

ISSN: 0976-8165

# The Criterion

An International Journal in English

Vol. 7, Issue- 3 [June 2016]

## 7th Year of Open Access

Editor-In-Chief: Dr. Vishwanath Bite

*The Criterion*



[www.the-criterion.com](http://www.the-criterion.com)

About Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/about/>

Archive: <http://www.the-criterion.com/archive/>

Contact Us: <http://www.the-criterion.com/contact/>

Editorial Board: <http://www.the-criterion.com/editorial-board/>

Submission: <http://www.the-criterion.com/submission/>

FAQ: <http://www.the-criterion.com/fa/>



ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

[www.galaxymrj.com](http://www.galaxymrj.com)

## **Intervention of Kashmiri Language in English Literature: A Study of *Our Moon Has Blood Clots* by Rahul Pandita**

**Archana Sonia**

Research Scholar

Department of English & MEL

University of Allahabad

In ancient or in modern era, life is generally understood in the light of what we consider as culture and civilization. There are many cultures all over the world existing simultaneously. Culture is the very soul of any nation; we recognise any nation through its culture. But if we come to know what culture is, it is very hard to understand the culture of any nation because it is the thing which is connected to the soul of human being. Culture concerns itself with the inner refinement of a person. Only when the deeper levels of human intellect and consciousness are brought into expression can we call a person 'cultured'. To understand the culture of any society one should understand the circumstances of society which upholds it as its ideal.

India is one of the world's great civilizations and culture. Its culture is highly rich and varied. In India we can see that culture differs from one place to another. Culture does not represent only one aspect of life but also it imbibes all the activities of human behaviour and expressions. In India we have various linguistic states and each state has its own culture, still there is one single culture from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, which is why we speak of Indian culture as a whole.

Language is the most important and representative part of any culture. It is the thing that makes people to express their thoughts and feelings and make them able to talk. Every culture has its own language or a way of expression. In India there are many cultures coexisted under the single culture. In India there is linguistic diversity as well as cultural. Every state has its own mother tongue or vernacular language, for instance: In Karnataka, Kannad is spoken; In Kashmir Kashmiri is spoken, in other places different languages such as Bhojpuri and Hindi are spoken and so on. India is conglomeration of varied cultures. It is a canvass filled with different colours, where colours represent different culture yet there is the uniqueness in this linguistic & cultural diversity.

Kashmir is such a beautiful place in India, people dreamt of to be the part of Kashmir. Beautiful landscape, mountain range, Chinar trees, Jhelum River, Dal lake all these natural surroundings are full of beauty and life in Kashmir. One can be mesmerised by seeing the beauty of Kashmir. Along with its scenic beauty Kashmir is famous for its cultural heritage. The culture of Kashmir has its distinguished features as every single culture has its own. In Kashmir the cultural identity of the Kashmiri is the Kashmiri language. Jammu & Kashmir is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse state in India. In the state the largest linguistic group is the Kashmiri group. Both sides of Kashmir have a Muslim majority although the Kashmiri language predominates only in the Kashmir valley on the Indian side (among both Muslims and Hindus). The focus of my paper is the use of the Kashmiri language in its vernacular form to empower the cultural potency of literature.

**Keywords: Kashmir, Kashmiri language, Culture, Kashmiri Pundits.**

Kashmir is very beautiful place but its beauty has become a dark spot on the forehead of India. A place which was full of peace and tranquillity is now full of terror and human sufferings. Kashmir has become the synonym of militants, gunfire, terror and insurgency. No one in the valley is remained unaffected by the numbing circumstances of Kashmir. There were many murders, disappearances, blasts, and migration took place in the valley. None writer can remain silent on such traumatic life of Kashmiri people. As Manto said, “a writer picks up his pen only when his sensibility is hurt”. On visiting Kashmir a person can see only the external beauty of Kashmir but inner beauty of Kashmir has been wounded since long time. To support my thought I would like to quote a line from the poetry of Agha Shahid Ali entitled “Farewell” which presents what Kashmir has become now if one would like to visit there: “I am being rowed through Paradise on a river of Hell”.(32-33) Thus many books have been written on Kashmir on its socio-political situation and on human sufferings and everlasting pains of Kashmiri.

The literature of Kashmir has produced is both rich and varied. For many centuries the literature of Kashmir has been written in vernacular language including Kashmiri, Sanskrit, Arabic etc. Many writers have been flourished in the Valley for instance: Lal Ded, Habba Khatun, Sadat Hasan Manto and many more. Kashmiri writers and their works were known to the people of Kashmir only, because their works were all written in Kashmiri; people outside Kashmir were oblivious of Kashmiri culture and thought through their literature. But in the recent past many Kashmiri writers have also shown their excellence

in the English language to make it wide. For example : Agha shahid Ali, Shubhash kak etc. But many writers have written about the human sufferings of Kashmiri people through their works as in forms of memoir, reportage and novel to delineate the real picture of pains and terror of the Valley in detail. Among those writers some are Basharat Peer, Siddhartha Gigoo, Rahul Pandita , and Mirza Waheed who have shown the very close picture of Kashmir to its reader.

