COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND NARRATIVE:
ETHNOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL TRAUMA IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

by

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Abstract

Kashmir has been in the throes of a civil war since late 1989. The armed conflict between Islamist militants and the Indian security forces has consumed over one hundred thousand civilian lives. Communities have been displaced from their centuries' old heritage. Almost every household has lost a dear one to the bullet of either a security man or a militant. Deeply entrenched patterns of militarization of the Kashmiri society encompassing a range of material and discursive processes have produced horrific social suffering for local communities in the ostensible rhetoric of protecting national sovereignty. In a situation where Kashmiris have been identified as threats to national order and incarcerated, literally and figuratively, as prisoners of the state, they try hard to retain their sense of history since awareness of history enhances communal and national identity. However, in a society under siege the only tools to retain a sense of 'social self' and ethnic collectivity, are through narrative telling and recall to memory that help live trauma collectively to give vent to their plight. This thesis attempts to broadly review the problem in Kashmir and then describe in detail various techniques that Kashmiri society employs like commemoration, narrative telling, oral history, symbolism, theatre, language, and memory etc. to create and live trauma collectively to maintain identity and strive for the perceived cause. Through such reliving of collective trauma societies seek their identity and reinvent their ethnicity.

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Dedication

Dedicated to Mom and Dad

And in memory of my dear dogs, Tutsee and Lizy, who could not bear the separation.

May their noble souls rest in peace!

Chapter 1 - Introduction

"Another woman who was pregnant on the day [night when soldiers committed mass rape of entire womenfolk of the village] was raped by six soldiers during the whole night. After three days of tragedy she gave birth to a boy with broken limbs."[1]

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is the shining example of British post-colonial legacy where conflict and chaos has ruled from inception since British deliberately ignored the basics of state formation as nations in complex Hindu-Muslim environment of India. As Williams (2004, p. 35) explains: "Statehood is, of course, a matter of degree – of the degree of monopolization of force, of the degree of centralization of rule-making and rule-enforcement, of the extent of control of institutions of socialization (family, school, "church"), of commonality of culture (e.g. language, religion, arts, science)." The conflict has evolved in myriad ways since the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan. An armed struggle for the liberation of Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir State began in 1989. Hundreds of young men crossed the border into Pakistan for arms and training, riding the wave of popular sentiment. India maintains that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the country since the Hindu ruler of the erstwhile princely state acceded to India in 1947. Pakistan's claim on it derives from its being a Muslim majority state. Over time, massive state repression and excesses by the Indian counter-insurgent forces, as well as the degeneration of the militant movement with extortions and human rights violations of their own, led to the development of a culture of fear and collective trauma. This provided fertile ground for a threatened identity polarization around Islam. As a result a thoroughly fundamentalist organization called All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), an alliance of 26 secessionist parties, was formed on March 9, 1993 as a political front to further the cause of Kashmiri separatism. The amalgam has, since then, been consistently promoted by Pakistan in the latter's quest to establish legitimacy over its claim on the Indian administered part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the garb of seeking freedom for the Kashmiris. Although Kashmir has been in the news ever since the insurgency broke out in 1989, it has largely been ignored by the international community. The missing appreciation of the terrible human tragedy in Kashmir and

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[1] Abdul Aziz Shah, one of the interviewees.

ignorance of the current state of affairs there is primarily a result of the years of manipulated mainstream reporting and government propaganda to spread disinformation. Although religious tensions have run high and wild among Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus since the partition of India in 1947, the onset of insurgency in 1989 fueled these hatreds further. In the ensuing armed confrontation between the Indian security forces and the Islamist militants the entire Kashmir Valley has become a ghost territory where death and destruction are a manifest reality of daily life. These killings and losses have created unique socio-cultural and psychological disorders among people. The most pronounced psycho-sociological damage caused is the creation of mass 'collective trauma' by the unrest that has over the years become a part of life. The society is now accustomed to this way of living, of witnessing the traumatic events in the long drawn insurgency. Normal life now has become or it may appear to be, a transient event; so much so that whenever there is a lull in the violence the communities use narrative and collective memory of the past traumatic events to relive the trauma. This has also helped people motivate younger generation to carry the struggle forward despite the heavy odds and harmful consequences. Besides in the melee and the chaos of decades of unrest, misinformation and gossip has added to the stories of brutality and injustice that has further heightened peoples' anxiety (MacKuen & Brown, 1987, p. 471):

> "Citizens form opinions about politics by evaluating information that is filtered through the social environment in which they live. This filtering process biases the information to accord with standards held by friends and neighbours. Consequently, opinion formation is a social as well as a psychic phenomenon."

Statement of the Problem and Research Question

For most people in the world Kashmir exists only in the realm of the imagination, bound by headlines, the empty spaces between newspaper article lines are left to be filled by the mind. Despite over two decades of near civil war, Kashmir still only invokes a romantic landscape of army convoys and *fidayeen* attacks against the backdrop of the Himalayas. This ignorance is the result of the years of mainstream reporting and government propaganda; whose only reference point for Kashmiri culture is the doctored tragedy of disinformation. Yet even for better-informed and avid readers, there are few authentic alternate sources of information. In such a situation perpetuated by the state and the vested interests and the neglect shown by the world

community towards this problem, there is very little room for the possibilities of histories spoken, yet left to be heard. Also in such a scenario Kashmir has become too dangerous for ethnographic fieldwork. As a consequence, sociological and anthropological perspectives on this violent region are not only missing, but have also become marginalized in the public debate.

This perpetual state of armed conflict and uncertainty where civilians are caught in the bloody and violent battles joined between Islamist militants and the security forces, and as a result of which terror and violence is inflicted upon the population caught in the cross fire, an eerie and strange melancholic state of affairs has come to be established among the local communities. Sociologically speaking, the distinction between terror and violence could make it easier to understand the social phenomena as fallout of either terror or violence; but the contemporary literature is ambiguous on the clear definition of terror and violence. "Violence may well be a universal phenomenon, as inseparable from the human condition as is the sense of frustration and anxiety which produce that violence; whereas terror is a historical phenomenon associated with particular developments in a people's consciousness" (Rapoport and Alexander, 1982, p. xiii). In Kashmir people have been facing religious and state terror for over the last twenty years. This has impacted the society psychologically, sociologically and emotionally in such a manner that a strange condition of trauma has come to embrace them where they do not want to bring a closure to it. People have lost interest in getting back to normalcy and have devised ways and means of perpetuating memories of the horrific incidents of the past and rather look forward to more such events to happen. Besides imparting a sense of martyrdom which manifests in the rural lore as motivators to young men to take up guns and cudgels to perpetuate the struggle, it has also accorded a sort of permanence to the collective trauma that the Kashmiri society is experiencing. Accordingly the communities are devising ways and means, some real, many manufactured, to perpetuate the memories that caused that trauma for it to act as a strong motivator for the continued struggle for the perceived cause. Recall to memory and collective narrative telling are some of the essential tools of living trauma. This thesis is therefore an attempt to establish this phenomenon through review of literature, specific and documented case studies and interaction with the victims across the cross section of the society in Jammu & Kashmir and also to answer a specific research question using two sub-questions:

How has memory, narrative, and social symbolism aided the formation of collective trauma in the conflict ridden society of Jammu and Kashmir? And, in this context I plan to answer the following two questions:

1. What experiences of life have people in insurgency ridden Kashmir gone through and why the memories of trauma are kept alive even after the insurgency has ebbed?

2. What strategies or ways of recovery are used by the community elders to lead their communities back to living a normal life?

Purpose and Objective of Study

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of trauma experienced by the Kashmiri community who have been subjected to violence by the state forces and Islamist militants since late 1989; and live in a seemingly perpetual state of uncertainty. International observers fear that Kashmir might turn into a nuclear flash point in a future flare-up between India and Pakistan because of the unstable nature of polity and the overwhelming radicalization of the society in Pakistan. In the light of these facts it is imperative for the comity of nations that the Kashmir problem is resolved on priority to end human suffering and possible nuclear flare up at a future date. Besides, the continuing state of terror and war within Kashmir has been bleeding the Kashmiri society and over 100, 000 lives, as per certain estimates have been lost[2] over the last twenty years. So far no serious attempt has been made to study the sociological causes of the alienation of larger Kashmiri society within the larger Indian nation. My study will thus help in unraveling and understanding the causes and mechanisms of reliving trauma when it is not practically being experienced and suggest ways that would help society and policy makers to overcome this strange but extremely harmful social phenomenon. This study will also examine the theoretical aspects of trauma and the role of narrative and collective memory in reliving trauma and any other associated social phenomena.

Overview of the Thesis

Kashmir is one of the most intricate and intractable crises that the comity of nations is facing since last over 60 years of India's independence. The problem has become intractable and difficult for resolution for a variety of reasons; the chief among them being the religious factor and the geo-political and geographical supremacy of the region that place it at the confluence of

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[2]http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/05/indian_pakistani_and_chinese_border_disputes?fsrc=rss

one of the great strategic cross-roads of the 21st century. For these and other reasons the human suffering has been mounting and has caused numerous social problems making it ripe for a sociological investigation. One of the most disturbing phenomena that have emerged among the population is the living of trauma and repeating the same even in periods of comparative peace and tranquility for keep the past perpetually in the 'present'. This lends credibility and sustenance to the sense of alienation and powerlessness. However, investigating social phenomena and apportioning responsibility is not that simple as we think. As Nobel laureate Amartya Sen (2009, p. viii) puts it:

> "Understanding inescapably involves reasoning. We have to 'read' what we feel and seem to see, and ask what those perceptions indicate and how we may take them into account without being overwhelmed by them. One issue relates to the reliability of our feelings and impressions. A sense of injustice could serve as a signal that moves us, but a signal does demand critical examination, and there has to be some scrutiny of the soundness of a conclusion based mainly on signals. Adam Smith's conviction of the importance of moral sentiments did not stop him from seeking a 'theory of moral sentiments', nor from insisting that a sense of wrong-doing be critically examined through reasoned scrutiny to see whether it can be the basis of a sustainable condemnation. A similar requirement of scrutiny applies to an inclination to praise someone or something."

My thesis therefore attempts to unravel the discourses of narrative telling, memory recall and trauma living by the society in Kashmir in the background of the terrible conflict that has been ravaging that beautiful land for over twenty years. The thesis begins with a review of the literature on narrative, memory and the formation of collective trauma in societies that are under siege in Chapter 2. This is followed by Chapter 3, which details out the methodology used in this thesis. In Chapter 4 a brief discussion of the problem of insurgency in the State of Jammu & Kashmir is presented. Chapter 5 deals with the evolution of collective trauma in Kashmiri society, which is basically a study of the cases that have occurred in the wake of long insurgency in Kashmir. In Chapter 6 I discuss the significance of the memorabilia, rituals, attire, symbols and customs in perpetuation of collective trauma. I conclude my thesis with a discussion of the themes that emerge from the investigation of the research questions and offer a road-map for future research in Chapter 7.

