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Excavation of Kashmiris' Historico-Cultural Trauma in Peer's *Curfewed Night*

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Letter of Recommendation

Tanka Nath Subedi has completed his thesis entitled "Excavation of Kashmiris' Historico-Cultural Trauma in Peer's *Curfewed Night*" under my supervision from April 2013 to February 2014 A.D. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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This thesis entitled "Excavation of Kashmiris' Historico-Cultural Trauma in Peer's *Curfewed Night* " submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Tanka Nath Subedi has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

Basharat Peer's non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* deals with the historico-cultural trauma and its negative impacts upon Kashmiri people. The text *Curfewed Night* depicts the victimization of Kashmiri people that occurs with the history of cultural clash and cultural encroachment in Kashmir, which leave indelible scars upon them. In *Curfewed Night* Peer shows the tendency of tirelessly recounting own experience to everyone by those who witnessed critical condition but those true witness could not bear and recount easily to get solace from trauma due to haunt of memory. Peer narrativizes trauma and tries to share effects of cultural trauma with reader through which he tries to keep critical distance with trauma or tries to be in 'working through' approach of trauma. Peer portrays the miserable situation of Kashmiri people and their inarticulate grief from which, they try to get rid of through testimony and attempt to overcome by calling for collective identity formation. Kashmiri people suffer from various trauma related problem like hallucinations, chronic stress, haunts of memory that was caused by the historico-cultural trauma, artistically present in the text. Peer shows the lack of harmony among Kashmiri people. Therefore, they were destined to suffer and he attempts to call for harmony and unity for peace and bright future.

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I. Historico-Cultural Trauma in Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night*

This research tries to critically analyze Basharat Peer's non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* from the perspective of historico-cultural trauma, cultural trauma especially that drags by the historical events and memory. It shows how cultural trauma reflected in *Curfewed Night* and what makes the life of Kashmiri people traumatic. It also explores traumatic history with its negative impacts. In the text most of the member are haunted by the past events like arrest, massacre, explosion, interrogations by militants and military and become victim of trauma. Peer artistically presents various problems like haunts of memory, hallucination, violence of history, and the incurable inner fear in this text through the characterization of people who suffered from the impact of trauma. Cultural trauma mainly focuses on the destructive activities of history, which leaves the scar upon collective identity or community. Powerful community acts upon powerless community and the history always is in the favor of power holding community.

Though Basharat Peer expresses his will of free and independent Kashmir in the text, trauma is revealed through the suffering of Kashmiri people in the text in which Peer and all members of his community suffered from historico- cultural trauma. Due to which, they lived with various problems like incurable inner fearfulness, haunts of memory and hallucination of history. Even the negative impact of cultural trauma makes the life and the collective identity of Kashmiri people problematic.

A Kashmiri journalist Basharat Peer wrote an autobiographical text *Curfewed Night*. Peer was born in Kashmir in 1977 and studied science at Aligarh Muslim University and journalism at Columbia University. He worked as a reporter at *Rediff* and *Tehelka* and wrote for various publications including *The Guardian*, *Financial Times*, *New Statesman* and *Foreign Affairs*, where he was an assistant editor.

Basharat Peer transforms himself from journalist to a creative writer and depicts what he experienced and saw in Kashmir where he spent his childhood. He develops his many news reports as his inspiration for writing this book. This text *Curfewed Night* is an autobiographical text where he portrays his own experience of horror and terrible days in a bold way. Ahmed Rashid says, “The story of Kashmir has never been told before so evocatively and profoundly” (cover page). This sentence proves the artistic capability of Peer. *The Hindustan Times* writes, “The first English language narrative by a young Kashmiri Muslim which describes Kashmir’s recent tumultuous history as lived experience” (cover page). With this writing, *The Hindustan Times* also accepts Peer as a brilliant and skillful writer. By exposing the dreadful history in the non-fictional text, Peer obtains the place and proves himself as a writer that was also proved by the words of Khushwant Singh who praises the craftsmanship of Peer, “Beautifully written brutally honest and deeply hurtful” (cover page). Peer also gets inspiration by reading Shakespeare’s and Marx’s books which he got from his father.

Peer depicted the terrible and unforgettable history in this text with various events and moments that he himself experienced, saw and listened from other people of Kashmir. Basharat Peer was inspired to become a writer from various writer who wrote their own history and culture to give contribution towards own place by exposing the reality. After reading traumatic stories of various conflict zones, which was written by local people like Palestinians, Africans and others, he promised to write about Kashmir, his memory from the callous varnish of time. Peer, as a Kashmiri journalist lists all his own experiences and events of Kashmir through this writing and becomes a bold writer of Kashmir who shows the cultural, political, economical, and other instabilities in Kashmir and their negative impacts on Kashmiri

people.

The non-fictional text was written in the historical background of the partition violence and conflict of Kashmir with the political and historico-cultural circumstances of Kashmir. The text *Curfewed Night* portrays Kashmir of 1989 and 1990s when Kashmir was governed by violence and the Kashmiri people suffered from traumatic situation and fire of inner fear. The text's title itself shows the emergency, which denotes the critical period for common people. The text *Curfewed Night* is a product of historico-cultural trauma, which brings some incurable problems upon Kashmiri people like crisis of identity, sense of diasporas, hallucination of fearful history, haunts of memory and chronic stress. In this text writer exposes how the Kashmiri people have been victimized by historico-cultural trauma. Its a pile of traumatic experiences and condition of Kashmiri people who live in uncertainty in every aspect of life.

The text exposes the traumatic condition of Kashmiri people who mainly suffer from the political, religious, and especially cultural differences among various communities where hostility spread like spark of fire and create miserable condition. In the text, he exposes the traumatic condition of Kashmiri people and his own inarticulate grief, shock that haunts him time and again. Peer shows how the Kashmiri people are in bereavement at the time in this text. He himself was attracted towards such traumatic activities affected by the slogans of free and independent Kashmir once at his schooling. Peer and all his friends, whose parents could afford fee of college, left Kashmir for their study and better future to secure their life. But he faced many difficulties in Delhi where he went for better future. Peer expresses his experience of not getting room in Delhi because of his Kashmiri Muslim community's background where the Indians think that the Kashmiri Muslims are terrorists and they

kill them in Delhi.

The text also shows the radical phase in Kashmir from where Hindu Pandits become prey for Muslim communities and migrate to Jammu at dilapidated camp facing identity crisis with inarticulate grief like Peer felt in Delhi. Kashmiri youths were restricted to sing Indian anthem in school at the time of assembly and they wanted to develop relation with Pakistan rather than India, which destruct the Hindu culture at the same time. Both militants and soldiers misused the holy places like temples of Hindu and it lost its aura and own culture which denotes Hindu history and importance. The Kashmiri people also changed their traditions and customs, which were related to their local culture because of violence in Kashmir. They used to go at dusk or after the sunset to the home of bride but because off the conflict they started to do it at mid-day, which is the vivid and visual effect of the historico-cultural trauma faced by Kashmiri people.

Curfewed Night brings out all those impacts of cultural trauma that is intolerable but unavoidable. This text is about such traumatic events, which create goose bumps in body while it haunts time and again. Traumatic events of the contemporary Kashmir shocks the Kashmiris who feel diasporic experience while remembering the past or while the memory haunts them.

In this text, all the people suffers from traumatic situation and its negative effect like hallucination, chronic stress, haunts of memory that happened in the past. After reading this non-fictional text many critics critically analyze it. Among them, Raghav Sharma writes:

The author also asserts that the struggle in Kashmir is strongly underpinned by issue of etching out a Kashmiri identity. However he, like most other commentators on Kashmir, approaches the issue of

identity purely from the sub-regional level, focusing essentially on the Kashmir Valley, ignoring strong counter- discourses on identity formation from Jammu, Ladakh and region like Mirpur in POK. (2)

Sharma opines that *Curfewed Night* is about the suffering of the Kashmiris' and says that Peer only shows the intention for identity of self as regional and religious group but not all the groups of Kashmir. He also says that Peer ignores the demands of other's identity formation and strong counter-discourse on it from Jammu, Ladakh and Mirpur. The critic only criticizes it from the perspective of nationalism but not from the perspective of trauma theory.

Another critic of the non-fictional text, Charles H. Middlebough analyzes *Curfewed Night* and writes, "reading the book and comparing its tales of systematic, summary arrest, gratutions rape and torture, mindless brutality, massacre and mass arrest, I was struck by the negligible coverage it receives in the world's press in comparision, say to, Israel"(1). Middlebough analyzes the text and says that the text excavates the traumatic condition of Kashmiri people with collection of traumatic events. He focuses on the physical and psychological aspect with the expression of words that cause trauma like mindless brutality, rape, and torture but he does not give emphasis to the socio-cultural aspect of trauma cause by historical events or historico-cultural trauma.

