

ARRIVAL OF INDIAN PARAMILITARY FORCES AND INSURGENCY  
IN KASHMIR: A REALISTIC STUDY IN THEBOOK OF  
GOLD LEAVES AND THE HALF MOTHER

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**Abstract:** *It is necessary, however, to lay stress upon the dreaming valley of mountains which is torn apart in bloodbath upheaval. To prevent misapprehension towards Kashmir conflict, it should however, be added that of novelists work as a whole, it is generally with a certain amount of truth. It is not necessary that Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir produced everything literary fictional, but everything in the novels is an expression and portrait of the reality of Kashmir. It is evident, through the experience of the study of Mirza Waheed's TheBookofGoldLeaves and Shahnaz Bashir's TheHalfMother, are deeply disturbing and conflicted melancholic portrait of the valley Kashmir.*

**KeyWords:** *Bloodbath, Kashmir conflict, truth, Mirza Waheed, The Book of Gold Leaves, Shahnaz Bashir, The Half Mother, disturbing, melancholic.*

### **Introduction**

Since the complex phenomenon of Kashmir conflict as we know, it dates back to the middle of the twentieth century. It is rooted in the history of the partition of the British colonial empire between India and Pakistan after World War 2. The situation in Kashmir since 1989, has affected the life of the people, living in Kashmir. The approach of paramilitary forces to the people of Kashmir is humiliated and inhuman. The barbaric behavior of army personnel aggravated human life in the vale. In 1987 after the failure of an election, for two years, there was a political unrest in the valley between political parties, MUF in opposition of two central Indian government sponsored political parties, National Conference and Congress. Indian union government found MUF a threat to the 'promise' Indian Union Government had given to the people of the state in 1947 on the accession of the state to Indian Union. Muslim Union Front was supported by the whole valley and everyone in the valley argued that the elections were deceitful and fraudulent, and which government should come next was preplanned by the central government of India. The political unrest lasted for two years, in 1989 when Central Government of India deployed

paramilitary and military forces in every residential area of the valley that complicated the social life in every respect and their oppressive behavior towards Kashmir natives insisted them to stand an armed rebellion movement against military forces and Indian Domination.

Both the novelists have demonstrated fragile entanglement of conflict, identified and unpacked the military presence in their texts. The specific complication account of war as well as rebellion response against paramilitary forces. They connect a close analysis of military forces and army relationship with local civilians. They have attempted to locate Kashmir conflict within its emphasis on textuality.

The major concern of this paper is to put forth the realistic account of arrival of Indian Paramilitary and military forces, and to analyze the situations after their arrival that compelled the valley's youth to take arms. Waheed's cognition of realistic elements in the novel is a complete comprehension of Kashmir conflict that reflects the history of partition as well as the armed uprising of 1989.

The novel '*The Book of Gold Leaves*' opens with a pale, sad light which possessively comprehend the concept of sorrow and glum in the readers mind. Faiz, protagonist, belongs to a Shia family. Faiz is a young, handsome, and smart papier-mâché artist. Alongside this, Mirza Waheed introduces female protagonist Roohi, a beautiful young Sunni girl. She prays to almighty Allah to make her wish of dream of love come true and to stay with her love for the whole life. She wants a love story, a life of romance and pleasure with her love. Finally she falls in love with our young smart, and talented papier-mâché artist our male protagonist of the novel.

The novel gives us an account of art, love, and armed treason against Indian rule in the valley of Kashmir. The personal desire of Faiz in making his secrete and passionate painting 'Falaknuma' remains unfinished, the concept of love affair moves further more complex with the intervention of the Indian armed forces, the reason behind Faiz's crossing over the LOC (Line of Control) to Pakistan for armed training is the representation of thousands of Kashmiris who similarly crossed the LOC. and the huge peaceful demonstrations is a portrayal of the whole valley in the resistance movement.

Faiz condemns the presence of Indian paramilitary forces in the valley and in the girl's school of their locality where her younger sister, Farhat, is a 10<sup>th</sup> class student. Faiz claims that due to their (Indian Army Forces) presence in the valley he lost his godmother and feels restless at her death, which is actually claim of every Kashmiri who lost their loved ones in the conflict and turned as armed rebellions. He (Faiz) feels valley as no man's land as there is no one responsible for her (god mother) death.