"No doubt Kashmir is not merely a Moslem problem: it is an international cause celebre. But the only way India can hope to integrate Kashmir is by respecting its separate identity. Even this will work only if the Kashmiris can be satisfied that India is a truly secular federation in which their coreligionists elsewhere in the country are not subject to discrimination" (Mukerjee, 1968, p. 528). These prophetic words written way back in 1968 have proven every syllable right. The cost of mounting human tragedy has been enormous. Untold collateral damage to life and limb has occurred. Families have been devastated and as unique culture represented by the Kashmiri Pandits has almost but vanished. Kashmiri Muslims who represented an ethos of assimilation and *Kashmiryat* and were famous for their docility and hospitality have become a hardened race with almost all strands of their culture having changed for worse. Centuries old heritage has been lost and emotional suffering of the people has caused strange kinds of psycho-sociological phenomena. Since the various sections of society and the religious groups in Kashmir have been subjected to collective violence as punitive action against their alleged collaboration with the Islamist militants, the climate of fear and loathing pervades the environs in which every one suspects everyone else giving rise to trauma, narrative telling and recall to memories to assuage psychological and emotional states of mind. Trauma has further become a tool of assuaging, at least emotionally peoples' feelings of neglect, inequality and disgust; "inequality of status, measured by wealth and other variables, is also associated with the likelihood of vigilantism, rioting, and terrorism. The more inequality between parties in conflict, the more these forms of social control occur: collective violence varies directly with inequality" (Roche, 1996, pp. 112-113). Religion has also added to the conflict dimension in Kashmir. In the initial stages of the insurgency Kashmiri Pandits, the oldest ethnic religious group were forcibly made to flee the Valley in a bid by the Islamist militants at ethnic cleansing. Pandits who are now spread over refugee camps in the southern Hindu majority province of Jammu and elsewhere in India suffer equally from the twin crises of identity and trauma. This has been perpetuated in the name of religion. The sublime message and meaning of religion has been thoroughly mutilated in Kashmir that it defies understanding; whereas both in the pure interpretation of religion and the spirit of *Kashmiryat*. Since religion is a strong arbiter of beliefs and actions in Kashmir, the recall is made to memory and narrative based on the advice or the edit of the elders. This has created a strange expectancy among the victims of recalling their

experiences of suffering, narrating them in their collective gatherings within the community and thus reliving the memories of trauma. Young (2007, p. 586) states that:

> "The specific future that we imagine depends largely on the symbolic meanings we attribute to the actions of our coparticipants. Such meanings are the product of both individual interpretations and collective understandings that are shared among members of a cultural community. As a result, there will be considerable variation in the future images brought to mind by any given action, based on the unique inclinations and social identities of interactants. Thus expectancy narratives are shaped and reshaped not only by various situational contingencies but also by the gender, ethnicity, and other identity characteristics of interactants."

The twin problems of state sovereignty and the social control through state coercion and religious terrorism have given rise to a number of sociological phenomena and disorders that are afflicting the society in Kashmir today. These are a matter for serious sociological investigation and this thesis attempts to precisely do that. As Sen (2006, 145) argues "Tolerance of terrorism by an otherwise peaceful population is a peculiar phenomenon in many parts of the contemporary world, particularly where there is a sense of having been badly treated."

Chapter 2 - Narrative, Memory and Formation of Collective Trauma

Recent ethnographic work on Kashmir has thus far not engaged in a detailed investigation of the role played by cultural productions within the ongoing interaction between memory and trauma. LeBaron (2003) stresses how intractable conflicts are not just about the territory, boundary, or sovereignty. They also encompass "acknowledgement, representation, and legitimization of different identities and ways of living, being, and making meaning." This thesis therefore provides this ethnographic perspective, and in particular to provide a more sociological insight into the problem of Kashmir. Collective memory is therefore a key concept being explored here. This chapter will also analyze the concepts of narrative, trauma and identity.

Conceptualizing Narrative and Memory

Narrative did not find its place in sociological literature until the late 1940s although some sociologists like Thompson (2000) now acknowledge that oral histories were actually the *first* kind of history. It was largely ignored and the use of it was considered flawed since it laid heavy reliance on psychological data (Maines, 1993) and data that came from memory. This gave rise to a possibility of it being prejudiced. Franzosi (1998) in his article shows the interplay between linguistics and sociology at the level of a text (p. 517). In a powerful introduction to his article, quoting Barthes (1977) as well, he argues that "narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society; it begins with the very history of mankind and there nowhere is nor have been a people without narrative. All classes, all human groups, have their narratives…narrative is international, trans-historical, transcultural: It is simply there, like life itself…" (Barthes in Franzosi, 1998, p. 517). Berg (1998) mentions that in constructing the original histories, researchers at times are "capable of reconstructing moderately recent histories – those that are part of a link to a given living memory. This provides access to the past from, perhaps, as long as 100 years" (p. 310). Oral histories provide the researcher with details into unreported events, tribulations of everyday life or events under investigation (Burgess, 1991; Ritchie, 1995; Trekel, 2005; Tonkin, 1995; Yow, 2005) and in particular the lives of ordinary people (Newby, 1977; Trekel, 2000, 1997; Harkell, 1978), how they behave, what they do and what motivates them. William Labov (1972) argues that stories have similar structures though they might vary in the

number of elements (abstract, orientation, complication, evaluation, results, and coda) they have. But it certainly must have "some action…something must happen in order for a story to occur" (pp. 359-60). Some narrative analysts do find Labov's chronological sequencing model of a story too restrictive. They suggest that narratives might also take the form of poems or stanzas (Becker 1999; Gee 1991; Riessman 1993). Others like Rimmon-Kenan (1983) say that "…narrative fiction… [is] a succession of events" (pp. 2-3); in Cohan & Shires: and for Toolan (1988): "A minimalist definition of narrative might be: 'a perceived sequence of nonrandomly connected events'" [(p. 7) in Franzosi 1998, p. 519]. Ewick and Silbey (1995) argue that narrative could be "used as a method or means of studying social life. Rather than the object of study themselves, here, narratives are the means of studying something else such as class consciousness, familial power, or jury decision-making." (p. 202). They exhibit the use of narratives by sociologists and psychologists using examples like the study conducted by the Chicago school of sociology where it used narratives to understand urban processes (p. 202). Ewick and Silbey (1995) argue that "even the most personal of narratives rely on and invoke collective narratives – symbols, linguistic formulations, structures, and vocabularies of motive – without which the personal would remain unintelligible and uninterpretable" (p. 212).

Narrative elements seem to draw from both sociology and psychology. There is interplay between an individual's social conditions, discourses and practices and his desires and identities which allows them to make the choices, reconstruct pasts and imagine futures within the range of possibilities open to them. Here both the fields of science seem to cross over when society and culture (outside environment) interact with an individual's personality (inner realm). Andrews, Sclater, Squire and Treacher (2004) mention Malson in their introduction: "'individual 'stories' contain elements of cultural metanarratives, stories that are much more significant than the apparent narrative totalities in which their elements appear" (p. 4). Therefore this research also adopts a psychosocial approach to explain the trauma discourse with the help of narrative.

Eyerman (2004) states that: "Narrative analysis develops within the dialectics of form and content and universal and particular, revealing how form and content are linked in making sense or giving meaning, just as culture is structured and structure cultured" (p. 28). In a similar context, Arthur G. Neal (1998) argues that the narratives of traumatic incidents are repeatedly told and retold for effect. They thus become effective and important markers in a community's history. The story-telling therefore becomes a generational legacy, which forms a link between

different generations by the constant re-remembering of past events or what Neal called "engaging in the mental 'excavation of data'" (Neal, 1998, p. ix). But in the process of such re-telling there are always new meanings and challenges that get attached to these stories. Neal (1998) also suggested that the source of these stories is usually individuals who carry the 'victimization status' and these stories are usually their grievances. He distinguishes between personal trauma and national trauma and suggests that "national trauma is shared collectively and frequently has a cohesive effect as individuals gather in small and intimate groups to reflect on the tragedy and its consequences. Personal feelings of sadness, fear, and anger are confirmed as appropriate when similar emotions are expressed by others" (Neal, 1998, p. 4). The victim's trauma is an 'individualized experience' (p. 4) growing out of the "abrupt changes in the qualities of social relationships. Previous feelings of safety and security are replaced by the perceptions of danger, chaos, and a crisis of meaning" (p. 3).

Literature on narrative and memory provides a reasonable framework to situate and examine the role of trauma in the ongoing Kashmir problem. Since the partition of India in 1947 and the start of the Islamist insurgency in late 1989 in particular, Kashmiri society has become grounded in internal conflict and fragmentation. This fragmentation and unabated violence has now become the defining characteristic of their society. The different groups of people in Kashmir repeatedly remind themselves of the forces that divide them. There is anger among the people of different groups but within these groups there are feelings of bonhomie, bonding, cohesion, membership, belonging and community. In such a scenario each group or community zealously guards its turf by recalling traumatic experiences vis-à-vis the rival group / community to grab greater public attention and sympathy. This also helps them displace any feelings of humiliation or shame that may have otherwise resulted from that conflict.

Crisis on an everyday basis intrudes into the peoples' consciousness that eventually ends up in the emergence of social turmoil and subsequent collective violence. Exploding bombs on public buildings, murders, rape, assassinations, and violent agitations are some of the attention-grabbing strategies employed by the militant insurgents. The counter response by security forces then adds to the miseries and collaterals on the public. This is true for Kashmir also. Similarly, Hutto (2008) argues that trauma victims make use of narrative as a tool to preserve and reinforce identity by way of 'communicating' their traumatic incidents and bad experiences to the future generations as a 'cultural legacy'. The existence of past injustice and the continued memory of

that injustice raise the question of the rectification of injustices. Thus, the use of narrative analysis helps understand *how* a story is told. The story is what happened, according to Franzosi (1998), and the narrative is the telling of it. The use of narratives helps in understanding the structure of the stories: the way a victim's story is constructed, its social context, the language used and even the pauses and false starts in the narrative reveal useful information.