Tasleem Ahmad War, another critic of the text, *Curfewed Night* asserts his idea about the situation of Kashmir and its people and analyzes in this way:

Since 1989, when the separatist movement exploded, more than seventy thousands people have been killed in the battle between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. Born and raised in the war torn region, Peer brings this little, known part of the world to life in haunting vivid

detail. Peer tells stories from his youth and gives gut-wrenching accounts of the many Kashmiri' he met years later as a reporter. (3)

In these lines, War focuses on the surrogate or secondary rather than primary trauma experienced by the writer who was born and grew up in the traumatic situation of Kashmir where war occurred and more than seventy thousand people lost their lives. The critic does not analyze how the effects of historico-cultural trauma ruled Kashmir but he emphasizes on the war history and takes the writer merely as a surrogate victim.

Basharat Peer exposes the indelible wounds of Kashmiri people in his non-fictional text, which was created by the effects of historico-cultural condition. Peer depicts the negative effects produced by the historico-cultural trauma like haunts of memory, identity crisis and the critical situation of individual as well as collectiveness or culture. Salma Malik who asserts her idea in this way has analyzed *Curfewed Night* in *IPRI* journal:

In the rest of India too, they are treated as not Indian enough. They are under constant surveillance and a general sense of being the “other,” enhances their sense of alienations and displacement. Returning to his homeland after more than a decade, he found it a land of “brutalized, exhausted and uncertain people”, where conflict might leave the streets but it might not leave the soul. (145)

In this extract, Malik analyzes the non-fictional text which is about Kashmir and its people who suffered from trauma and gives emphasis on the loss of collectivity among the Kashmiri people, identity crisis and loss of cultural aura rather than the physical and psychological aspects where the dead history ruled present because of historico-cultural traumatic condition of Kashmiri and its negative effects.

Another critic Arup Kumar Sen, after reading the text *Curfewed Night*, analyzes this non-fictional text in this way:

The 1990s was the decade of “disappearance” in Kashmir and the Bhardas and their plays disappeared as well the intense violence of 1990s left no space for folk theatre. But a new generation is preparing itself to tell the story of the last few decade of Kashmir and brings to the world’s novel, memoirs and reportage that have been shaped in the hard crucible of Kashmiri politics. (82)

Sen, a critic who analyzes the non-fictional text, *Curfewed Night* by Basharat Peer focuses on the cultural aspects of Kashmir and Kashmiri people but not physical and psychological traumatic situation of Kashmiri people. Sen only talks about folk theatre and culture, which is disappearing, with the span of time or due to war in Kashmir to which he pronounces as the decade of disappearance. He does not give any image of physical and psychological impacts that was produced by the historico-cultural trauma among the people of Kashmir.

To present the changes of Kashmiris’ due to effects of cultural trauma, Nina Rao analyzes the text *Curfewed Night* in this way:

As he makes his way back, he comes across a migrant Kashmiri pandit working as a commission agent for a travel agency. Did he feel sympathy for him? One cannot be sure because the images of camps, soldiers and encounters have so changed the life of Kashmir that the seething anger and sadness that has transformed age old customs and traditions with curfews, shootouts and arrest, make it difficult to see what the future might be like. Just as there were physical changes in Kashmir so also there were changes with the militants. (89)

Rao, in this extract analyzes the non-fictional text mainly on culture and collective identity rather than physical and psychological effects or disease like mental disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and paranoia. She says that because of the curfews and shootouts Kashmiri people were compelled to adopt new culture instead of their own, which is main negative effect of historico-cultural trauma. She also shows the relation between Pandits and the writer then expresses the uncertainty of people in Kashmir.

Raghav Sharma vehemently criticizes *Curfewed Night*. As he remarks that *Curfewed Night* is similar to an agenda of a part of Kashmir but not of a whole or collectivity. He further criticizes the text as supportive book of partition and against collectivity, which raises the voice of a group but not of a whole Kashmiri people who are in traumatic condition. He categorizes this text just about certain groups of people but it does not represent whole traumatic situation of all people. But, most of them come with their good feedback towards the book and writer though they are unsatisfied and want to raise questions about presentation of subject matter. Some of them emphasize on the physical torture, rape, arrest, and massacre as a main issues that we can also find in Peer's non-fictional text rather than culture, customs, traditions and collective identity. Some critics give emphasize on cultural and collectiveness of Kashmiri but not mention about its effects. Mainly those critics emphasize on the physical conditions and hardships of Kashmiri people with its effects but this research gives emphasis on the effects of historico-cultural trauma and its negative impacts upon Kashmiri people.

Though critics penetrate and analyze the non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* with their bitter criticism and good feedback, they do not open the main door of the text. They only try to expose and explain those matters, which they saw from the

irrespective window. The text *Curfewed Night* is a pile of negative impacts of historico-cultural trauma like hallucination, haunts of memory of vicious history, chronic stress, and crisis in culture and collective identity. All the people of the non-fictional text are guided by the dead or past history which they cannot take out from their soul. Their life is in uncertainty and experience as dead though they are alive in Kashmir. Though the text also mentions the will of freedom and independent Kashmir, writer's attraction towards it, the non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* mainly gives emphasis on culture, customs, traditions, collectivity and the effects of historico-cultural trauma upon them which cause various problems.

Trauma, a medical term of Greek origin, generally denotes shock, injury inflicted in body. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, "trauma is a mental condition caused by severe shock especially when the harmful effects last for a long time" (1384). Trauma ruled over the world with the emergence of various wars and conflicts. Trauma theory in literature developed systematically after the mid 1990s when various lines of inquiry converged to make trauma a privileged critical category. Trauma study includes many fields focusing on psychological, cultural, philosophical, ethical, historical, aesthetic and historico-cultural question about the nature and excavation of the traumatic events.

At first, a model of traumatic subject and its various accounts of effects related with memory was provided by Freudian psycho-analysis. Cathy Caruth who is known as a pioneer of trauma theory described the term trauma and writes, "Trauma is, after all, is an attempt to think differently the relation between "event" and "mind," in which the two are not separable in the usual ways" (78). Caruth says that trauma is not separable from events, which create various problems in minds with its flashback. She further says that, "Trauma has a history that it appears on the scene, disappears,

returns etc” (78). From this, she exposes the effects of trauma, haunt of memory of history.

In general, ‘Cultural’ denotes society, community, or collectivity and the term ‘Trauma’ refers shock and the negative effects that remain long time. Cultural trauma refers to such condition when members of collectivity feel they have been forced to an extremely shocking event that is amalgamation of two terms ‘Culture’ and ‘Trauma’. The term cultural trauma itself shows relationship with collectivity and community but not with mere individual. Therefore, the cultural trauma focuses on the collective representation of social construction but not on individual event and its effects. In this regards Neil J. Smelser says, “A cultural trauma is, above all, a threat to a culture”(40). As he opines cultural trauma denotes threat to a culture that contain collectivity. He further says,” Cultural traumas are for the most historically made, not born”(37). In this line, he focuses history that plays vital role to create cultural trauma. Historico-cultural trauma indicates the combination of cultural trauma and history. Cultural trauma that occur due to history or historical events are historico-cultural trauma which depends on memory of past. Similarly, historico-cultural trauma denotes the states of collective members when they experience that they are compelled towards shocking which comes from history and leave indelible mark upon them. Historico-cultural trauma especially exposes the unforgettable scar that left by historico-cultural events and its memory which haunts repeatedly. Culture is creation and recreation of history that fluctuate with the span of time or history (past experience and memory) drags the culture.

Among many cultural trauma theorists, Jeffery C. Alexander defines cultural trauma as a construction of collectivity guided by memory in his book. He says, “Cultural trauma occurs when members of collectivity feel they have been subjected

to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, making their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways” (1). As he opines, cultural trauma occurs when members of groups, community, society and civilization feels that they are forcefully guided by extremely shocking events of history and its memory which leave an unavoidable scar in psyche. Cultural trauma emerges when the members of whole collectivity or community think their identity is in crisis and that never gained after it disappeared. According to him, the memory change the future that means the identity created and re-created by history. So the cultural trauma that happens due to historical events and memory is itself historico-cultural trauma.

Another historico-cultural trauma theorist Ron Eyerman focuses on the collective identity and collective memory that shows the relation between culture and history. He says, “As cultural process, trauma is linked to the formation of collective identity and the construction of collective memory” (60). Eyerman emphasizes on the term collective identity that formed by collective memory where memory indicates history, grounded on the formation of collective identity. He further says, “Collective identity refers to a process of “we” formation, a process both historically rooted and rooted in history” (74). In this line, he shows the relation of collective identity, culture, and history where the collective identity is rooted in history that analyzes by historico-cultural trauma.

Neil J. Smelser, a historico-cultural trauma theorist pours his notion of historico-cultural trauma by differentiating cultural trauma with psychological trauma. He writes, “Trauma is dependent on the sociocultural context of the affected society at the time the historical event or situation arises” (36). Smelser emphasizes on the historical events and socio-cultural context in which trauma depends. He says that

trauma occurs due to historical events or situations. Smelser focuses on the creation of collective identity that created with history.