The vernacular language of a particular place is very close to the heart of people living there. Even while adopting the English language as a medium of expression, many authors simultaneously make use of their vernacular language in their works. Many contemporary writers have begun using English language as a medium of expression so that their works does not remain esoteric to single linguistic cultural boundary. Here my focus is on Kashmiri language in English literature. Rahul Pandita , a Kashmiri, has received wide acclaim by writing his landmark book *Our Moon Has Blood Clots*(2013) in the English language. Rahul Pandita has used (vernacular) Kashmiri language interspersed in English to give the flavour of Kashmiri culture in their works. This interspersion is used by author as a tool to keep the Kashmiri tinge alive in their writings. Similarly Khaled Hosseini , an Afghani-American writer uses Afghani vernacular Language interspersed in his English writings. Because in which part of the world we live but our native language remains inseparable from our emotions as it is said that language is structured in our consciousness. Thus Rahul Pandita's book presents a heart- stirring tale of the socio-political ambience of Kashmir in the 1990s when brutal violence and an exodus of Kashmiri pundits took place. It was not an easy task to write about the Kashmir because it is not about the scenic beauty of Kashmir but of human sufferings and their emotional void. It would have been hurt many times to writer by commemorating those painful events. Being a Kashmiri native Rahul Pandita has faced in reality what he has written in his book. In the words of Rahul Pandita about his book, he says:

“It's a memoir on growing up in Kashmir as a religious minority, essentially Kashmiri Hindus, also known as Kashmiri Pandits- a small, miniscule community that lived in Kashmir for hundreds of years and were forced into permanent exile as refugees in their own country in 1989-1990 when a Islamic movement broke out in Kashmir valley”.

*Our Moon Has Blood Clots* is basically written in English Language but the intervention of Kashmiri language appeared many times which has made this book full of life. This book is not about any fictitious world but it is all about human feelings, emotional void and pain in reality. It is not about what Rahul Pandita has read in the news, not what he has heard by others but it is the thing which he has faced and experienced in reality in the Kashmir valley. So that Rahul Pandita has brilliantly presented the true picture of Kashmir by narrating the dialogues and slogan of Kashmiris in Kashmiri language. For instance – when Kashmiri militants were raising slogans against Kashmiri pundits Rahul Pandita has written those words as it was: Raliv, Chaliv, ya Galiv. (Be one among us, flee, or be decimated). By the use of Kashmiri language in his book Pandita successfully connects the reader to its very soul.

No one can better understand what the Kashmiri culture was when Kashmiri Pandits were living with the Muslim friends and neighbours in the same Valley which was the kashmiriyat of Kashmir that the amalgamation of both cultures(Hindu and Muslim) exists together happily in the shade of one culture. The culture of Kashmir which was the soul of Kashmiri has been dying day by day. In the words of Rahul Pandita:“Kashmiri born in the 1990s have no idea about what it was like to love in Kashmir when Kashmiri Pundit culture coexisted with Muslim culture...It was beautiful life which we had in Kashmir; it’s all lost now. It’s lost for every Kashmiri.”Kashmiri Pundits migrated not by leaving their homes but all the idea which has formed their homes. And the people of other community who left behind to live in Kashmir have burnt the houses of Pundits. In the support of this I would like to add a line from Agha Shahid Ali’s poetry entitled “A Country without a Post Office” which truly recounts the idea of loss of home: “The houses were swept about like leaves for burning”.(19-20) It was very hard for every Kashmiri Pundits to survive in those uncertain given circumstances even outside the Valley. It is very suitable lines from Agha Shahid Ali’s poetry entitled “Farewell” which supports the sufferings of Rahul Pandita : “I hid my pain even from myself; I revealed my pain only to myself ”.(43-44) Rahul Pandita while depicting the scene from Kashmir writes in his book *Our Moon Has Blood Clots*: “...early in 1990 in Kashmir: a mammoth crowd in Lal Chowk , shouting, ‘Indian dogs go back!’ and ‘hum kya chahte- Azaadi!’”.(19)

In his book Rahul Pandita has quoted original lines by Lal DEd, Kashmir's revered poetess saint to support his idea of discrimination:

*Shiv Chhuy thali'e thali'e rozan*

*Mo zaan Hyon'd tey Musalmaan*

God pervades every particle, every being,

Don't distinguish between a Hindu and Muslim. (15)