In successfully identifying and understanding how memories of traumatic events are shaped in a community we need to situate a particular incident or way of behaving in the context of a number of narrative histories. Thus we identify actions by situating the agent's behavior with reference to its place in their life history and also situate that behavior with reference to its place in the history of the social settings to which they belong. The narrative of one life is part of an interconnecting set of narratives; it is embedded in the story of those groups from which individuals derive their identity (Connerton, 1989, p.21). The impasse and the cultural disorientation that the Kashmiri society finds itself in today can best be described in the words of Sztompka (2000, pp. 453-454), who while discussing various situations in which such a 'cultural disorientation' or 'disruption of the pre-existent culture' may arise states that, "[it may] occur when some significant, sudden and unexpected episode of sudden change (or salient recollection of such an event from the past) gives a blow to the very central assumptions of a culture, or more precisely is interpreted as fundamentally incongruent with core values, bases of identity, foundations of collective pride, etc."

Identity in contemporary social sciences is usually understood in a constructivist manner, wherein, by the use of language, dress, rituals, social customs, monuments, and other cultural symbols, and through our interactions with other individuals and groups gain a sense of *'self'*. Images of ourselves and of our external environment are shaped by memories which facilitate the formation of identity. According to Allen Young (1995), 'the proof as well as the record of the self's existence, and the struggle over memory is the struggle over the self's most valued possessions'. It is here that narrative tracing of the linkages between the past and present that help locate the self and the society in time, come into picture (Halbwachs, 1992). Communal memories act as powerful mechanisms for generating and sustaining social solidarity. The deeply ingrained perceptions of the past also help shape the community identities. In general, with the decline of living memory, when a common past is more about the duty to remember rather than about real memories, the past sufferings can be transformed into the icon of identity and the

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instrument of community of spiritual renewal. Since memory of trauma demands certain narrative forms, we witness the growing importance of cultural memory, which assists the construction of the central role of trauma and victimization through cultural means and cultural forms. These cultural forms are distributed across social institutions and cultural artifacts such as films, monuments, statues, souvenirs, and so on. "Cultural memory is embodied also in regularly repeated practices, commemorations, ceremonies, festivals, rites and narratives" (Misztal, 2004: p. 75).

As has been observed so far narrative has the power to shape individual and community behavior and identity. The concept of such social reproduction has been studied at considerable length by sociologists. Sociologists have different opinions when it comes to conceptualizing 'identity'. Erikson (1959) for example, argues that identity forms as a result of a psychological development of the individual over a period of time, which despite the kind of experiences encountered or learned over time, do not alter identity. So he suggests its 'self-sameness over time.' On the other hand, Bruner (1990) and Calhoun (1994), see it as 'ongoing processes of construction in narrative form.' For Hobsbawm (1972), identity of an individual at the social level is closely related to his or her past and specifically the past of his or her community. Bella (1985) supports Hobsbawm's (1992) argument and suggests that "communities…have a history – in an important sense are constituted by their past – and for this reason we can speak of a real community as a 'community of memory,' one that does not forget its past. In order not to forget the past, a community is involved in retelling its story, its constitutive narrative" (p.153). Wallerstein (1991) stressed on the "temporal dimension of pastness" which he feels "is central and inherent in the concept of peoplehood" (p. 78). On the other hand, Mannheim (1952) brings out the impact of social and political events on collective identities that take place over 'generations.' He suggests that the way a community is formed today or the way it acts is based on how it was shaped by the shared experiences in the formative years. He takes the example of World War I and shows how the war had created a community of soldiers that could clearly relate to one another and hence a whole generation of such soldiers was passed on. Schuman and Scott (1989) further developed and tested Mannheim's theories about the connections between generations and social memory. They demonstrated that memory is categorized according to the generational effect. They show how "generational imprinting in the sense of political memories" makes adolescence and early adulthood the primary periods. They also show how memory then

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comes to be understood only in terms of past experiences. Zerubavel (1996) argues that the act of remembering or recollecting events does not happen for individuals in isolation. It is the other people in our surroundings, which he calls the *'mnemonic others'* (p. 285) like our family and friends that help us recall certain events or people. Therefore family plays a role in how we construct our past. He calls this *'mnemonic socialization'* (p. 286). "In fact, all subsequent interpretations of our early 'recollections' are only reinterpretations of the way they were originally experienced and remembered within the context of our family (p. 286). He continues to explain how the process of mnemonic socialization enters into the community where the individual then starts framing and reinterpreting his or her memories in new and different *'mnemonic traditions'* (p. 286). Zerubavel (1996) views remembering as "a spontaneous personal act" (p. 286), which is regulated by some "social *rules of remembrance,*" that determines and limit how far our memory can reach by "setting certain historical horizons beyond which past events are basically regarded as irrelevant and, as such, often forgotten altogether" (p. 286). He observes that much of what an individual remembers is not even experienced by that individual.

Zerubavel (1996) also argues for *'mnemonic communities'* (p. 289). He suggests: "Indeed, being social presupposes the ability to experience events that happened to groups and communities to which we belong long before we joined them as if they were part of our own past…" (p. 290). He calls it *"sociobiograhical memory"* (p. 290), a term he says he borrowed from Bonchek (1994), "is the mechanism through which we feel pride, pain, or shame with regard to events that happened to our group before we joined them" (p. 290). It becomes part of every community, business or organization to introduce and familiarize its new members to its traditions and history, the technique seen as an effort to incorporate them. Memory though understood to form by the influence of certain elements in the social environment cannot take place all by itself and by simple interacting with the community. The community itself has to make use of certain techniques or tools in order for it to translate. The community establishes and maintains such identities through a variety of mnemonic sites, practices and forms. The first that Zerubavel (1996) mentions is the use of 'language' to share personal experiences with others, which then do not remain "exclusively theirs and could therefore be preserved as social memories even after they themselves were gone" (p. 291). He further suggests that "such 'mnemonic transitivity' underlies the preservation of social memories in stories, poems, and

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legends that are transmitted from one generation to the next" (p. 291). So therefore apart from making use of oral traditions social memories are also transmitted by the use of material artifacts or ruins, monuments, souvenirs, and museums. This thesis therefore devotes a separate chapter to investigate these *'social sites of memory'* as Zerubavel (1996) would call it.

Olick and Robbins (1998) in their article on Collective Memory also talk about memory contestation. They quote Foucault (1977), "…memory is a very important factor in struggle…if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism" (p. 126). Later he writes how groups engage in activities that help remember their history, like for example people celebrate Martyrs Day in Kashmir by taking to the streets, whipping up mass hysteria, eulogizing those who laid their lives by attributing exaggerated heroic acts to them although most of that heroism would not have occurred at all, and by shouting slogans and reciting verses from holy texts; sociologists like Olick and Robbins and Foucault would view it as a channel to keep past memories alive. The aim of narratives, which are created to maintain individual and group identities and target the maintenance of cohesion of a community, use special tools. One such tool is memory.

Memory plays a crucial role in forging and preserving peoples' identities and their affiliations thereof – identities that gives them a sense of belonging to a community or to a nation. Collective or historical memory, as it is also known, is often used in its many forms, such as commemoration, monument, political or even controversial or strategic use of the past, or remembrance of personal or handed-down experience. This helps generate a strong in-group bond while laying down boundaries with the out-group members. The different groups, giving them a sense of superiority over the others, are then able to socially define and alienate/differentiate themselves from others. In Kashmir, different groups of people are able to keep alive the memories of painful past experiences both on a personal or individual and community level by engaging in various political and social activities. Memory therefore needs to be understood both from the psychological and sociological viewpoints.

Psychologists define memory as "the process of maintaining information over time" (Matlin, 2005, p. 3-5) or "the means by which we draw on our past experiences in order to use this information in the present" (Sternberg, 1999, p. 11-15). Such a drawing from past experiences or what in psychology is called 'remembering' is always opposed by 'forgetting,' another concept which results in the loss of an experience or past after considerable lapse in

time, the retrieval of such information then becomes difficult. More so only those parts of the past (memories) are forgotten that have no referential frames in our presence. For example, in Kashmir where multiple ethic groups exist, a community might make use of group strengthening devises like remembering historical events and their consequences or benefits to guard against external threats to their identity. In such cases, references to the cultural differences are known to be exploited for the reproduction of group identities. The members of a group therefore share a collective memory of victimization. They view it as a way to secure continuity and to strengthen group identity and cohesion. Mutual recognition can be reached if the divergent collective memories are reconstructed. Discourses about the group's history are means to capture in the present what happened in the past. These discourses can address in-group, but also out-group members and therefore generate several opportunities to reconstruct their relationships in order to work on a common future (Licata, Klein & Gély, 2007). It can be understood that people and societies need to keep their pasts alive because that defines their present and future. Historian Hayden White (1981) argues that historical events are not real because they happened, but first of all because they were considered worth remembering and telling, thus finding their natural place in a chronological order of events. A person might, for example, simply search their memory for important life events with no particular interpretive agenda in mind. As events emerge, their date of occurrence is recorded and the event described (pp. 45-67). Since an individual is not alone and is part of a larger group or community, their interaction with others and experiences or ideas of these people tend to influence their particular narratives, thus acquiring experience in the framework of meanings, which have social relevance; "No memory without perception" (p. 169) as argued by Halbwachs (1992). But at the same time Zelizer (1995) warns against considering memory as a carrier for the past memories into the present; "memory is a process, not a thing, and it works differently at different points in time (as quoted in Olick and Robbins, 1998, p. 122).

It is common practice for communities to construct their past in a manner that they are remembered as something very ideal people with full societal values and institutions. Past is often mythologized with exaggerated visions of glory. As Connerton (1989) observes that at times when we attempt to reconstruct a past and present it in its utmost glory, we end up finding that such a paradise never existed. Furthermore he adds that in this return to the past, through

memory and its analogues - visits to places associated with the past and conversations in which well-known past events are rehearsed - is a part of life invested with profound, ritualistic implications. This method of historical reconstruction leads to the production of formal written histories. But there are also methods of narration that are procedurally informal and more culturally diffused. It is the communal memory (Connerton, 1989, p. 17). In a village setting, communal history is created and kept alive by way of gossips, which is composed of the daily recounting combined with past mutual familiarities. By this "the village informally constructs a continuous communal history of itself: a history in which everybody portrays, in which everybody is portrayed, and in which the act of portrayal never stops" (Connerton, 1989, p.17). This to a large degree leaves little space for the presentation of an individual's self in everyday life because individuals remember in common. This further gives rise to collective memory; which in turn aids in nurturing collective trauma.