Dominick LaCapra, a historico-cultural trauma theorist defines trauma and writes, “Trauma may bring radical disorientation, confusion, a fixation on the past and out of context experience [. . .]” (45). In this line, LaCapra expresses that trauma which studies the relation between culture and history with traumatic perspective is historico-cultural trauma. He distinguishes between two forms of remembering trauma. The first one is ‘acting out’ that refers such kind of trauma from which victims cannot come out and always is haunted by history. LaCapra further writes, “[A]cting out in which one is haunted or possessed by the past and performatively caught up in the compulsive repetition of traumatic scenes”(21). In this line, he opines that the term acting out indicates insurmountable condition of victims who cannot come out from the trauma and its effects. Those victims of acting out cannot distinguish the past and the present and compel to repeat past in the present. Another is ‘working through’ which indicates the situation of victims where they can live in present by keeping distance with past memory but cannot totally get rid of from it or they live with the scar of history. LaCapra says, “Working through is an articulatory practice: to the extent one works through trauma (as well as transference relations in general), one is able to distinguish between past and present”(21-22). As he argues victims of working through can differentiate past and present that helps them to live in present. They know that they have traumatic past but can keep critical distance with past memory. He focuses on the scar or mark that leave by the history that cannot remove or no one can surmount the historical events and its effect. He says that the cultural identity is based on the memory or on the road map that was created by history. Moreover, to know and analyze it historico-cultural theory is necessary which

can penetrate the effects of trauma.

Jenny Edkins defines trauma relating it with power and politics where people fight for sovereign and freedom. Edkins writes, “[T]he effects of trauma that it produces, and forms of political community” (9). She focuses on the political community to form collective identity, which create trauma upon them. She further writes, “[O]ne that is deeply worrying – is that the state, or whatever form of power is replacing it, has taken charge of trauma time” (233). She says that due to power replacing process, violence takes place and that creates trauma in people. Therefore, she gives importance on power politics that brings trauma.

Mainly, the historico-cultural traumatic effect has been reflected in the non-fictional text though there are psychological, physical, ethical and other aspects of trauma. The historico-cultural trauma is excavated to explore the effects of historico-cultural traumatic conditions, which govern Kashmir and Kashmiri people. This theory digs out all the problems created by historico-cultural traumatic condition like hallucination, haunts of memory of vicious history and its indelible scars though they cannot be eliminated. The theory explores the traumatic situation of people whether they are primary victims or secondary victims of trauma.

This research penetrates the non-fictional text, *Curfewed Night* from the perspective of historico-cultural trauma and exposes the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people. This project reflects the history and reality of Kashmiri people and dig out the history of cultural clash and deals with cultural conflict. The research works on Kashmiri people’s process of collective identity formation and harmony of them to create their own identity and finds out some conclusive idea that is necessary for them to move their life towards peace and bright prosperity.

This research contains six chapters in total. The first part of the project

introduce the issue and subject matter of the research as well as the objectives of the project. The first chapter of the thesis contains general concepts of historico-cultural trauma, review of critic upon the text *Curfewed Night*, definition of trauma and cultural trauma with the reference from many theorists. Similarly second chapter analyzes how the cultural clash and cultural encroachment becomes the cause trauma. What is the relation of trauma with cultural clash and encroachment? Since how long the chain of cultural conflict cause trauma upon Kashmiri people. Likewise third chapter describes the traumatic situation of Kashmiri, how they try to deal with historico-cultural trauma. Do they work through the trauma or act out and remain in trauma? In the same way, fourth chapter presents the text as a testimony of Kashmiris' experience, definition of testimony and shows how Kashmiri people try to get solace through testimony. In the same manner, fifth chapter of the research exposes necessity of collective identity and writer's attempt to call for collective identity formation with some references from the text. Finally, the sixth chapter provides conclusion of whole thesis and shows that harmony among Kashmiris is require having no option to form collective identity and to live in peace, which make their life happy and can get solace from trauma.

II. Cultural Clash and Cultural Encroachment as the Causes of Trauma: A

Study of Peer's *Curfewed Night*

This research analyzes the non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* from the perspective of historico-cultural trauma. The text is a pile of cultural clash that takes place time and again. All of the people of this text suffered from trauma that was caused by cultural clash and cultural encroachment. The text exposes the conflict between various cultural groups that occur repeatedly in history of India and Pakistan where Kashmir becomes a battlefield. The cultural clash between India and Pakistan mainly and supporter of India and Pakistan inside Kashmir cause the trauma among the Kashmiri people. The issue of frequent conflict and cultural clash is raised in this non-fictional text and the writer expresses his own experience as well. The powerful community or cultural group attacks upon powerless where powerless community try to protect its own culture and existence and then the cultural clash and cultural encroachment takes place that causes trauma upon people.

However, people have their individual freedom and existence they lives in the society that binds them in every aspects with certain periphery. People born and grow within the certain boundary of community and guided by same society. In this regard, Jeffrey C. Alexander says “[. . .] trauma is not something naturally existing; it is something constructed by society” (2). In this statement, Alexander focuses on the compulsion of people to suffer from trauma due to society and cannot exist individually. Being social beings, they are forced to raise voice and fight for the contemporary society where power and politics play the vital role that sometimes leads towards betrayal, cause cultural clash, and results into trauma. Jenny Edkins, writes:

This can be devastating because who we are, or who we think we may

be, depends very closely on the social context in which we place and find ourselves. Our existence relies not only on our personal survival as individual beings but also, in a very profound sense, on the continuance of the social order that gives our existence meaning and dignity: family, friends, political community, beliefs. If that order betrays us in some way, we may survive in the sense of continuing to live as physical beings, but the meaning of our existence is changed. Commonplace solutions to do with who and what we are and what life might be provided by culture, religious beliefs, patriotic sentiment or close family relationships are overwhelmed. Any illusion of safety or security is broken. Events seen as traumatic seem to reflect a particular form of intimate bond between personhood and community and, most importantly, they expose the part played by relations of power. (4)

As Edkins opines in this extract, the existence of people related with the social context and guided by society where they cannot perform themselves merely as individuals. As she says, sometimes people are forced to do activities due to social matter that lead towards cultural conflict and cultural encroachment, which is the cause of trauma.

The text, *Curfewed Night* exposes such trauma and its effects that experienced by Kashmiri due to the contemporary society, historical background, power, and politics. In the text, Peer writes:

They were caught in the whirling of imperial politics. Akbar, the Mughal emperor of Delhi, invaded Kashmir in December 1585. Yusuf considered resistance futile but his army fought and stopped the Mughal march. Fearing an eventual defeat, Yusuf agreed to visit the

court of the Mughal emperor for peace talks, where he accepted Mughal sovereignty. Kashmir lost its independence. Akbar imprisoned Yusuf and a year later sent him to Bihar as a petty Mughal official. (134)

In this extract, Peer exposes the existence of Kashmiris' within the power and politics where they lose their identity. The Mughal king betrays Yusuf and he betrays and plays with the patriotic feeling of his army and the whole Kashmiri people that creates a ditch of cultural conflict and trauma. People of Kashmir have been compelled to change their culture and existence. The liberal Muslims of Kashmir were invaded and betrayed by hardliner Muslims. The Mughals create cultural conflicts and cultural encroachment that caused trauma among the Kashmiris'. An individual needs communication to create and sustain own identity and communication is possible mainly through the use of language. Therefore, people cannot exist individually without society, culture, power, and politics rather they are always guided by these things. The king of Kashmir, Yusuf and Kashmiri people lost their independence and accepted Mughal sovereignty due to power politics and cultural conflict. Kashmiri people become victim of cultural clash and cultural trauma because they cannot live freely and personally with own identity that is the result of cultural clash and cultural encroachment.

Every group seeks for its betterment and self-advantage rather than addressing all people's feelings. None of the group thinks for all people but all try to dominate rival group or nation and take advantage by compelling those people to fight. In the process of dominating other group and blighting them, cultural conflict takes place and powerless group becomes victim of cultural encroachment that invites trauma. The memory of those incidents hallucinate people frequently that compels to

remember traumatic incident and to raise voice as well as weapons for protest. In this context, Jenny Edkins says:

The protest that takes place there are symptomatic of the centrality of memory and trauma to the production of political space. At the point at which changes in the political ordering of the state are demanded, protests move to the sites that are central to the current structure. The protests reclaim memory and rewrite it as a form of resistance. The story is never finished: the scripting of memory by those in power can always be challenged, and such challenges are found at moments and in place where the very foundations of the imagined community have been laid out. (216)

Edkins says that cultural clash and cultural encroachment is result of the memory that regenerates trauma among people due to political space and ordering. She opines that people are guided by their own memory that leads them towards cultural conflicts and clash. It is certain that one group's victory makes another group the victim of cultural encroachment and trauma.

Curfewed Night exposes the protest of various cultural groups for their independence and freedom of power, politics, and culture where they become prey of cultural clash that causes trauma upon them. In the text, Peer shows how the leaders fight for their own advantage and play with sentiment of people that causes cultural trauma upon people:

Though most Kashmiri Muslims were disillusioned with India and had sympathies for Pakistan, they did not take very kindly to the *jamaat*. In 1979, when Pakistani dictator Zia-ul-Haq hung the socialist Prime Minister of Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was liked by Kashmiri

Muslims, *Jamaat* supporters were attacked by mobs in Kashmir and their houses brunt. Grandfather saw the angry villagers throwing copies of the Quran into a bonfire in the road near our house. 'I tried to stop them but they wouldn't listen and said that it was a Jamaat-e-Islami Quran.' (178-79)

Peer shows the selfish nature of ruler and the protest by people in Kashmir in this extract. People of Kashmir protest and want to use their sovereignty and freedom by making political space. Rulers of both states play with the emotion and feeling of the Kashmiris and they are haunted by memory that force them to protest for their own will and freedom. People's act of throwing copies of the Quran into bonfire on the road after the murder of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto whom they liked was protest they made for their own will and freedom. The state always compels people to fight for its own benefits but not for people's freedom and independence that cause cultural clash and invite protest. That protest brings cultural encroachment and cultural trauma as its results.

