).

The frustration of basic biological needs (that must be satisfied) is created. This type of violence is the denial of food, sleep, or rest. In the novel, the chapter "The Milk Beggars" (Waheed, 2011) typifies this type of violence. On an early summer morning a group of ten or twelve women aging between 20 to 35 years, visit the shop of Noor Khan. They are in a very pitiful state and are weeping continuously. They tell the story of a curfew that prolongs for more than three months and nothing remains to eat (p. 179). The women plead for some milk for their little kids for whom they have traveled through streams, mountains, and rivers. The poignancy of the situation intensifies when they are forced to eat their *ghairat* (p. 181) or honor and are ready to give their girls in exchange for a little quantity of milk (p. 181). A very heart-rending statement from the novel can be read to imagine the situation:

'Our babies will die. Zubaida's daughter died last night, did you hear, did you hear that?' The third woman again, the one with the hennaed hair. 'Our breasts are barren now, nothing left for our children, nothing. We have eaten all the grass in our gardens and finished all the pulses we had and cooked every grain of rice there ever was.' (p. 181).

Confining someone in the four walls or otherwise removing him/her from the scene also typifies violence. When the boys move across the LoC, the posters of Azadi with the slogans "Pakistan Zindabad/ Hindustan Murdabad...Hum kya chahte! (We want freedom)/ Azadi! /Go back, go back! Indian dogs, go back!" are displayed (pp. 175-176) in the valley. To stop this insurgency against the Indian government and the armed forces, a curfew is launched in Nowgam (p. 177) which the collaborator narrates as:

I learned that this second curfew had arrived rather late in our village... ever since the new Governor had arrived. He liked curfews. Those three months of curfew were the last days of our freedom. Everything changed after that... But it was double curfew for us now. How were they to enforce that? I had no idea. What was the difference? Curfew within a curfew, what did it mean? It turned out that this one would be very different (p. 176).

Crackdowns and search operations also come in the domain of violence and coercion exercised on the power subject by the powerful. It is both to establish the credibility of the powerful and (Wrong, 1995, p. 26) crush those power actors who challenge it. The narrator also recounts the story of the crackdown in Nowgam (Waheed, 2011). There is an announcement on the loudspeaker of the mosque that there will be a search operation, a crackdown for some security purpose. Soon the people of all ages gather in the open field outside the village in the full swung winter cold. On the second day of the crackdown, they observe a dead body lying in the field. All the people coming out of their houses attend the exhibition of that dead body. Walking towards the body makes the observers feel as if they are looking at themselves. Ultimately, the narrator "reach [es] the spot, stop[s] for the tiniest of moment, and look[s] down at the perforated body—Khadim Hussain's body" (p. 221) whose lips are a bit open as if he were thirsty (p. 222). He has been killed by the troops for his sympathy for the freedom fighters. This also comes in the scope of coercive strategy through which the offenders may be removed by death or confinement to set an example for the others (Wrong, 1995, p. 41). When a soldier abuses the narrator by yelling and asking if he also wants to end up like Khadim Hussain? The connection between the displayed dead body and coercive strategy is solidified. Hence, as a coercive strategy, Rebellions are suppressed to discourage the supporters of freedom fighters/militants (depending on the perspective).

Conclusion

The novel under study is, no doubt, an eye-opener for every class of humanity—from a common reader to a literary scholar, from the world forums of human rights to the NGOs. The narrator the mouthpiece of the author narrates the topography, demography, and the history of Kashmir conflicts. The above discussion reveals how the violent acts carried out by the Indian army and the militants produced a long traumatic history of Kashmir. The narrator, the unnamed protagonist of the novel expresses the border crossing of his four friends that bring about misery to all the village. The people become the veterans of Indian armed violence. It also highlights how the resourceful Indian army being a powerful power actor exploits and influences the powerful subjects of Kashmir. The novel also reveals how the violence converts the lives of the common people of Kashmir into fears, tears, and traumatic memories, and how the Indian forces legitimize their exercise of power on the power subjects. The ongoing negative events like the collection of IDs from the corpses, the murder of Farooq, the crackdown, and curfews bring the traumatic memories to the narrator. Nowgam represents all Kashmir, Kadian represents the Indian perspective, and the narrator is an ambivalent figure working for Kadian. His bloody duty is also a constant source of trauma for him. All the trauma symptoms i.e. hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction are seen applicable to all the characters including the narrator and his mother.

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