Connerton (1989) also suggested considering the ruling groups and looking at distinction between their political records and their political memories, we would see that 'the ruling group will use its knowledge of the past in a direct and active way' (pp. 17-18). Its political behavior and decisions will be based on an investigation of the past, which come to light only after the war or a revolution, or a public sandal. The distinction is evident when its leaders have to take decisions in crises which they cannot wholly understand and where the outcome of their actions is impossible to foresee; for it is then that they will have recourse to certain rules and beliefs which 'go without saying', when their actions are directed by an implicit background narrative which they take for granted (Connerton, 1989, p. 18). So, for many years it was common to interpret every disturbance in the Valley in terms of the continuation of the insurgency that began in 1989, so that times of restoration appeared as pauses during which there was considerable lull in the society, only to break through to the surface once more; repeatedly over and over again.

In my thesis, the main tool that facilitates narrative to perpetuate social trauma is the 'social memory'. Success of the concept of 'social memory' can be attributed to the context marked by great social and political upheavals of early and mid-20th century, to the passing of generations, and to an interest tinged with nostalgia for worlds in which the oppressed groups had lived and identified themselves with. This concept gained great currency due to the barbarities meted out to Jews in the Holocaust. In short, the concept of 'social memory' alludes

to the question of *remembrance* and of *handing down* memories (Lavabre, 1994). The concept of collective memory therefore, stresses less the institutional and political uses of the past than the socially shared representations of the past (Lavabre, 1994). In other words, collective memories are built up in the work of homogenizing representations of the past (Lavabre, 1994) by a society or an ethnic entity against perceived or real threat to their identity and in conditions of stress and difficulty. International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, pp. 1870-1872 vol-2 (2nd ed.) attributes the contemporary usage of the term 'collective memory' to Emile Durkheim. Durkheim in his 'The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life' (1912) constructs a theory of ritual and collective representations through an analysis of commemoration and states that every society displays and requires a sense of continuity with the past and that the past confers identity on individuals and groups allowing us to see collective memory as one of the elementary forms of social life. However, the specific phrase 'collective memory' first appeared in Maurice Halbwachs' *'The Social Frameworks of Memory'* (1992) and later in *'The Collective Memory'* (1980) published after the death of the author. Halbwachs' conceptualization of collective memory as shared social frameworks of individual recollections follows Durkheim's belief that every society exhibits and requires a sense of continuity with the past (Mistral, 2003, p. 124). Halbwachs (1992) states that "collective memory is not a given but rather a socially constructed notion...it is individuals as group members who remember…[and] requires the support of a group delimited in space and time" (p. 22). Halbwachs (1992) argues: "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories" (p. 38). This suggests that the formation of memories or the forgetting of these for an individual is more likely to happen in the context of a group where they are able to attach meanings to these memories as a collective. Identification with a group also gives rise to experiences of trauma or victimization even if they are not experienced in 'real.' Halbwachs (1992) further contrasted between collective and individual memory. He calls individual memory "personal" and "autobiographical" memory, and collective memory "social" and "historical" memory (pp. 23-25). Social or autobiographical memory is the memory of things that one has experienced personally; whereas 'historical memory', by contrast, extends to groups and communities, and has the capacity to reconstruct. Applying these interpretations of various types of 'memory' one would see that the historical memory of the people in Kashmir who have undergone the painful experience of the partition of their nation in 1947 is limited to that

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generation only; whereas, the social memory, on the other hand, is more of a represented memory mediated and enriched, fictitiously or otherwise, by books, poetry, ritual, commemoration, folklore and holidays, etc. "People do not simply identify with what they see on television. Strong identifications are only produced when distant events have a local resonance. But paradoxically, this ethnocentric focus on events is precisely the process that causes a belief in, and then willingness to act on universal values. 'The basis of a wider shared morality is identification with distant others'" (Sznaider, 2000, p. 12; Levy and Sznaider, 2002, p. 92).

P. Jedlowski (2001) argues that individual and collective memory are also influenced or shaped by the cultural attitudes of the people. He suggests that individuals take great pride in their cultural backgrounds. And these cultural assumptions also come to shape the narratives but are "constituted and stabilized within a network of social relationships" (p. 34) and hence the difference from one society to the other but narrative itself is dependent on cultural factors. The past is "constantly selected, filtered and restructured in terms set by the questions and necessities of the present" (p. 30). Wallace Martin (1986) comments on narrative as "Karl Marx said that history, and perhaps narrative, will end when there is a classless society. Narration starts when that world is thrown out of kilter, or there is a need to explain the world's origin and structure" (p. 100), implying that narratives are dependent on the conditions that prevail in the social world – is there stability or chaos? Berger (1993) argued for a 'top-down' approach to narratives. According to him narratives have their roots in cultural loci or specific cultural locations, which the narratives could easily relate to and hence making them culturally specific seem emerging from the individual narratives and narrating subjects. Therefore it is these 'personal stories' that have a deep impact on culture. Thus, we can safely deduce that 'collective trauma' is a function of the society or a group of individuals, who live, relive and invent ingenious ways to narrate their experiences and episodes of trauma for it to become a rallying point in their perceived struggle against injustice. This seems possible by the use of commemorative tools and techniques that they employ to strengthen feelings of identity and belonging.

Role of Narrative and Memory in Trauma formation and perpetuation

The proposed thesis is an attempt to analyze the formation, living and reliving of trauma by the people for a certain underlying reason or cause through narrative and memory and its subsequent fateful social impact. In recent years the term 'trauma' has increasingly found its

place in sociological literature and no longer seems to be confined to the psychological domain. The idea that entire collectives and societal identities can be traumatized by an attack on the historical events, a comparison becomes important to understand the impact of different events and historical constellations like the Holocaust, Israel-Palestine and the ongoing Kashmir problem. Recurrent communal, terrorist and other repressive events maul the minds and consciousness of people in such a manner that they develop a certain psycho-social defense mechanism around them to cope with such events or atmosphere. Frequent visitations of such traumatic events cause societies to develop a pattern that consigns to memory the worst episodes which surface in subsequent social discourse. As the matrix of this trauma and collateral response progresses in a society or a group or an environment, the receiving entity prepares to release pent-up aggression through various means of protest against the identified perpetrators. Whereas incidents of individual trauma may erase from the memory of victims over time, collective trauma caused to societies caught in the conflict zones has been seen as being used as a tool to facilitate recollection of events that caused that trauma, and to perpetuate the main theme of the conflict.

Recourse to such collective trauma is done by a recall to memory. Trauma has so far generally been dissected as a psychological phenomenon causing hurt to an individual's physique and psyche and giving rise to post traumatic syndromes of various kinds. A significant attempt to conceptualize 'cultural trauma' has been made by Jeffery Alexander (2004), wherein he defines 'cultural trauma' as "a socially mediated attribution" (p.8). This 'socially mediated attribution' in other words is the recall to memory through narrative. Remembering an event through memorialization makes the past part of their present, which can be seen as memorizing itself. Alexander downplays the forms of traumatic events, and stresses the importance of peoples' *belief* that an event in which the trauma has taken place has damaged the bonds that serve to attach people together. For Jeffrey Alexander (2004), trauma is entirely a social construct: "Events are not in themselves inherently traumatic" (Alexander, 2004, p. 8). "Traumas occur", he argues, "when individuals and groups *feel* they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their consciousness, will mark their memories forever, and will change their future in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Alexander, 2004, p. 8), and that, "the past of a community continues to shape its present". Traumatic experiences and events involve mere exaggerations of the initial precursor as such events replicate. "It is only through

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the imaginative process of representation that actors have the sense of experience" (Alexander, 2004, p. 9). Anderson (1983) in his study of nationalism saw communities and nations as collectives or unities that were imagined. Individuals tend to build up on a shared identity that grows out of their common sufferings and tragedies. "...[there] is a sense of shared moral unity among any given group of people and permit linking personal lives with historical circumstances" (Neal, 1998, p. 21). "The collective suffering, sadness and anger growing out of social disruptions provide the new raw materials for the recreation of society as 'moral community' (Neal, 1998, p. 22). Papadopoulos (1999) suggests identities have a much stronger base when individual stories and shared narratives are based on common experiences or community identity. He suggested that 'communities are storied by shared narratives'. These have power because, `by locating oneself within them, one is able to access their therapeutic effect' (Papadopoulos, 1999, p. 325).

The concept of trauma covers a broader canvas in the society where it occurs. By exploring different manifestations of trauma and the attendant social implications, we not only understand the way individuals deal with crises in their personal lives, but also the ways that they use to make it a collective reference point for their group. Any kind of conflict not only harms the individual, but also the relationships and social arrangements that connect them in many ways thus disrupting the social order. Communities whose distinct cultural identity may be under threat by larger communities around them, use trauma as a kind of cultural reality that enables them retain their own identity. Trauma here is not only the result of a group experiencing pain, but a collective 'deciding' of how to use memories of trauma as defense against the potential threat, perceived or real, to their identity, culture and existence. Such trauma can thus be called 'collective trauma' associated with a group's collective identity. Culture and historical period both strongly influence the individual. The sociological self reconciles the individual with his or her culture as also allows for the culture to control the individual from within. Society accepts the importance of trauma no more than it accepts the meaning of the individual. In contrast, the individual is prone to maximizing the importance of his or her traumatic experience. Therefore, collective traumatization facilitates society's control of the individual. Freud (1922) in his book 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' suggests that although traumatic events are abrupt and sudden, they cause 'physical fixation' in individuals that gives rise to an overwhelming effect on the

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consciousness evoking "extensive disturbance to the system of the organism" (http://www.bartleby.com/276/4.html).

Erickson (1994) defines collective trauma as a "blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of community" (p. 233). Individuals make use of the resources like stories, myths and memories of past events to remember and develop a 'sense of continuity' (Stein, 2009, p. 294). Stein (2009) in her article quotes Eyerman and argues how "'second generation' memory workers begin with the knowledge of trauma – a 'dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in the social fabric affecting a group of people who have achieved some degree of cohesion" (Eyerman, 2004, p.123 as quoted in Stein, 2009, p. 294). Trauma can be viewed as a blow to ones beliefs on how stable our society is and how events which cause mass destruction and cause trauma also alter social groups and cultural formations. De Vries (1996) refers to culture as a "double-edged sword" (p. 400). Culture on one hand provides us with a sense of belonging and individuals get the opportunity to relate to their surroundings but when the cultural tissue is scarred or under attack, it fails to provide identity and meaning. De Vries (1996) argues that it is during this time that there is an increase in the fundamentalist or nationalist regressive forces which "rush in to fill the vacuum" (p. 407). Furthermore the concept of victimization or being a victim of trauma also beckons explanation when one talks about collective trauma. Eyerman (2004) suggests that being a victim of trauma is "a time-delayed and negotiated process" that would need cultural intervention for reducing its sufferings on the individuals (As quoted in Stein, 2009, p. 296). Now Erickson (1994) and Geertz (1973) also talk about collective trauma in terms of centrifugal and centripetal forces that have certain pull and push forces. Erickson (1994) argues that collective trauma acts as a "centrifugal force," (p. 232) that has a tendency to 'push' the marginalized groups of the society further away from the cultural center. On the other hand, collective trauma as a "centripetal force" has a tendency to 'pull' people to interact and recreate the near original culture (Geertz, 1973). The social significance of traumatic events gains significance and a sort of permanency in the collective rendering of community narratives when people as a collectivity engage in debates over the causes, conditions, and consequences of a traumatic event. With the passage of time, the effect of these traumatic events fades in the collective memory and the consciousness of the community. When such a stage is reached narratives and use of collective memory comes into play. Therefore by narrating and retelling of

the stories of the past, the events in question become stereotyped and selectively distorted as these are retained in collective memories of the people. Thus this entire process helps a group maintain its distinct identity within a given social framework which it attempt to protect. The protracted tense conditions that prevail in Kashmir since the onset of the insurgency in late 1989, the collateral damage suffered by the people adversely affecting all aspects and spheres of life; psychological, economic, environmental, cultural and social; has set in motion an irrevocable sense of trauma leading to social change.