Socio-cultural context is one among various determiners of cultural trauma. The historical events may cause harm for a long time as a chain of trauma with the contemporary socio-cultural context, which compel to remember the past incident and re-experience the traumatic experience. In this regard, Neil J. Smelser says, "[. . .] a trauma is not a thing in itself but becomes a thing by virtue of the context in which it is implanted" (34). In this statement, Smelser emphasizes on the role of social context that forms trauma as a thing with its virtue after plantation of trauma in society. He opines that trauma sprouts out in the suitable condition, which is created by social context. In the situation of trauma, people remember earlier historical events and express their anger upon such skeptical group or society, which affected them for a

long time with the impacts of trauma. That leads towards cultural clash and cultural encroachment, which cause trauma upon the people and community. Neil J. Smelser further writes:

The status of trauma as trauma is dependent on the socio-cultural context of the affected society at the time the historical event or situation arises. A society emerging from a major war, suffering from diminished economic resources, experiencing rampant internal conflict or having shaky social solidarity is more trauma prone than others that are more solid in these respects. Historical events that may not be traumatic for other societies are more likely to be traumas in afflicted societies. (36)

Smelser emphasizes on the historical event and its effects on the society that brings cultural clash and encroachment. As he opines, due to the effects of historical events, some groups and societies are compelled to bear trauma continuously. In this text, Kashmiri Pandit society becomes victim of the series of trauma from history until now in this socio-cultural context, where the Kashmiri Muslims become prey of trauma at Delhi too. Because of their socio-cultural context, economic status, and historical background of civil war, they suffer from trauma as the form of cultural conflict and cultural encroachment.

In the text, *Curfewed Night* Peer portrays traumatic situation in this way:

And then our eyes were fixed on those empty chairs for a long time. Five of our Kashmiri Pandit classmates were not there. Along with killing hundreds of pro-India Muslims ranging from political activists to suspected informers for Indian intelligence, the militants killed hundreds of Pandits on similar grounds, or without a reason. The death

had scared the Pandits and thousands, including my classmates and their families, had left the valley by March 1990 for Jammu, Delhi, and various other Indian cities and towns. (22)

In this extract, Peer exposes the socio-cultural context of the Kashmir and the condition of Kashmiri people. As Smelser opines, trauma depends on the socio-cultural context. Kashmiri Pandits's community much more affected from trauma than other communities and compelled to migrate from there. Because of the historical events of the civil war in Kashmir and violence between Hindus and Muslims, Pandit society becomes victim in Kashmir and the Kashmiri Muslims in Delhi. Such activities and events push towards cultural clash and gives continuity to cultural encroachment that creates trauma among people.

Cultural clash governs community and nation due to various ethnic conflicts, racial hatred, violence, and war that are related to historical events. People fight for their own group's sovereignty and demand for their own independent political, economic, and cultural space that invites cultural clash. Powerful groups govern powerless and the cultural encroachment gets transformed into trauma. In this respect Jeffery C. Alexander remarks:

An event marked by ethnic and racial hatred, violence, and war, become transformed into a generalized symbol of human suffering and moral evil, a universalized symbol whose very existence has created historically unprecedented opportunities for ethnic, racial, and religious justice, for mutual recognition, and for global conflicts to become regulated in amore civil way? This cultural transformation has been achieved because the originating historical event, traumatic in the extreme for a delimited particular groups, has come over the last fifty

years to be redefined as a traumatic event for all of humankind. (197)

Alexander focuses on the activities of various ethnic and racial communities for their own sovereignty, independence, and governance like Nazi- Jews in Germany and White- Blacks in America. As he opines, historical events and backgrounds of the various racial and ethnic groups and their contemporary socio-cultural and moral differences invite cultural clash that brings cultural encroachment and trauma upon people simultaneously.

In the text *Curfewed Night*, Peer shows the critical condition of powerless and minority groups who suffer from trauma. The livelihood of minority groups becomes harder day-by-day due to cultural clash that Peer portrays in this way:

Living in Delhi as a Kashmiri Muslim had become even more difficult after the attack on the Indian parliament despite the warmth and generosity of my colleagues and friends. The Indian government believed that the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e- Mohammed had attacked the Indian parliament; these groups had been operating mostly in Kashmir. Hardliner inside and outside the Hindu right, the BJP, claimed that December 13 was India's 9/11. They demanded that Indian soldiers cross the LoC and attack the terrorist camp in the part of Kashmir held by Pakistan. (87)

Peer explains the situation of minority groups in front of majority group within this extract. As Alexander opines, an event marked by ethnic and racial hatred, transforms into human suffering and trauma that affects on historically formed existence. The Kashmiri Muslims suffer in Delhi after the attack on Indian parliament by terrorist and the Indian government believed that all the Kashmiri Muslims are terrorists and behave them mercilessly where Hindu hardliner youths killed some Kashmiri Muslim

students.

In *Curfewed Night* Peer shows how the cultural clash and cultural encroachment takes place in Kashmir that causes historico-cultural trauma upon Kashmiri people. He depicts the chain of cultural clash and cultural encroachment before the partition of India and Pakistan till now where some rulers try to grab advantage by compelling people to fight for sovereign and independent existence. Peer extracts this statement from James Baldwin's book *Stranger in the Village*, where Baldwin writes, "People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them" (I). In his book, Baldwin emphasizes on the continuous chain of cultural clashes and encroachments that cause trauma.

The title of the text, *Curfewed Night* itself denotes the emergency that portrays the situation of Kashmiri people like a parrot of a cage vividly. Kashmiri people, similar to the parrot of a cage, cannot do whatever they like but they were compelled to obey others and do activities unwillingly. The title also reflects the merciless behavior, brutality, cruelty, and anarchy of military and militants that destroy the life of Kashmiri people. The title *Curfewed Night* also exposes the loss of human rights, hardships in daily activities and uncertainty of life in Kashmir. The title of the text itself works as a key point of whole Kashmiri circumstances. Like the title, the text is full of miserable condition of Kashmiri people so it is a pile of traumatic situation of Kashmir and Kashmiri. After reading the text *Curfewed Night*, we can say that the title is appropriate for the text that reflects the condition of Kashmiri people of emergency period when civil war governed Kashmir.

This text is full of historical accounts and historical figures that help to prove its authenticity about Kashmir and Kashmiri people's situation. Peer uses various historical events like the attack in the Indian parliament, abduction of Indian home

minister's daughter by Kashmiri militants and so on. Like this civil war between Kashmiri Muslim and Pandits compel Pandits to migrate from Kashmir. Earlier historical accounts about Kashmir's independence, invasion of Mughal king, Sikander who banned music, wine and dancing in Kashmir and destroyed many Hindu temples that brought out the history of Kashmiri cultural clash and encroachment. He also uses many historical figures of 1947 freedom of Kashmir as a large state with other approximately five hundred princely states and October 1947 from where India and Pakistan fought for Kashmir. Similarly, in climax of protest by Kashmiri for independence in 1989 and 1990 unforgettable due to Gawkadal massacre where many Kashmiris lost their life. In 1996 when local election was held in Kashmir and attack in Indian parliament on 13th December 2001 increased the gap between Kashmiris and Indians. By presenting those historical incidents, Peer shows how the chain of cultural conflict and cultural encroachment develops with the time span and causes trauma upon people. In this way, Peer uses many historical events and historical figures to show how cultural clash governs Kashmir from the past to the present.

III. Kashmiris' Approach to Historico-Cultural Trauma:

A Study of Peer's *Curfewed Night*

The non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* reflects the situation of Kashmiri people and experience of the writer simultaneously. In this text, the writer shows how the Kashmiri people deal with the historico-cultural trauma that they unwillingly bear from long time. Peer also exposes the traumatic condition of people and their daily activities, which is affected by historico-cultural trauma and their attempt to approach to historico-cultural trauma. The issues of frequent conflicts between Kashmiri people that was caused by historical, cultural, social events and context of Kashmir invites trauma from which Kashmiri people try to get rid of are highlighted in this text, *Curfewed Night*. Especially, this text shows how the Kashmiris cannot get success to get rid from the effect of historico-cultural trauma and why they cannot approach it easily due to political, historical, and cultural context of contemporary society.