The discourse between Faiz and his elder sister, Shahida, on the military occupation over Farhat's school debates very hard between brother and sister which comprehensively makes it clear, that author exposes to us, the presence of military forces is the reason behind the armed movement in the valley. Shahida's arguments are quiet humble towards military soldiers that dictates the intellectual thought of Mirza Waheed regarding the colonial discourses over the territory. She knows that the overwhelmed military presence in the valley or in school is not their (military soldiers) own decision. She claims, they have been deployed here by higher authorities and the union government of India. They are just following the rules of higher authorities have made for them. Their hands are tied in the compulsions of duty. The discourse is held in the beginning of the military placement in school. On the other hand of discussion Faiz objects their presence in every respect. He doesn't accept their presence which is symbolically an argument of He argues, the higher authorities, officers or government should not send them here in the valley and claims this is not chicken-and-egg situation here. The cause of armed movement in Kashmir is their arrival. He claims military forces came first in the valley the boys took arms after their arrival.

Okay, *officers* shouldn't do this. *They* shouldn't send them here. Happy? This is not a chicken-and-egg situation, my dear sister. They wouldn't have taught you this at college, but remember one thing, the soldiers came first! The boys took to arms later. (Waheed, 46).

After the deployment of forces into valley it is important to recognize that the Kashmir debate claims their presence conducted by every class of society. Similarly in Farhat's school, the debate conducted by her class mates. Farhat also joining them in the discussion on the occupation of military force over their school. They too like Faiz claim their presence in their school. Their presence is claimed in every debate in, schools, offices, Homes, and streets etc. After the death of Faiz's godmother his elder brother was tortured by the military forces when they raided the area, captured unarmed youth, and tortured people of every age of the locality. The raids followed tortures, oppression, and humiliation, rapes, killing, and enforced disappearance.

Faiz claims to Roohi that his spontaneous over flow of thoughts of his godmother's death and elder brother's torture didn't supported him to sleep for many nights. He is restless in the thoughts of death and torture. In addition to this, when Mir Zafar Ali (Faiz's older brother) recovered to his conscious he suggested Faiz to choose and join the track of armed insurgency which he found the only way to see his brother safe and secure from the tortures and despotism of Indian armed forces, who do kill and torture people ruthlessly, who even have no mercy on children, women, and elderly people of Kashmir. This demonstrates the livelihood of youth of Kashmir in turbulence, who are highly chosen by the military forces to be killed, to be ashamed, and to be abducted. He (Mir Zafar Ali) explains to him that why he

suggested Faiz, not his own children, because they are older than him, one has paunch and balding due to which they will not be interesting in them. He advises him to leave to cross over to Pakistan as soon as he could. The content here entails the youth in Kashmir is completely at risk in the hands of military forces. Similarly, in *The Collaborator*, the Author narrates the deal of military forces in Kashmir with the youth is to catch and kill.

Whereas Faiz was already in dilemma whether to cross Line of Control or not to Pakistan administrated Kashmir. Though he wanted that this bloodshed should come to an end and for that he found himself on the best way if he chose to get involved in armed insurgency. He had not the other way to follow that would help him to finish it peacefully. Therefore he left the valley and joined the armed movement and crossed the line of control to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir where he was trained for the six months. In order to restore the peace by explicating the military forces from the valley. This portrays the reality of every Kashmiri youth that joined the armed resistance due to such compulsions. Similarly, they have no other ways like Faiz to protest to demand justice they deserve. The novelist wants to convey here that the youth who joined armed insurgency in the valley of Kashmir just want to get rid form Indian military domination over Kashmir. And they are on the right track in doing so.

Faiz's motive to cross over to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir is not only revenge of his godmother's death and brother's torture however to expel the military forces who are basic cause to uproar in Kashmir though they could live peacefully. The valley's turmoil is due to the Indian military forces who followed opposed mankind activities. They distracted the mental stability of the youth of Kashmir by their ill-use of power they are provided by the central government of India. Throughout the study of the novel it noticeably denounces the military presence and their behavior towards the natives of Kashmir valley is oppressive and humiliated.