Importance of Social Space

Nothing exists in isolation. Individuals interact not only with other human beings but also develop relations with the 'entities' and 'objects' in their immediate environment. This environment provides them with a sense of stability and belonging as long as it does not change. Auguste Comte propounded the idea that it is the relative permanence of the physical objects around us that imparts a sense of 'mental equilibrium' (Halbwachs, 1992). Comte believed that once the surroundings start to change, individuals see a disturbance in their reference points, uncertainty increases and hence gives rise to mental stress. This is also true for a group. It adapts to the situations presented to it, transforms, and grows building a 'framework' for itself. This idea of group stability is imparted to all individuals who are part of it, so the individual does not see himself and the group as separate but as one. Therefore Halbwachs (1992) shows how spatial images have a bearing on collective memory. He further argues that memories of every stage and era of our lives is registered in our minds and 'continually reproduced' (p. 47) but since it is reproduced in our minds so many times it loses its originality, form and appearance. It is through this constant reproduction of these memories that a 'sense of identity is perpetuated' (p. 47).

Past and present are irrevocably intertwined into each other, and individuals always attempt to retrieve the past while interacting with each other. This process is through the collective memory of the participants although they may differ in many aspects. It is not surprising therefore, that memory became a favoured concept in an understanding of the past. Johnson (1982) say that to anyone who follows contemporary political debates, from the Nuremberg Trials to the ethnic massacres in former Yugoslavia, it is clear that the issue of collective memory has become deeply associated with the study of social identity, nation building, ideology and citizenship. Contemporary concepts of memory are therefore, much more

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complex than the previous theorists could have anticipated. Elias (1992/1987) avers that the memory was construed as a kind of performance in which the act of remembering does not reflect either the individual's will or social determinations, but rather the intertwining of these two forces. Halbwachs (1992) explains this 'performance' when he states that when 'extraordinary events or destructive events take place, there is heightened awareness of the past and present among its members. An important point that Halbwachs (1992, p. 26) makes which describes the situation in Kashmir is his argument that:

> "Religions are rooted in the land, not merely because men and groups must live on land but because the community of believers distributes its richest ideas and images throughout space. There are the holy places and other spots that evoke religious remembrances, as well as the profane sites inhabited by enemies of God, which may even be cursed and where eyes and ears must be closed".

Such is the power and inter-relation of memory to our past and thereby to our identity that Derrida (1988, p. 27) sadly states:

> "I have never known how to tell a story. And since I love nothing better than memory and Memory itself, Mnemosyne, I have always felt this inability as a sad infirmity. Why am I denied narration? Why have I not received this gift (*doron*) from Mnemosyne?"

Communities also tend to create 'sacred spaces' (other than religious places of worship) as a way to remember and commemorate the brave. Such cultural productions have great significance because it speaks for the people whom it was created for and the appeal it has for the people of that culture. In the case of Kashmir these sacred spaces where people engage in 'performed memory' are the streets or villages glorified because of its sacrifices or losses incurred, or the graveyards for martyrs, and other such cultural indicators. For Pierre Nora (1989), these are the 'sites of memory' or *lieux de memoire.* He suggested that a site for memory could be found in symbols, celebrations, rituals or sites where a past event occurred, incident happened and hence hold deeper meanings (p. 16).

The Method of Commemoration

Although individual trauma has been studied extensively by psychologists, the collective impact of social trauma needs much more exploring to understand this unique phenomenon that is prevailing in Kashmir Valley today and thereby its impact on various aspects of community life. A better understanding of this phenomenon can be reached by unraveling the association between the people, place and society at large and the variety of commemorative activities they undertake. Some scholars like Degnen (2005) differentiate between the *'obvious'* 'Western' forms of social memory which takes into account the most obvious sites of memorialization like the museums, war memorials etc. and the *'not so obvious'* things happening in everyday setting, everyday talk, gossiping, etc. Assmann (2006) took the social aspect of individual memory as described by Halbwachs a step further and called it '*communicative memory'* which involves constant interactions between individuals and the core of all these interactions is emotions, that are the defining feature of memory. As quoted in Assmann and Czaplicka (1995) Halbwachs argues that such a remembering or collective memory by individuals is "socially mediated and relates to a group. Every individual memory constitutes itself in communication with others. These 'others,' however, are not just any set of people, rather they are groups who conceive their unity and peculiarity through a common image of their past. Every individual belongs to numerous such groups and therefore entertains numerous collective self-images and memories" (p. 127). Schwartz (1982) argued that remembering or recollecting information of the "past is an active [and] constructive process" (p. 374). Fentress and Wickham (1992) had a similar opinion and argued that memory "is not a passive receptacle, but instead a process of active restructuring, in which elements may be retained, reordered, or suppressed" (p. 40). He further argued that there are some memories that we register and 'chronicle' and yet there are some that we morally are indifferent towards. So the memories that are chronicled, which "safeguards the historically real" (p. 377) are evaluated by way of commemoration which "celebrates and safeguards the ideal" (p. 377). For Durkheim commemoration or rituals are a way to socially reproduce cohesion and unity (moral) in a community or society. For Jedlowski (1997), "commemoration is a transition from bereavement to *naming the past"* (quoted in Tota, 2004, p. 138). Schwartz (1992) calls commemoration a "register of sacred history" (p. 377). Connerton (1989) defines commemoration as: "All rites are repetitive, and repetition automatically implies continuity with the past. But there is a distinctive class of rites which have an explicitly backward-looking and

calendrical character" (p. 45). Neal (2001) argues that commemorative creations are 'echoes from the past' and have a huge influence on the 'current and future generations' (p. 203). They provide people with a sense of reassurance that their past would not be lost and the sacrifices made by the heroes would be remembered forever. John Gillis (1994) also argues for the influence commemoration has on identity rather how it shapes it. He explained the social and political nature of commemoration activity and how it is a combination of individual and collectively agreed upon memories (so there is a consensus) even if these memories to the people are painful, produce intense anxiety and was and is a struggle for them. So a focus on *'commemorative leavings,'* as Patrick Hutton (1994, p. 149), following the work of Nora, has called them, engages with how memory leaves a mark in words, for example, texts, speeches, spectacle and in constructing figures like monuments, and museums. It is the commemoration of both the traumas and triumphs of a struggle that play an important role in the formation of identity, national, community or collective, an important way through which the collective is able to shape the views (individual) of its people of a shared past and views (collective) of a shared future and also collectively remembered. So commemoration is also a way of creating, what scholars call a *'public memory.'* It is the memory that is publically constructed to keep the collective memories, whether pleasant or unpleasant, alive. As Bodner (1994) points out, "Public memory is a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past and its present, and, by implication, its future" (p. 76).

Engaging in what scholars call *'identity work'* defined by Schwalbe and Schrock (1996) as what people do, engage in, alone or with others to bring about change or assign meanings to situations or people themselves. They suggest identities are essentially "indexes of the self" (p. 115); indexes here are the shapes, symbols or signs which actually carry meaning. Stone (1981) argues that socially these symbols give meanings to whatever they are attached to, be it the individual or the collective, and thereby mobilizing the actions or responses of other individuals, engaging them in similar activities. So therefore, identity work constitutes any kind of interaction that takes place between individuals as a collective: narratives, texts, rituals, excuses and justification (Hewitt and Stokes, 1975), and confrontation / interaction with outsiders (Stryker, et. al 2000) etc. Schwalbe and Schrock (1996) argue that even 'mere talk' (p. 116) constitutes work because of the way it is placed in the conversation, idioms that are used, and the meanings conveyed.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Research Design

The research strategy employed is the qualitative mixed method approach. Qualitative research is often used by social scientists to study true-to-life situations that provide a foundation for the application of other ideas and other research methods. Erickson and Gutierrez (2002) pointed out that rather than making inferences based on statistical analyses, a qualitative research design focuses on the understanding of a phenomenon within its context or environment. Since the phenomenon of social collective trauma as experienced by the people of Jammu and Kashmir has not received adequate attention by the academia and thus not clearly defined in sociological terms, research was done to explore the possibilities of its prevalence of what was otherwise seen as a known fact or an obvious aftermath, rather than to test any particular hypothesis. The research focused on the depth of detail and methods employed to relive trauma through direct interaction with the members, mostly the heads of different communities. To explore the lines of inquiry just detailed, this study makes use of a number of different data sources and methodologies. Because trauma in Kashmir has always been studied from psychological point of view ignoring the more dominant underlying sociological causes, it was something relatively new that was being researched and hence the lack of adequate data. It was also treated more as a political matter nationally even when it was in the hands of the human rights advocates. It was therefore imperative to study the political, cultural, and ideological meanings attached to the collective trauma discourse which necessitated the use of a variety of data sources. Therefore, in addition to document reviews, the study makes use of media reports, semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, online information, and published material from outside sources.

Interviews

The primary data collection method employed is the in-depth and open-ended interviews of community leaders and other elders. These open-ended interviews conducted in the field were guided conversations aimed at answering the research question. Berg (1998) argues the importance of interviews as an effective method of understanding the perceptions of participants or learning how participants come to attach certain meanings to phenomena or events (p. 62). The interviews were semi-structured face-to-face interactions with community leaders and families of the missing people, who are also prominent public figures / spokespersons chosen

from their appearance in daily newspapers circulated in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. Again Berg (1998) argues that in a semi-structured interview style, interviewers begin with a set of questions to start the conversation and then have the freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardized questions (Berg, 1998, p. 61).