The memoir of violence of history and the present circumstances is artistically presented in the text, *Curfewed Night* through narration. Human beings are social beings and tell their stories from generation to generation. Peer uses the technique of narration to reflect the situation of Kashmiri people where memory plays a vital role for their traumatic situation and he himself suffers from the primary as well as secondary trauma. Narration is a technique that specially tells a story in detail by explaining all events one by one but here Peer uses it to tell and share the history of Kashmir. *Curfewed Night* is a masterpiece of Peer with narration where he reflects Kashmiri people's traumatic situation as well as his own experience. The narrative shows that he is totally affected by historico-cultural trauma as other Kashmiri people. In this narration, he depicts and describes the historico-cultural trauma that is based on various factors of society related to culture, race, ethnicity, religion and others.

Peer narrates the experience of Kashmiri people by expressing their painful words without taking side of certain group or religion. *Curfewed Night* with some historical events and important historical accounts that help to portray the situation realistically.

Peer exposes the reality of Kashmiri people and their approach to historico-cultural trauma by narrativizing his own memory, experience, shocking events and experiences of Kashmiri people. Through narrativization he tries to show the situation of Kashmir and Kashmiri people as it is. Dominick LaCapra says, “[N]arrativization is closest to fictionalization in the sense of a dubious departure from, or distortion of, historical reality when it conveys relatively unproblematic closure” (15-16). As LaCapra opines narrativization is a technique, especially used to tell a story but here Peer uses it to tell history by relating somehow with imagination like that of Saadat Hasan Manto’s story. Narrativization is a technique that is used to describe, explain and clarify all the events, issues and matters though they are little or vast as in story. Peer, by using this technique, describes the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people in the text, *Curfewed Night*.

The memory of a person guides him for a long time with its impacts, especially negative impacts guide longer. The stale memory digs out the road for future and the destination becomes traumatic. Jenny Edkins says, “[. . .] trauma was a matter that was dealt with by memorial ceremonies and practices of remembrance” (215). As she says trauma is related with memory and remembrances that cannot be differentiated and surmounted by people so, they always become victim of trauma. People always oppress and suffer from historico-cultural trauma due to their own memory. Our present and future is determined by our past that is memory and recalling or remembrance of it. The memory of our past mainly haunts and hallucinates us with its negative impacts that cause historico-cultural trauma and no

one can easily bear it and successfully deal with it. The traumatic memory destroys our present and future also by dragging us towards past where trauma nagged us and we are compelled to bow our head.

Therefore, people cannot come out from trauma and approach it easily by forgetting the memory and pain. Dominick LaCapra writes:

[A] past that intrusively invades the present and may block or obviate possibilities in the future. So-called traumatic memory carries the experience into the present and future in that the events are compulsively relived or reexperienced as if there were no distance or difference between past and present. In traumatic memory, the past is not simply history as over and done with. It lives on experientially and haunts or possesses the self or the community. (55-56)

As LaCapra says in this extract, the memory of past destroys the present and will block the future of people that compels them to bear pain caused by historico-cultural trauma. People cannot overcome the historico-cultural trauma and unwillingly live with it because of traumatic memory that haunts repeatedly and makes amalgamation of past and present by destroying the difference as LaCapra opines.

In the text *Curfewed Night*, Peer shows how the Kashmiri people suffer from historico-cultural trauma, why they cannot get rid from such traumatic condition by approaching historico-cultural trauma successfully due to the traumatic memory that plays the vital role to destroy people's present and future as well. In the text Peer writes, "The smallest altercation would become a reminder of her trauma. 'Aren't you the bride who was raped? Aren't you the one who brought ill-luck?'" (155). In this statement, Peer exposes how the memory of past destroys the present and blocks the future that compels Kashmiri people to survive with trauma forever and cannot

approach it successfully. As LaCapra opines, the traumatic memory haunts and hallucinates repeatedly with revision of traumatic experience spoils the present and block future by avoiding the gap between past and present. The bride remembers all her past that blights her present and blocks future when the queuing people for water ask her question about past and besets from the effects of historico-cultural trauma.

While excavating Kashmiri people's traumatic situation he further writes, "An enquiry was ordered; some paramilitary soldiers were suspended. New personnel took their place: soldiers who did not recognise Rashid and Mubeena. But she still shivers at the sight of a uniform. That night lingers around her like a ghost, refusing to be exorcised" (155). In this extracted form, Peer shows the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people from which they try to come out but fail to approach and surmount it, then compel to live with historico-cultural trauma due to their own memory. As LaCapra opines, Kashmiri people cannot reach beyond and far away from their memory because the traumatic memory hinders their present and future. The first and foremost enemy of Kashmiri people was their own traumatic memory. They haunt by the memory, they re-experience bygone days and trauma that compels them to live in traumatic circumstance. Mubeena, a bride who was raped by paramilitary members on the evening of wedding day, still shivers at sight of a uniform of rapists who were suspended and new personnel replace them whom she does not recognize. Mubeena cannot come out from the black day and repeatedly haunted by memory of rape every night while she sees military uniform. The day of wedding and rape always lingers around her as ghost and haunts her. Therefore, she cannot work through it rather she acts it out. Kashmiri people try to live peacefully and want to go ahead for better future but their traumatic memory like that of Mubeena, does not let them live in peace and approach historico-cultural trauma appropriately. Therefore, they live with

traumatic experience and memory that frequently haunts and hallucinates them.

People guided by their own stale past lose their bright sides of life. Kashmiri people suffer from trauma either primarily or secondarily. Kashmiri people always remain under the shadow of historico-cultural trauma and cannot approach it finally or eliminate it that is beyond their control. Peer also suffers from both kinds of trauma. Memory of past events has traumatized and created psychological fear upon him. In the process of narration the events by indebted words of Kashmiri people, Peer internalizes their past memory and suffers from secondary trauma. In this regards, Dominick LaCapra says, “Secondary trauma is likely in the case of those who treat traumatized victims or even in the case of interviewers who work closely with victims and survivors” (102). Peer also suffers when he collects information for reporting and interviewing for his own books. He, after listening to the painful history of Shameema, decides to meet Majid who lost his elder son in suicidal bomb used by the military. Peer writes, “I could not muster the courage to disturb his world again. I walked towards the deputy commissioner’s office to meet a man who once had the charge of ‘cases’ relating to compensation death” (172). From this statement, we know that Peer becomes surrogate victim of trauma. He tries to help the Majid family by requesting for the compensation to the bereaved family, as he knows about their painful reality. A reporter goes to request for compensation for another people means that he internalizes the trauma and is affected by secondarily, that is virtual trauma. Not only the other Kashmiri people but writer also cannot approach historico-cultural trauma successfully and eliminate traumatic effects from life that can lead towards golden and bright future.

Kashmiri people try their best to come up from the ditch of trauma but cannot succeed to come up from the ditch. They are affected either from their own traumatic

memory or from other's traumatic situation, which spreads horror among people. On the course of suffering some people can get little solace by forgetting the past and are conscious about present which is known as 'working through' in the term of trauma theory where people have sense of past and present or they can differentiate past and present. Dominick LaCapra writes:

In working through, the person tries to gain critical distance on a problem and to distinguish between past, present, and future. To put the point in drastically oversimplified terms: for the victims, this means the ability to say to oneself: "yes, that happened to me back then. It was distressing, overwhelming perhaps I can't entirely disengage myself from it, but I'm existing here and now, and this is different from back then". (143-44)

As LaCapra says in this extract that working through is the aspect of trauma, which indicates such situation where person can obtain critical distance from past memory for some time and can think about present and future then take better decision that gives solace but cannot totally forget the past, which haunts and hallucinates. As he opines, people cannot totally remove the scar of trauma from their life and live happily because the elimination of memory of past traumatic effects is not possible.

Curfewed Night is a collection of such traumatic situations, which shows people's inability to make distance from trauma forever. In the text, Peer writes:

After his release, Ansar took treatment for urinary tract infections and some other disorders he did not mention. 'I was not ready to marry. But my family supported me in a big way. I agreed to marry only after I was treated for a year and a half. Thank God, now I have a daughter and run my small business'. (144)

In this extract, Peer shows the condition of Kashmiri people by presenting Ansar as a representative of those who can think for present and future, keeping critical distance with the dreadful past for some time and manage to survive in the present that is known as 'working through' of trauma. As LaCapra opines, people of Kashmir like Ansar who suffered almost in the past try to keep critical distance with past and live peacefully in the present but they are haunted time and again by memory which they cannot remove. Though Ansar succeeds to marry and run business for survival with support of his family, he cannot forget the torturous house Papa 2. Papa 2 was the most infamous torture centre run by the Indian forces in Kashmir where Ansar spent time as prisoner. However, Ansar manages to live new life with his wife and daughter, he is shocked when he is haunted by Papa 2's memory and cannot approach historico-cultural trauma completely and successfully that leads him towards traumatic situation. Like Ansar, some people of Kashmir only get some solace and peace by keeping critical distance with their past but cannot remove trauma from their life.

Peer further writes, "She pointed towards a group of villagers and said, 'That was where they [militants] sat with the remote control.' I bit my lips. We ended the rest of our journey in silence"(161). In this extract, Peer shows the traumatic condition of his mother who cannot eliminate the scar of the past events and haunt by the memory. She remembers the past event of mine blast when they were returning from a marriage ceremony. Though she recalls the past memory, she knows that was her dreadful past and is self-conscious about the past and the present. She can distinguish the past and the present. She works through the trauma and keep critical distance with it but cannot avoid her memory of the past, which shows trauma cannot be eliminated.