The enforced disappearance is crime against every world law which occurred in Europe during World War 2 in colonized countries when, after arrest, thousands of people were transferred to Germany in order to repress the resistance movements in the colonies they have occupied. After the World War 2 in the second half of the twentieth century the enforced disappearance reached to Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Carrabin and it is being practiced still in some countries in Asia and Africa. Similarly in Indian administrated Kashmir since 1989 enforced disappearance became an apparent tool of Indian armed forces to suppress their voice. The number of enforced disappearance of people in Kashmir is more than eight thousand since 1989.

Enforced disappearance is a recognized phenomenon under the military occupation of India over Kashmir. However, day by day disappearance in valley by the hands of Indian military forces grow in a large scale which also gives a widespread rise to the youth of Kashmir to join armed insurgency. Consistently, the

disappearance of innocent people has witnessed more than eight thousands in last twenty seven years of insurgency.

The concept of enforced disappearance is distinctively tied in to the notions of colonial and post- colonial theories. Both in the context of conflict and the novel and in every element in the novel, the novelist seeks to describe the characteristic features of colonialism as a system of domination and subjugation. The adaptation of injustice have been described as a straightforward task of political organizations. Colonialism is a form of domination where the people of colonized territories are subjugated by armed domination of colonizers. Colonized are suppressed by force of domination. Their traditional cultural, social, and moral values are overthrown by the force of suppression of colonizers. The establishment of such practices are mostly contested among intellectuals of colonial discourses.

*TheHalfMother* is the story of a mother who lost her son in the wake of insurgency. Haleema, the protagonist of novel was an apple for her parent's eye. She is the only child of her parent. She lost her mother when she was an eighth class student. Due to household circumstances and being the only child of parent she left school and donated her books to her classmates. Very soon with the help of a neighboring women, Shafiq, who assumed her mother's role and taught her household chores got expertise rapidly in the chores. Later Ab Jan, her father, married her with a medical assistant that proved unsuccessful when she came to know about her husband's filthy affair with a nurse in hospital. After knowing this she divorced her husband. After nine months of marriage she gave birth to a baby boy whom Ab Jan named Imran.

Before the deployment of forces Shahnaz demonstrated Joo's family in three generations and what they experienced in their daily lives is inevitable as that is a natural call that has to face every individual in his own version. But story takes a merciless change in no time when military forces arrive Natipora, where Joo's family lived. In their presence the Joo's generation reached to its climax that makes abrupt end of Joo's family. Firstly Gh Rasool Joo was killed in his own compound in front of his daughter and grandson, Haleema and Imran, by an army major, Kushwaha, who pumped three bullets in his body in neck, heart, and stomach.

The representation of people who have been disappeared is the accuracy of the novel within the conflict which summarizes the reality of enforced disappearance in Indian Administrated Kashmir when, Shakeel in the witness box in court reveals the truth behind Imran's disappearance which dictates the act of enforced disappearance of innocent people:

A man means a medal... I told him I knew a boy who was a namesake of Imran Bhat: Imran Joo was on my mind... Then one night he suddenly barged into my cell and got me dressed in a long trench coat

and wrapped a scarf around my face. We raided Imran Joo's house and caught him. (Shahnaz Bashir, 138).

In a late night when major Kushwaha raided their house and picked up Imran. Haleema begged Kushwaha and other troops that he is the only hope of her life don't take him away from me. She begged Kushwaha:

'You killed my father! Leave me someone to live with! How could you be so cruel?' (Shahnaz Bashir, 56)

But none among them listen to her helplessness and left her alone in the house in such dark and cold night. Haleema along with imam and Shafiq in the morning reached to the nearest police station which is two kilometers away from the locality, they live. From where Shahnaz Bashir's narration dictates the stories people whose relatives similarly have been picked up by Indian paramilitary and military forces, and when they reached to their nearest local police stations they got same response what our protagonist gets in the novel:

'It has been a long time since we filed an FIR. A long, long time. Actually we cannot lodge an FIR against the army.' ... 'Our job is now confined to identifying, carrying and delivering dead bodies to their families. That is the job of the police now...' (Shahnaz Bashir, 63).