Identification of Key Informants: A total of nine representative cases of atrocities were selected randomly from a pool of fifteen cases, all of whom had received national and international coverage and aroused worldwide condemnation. Incidents represented by these cases also aroused intense public reaction culminating into agitations, protest marches and willful defiance of law that resulted in hundreds of deaths. Seven community leaders and village headmen were also interviewed in order to seek a balanced insight. Additionally, these respondents were selected primarily on the basis of their roles and experiences they played in their respective communities. Then within these villages, the community leaders helped identify a couple of people who were willing to talk about insurgency and related issues, on free will. First, potential participants were contacted via letter or phone call to determine if they were willing to participate in the interview. Once an individual agreed to participate in the study, an interview date was determined and scheduled. This was based on each participant's availability to ensure convenience to the participant concerned. The potential participants were provided an informed consent form so that they could acknowledge their participation in the study. If a potential participant chose to participate in the interviews, then he or she would sign the consent form and continue on with the interview. If a potential participant chose not to sign the informed consent form, then he or she was thanked for considering taking part in the study and no further information was collected. Each signed informed consent form was collected by the researcher and placed in an envelope, where it was subsequently stored in a locked file cabinet. These interviews were conducted privately, in homes or at community halls, as the availability permitted, over a period of one month in 2011.

On an average each interview lasted about an hour. The interview questionnaire and guide was designed to generate data on how individuals, groups, and organizations experience life in a traumatized environment, how traumatic experiences shape the attitudes of the community members and their perceptions and behaviour. Some questions were designed to enable the narrative telling of stories, mass commemorations, burial rituals and manner of protest

and to gain first-hand knowledge of the real incidents lived by these people. Thus the interviews were structured to an extent but were mostly treated as conversations during which the researcher was drawing out detailed information and comments from the respondents.

In accordance with the IRB instructions the respondents were also explained the purpose of the interview and how they were selected. It was also made clear that all names and their responses would be kept confidential. Therefore to maintain the confidentiality of the personal particulars of the participant interviewees, their names have been changed in this thesis. All interviews were tape-recorded and at the same time field notes were also taken. Locations were selected based on the proximity of these areas to the Line of Control, intensity of operations, nature of insurgency, communities involved and representation of all communities as per the tragic events investigated. These are briefly tabulated below.

Table 3.1 Number of Interviews by community and regions

Region / District	Muslims	Hindus (Pandits)	Sikhs	Total
Kupwara	4			4
Pulwama	2	1		3
Shopian	3			3
Anantnag	2		3	5
Jammu	1	3		4
Total	12	4	3	19

Non-Participant Observation

Field notes were taken at the time of interviews. These field notes were running descriptions of how respondents interacted with their surroundings – formal and informal, settings, observing that does not happen and sounds. Berg (1998) argues that "systematic analysis of ethnographic data typically begins by reading the field notes" (p. 151). An initial reading of the notes proved helpful, which Glaser & Strauss (1967) also emphasize to, "reinforce any hypotheses or themes developed during the data collection phase and to generate new hypotheses and themes previously unrealized" (as cited in Berg, 1998, p. 151). With a careful study of the notes, additional themes and sub-themes were also identified, and then the data were categorized according to the themes they corresponded to. These notes were short-hand; like

Lofland and Lofland (1984) recommend taking notes that will serve as a memory aid when full field notes are constructed (p. 56). Also both descriptive (what is actually observed) and reflective (personal impressions) field notes were maintained. In a subject that explores trauma and its manifestations such observations come in handy since respondents unknowingly project emotions that speak for the bad memory.

As the focus of this research is how memory of past events is lived by the people of a community, special care was taken to note respondents' pauses, sighs, what part of the conversation made them uncomfortable, part they tried to ignore or preferred not to answer. All of these were seen as indicators of a past experience or memory that the respondents were unwilling to share or remember. Patton (1990) argued that observation when coupled with interviews provides for a deeper understanding since it imparts a real life setting to the context of events that occur. It also allows the researcher to see things that the respondents themselves would be unwilling to discuss due to the traumatic nature of events. Seidman (2006) argues that an interviewer pay special attention to the non-verbal cues offered by a respondent (p. 79). According to Silverman (2006) the reliability of the interpretation of transcripts may be gravely weakened by a failure to note apparently trivial, but often crucial, pauses, overlaps or body movements when their activities are audio or video recorded and transcribed (p. 46). Silverman (2006) therefore suggests a researcher to both observe and listen. As Silverman (2006) argues, we can obtain underlying information, an important data, through this method. This is where non-participant observation comes in which helps gather additional information suitable to access when and how reliving a traumatic experience comes with ease or is a discomfort.

Document Reviews

The review of documents was a secondary data collection method. These included newspaper articles – news stories, features, opinion columns, and editorials from a local daily newspaper (*The Kashmir Times*, the State's over seventy years old newspaper), a respected vernacular newspaper (*Daily Udaan*, published from Srinagar for over fifty years), national newspaper of international standing for free and frank journalism (*The Times of India*, circulating for the past over two hundred years) and an international newspaper (*The New York Times*, which needs no description). Also included in these analyses were pictures of various agitation and mourning scenes, scenes where populace was engaged in internecine squabbles with the security forces, community gatherings over tragic events and the like; posters, flyers, and some

works of art that have emerged from the experience of local communities during this long period of unrest visually depicting the events, ritual acts like burials and mourning and processions to burial grounds, resting places of martyred men and women, and the like; literary and theological texts (Appendix B) that have emerged during this period of unrest and uncertainty, although very limited in number; commemorative ceremonies to celebrate the deeds of the dead and their remembrance; revolutionary pieces of local folk music laced with pain and longing and at times eulogizing the great heroism of the departed and at times beseeching to return; and video programs in certain cases that stand testimony to certain events related to the ongoing unrest but revealing valuable information for our investigation – all possible objects of keeping memory alive. Archival research also included electronic (internet-based) search of the above two mentioned newspapers – examining the news and editorial content of the newspapers dating back to 1990, when the insurgency started in Kashmir.

Case Studies

According to Gary (1996), the most common form of qualitative research is the case study. The case study method emphasizes exploration of a specific phenomenon. In contrast to other methods, which lack flexibility, this less rigid format of qualitative research allows the study to evolve according to the data as they are recorded (Van Maanen, Dabs, & Faulkner, 1982). Thus, a case study methodology was also used to investigation the thesis statement. The cases included are mass massacres in Kashmir that have affected people of all religions. In order to understand how these communities are now dealing with past memories, nine important incidents that took place during the period 1991-2009 were chosen. They meet the criteria for the appropriate context (occurring in a public place) and equal representation (all communities equally represented). These cases for example, include: Kunan and Poshpora rapes, an event that occurred in the initial stages of Kashmir insurgency brought international condemnation and anger, and festers to date. The other incident studied is of the massacre of 33 innocent Sikhs in the village of Chhiti Singhpora on the eve of President Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2006. This incident mauled and emotionally bruised an entire community and galvanized them into a *kibbutz* like activity. The incident till date defies resolution and the perpetrators, allegedly Indian Army officers and men, till date have not been brought to book taking shelter behind a draconian law called the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. Few other incidents of similar atrocities and proportion were also studied.

Case Studies were built upon interviews and background reports. As all incidents of public mass murder receive an inordinate amount of coverage, there are multiple research sources available for reconstructing a profile for each individual. Therefore data was collected through The Kashmir Times and The Times of India, and events were also confirmed by respondents who were interviewed. The respondents were given complete freedom to talk if they wished. They were not asked about the details of the events concerned but only a confirmation was asked for if it really happened the way the newspaper clips projected. So they were first shown the clips or were read out to them and confirmation followed. At this moment the non-verbal cues of the respondents were carefully observed and noted. Thereafter the respondents were asked to explain if they commemorate the loss or the damage in any way. If yes, then they were asked a couple more questions. The respondents were given the freedom to talk about whatever they felt comfortable with and when they did not, the discussion was carefully diverted to a more desirable topic.

Data Analysis

What now follows is a description of the methods and procedures used in analyzing the data collected in the field. The analysis of interview transcripts and field notes was done based on the inductive approach which helps identify patterns in the data. "Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1980, p. 306). To ensure reliability and validity of the study, interviews were transcribed verbatim. Interviews were conducted in the native language Kashmiri and other commonly spoken and understood language in Kashmir, Urdu. These interviews were tape recorded and later translated into English to obtain transcripts. After completing all interviews, transcripts were categorized into themes. Constant comparison and reflexivity was practiced to ensure that the interview data directly supported the analysis of the research questions. Each participant received a unique identification number. The unique identification number was used for confidentiality purposes so that no personal information was collected that would compromise privacy. The transcribed data were saved on a personal computer that is password protected. Paper documents from the interviews were digitally scanned and stored on a personal computer, along with the informed consent forms. Upon completion of the interviews, the researcher transcribed all gathered information into a word document for purposes of data analysis. Berg (1998) contends that once

the interview has concluded, the analysis should begin with a systematic pattern of looking for themes and sub-themes, patterns of similarities and dissimilarities and any other information that might get thrown up. Accordingly, the data collated from these interviews were then organized into what Maxwell (2005) considers ―broader themes and issues (p. 96). Further analysis of the data helped to identify additional themes and subthemes, and the findings are reported accordingly in chapter seven.

Researcher Bias

Since the method of research in this study is qualitative, efforts were made to stay true to the views expressed by the participants interviewed. Qualitative research is interpretive in nature. Therefore, it is important to be aware of biases brought to the collection and interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2009). Maxwell (2005) views researcher bias in selecting data as a major threat to the validity of qualitative research, and he contends that the only way to overcome the problem is by acknowledging the bias. In his words, qualitative research is concerned with understanding how a *particular* researcher's values and expectations influence the conduct and conclusions of the study (which may be either positive or negative) and avoiding the negative consequences (emphasis in original, p. 108). Thus, an important task of a qualitative researcher lies in explaining his / her possible biases and how to deal with those (p. 108).

I had a singular bias in selecting the topic itself; which I feel is a major bias. Since I come from the majority community in Kashmir and have suffered personal family tragedies of very grave nature, I wished to delve deeper into the complex sociological imagination that awakens in a people the desire to retain and guard their identity zealously and to do that devise mental and social tools like narrative, recall from memory and such other devices to celebrate their pain and tragedy. This celebration is nothing but venting out of suppressed feelings of anguish and loss and a perceived imminent threat to their way of life. In other words this celebration and these acts of commemoration are nothing but the collective trauma lived by such societies as a routine way of life. It has thus been my desire to have a deeper peep into this illusory phenomenon of social formation. Since I belong to the place I have been actively observing the tragic drama unfolding over the years and have in a sense, grown up with it. This has also helped me collect data over the years, observe the events unfold and watch their often unpleasant and tragic aftermath. But I have assiduously and truthfully avoided any of my biases color my judgment in

this investigation of a very important phenomenon in Kashmiri society. I have been objective and truthful to my craft as far as I could perceive it.