Trauma invites destruction and collapses the identity. However, some people can keep critical distance and become conscious about their past and present but many people cannot differentiate between the past and the present that may blight their future. They become continuous victim of trauma and cannot get relief from it. They are haunted by past memory frequently on the form of nightmare, flashback and so on that do not let them think for the present and the future but drag towards hideous past and repeat the past activities which is the affect of trauma, known as 'acting out' aspect of trauma. 'Acting out' is the approach to traumatic past in which the victim cannot come out from traumatic past and its effects and is lost in past memory.

Dominick LaCapra writes:

Acting out is related to repetition, and even the repetition compulsion—the tendency to repeat something compulsively. This is very clear in the case of people who undergo a trauma. They have a tendency to relive the past, to be haunted by ghost or even to exist in the present as if one were still fully in the past, with no distance from it. Victims of trauma tend to relive occurrences, or at least find that those occurrences intrude on their present existence, for example, in flashbacks or in nightmares or in words that are compulsively repeated and that don't seem to have their ordinary meaning. (142-43)

As LaCapra says, acting out denotes such condition where people cannot keep critical distance with their past and cannot become conscious about their present and future but they are only drown in to past memory that leads them towards miserable life. People are frequently haunted and hallucinated by past memory and fail to approach historico-cultural trauma that makes their life worthless forever. As he opines that people always remain under the shadow of traumatic past memory that repeats in the

form of flashback and nightmare like a ghost; then they are lost in their consciousness to come out from it, are compelled to remain in traumatic situation with past memory.

Curfewed Night exposes such traumatic situation of people from where they cannot lift up themselves but fail to deal with historico-cultural trauma successfully.

Peer writes:

A man waits for a long time, as if in queue, before entering his own house. and leaves in another direction. His family takes him to a doctor. The doctor says, 'Ever since frisking has been introduced, a new disease has come up. Some people need to be frisked every time they see a gate; others frisk themselves'. He prescribes a 'body search' every time he reaches a gate. (160)

Peer shows those Kashmiri people's situation in this extract: they are totally lost in trauma and cannot come out from it. As LaCapra remarks about acting out of trauma, most of the Kashmiri people cannot keep critical distance with past memory and their life is rotten by the dreadful past memory. By presenting the situation of a person who stands for a long time in queue and requires bodily search, checking, investigation and frisking before entering his own house every time while he comes from outside reflects the miserable situation of Kashmiri people. This illustration shows the condition of Kashmiris' who cannot overcome past in any aspect, lose their own identity and spend whole life in trauma which belongs to 'acting out' aspect of trauma. Because of interrogation and frisking by soldiers and militants in past, people internalize it, are affected by its traumatic effects that make people psychologically weak, like this person.

Peer further writes, "Every time someone knocked on the door or the phone rang, he jumped. 'I feel they are looking for me. I hear the phone bell and it seems

they have traced me and are calling me' Nabi told me once, [. . .]"(78). In this extract peer portrays the condition of trauma victim who cannot differentiate the past and the present. Nabi cannot come out from the past traumatic memory and compulsively repeats the bygone event that destroys his life. After the attacks of militants, Nabi cannot live in present. In this situation, the relation between self and other get blurred where he does not trust other. Nabi cannot works through the trauma but act out it and live in the past having traumatic memory. People are badly ruled by trauma. Therefore, people of Kashmir cannot successfully approach historico-cultural trauma and remain in traumatic condition.

In *Curfewed Night*, Peer reflects the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people who suffered from various sorts of traumatic effects and cannot remove it from their life. Peer himself suffers primarily and secondarily from trauma and we can find 'acting out' and 'working through' aspects in him like other Kashmiris that create hindrance to him and Kashmiri people to approach successfully with historico-cultural trauma and get rid of from its traumatic effects for better future.

The non-fictional text, *Curfewed Night* exposes the traumatic reality of Kashmiri people with the help of narration. If we talk about literary devices, Peer uses prosaic style to reflect the traumatic situation, chain of violence and trauma still now from history of Kashmir. It is believe that prose is suitable to tell history and reality. Therefore, he may use this style in this text. The text *Curfewed Night* is a testimonial text with various sorts of testimony where Peer amalgamate traumatic fragments and witness who speak for all or share their experience with other as survivor. There is various types of trauma related terms and some religious terms rather than literary features. The contemporary age is the 'Age of Trauma' and the text is a traumatic text with full of traumatic experience which is literature of trauma. Dominick LaCapra

says, “The writing of trauma survivors comprise a distinct “literature of trauma”.

Where he emphasizes on the experience and he defines collection of traumatic experience as literature of trauma. Kali Tal says, “Literature of trauma is written from the need to tell and retell the story of the traumatic experience to make it ‘real’ both to the victim and to the community” (21). In this extract, she focuses on the sharing of traumatic experience as literature of trauma. Peer uses various sorts of simple, complex and combine sentences in the text. There are few figurative language and literary terms in comparison to historical and trauma related terms. There is use of poetry and symbol somewhere that denotes something else that is a sample of literary device. In one incident writer talked about images in poetry while he read poetry of a genuine poet which also indicates literariness of the text. However, there is little use of literary figurative terms and device the text mainly related with history and there is use of trauma related terms and dictions.

IV. Basharat Peer's *Curfewed Night* as a Testimony of Kashmiris' Experience

The word 'testimony' generally denotes witness and the truth of very thing in a court of law. The term testimony develops from the Latin words 'testis'. In law testimony is a form of evidence that is obtained and forms a witness. And in literature autobiographical narratives particularly present evidence of first person account of human rights abuses, violence and war and living under condition of social oppression. On the course of defining testimony, Giorgio Agamben writes:

“In Latin there are two words for “witness”. The first word testis, from which our word ‘testimony’ derives, etymologically signifies the person who, in a trial or lawsuit between two rival parties, is in the position of a third party. The second word, superstes, designates a person who has lived through something, who have experienced an event from beginning to end and can therefore bear witness to it. (17)

In this extract, Agamben remarks that testimony refers to the truthfulness of a person's experience and living with it from long time. He further mentions the situation of in-between of two rival parties, in the position of third party or disinterested witness is testimony. The non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* is based on the testimony of Kashmiri people's experience. Testimony or witness is based on and formally defined by first-hand knowledge or seeing where we can find various sorts of witness like real witness who experience the trauma or the victim who bears trauma, eye-witness or first-hand witness and journalist, historian and reporter as intellectual witness or second degree witness. Peer amalgamates all sorts of witness in this text *Curfewed Night* and depicts experience of many trauma affected Kashmiri people in their own words. Therefore, this text is a testimonial text.

The text *Curfewed Night* is considered as testimonial text where we can find

many fragments. Peer joins those traumatic fragments and forms a book like a garland, which reflects Kashmiris' traumatic situation and their testimony vividly. Peer keeps one fragment upon another and relates them to make this text life like by blending with his experience and accidental incident. The text covers various aspects like introduction of Hindu and Muslim cultures to cause of trauma and its unbearable effects. The text is formed by blending of many fragments that becomes clear by its structure.

This project analyzes the non-fictional testimonial text, *Curfewed Night* through the lens of historico-cultural trauma. This text is a collection of various kinds of testimony of Kashmiris' experience that forms a book. Therefore, the text is testimonial text. Peer collects many testimonial traumatic experiences and blends with his own experience to form the text that is full with series of witness's voice. Peer as a reporter collects, analyzes, and depicts those voices of witness and survivors who are compelled to bear trauma. Peer uses various sorts of witness in book like experienced and non-experienced witness, similarly real witness voice, eyewitness voice and the voice of intellectual who analyze the voice of witness. In the contemporary time after World War II, writers use mainly testimonial text to present their idea so this is the 'Age of Testimony'. Testimonial writing is a medium of historical transmission to present and future and medium of healing to those victims after they open up belated witness. Testimony is required to begetting the truth when the truth was in crisis. In this context Shoshana Felman says, "The "literature of testimony" is thus not an art of leisure but as an art of urgency" (114). As she opines literature of testimony contains the evidence of the victims which, cannot be compare with the art of leisure but art of urgency which makes problem in society.

Peer uses the testimony to supply first-hand knowledge to all, speak for all, or

say to all about the traumatic history of Kashmir. People who bear trauma as victim of the traumatic situation become witness and remember the past being in state of disarray or death in life and life in death. Shoshana Felman says, “Survival and bearing witness become reciprocal acts” (117). As she argues being survive means being a witness, speak to all, and speak to all as witness denotes survive by bearing trauma. Felman further says, “To bear witness is to bear the solitude of a responsibility and to bear the responsibility, precisely of that solitude” (3). In this statement she emphasizes on the lonely state of victim while they played the role of witness and bear trauma again on the course of witnessing. In this regard, Felman further writes:

[A]n experience that requires one to live through one’s own death, and paradoxically, bear witness to that living through one’s dying; a death experience which can be truly comprehended, witnessed only from inside (from outside the witness own annihilation); a radical experience to which no outsider can be witness, but to which no witness can be, or remain, outsider. (109)

As Felman remarks in this extract, people who become witness suffer much more and remain in subconscious state and confusion. When they remember the past, they re-experience the bygone days and pain that gave torture and compelled them to remain in subconscious and state of disarray.