People were disappeared one by one day by day from the valley. circumstances were so wierd and uncertain for Kashmiri people. In one scene of book when someone is disappeared from the valley Rahul Pandita has quoted lines from a song of Rashid Hafiz:

*Yeli chhe myonuy maqbar sajawakh, paanay pashtaavakh*

*Asmaan'ik taarakh ganzraavakh, paanay pashtaavakh.*

You will repent only when you decorate my grave

You will count stars in the sky, this is how you will repent. (46)

Rahul Pandita further writes how the crowd was shouting slogans that had shocked them

*Yahan kya chalega Nizam-e-Mustafa*

*La sharqiya la garbiya, Islamia Islamia*

What will work here? The rule of Mustafa

No eastern, no western, only Islamic, only Islamic (66)

*Zalzala aaya hai kufr ke maidaan mein,*

*Lo mujahid aa gaye maidaan mein*

An earthquake has occurred in the realm of the infidels, The mujahids have come out to fight (66)

While narrating the uncontrolled situation of Valley (the crazy crowd and their slogans with aggression) Rahul Pandita writes:

With every drop of bile coming from Benazir Bhutto's mouth, the mammoth crowd's cheers grow nosier until they turn into a stormy sea...

“Kashmiriyo ki ragon mein mujahideen aur ghaziyon ka khoon hai...’

( In the veins of Kashmiris flows the blood of Mujahideen and the destructures of the infidels...)(71)

“Har eik gaanv se eik hi awaaz buland hogi: Azadi! Har eik masjid se eik hi awaaz buland hogi Azadi! Har eik school se baccha-baccha kahega Azadi, Azadi, Azadi!’

(From every village will rise a cry: Azadi! From every mosque will rise a cry: Azadi! From every school, every child will let out the cry: Azadi, Azadi, Azadi!)(71)

By writing these original version of language Rahul depicted the real picture of Kashmir, he would has been failed by writing in English only.

Rahul Pandita writes: I remember Ma began to tremble like a leaf when we heard it.

“Assi gacchi panu’ nuy Pakistan, batavroostuy, batenein saan’

The crowd wanted to turn Kashmir into Pakistan, without Pandit men, but with their women.”(77)

Once the protagonist of the book was going somewhere in taxi, he has heard that someone has shouted at him: Maryu, Batav, maryu! ( Die, you Pandits, die!).(97)

Rahul Pandita writes:

For them, we were outsiders...The most popular slogan among them was:

*Haath me Kangri munh mein chholey*

*Kahan se aayey Kashmiri loley*

Kangri in hands, chickpeas in their mouth

From where did these Kashmiri flaccid penises come? (123)

Thus we see that how these interpretations caught the attention of every reader and definitely touches the soul of Kashmiri people who are living there or were migrated. . But without the intervention of the Kashmiri language in his English text, Rahul Pandita would have failed to portray the real picture of Kashmir in the 1990s. By the use of Kashmiri in his book Rahul Pandita successfully connects the reader to its very soul. This treatment of Kashmiri language in Rahul Pandita's work *Our Moon Has Blood Clots* and the necessity of the presence of Kashmiri to portray the real situation and the pain of Kashmiri pundits. Rahul Pandita has successfully interspersed his English language with his native dialect in a work of literature.

### Works Cited:

1. Singh, Tavleen. *Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors*. Penguin Books India, 1995
2. Ali, Agha Sahid. *The Vieled Suite*. Penguin Books India, 2010
3. Pandita, Rahul. *Our Moon Has Blood Clots*. Random House India, 2013
4. Pandita, Rahul. Interview by Peter Griffin. *Forbes India Magazine-Rahul Pandita on Kashmir and its Stories*. 08 Mar. 2013. Print
5. Narayan, Manjula. Rev. of *Our Moon Has Blood Clots*, by Rahul Pandita. *Hindustan Times* 19 Jan 2013. Print.
6. Dossani, Rafiq., and Henry S. Rowen, eds. *Peace in South Asia*. Orient Longman Private Ltd. 2006
7. Ganguly, Rajat., and Ian Macduff, eds. *Ethnic Conflict and Secessionism in South And South East Asia*. Sage Publications, New Delhi Thousand Oaks London 2003.
8. Sayeed, Ausaf. *Trends in Indian Culture and Heritage*. Har Anand Publication, 2014.
9. Ganjoor, Vidhu. *Kashmiri Shawls and Carpets*. Samvedana Culture & Heritage Trust.
10. *World Thinkers n Ramakrishna-Vivekananda*, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calicut, 1983.
11. Rao, Aparna. ed. *The Valley of Kashmir*. Manohar, 2008.
12. Garg, veena. *The heritage of Indian Culture*. Ancient Publishing House, 2011.