Silverman (2006) argues that sometimes the extended immersion in the field, so typical of qualitative research, leads to certain preciousness about the validity of the researcher's own interpretation of their tribe or organization (p. 47). I have religiously avoided falling in such a trap and never valued my observations anything but figments that needed serious academic vigor to stand their conclusion. In the field, I took note of both what I saw and what people said verbally and non-verbally and recorded my communications (or interview) with each respondent truthfully.

Chapter 4 - Brief Overview of Insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir

From ancient times to the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947

The State of Jammu and Kashmir in the Asian sub-continent of India straddles the Himalayan routes of ancient travel, culture and myth. The state lies on the Himalayan cross roads where great ancient trade routes and cultures from China, Central Asia, Iran and India meet. The state has enormous contemporary geo-political relevance since it forms a formidable Himalayan barrier between China, Pakistan, Central Asia and India. It has the world's largest water reservoir in the shape of Karakoram and Siachin Glaciers that drain into the Arabian Sea through a network of mighty Asiatic rivers fertilising the mainland sub-continent. The recorded history of Kashmir extends back nearly three thousand years. Predominantly Hindu and Buddhist, Islam entered the State in 14th century. In 1339, Shah Mir, a Muslim ruler, deposed the widow of the last Hindu ruler and founded a Muslim dynasty. In 1532 Kashmir passed under Turkish rule when Mirza Haider occupied it for a brief period. In 1586 Kashmir was incorporated in the dominions of Akbar, the great Mughal ruler of India and a contemporary of queen Elizabeth of Great Britain. Though during most of the time under the Mughal rule Kashmir was prosperous, with the decaying of the Mughal Empire, Kashmir fell into wild disorder and eventually came under the oppressive rule of the Afghans in 1750, marked as a time of "brutal tyranny". When the oppression became unendurable, the Kashmiris turned to Ranjit Singh, the powerful Sikh ruler of the Punjab who after an unsuccessful attempt finally defeated the Afghan governor in 1819 and annexed Kashmir. However, by that time Afghans and other Muslim preachers had forcibly converted nine-tenths of the population to Islam. After the death of Ranjit Singh, Gulab Singh, the king of Jammu and a friend of Ranjit Singh, became the virtual ruler of Kashmir. Gulab Singh, a Dogra Rajput, maintained excellent rapport with the British, who were by now the undisputed masters of whole of Asian sub-continent including Kashmir. On March 16, 1846, the British signed a separate treaty with Gulab Singh by which the British Government sold entire Kashmir including the mountainous territories around Kashmir for a consideration of 75 lakhs of rupees. Gulab Singh was succeeded by his son Ranbir Singh in 1857, and on his death in 1885 by Hari Singh, till the independence of India from the British rule in 1947.

During Hari Singh's rule Muslims in general, and the Kashmiri Muslims in particular, were subjected to the rule of injustice and oppression. The Dogras' policies[3] were based on social, cultural and economic discrimination against the majority Kashmiris who were subjected to severe brutalisation, and persecution and were deprived of social and religious freedom. This, long and sustained ill-treatment and discrimination against Kashmiri Muslims culminated in an organised freedom struggle, that surfaced in July, 1931. The uprising of the 13th of July that year was not merely a protest against the excesses of certain officials with the religious practices of the Muslims which had occurred one after another in Jammu a few weeks before but it was in fact a vehement expression of a deeply felt resentment by the Muslims who had failed in the past to persuade the rulers to do them justice. They exploited the incident of an alleged desecration of the holy Quran and made it the starting point of what eventually turned out to be a long-drawn-out political struggle. Coming out of the state of disarray into which they had lain low for long, they pulled themselves together, and started an organised struggle for freedom from economic, social, political and religious subjugation. Thus the seeds of rebellion and revolution that were sown in 1931 germinated slowly but steadily and a full-fledged disenchantment with the existing order started brewing under the calm surface till the time of partition of India in August 1947, at which time the fate of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir had remained undecided.

Events in the run up to the partition of India in 1947

In October 1947, Muslim revolutionaries in western Kashmir districts bordering the newly formed Pakistan and Pakistani tribals from Dir entered Kashmir, intending to liberate it from the Dogra rule. Lamb (1966) gives a detailed description of the exploitation of Kashmiris under the Dogra rulers since 1846 that ultimately led to the tribal invasion. Unable to withstand the Pakistan sponsored tribal invasion, the Maharaja signed the Instrument of Accession that was accepted by the Government of India on 27 October 1947 (Ganguly, 2003). Partition of India did not happen the way it was presumed by most of the leaders involved in it. Leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, the secularist, wanted to demonstrate that a Muslim population could coexist

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[3] The Sikh regime banned the *adhan* (the Islamic call for prayer) and the gathering on Friday. It also passed a law according to which any Sikh who killed a native would have to ransom of Rs. 16.00. But there was division of the money on religious lines. One-fourth would go to the family of the deceased if the deceased was a Hindu and one-eighth if he was a Muslim, and the remaining amount would go to the state exchequer (Sufi, 1979).

with the Hindu majority whereas Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslim nationalist, insisted that Pakistan would be incomplete without the Muslim enclave of Kashmir. India demanded Kashmir on the ground that its ruler had been a Hindu and that it is a natural extension of India's territorial integrity. For India, Kashmir was and remains to date symbolic of her secular nationalism and state-building. If Kashmir was allowed to secede to Pakistan because of its Muslim-majority population, Indian leaders argued that such an eventuality would jeopardise the very survival of India as a secular conglomerate of different identities, ethnic and social and religious groups. Besides, it was felt that India would be exposed to serious northern incursions and its very security will be at risk; the Indian's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1949) asserted:

> *"India without Kashmir would cease to occupy a pivotal position on the political map of Central Asia. Its northern frontiers...are connected with three important countries, Afghanistan, the USSR and China. Thus, strategically, Kashmir is vital to the security of India; it has been so since the dawn of history"* (p.95).

Thus the partition of the state of Jammu & Kashmir that was a result of an abrupt and brutal tribal raid by Pakistan in an attempt to annex the state but without requisite preparation on the one hand; on the other hand India engineered and managed a hasty and debatable accession from a weak ruler. This bizarre arrangement left communities divided in most unusual of ways across the borders in Jammu and Kashmir between Indian and Pakistani state control. In some families settled children were left on one side of the divide whereas old parents came to stay on the opposite side. Properties and livelihoods were destroyed and generations were left traumatized. Thus forced and disputed partition of Jammu & Kashmir left an indelible mark on the identities and the intercommunity relations of the people; (Pandey, 1997; Butalia, 1998; Menon and Bhasin, 1998; Nandy, 1999; Bagchi & Dasgupta, 2003). So the three major events of that time: the tribal invasion in 1947, the "accession of Kashmir" to India, and the Indo-Pakistan war in the same year bequeathed to the State of Jammu and Kashmir the face it has today. The matter was taken to the United Nations Security Council by India for arbitration. However this could not be done since both India and Pakistan adopted rigid stances that would leave Kashmir in the lurch. This perceived betrayal felt by the Kashmiris transformed into the secessionist underground movement right from 1950s. As Varshney (2002, p. 64) observes:

On the other hand, one can also go too far in protecting pluralism. Kashmir was given a special status in the Indian constitution. Delhi was to be responsible only for foreign affairs, defence, communications, and currency; the state government would handle the rest. Other Indian states had fewer powers. The Kashmir arrangement, thus, had the potential of contradicting the territorial principle, if Kashmiris claimed they were still unhappy. Nehru was instrumental in shaping Kashmir's special status, but he himself had to deploy force to quell the vacillations of Sheikh Abdullah, the leading political figure of Kashmir (1947–82), between India and independence.

Thus the seeds of secession were sown at the time of partition itself which in subsequent years due to Indian apathy towards the people of Jammu & Kashmir, hostile relations between India and Pakistan, and absence of political sagacity by the Indian leaders to gauge the mood and the sufferings of the Kashmiris adequately so that these could be redressed before the events went out of hand, culminated in the breakout of armed insurgency in the state in late 1989.

The Start of Insurgency

The insurgency in Kashmir is part of a larger global plan initiated by a diffuse grouping of Islamist movements that seek to re-make Islam's role in the world order. They use terrorism as their primary, but not their sole tactic. India and Pakistan have fought at least four wars over Kashmir in 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999 (Kargil war) besides continuous skirmishing in Siachen Glacier and along the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir. The conflicting ethnocentric national narratives by Pakistan and India in Jammu and Kashmir have generated tremendous pressure among the local communities to keep the animosity alive. Such narratives illustrate the manner in which "culture" has become an important denominator for political conflict in the twenty-first century. Dubious State legislature elections in Jammu & Kashmir in 1983 in which certain successful candidates were deliberately made to lose by the ruling establishment headed by Farooq Abdullah that created mass disgruntlement among Kashmiris and further distanced them from the government in New Delhi and sowed seeds for the coming insurgency that started soon thereafter in 1989. Many important political activists of Jamaat-i-Islami crossed over to Pakistan occupied Kashmir where they started recruiting cadres for an armed struggle with India in Kashmir since they felt that there was no other way of getting justice from the India-sponsored politicians in Jammu & Kashmir. Unprecedented strife

engulfed the Valley after the elections were over. Farooq Abdullah's government became untenable and New Delhi soon dismissed it and imposed central rule. The state then faced strikes, demonstrations and bombings. In 1986, Rajiv Gandhi, then Prime Minister, signed an accord with Abdullah, making him a mere puppet in the hands of the Union. This accord made him the chief minister but he lost all support from the public. For the first time National Conference joined hands with the Congress Party, who were opposed to the Muslim United Front (MUF)[4]. The MUF arranged strikes in the Valley in retaliation to the alliance being formed by Gandhi and Abdullah. Widmalm (1997) mentions that such an alliance is usually referred to as a *'tactical alliance,'* which is "a coalition of or cooperation between two parties considered significantly different ideologically" (p. 1018). But more than a tactical alliance he views it as being 'cynical' and an 'election coalition' or *'election cartel'* (p. 1018), a situation where "the main opponents divide the constituencies and power before the election" (p. 1018). The younger generation as many scholars believe lost trust in the whole election and democratization process. The only other method preached to them by the MUF was of an armed struggle for their voices to be heard. Many of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) activists also took to arms. Widmalm (1997) quotes Yasin Malik, who was one of the militant separatist leaders and is now president JKLF and Mohammed Yusuf Shah later became the leader of the Hizbul Mujahadin (p. 1022), taking the pseudonym of Syed Salahuddin, the legendary Islamic conqueror. Ganguly (1996) reports that "in this election, voters were intimidated, ballot boxes tampered with, and candidates threatened…the extensive electoral malfeasances that they witnessed in 1987 convinced this younger generation of Kashmiris that the national government in New Delhi had scant regard for their political rights and reckless disregard for democratic procedures. With no other institutional recourse open for expressing their disenchantment with the flawed political process, they resorted to violence" (p. 105). Widmalm (1997) calls it a small civil war that ensued in the wake of a democratization process.