The testimonial text *Curfewed Night* exposes such condition of survivor who become victim of time and trauma and become witness in contemporary time. In this text, Peer writes:

One soldier held your neck, two others pulled your legs in different directions, and three more rolled a heavy concrete roller over your

legs. They asked questions and if you didn't answer, they burnt you with cigarettes. He paused for a while and as if suddenly remembering something said, 'The worst part was the psychological torture. They would make us say Jai Hind every morning and evening. They beat you if refused. It was very hard but everyone said it except Master Ahsan Dar [a top commander of Hizbul Mujahideen]'. Then he stopped abruptly. 'I cannot talk about it. It makes me crazy'. (142)

In this extract Peer shows the brutality tolerated by the survivor victims who become witness and try to recall their bygone experience to tell other or speak to all. On the process of sharing traumatic experience to other survivors try to recall their experience but cannot recall, as it is being subconscious. They become unconscious while explaining and witnessing their past to other and live in death, drown in tear and become full of trauma again. The trauma victims cannot keep distance with their past memories and cannot remain outsider while they become witness. People who face trauma and bear it cannot remain outside and those who do not bear trauma cannot become witness of the past traumatic situation of Kashmiri people. Those people who play the role of witness cannot live and remain in peace but are haunted by past and live in unconscious state.

People of Kashmir are compelled to live with indelible scar of trauma, which haunts and hallucinates them time and again. Kashmiri people willingly cannot remember and forget all those traumatic experience because they become victims on the span of time that drag them towards past traumatic ditch. The survivors and bearers of the trauma cannot witness those entire things that happened to them because the effects of trauma destruct them. However, Kashmiri people recall and resuscitate past memory and witness; they cannot share those entire things because of

the situation, which, make them unconscious and stiff. Sometime we cannot recall the entire thing and represent all the experience and feeling in language like this sometimes, witness cannot be articulated in language. In this regards Geoffrey Hartman says, “[. . .] the truest witness were those who could no longer witness: submerged, the dead” (86). As he remarks, the true witness or the real witness cannot become long time witness because the span of time and the effect of trauma drag towards unconscious state and they feel like death while they are witnessing. Shoshana Felman says, “[T]he witness elect to become victim” (117). As she opines those who become witness suffer most on the process of recalling past memory and become victim for long time. Felman further says, “[T]estimony cannot be simply reported or narrated by another in its role as testimony” (205). As she argues testimony or witness cannot simply, easily narrated because it is not a matter of smile and happiness but matter of trauma that destroys life. Witness will be possible if the person who plays the role of witness is real witness. In this regard, Giorgio Agamben writes:

The survivor’s vocation is to remember; he cannot not remember“The memories of my Imprisonment are much more vivid and detailed than those that I cannot explain [. . .]. For some reason that I cannot explain, something anomalous happened to me, I would say almost an unconscious preparation for bearing witness. (26-27)

As Agamben opines in this extract, the survivor or the victim has memory that haunts and hallucinates them time and again but they cannot recall or resuscitate as they bear it in past. However, they remember such traumatic memory they cannot express it in language while they become witness.

In the text *Curfewed Night*, Peer excavates the situation of witness. The text

Curfewed Night exposes those victims of trauma as witness who cannot forget past and cannot share entire experience with other with the help of language. In this text, Peer writes:

‘How can i forget it? Not even stray cows would eat the food they threw at us there’. He passed a plate of plum cake to me. ‘That place destroyed most people who were there. You do not live a normal life after that torture. It scars you forever’. He lit a cigarette and talk about his experience. ‘They beat us up with guns, staffs, hands. But that was nothing’. His voice had no emotion and he talked as if he was reading from a manual. ‘They took you out to the lawn outside the building. You were asked to remove all your clothes, even your underwear. They tied you to a long wooden ladder and placed it near a ditch filled with kerosene oil and red chilli power. They raised the ladder like a seesaw and pushed your head into the ditch. It could go on for an hour, half an hour, depending on their mood. (143)

In this extract Peer exposes the traumatic situation of trauma victims who have experience of traumatic condition that nearly kill him. The first sentence reflects the situation of the survivor’s state mind who cannot forget past and cannot share entire experience to all with the medium of language by being witness. The simple and short sentence “It scars you forever” (143), works as mirror of the victim’s life and traumatic situation. In the process of telling his past or sharing his experience the victim of trauma, Ansar lit cigarette that denotes his state of mind and affect of past memory. Ansar as witness reveal his past traumatic memory without any emotion in voice that also shows the state of unable to witness and sharing all experience or

explaining his own memory though, he has vivid and acoustic memory of bygone experience.

The literature of testimony is a pile of witness where various sorts of testimony or witness take parts and make the literature complete. The intellectual witnesses analyze the first-hand knowledge of real witness and speak for all that helps to spread knowledge about the victim's experience. Reporter or the narrator should be aware of the witness and should judge that to share with other people. In this context, Dori Laub writes:

The listener, therefore, has to be at the same time a witness to the trauma witness and a witness to himself. It is only in this way, through his simultaneous awareness of the continuous flow of those inner hazards both in the trauma witness and in himself, that he can become the enabler of the testimony- the one who triggers its initiation, as Well as the guardian of its process and of its momentum. (58)

As Laub argues in this extract, narrator or the listener should be a witness to the trauma and to himself simultaneously or narrator/listener should aware about his position and should conscious about himself to become a successful witness who can share this experience to all. The listener or reporter should play the role of guardian towards witness and try to open the hazardous painful knot of them to speak for all. That means narrators should keep critical distance with trauma witness and analyzes.

The non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* shows the writer's position as listener as well as witness in the text. Like other Kashmiri people, Peer himself was a real witness and besides that, he was a listener of others too. In the text, *Curfewed Night* Peer writes:

After his interrogators threw him back in his cell, Hussein kept losing

consciousness. 'At least during the blackouts, I felt no pain.' He was bleeding when he urinated, his penis had swollen and pain crawled up it like a leech. When he was moved to the detention centre at Srinagar, an infection had set in and he saw pus and blood in his urine. There was no medical aid for weeks. 'Then a Sikh paramilitary officer asked me about my condition. I told him what had happened. He was an angel; he got me some medicine, cotton and Dettol antiseptic lotion. That helped a lot'. It made me think of what Ansar and Shafi told me about different interrogators: 'Some were sadists and some were decent men.' (146-47)

Peer exposes the condition of victims in prison and its continuous effect after their release from prison. Peer as a listener and reporter listens to the experience of real witness who bears trauma and extreme brutality in prison then analyzes it to share with other. Peer works as a second grade witness in this context by speak for all with those survivors' experience who bear it in prison. Peer depicts the miserable condition of Kashmiri people as victims of trauma where he remains conscious to analyze and play the role of witness to share it with other people. Peer himself as a victim and as a narrator shares traumatic experience to all and recall past memory being conscious about his position. However, Peer manages to keep critical distance with the real witness and analyze to share being conscious about him and other witness while he become listener to those witness.

The text *Curfewed Night* mixes up various events and fragments of traumatic experience of Kashmiri people. In this text, Peer reflects the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people and witness to make life like, which testifies the text as historical. Testimony is always related with history where testimony is used for clinical and

transmission approach. *Curfewed Night* contains various witnesses to testify itself. Therefore, this text is a testimonial text that represents the testimony of Kashmiri people's traumatic experience.

V. Peer's Attempt to Call for Kashmiris' Identity Formation

The spectacle of historico-cultural trauma penetrates and analyzes the non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* in the course of doing this research. However, the text *Curfewed Night* reflects the problems of Kashmiri people and their traumatic situation; it also tries to create collective identity. Peer in this text excavates the traumatic situation of Kashmiri people, their inarticulate grief, and bereavement caused by historico-cultural trauma where he tries to suggest forming collective identity with harmony. Peer especially stands on the side of harmony though he himself has been distracted with his emerging youth and tries to call for collective identity formation where he expresses his notion of free and independent Kashmiri as one and collective identity of Kashmiri but not various identity. Through the help of this text Peer attempts to call for Kashmiri people to form collective identity as Kashmiris' identity and attempt to call for formation of 'We' rather than 'I'.

The memory of the past directly or indirectly is related with society though that is individual memory because human being is a social being and lives in a society. An individual cannot remain individual by separating from society and certainly is affected by the social problems and hazards. Therefore, memories always become collective which help to create and recreate collective identity. In this regard, Ron Eyerman says, "[T]he collective memory that forms the basis for collective identity" (70). In this statement, Eyerman emphasize on the collective memory that helps to create collective identity by being the base of the identity where he focuses on the harmony. Eyerman further writes:

Resolving cultural trauma can involve the articulation of collective identity and collective memory, as individual stories meld into collective history through forms and process of collective

representation. Collective identity refers to a process of “we” formation, a process both historically rooted and rooted in history. (74)

As Eyerman argues in this extract that we can make the solution of cultural trauma through collective identity formation where hatred and violence disappears and harmony takes place. As he opines collective identity refers to ‘we’ formation that means elimination of individual ego that creates enmity, invites violence and causes trauma upon people.