Next day along with the whole neighborhood she reached to the military camp where Imran was taken. An army soldier at the entrance gate admitted when Imam told him the major of this camp picked up a boy from Natipora, but instantly another troop interfered and said he is not in the camp. He was sent somewhere else. They protested and blocked the road after some time military soldiers came from other camps beaten the crowd and some were kidnapped in order to make them disappear from the road. Similarly the families whose relatives have been enforcedly disappeared protested when they do not get any clue of their loved ones. There protests are still seen in Srinagar in which they demand justice to bring their loved ones to them. Like Haleema they could not find them. Similarly they went everywhere they could in order to get them. They visited every military camp, every torture center, every police station, and every prison in Jammu and Kashmir and other states of India. They sold properties everything in the process of searching their dear ones which brought their economic situation very critical. They faced starvation, physical weakness, psychological disorder, and they look old in young age. The wrinkles covered their faces and foreheads in the tender young age. Their hair turns white rapidly and even they die young in trauma of their disappeared ones.

The name of the protagonist in the novel has been taken from the realistic account of the enforced disappearance of people in Kashmir, Haleema Qureshi, who lives in north Kashmir misses her son in the wake of armed resistance in Kashmir,

who was quiet innocent like Imran in the novel and had no deal with any armed rebellion group which would make him guilty in parlance of Indian government and military forces. And similarly, like our protagonist's son, he was the only bread winner of the family and survival hope of her mother, but military force's brutality has not showered mercy on her condition and left her, similarly, in the life long restlessness and pain. The narrative of the novel, *The Half Mother*, is apparently comparative to her journey in quest of her son from the beginning to the end of the story. In the beginning efforts at her son's disappearance she approached almost every police station and every paramilitary and military camp, but, when her efforts proved futile she filed a *habeascorpus* petition in the Jammu and Kashmir High Court where she struggles till her last breath of death. Haleema Begum said about the disappearance of her son 'Bilal Ahmad Bhat' before she and her younger son were killed, which locals reportedly links to her persistent efforts to trace her disappeared son:

I went from pillar to post to get any trace of my son but to no avail. I lodged a report in the police station ... but the officer in charge refused to register a case. I approached the Inspector General of Police ... and at first he assured me that my son's whereabouts would be made known to me but when I approached him again after some days I was chased away. Finally I filed a petition in the High Court and pursued it for some time but could not continue for lack of money as I am very poor. ... My son had nothing to do with militancy ... His "disappearance" is unbearable for me. Neither his person is shown to me nor is his dead body shown. This is a horrifying experience for me and other members of the family... I am right now helpless. It is very difficult for me to manage the household affairs. His "disappearance" has virtually brought us to the level of begging. God knows what will happen to us.

Similarly the protagonist filed her case in the Jammu and Kashmir High Court where she was termed as the half mother. She struggled for her son till her last breath. She died while uttering:

'Imran Saeba? Aakha?' Imran. Have you come? (Shahnaz Bashir, 178).

The novel in realistic sense is the representation of those people whose hearts have been scattered in life long distress of lamentation of their missing sweethearts. They, how a mother, a father, a bother, a sister, a wife should search, searches their loved ones in the every possible ways. Of course their every attempt goes in vain but they continued their search. A measurable number of parents, wives, brothers, sisters, and the elderly people died in waiting of their disappeared ones but they struggled till their last breath to find out them. The enforced disappearance is a never healing pain of Kashmiri people.

In reading the novel *The Half Mother* it is well to remember the most important subject of the novel enforced disappearance became predominant overthrow over the natives of Kashmir since 1990, when more than six hundred thousand military forces were deployed. Enforced disappearance brought a lifelong mourning to the families of disappeared people. They die of a new death every day. Since the overwhelming deployment of paramilitary and military forces in the valley of Kashmir which was known for its colossal beauty and peace loving environment as paradise on earth is now altered into the hell in which from every respect Kashmir is the victim of hell fire.

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