The text *Curfewed Night* shows how Kashmiri people suffer from the effect of historico-cultural trauma and why they cannot surmount it and eliminate the scars of trauma from their life. In the text, Peer shows the loophole of destruction from where Kashmiris can form collective identity and takes rest by avoiding violence after knowing this loophole. In the text, Peer writes:

Many Muslims and Hindus would keep separate cups and plates in their homes for the visitors of the other faith. In our house though, there were no separate cups or plates for Bhaskarnath or Somnath. We ate together. I might have been ten when I attended a Hindu marriage. Bhaskarnath’s younger brother was getting married in a nearby small town. We sat in a carpeted room full of guests. Lunch was served in small steel plates- a mixture of vegetables and lamb dishes. It was different from the Muslim wedding feasts where four people eat together in a tin- plated copper plate, the vegetables are minimal, and the lamb dishes spicier and numerous. Somebody who sat next to me asked, “So you ate at Hindu homes?” then somebody took pictures and later gave us copies. (177)

Peer in this extract shows the relationship of Kashmiri people among them and especially between Muslims and Hindus. Through this extract Peer calls Kashmiri people for doing work together and form collective identity as Kashmiris. Peer exposes the variation or difference in culture of Muslims and Hindus where they cannot accept other's custom though they are guests in second parties' home. Peer reflects the necessity of religious harmony among Kashmiri people to form one and entire identity through his and his grandfather's activities of eating feast in Hindu's house by sitting with Hindu. Peer, by presenting his own illustration, gives emphasis upon collectivity and collective identity formation where some people wonders and puzzles earlier but it gives right direction in future.

Memory or the past always demonstrates the path for future though that leads towards either wrong direction or right one. A person cannot totally remain separated with his own past and society's historical events. Every person and every society stirs step by looking their past incidents. In this regard, Ron Eyerman says, "[C]ollective memory is a social necessity; neither an individual nor a society can do without it" (65). In this statement, Eyerman focuses on the relation of past collective memory and the future of an individual and society where we cannot think of future without collective past. Eyerman further writes:

[T]he contemporary reworking of cultural trauma is the rejection of the separatism and marxism that characterized the 1960s' nationalism and thus an implicit convergence through the idea of the African American as black American. This is accomplished through the coexistence of a distinctive and relatively autonomous collective history and the progressive political and economic integration. (110-11)

As Eyerman opines in this extract that we should form collective identity to abolish the scar of cultural trauma and to do progressive political and economic integration. The solution of cultural trauma needs collectiveness but not separatism. Through this extract, Eyerman focuses on the combination or togetherness of people to form collective identity and be progressive in culture, economic and politics.

The non-fictional text, *Curfewed Night* exposes the necessity of harmony in Kashmiri people to come out from the ditch of historico-cultural traumatic effects. In the text, Peer attempts to call Kashmiri people to form a collective and entire identity but not different identity by keeping harmony among all people. Peer in this text writes:

Islam in Kashmir had borrowed elements from Hindu and Buddhist pasts; the Hindus in turn had been influenced by Muslim practices. In my childhood, nobody raised an eyebrow if a Hindu woman walked to a Muslim shrine to seek the blessing of a saint. The religious divide was visible only on the days of India and Pakistan played cricket. Muslims supported the Pakistani cricket team; the Pandits were for India. Yet the tensions, which were partly class- based, never simmered into sectarian violence. (195)

In the extract Peer presents the collectiveness of Kashmiri people in past that opens up the right path to form collective identity through religious harmony. Peer by depicting the past religious harmony and act of working together by various religious community attempts to call for forms, collective identity. In this extract Peer exposes the co-existence of Hindu, Muslims and Buddhist that means by being nostalgic he calls Kashmiris for co-existence. By reflecting past events or memory Peer shows the religious harmony among people where Hindu walk to Muslim shrine and Muslim

and Buddhist walk to Hindu temples to seek blessing of god that demonstrate a golden path for Kashmiri people to form collective identity for which writer attempts to call.

The text, *Curfewed Night* is an amalgamation of many fragments of cultural traumatic events that reflects the Kashmiri people's traumatic situation as it is. Through this text Peer, call Kashmiri to form collective identity that can decrease the effects of historico-cultural trauma, which governed them since history. By presenting the history and by being nostalgic about religious harmony Peer call for collective identity formation as 'Kashmiri'.

Peer uses simple language in the non-fictional text, *Curfewed Night* to reflect the situation of Kashmir and Kashmiri people. Language is a mirror of society that reflects society as it is. Jenny Edkins says, "[C]ommunication takes place in language and language itself is social and political, not individual" (7). As she opines language is a product of society and it represent the community as it is. Therefore, language of the text is affected by the situation of the contemporary society and politics of Kashmir. We can find uses of various war related terms and dictions that explains traumatic situation of Kashmiri people. For example, brutality, cruelty, inhumanity, insurgence, counter attack, suicidal bomb, firing, crack down, violence, murder, interrogation, mine blast, collaborators and various name of militant groups are related to war and the term like hallucination, memory, Mental disorder, shock, fear, horror, haunt, violation of human rights, terrifying, torture, curfew are related with trauma that face by Kashmiri people. Therefore, the language reflects the society. The text is combination of fragments. Therefore, we can find various sorts of terms, diction, and complexity to understand in one sitting. There are some sorts of terms that are difficult to understand because that is trauma related, history related, violence and war related especially used by military and militants. We can also find

harmonious term and testimonial terms in the text. However, the text is a grand mixture of terms and diction and the writer uses various styles to reflect Kashmiris' situation as it is, *Curfewed Night* is one text that bring vivid subject by using simple language structure.

VI. Conclusion: Cultural Encroachment, Trauma and Kashmiris' Need for Collective Identity

The non-fictional text *Curfewed Night* exposes the traumatic condition of Kashmiri people due to historico-cultural trauma. Kashmiri people are traumatized and compelled to bear it silently. The text reflects the inarticulate grief of Kashmiri people including the writer himself being wounded by cultural encroachment where a powerful cultural group attacks and invades them. *Curfewed Night* portrays the history of cultural encroachment and its fluctuating pattern with the span of time. Peer in the text depicts the miserable condition of Kashmiri people who cannot surmount cultural trauma and cultural encroachment and live with indelible scars. The existence of Kashmiri people is related with trauma which haunts and hallucinates them forever and they cannot keep critical distance with trauma to live in the present and think for bright future. However, Kashmiri people try to come out of the ditch of cultural trauma they cannot approach it effectively because of their history where Kashmir always remain in-between of two or more than two different cultures, customs, nations and faiths.

In the text *Curfewed Night* Peer exposes the hideous effects of historico-cultural trauma. Kashmiri people suffer from different sorts of problem like hallucination, chronic stress, reoccurring dream and haunts of memory. They were forced to change their own culture due to the trauma that invites by cultural clash and cultural encroachment. The traumatic situation spreads feeling of enmity among Kashmiri people and spoils the social web that creates various groups in Kashmir. Due to the effects of cultural trauma, Kashmiri people could not secure their collective identity and feel identity crisis. However, the Kashmiri peoples try to overcome cultural trauma by witnessing the traumatic situation they cannot

successfully attempt it and are dragged by traumatic past that is destined to remain in 'acting out' approach of trauma. However, Peer tries to share his inner pain that caused by cultural trauma through narrativization. Peer presents the history of cultural trauma amalgamating with imagination to reduce the intensity of trauma and tries to work through the cultural trauma.

Through this text *Curfewed Night* Peer represents Kashmir and Kashmiri people's daily life as it is where they live in uncertainty. Due to cultural encroachment, people hate each other and enmity takes place that forms war and causes trauma. The text also talks about the harmony between people in past which produces friendship among people and help to create collective identity. The formation of collective identity as entire or as united Kashmiri is urgently necessary for Kashmiri people to come out of the dark cave of trauma or to and live life happily with feeling of solace. To form collective identity there should be mutual understanding between Kashmiri people who have scattered in various ethnic, racial, regional and religious groups. All Kashmiri people ought to promise to go ahead together that can create collective identity as independent Kashmiri, which is their need. An individual cannot do anything if he/she processes lonely but if all the members of a society process it for that, they will easily get success in every task. Therefore, Kashmiri people need collective identity to change their life and move towards golden future.

However, the text mainly reflects unbearable reality of Kashmiri people and their compulsion to bear inarticulate grief; it also shows the crisis of unity among Kashmiri people. There is necessity of unity that can solve the problem of them by creating collectiveness and togetherness among them with collective identity. Kashmiri people who lose their feelings and emotions with the effects of trauma can

regain happiness in their life after forming their own entire identity that is possible if they walk together without bias.

The religious, racial, and ethnic harmony is necessary for Kashmiri people to walk together and to form collective identity that can provide solace to them and they need it having no other option. They can make their future bright through unity of harmony and can form collective identity that can change their life style. Not only for Kashmiri people but all over South Asia and all over the world harmony of religion, race and ethnicity is necessary to make secure and golden future and to establish brotherhood in the world.

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