The year also marked the transition of the demands for Kashmir from autonomy - limited association with India (Tremblay 1996-1997, p. 471) to 'demands for sovereignty and freedom (*azadi*) from the Indian state (Tremblay 1996-1997, p. 471). Tremblay (1996-1997) also reports a

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[4] A party formed before the 1987 state elections and was a conglomeration of various political parties: Jamaat-i-Islami (rejected Accession) and the Ummat-i-Islami (demanded more democratic rights for the people).

couple of 'catalysts for this transformation' – "the unpopular alliance between…the National Conference, and the Congress party, the rigging of the 1989 elections in the state by this alliance, the kidnapping in Srinagar of the daughter of India's home minister (Dr. Rubiya Sayeed) and in early 1990 the appointment of Governor Jagmohan (p. 471). Tremblay (2009) states that the "calls for azadi [were] led by two sets of forces – one secessionist [JKLF][5] and the other irredentist [the Hizbul-Mujahideen[6], Jamaat-i-Islaami, and the Awami Action party] – and supported by most of the Valley's Muslim Population (p. 934-925). All of these events together led to the complete breakdown of the society and people were made easy targets of showing the administration of who was in control and who had more might. Tremblay (2009) also reports how a "small Hindu minority population…fled the Valley" (p. 935).

Ganguly (1996) in one of his articles analyzed a very important question – "Why, after forty-two years of Indian rule, did an insurgency abruptly break out in 1989?" (p. 80). He tries to explain the origin of insurgency in terms of "two interlinked forces of political mobilization and institutional decay" (p. 80). Tremblay (2009) reports how with the beginning of insurgency the insurgents released a 'new public events calendar' (p. 935) that related to all events that were Islamic in nature, which then also became 'official days of celebration' (p. 936) for the Valley. These were part of the many commemorative techniques through which the insurgents got the people of Kashmir involved. For Example, "October 24, the day marking the Treaty of Accession, became termed as the 'Day of Occupation'" (p.936). Over time, massive state repression and excesses by the Indian counter-insurgent forces, as well as the degeneration of the militant movement into retrograde activities like the extortions and human rights violations of their own, led to the development of a culture of fear and collective trauma. This provided fertile ground for a threatened identity polarization around Islam. What happens to a particular individual, soon takes the shape of something that happened to the whole society, having individuals who don't even have anything to do with it. In Kashmir trauma is being collectively

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[5] Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) was founded by Amanullah Khan and Maqbool Bhatt in Birmingham, UK in 1977. It is a Kashmiri nationalist organization. They started operations in Jammu and Kashmir in 1987.

[6] It is a radical Islamist group (Party of Holy Warriors). The irredentists were demanding the unification of Kashmir with Pakistan. They were given open support by Pakistan, trained and provided with the weapons needed to introduce a huge ethno nationalist insurgency in the Valley.

lived by the Muslim community to perpetuate the remembrance of atrocities and alienation with the Indian nation; in Jammu, Kashmiri Pandits use narratives to retain the memory of their cultural identity and pass it on to generations ahead; "Awareness of history…enhances communal and national identity, legitimating a people in their own eyes. 'A collectivity has its own routes in the past', in Simone Weil's phrase. 'We possess no other life, no other living sap, than the treasures stored up from the past and digested, assimilated, and created afresh by us'" Lowenthal, 1985, p. 44). The psychological trauma that these communities suffer is not as a result of violence but as a result of 'longing" and yearning to go back to their native Kashmir. Kashmiri Pandits had to flee the Valley for shear survival and other minorities too found Valley becoming increasingly unsafe and therefore took to flight.

Thus the lava of anguish that had accumulated over years of misrule and neglect started underground disturbances and tectonic tremors that initially appeared above ground in the form of bomb blasts on 31 July 1988 in Srinagar. The mirage or façade that had been built under the cover of Indian secularism and international apathy over a period of over forty years in Kashmir was broken immediately after the rigged elections of 1987. Thus, an unprecedented new phase in the history of Kashmir ensued. Muslim youth started with sporadic bomb blasts, which in due course of time proliferated into an armed struggle for freedom. The situation which had thus reached a point of no return was further exacerbated by the callous response of the authorities to crush the voices of dissent with brute force rather than genuinely addressing their grievances politically. Kashmir had entered a phase of no return and the hatred among communities had become so intense that in a Kashmir of centuries of remarkable secular credentials and mutual peaceful coexistence people of other faiths came to be seen as unacceptable pariahs (Dibdin, 1996, p. 208):

> "There can be no true friends without true enemies. Unless we hate what we are not, we cannot love what we are. These are the old truths we are painfully rediscovering after a century and more of a sentimental cant. Those who deny them deny their family, their heritage, their culture, their birthright, their very selves. They will not lightly be forgiven".[7]

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[7] Dibdin, Michael, *Dead Lagoon* (New York, Vintage Books – 1996), p.208.

Chapter 5 - Case Studies from the Conflict Zone

The armed conflict in Kashmir has taken many turns and twists since its violent eruption in 1989-1990. To observers of the events that have rocked this strife torn area and the region beyond, the conflict seems to be a clash of political allegiances, a proxy war between India and Pakistan, a squabble over territory, a greater Islamist conspiracy for expansion, a fight for self-determination, a collusion between the founding nationalisms of India and Pakistan – secular nationalism in the case of India, religious nationalism in the case of Pakistan – and so on. But for those who live in Kashmir, the armed conflict means much more for the inhabitants have experienced the violence first-hand and know how insecurity feels and what security means. In a situation such as obtaining in Kashmir, a dispassionate perspective becomes difficult and hazy. Cameo portraits of villagers' responses to events in localities have been produced by journalists, but these are generally brief and unconnected. On the other hand, broad and often rhetorically driven characterisations have been numerous, such as suggestions by some journalists that a state of 'civil war' was emerging as a result of brutal killings of young Kashmiris in the stone pelting saga of 2010 in Srinagar. The challenge of developing an adequately detailed portrait of social and ethnic relations under conditions of violence has been further constrained by the dearth of basic research, over the last decades, on the communities living along or closer to the Line of Control with Pakistan Occupied Kashmir or Azad Kashmir, as they call it, since those areas have received the maximum punishment both from the militants and the security forces and have often, also been victims of cross border artillery shelling between the Indian and Pakistanis armies deployed along the Line of Control. With a lack of a sociological perspective of the conflict, scholars have shown little interest in studying the aftermath or the consequences of the conflict in terms of trauma, fear, loss or perceived loss of identity, mass displacements and related phenomena that affect the emotional and clan wellbeing of the people involved. As Kathleen Jennings (2007) has recently emphasised in a review of field research in war zones; "conflict zones need to be recognised as social spaces, sites where people act to adapt and innovate in the constraining conditions presented by the dangers (real and imagined) that

surround them" (pp. 6-7); and devise the ways to order their worlds through narratives that variously emphasise difference, alienation and commonality.[8]

Keeping in mind the above biases and possible rhetoric that might creep into the narrative, all possible precaution was taken to broad base my interviews as much as the time and the situation could permit. Interviewees were selected randomly from a variety of locations with a variety of backgrounds. Drawing on the testimonies of and interviews with the Kashmiri people, this chapter will chronicle their experiences of the over twenty years' long armed conflict by juxtaposing a survey of theoretical ideas on trauma and its related phenomena of recall to memory and narrative telling. In the following cases which I investigated, the names of the interviewees are presented in bold typeface and their quotes are in italics.

Case 1: Kunan and Poshpora massacres

In the intervening night of the 23rd and 24th February 1991, the young and energetic, but inhuman troops of Indian Army's 04 Rajputana Riffles launched a search operation in the village of Kunan Poshpora, just two miles from the main township of Kupwara, and exhibited extreme barbarism by raping almost all the women and girls of these twin villages, numbering over fifty as per various estimates, including teenage girls and an over eighty years old frail grandmother. In the pitch dark of the night, in wretchedly poor mountain hamlet of Kunan Poshpora, where even now there are no traces of development or electricity, the soldiers of the Indian Army, in their frenzy to punish and to satisfy their animal egos by inflicting the most heinous of human instincts, were blinded to even target an over eighty years old grandmother, who was but a bundle of bones. The troops first collected all the men in one corner of the village not allowing any of them to enter the houses, and whilst a group of soldiers interrogated and adopted cruel measures to torture the men, others went ahead and mercilessly raped the women till 9AM the next day, irrespective of their age, marital status, or even pregnancy. The village head, **Abdul Aziz Shah** recollects, *"19 army personnel of local camp (Rajput Rifles) cordoned the entire village in the evening, gathered the men at one place, only women were allowed to*

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[8]See for example, Trnka, Susanna, '*Between victims and assailants, victims and friends: Sociality and the imagination in Indo-Fijian narratives of rural violence during the May 2000 Fiji Coup*', in Terror and violence: Imagination and the unimaginable, ed. Strathern, A., Stewart, P. and Whitehead, N. (London: Pluto Press, 2006), pp. 117–41.

remain inside their houses. For entire night all the men were kept outside in cold. We were beaten, tortured and abused in a ruthless manner. Soldiers entered in our houses during search and gang raped about 100 women in their houses and also at the local school." The incident sent shock waves across the entire Kashmir valley, however, the helpless people could only cry. Those who dared to resist were beaten ruthlessly by the government soldiers. **Aziz** remembers, *"Some were tortured when they refused to share sexual relation[9]...and more than one soldier molesting a single woman."* The heart wrenching incident has had a prolonged impact on the lives of women who became victims of the troopers' aggression. Almost all the victims suffer from psychosomatic disorders and many women have been divorced by their husbands and still many others find it hard to find a groom for their daughters. On April 7, 1991, the Kunan-Poshpora rape incident was reported in the New York Times under the headline, "India Moves against Kashmir Rebels." According to the report, on March 5, 1991, villagers complained about the incident to the then-Kupwara District Magistrate, S.M Yasin, who visited the village two days later to investigate. "According to a report filed by Yasin," the article reads, "the armed forces behaved like violent beasts."

A mass criminal behavior was displayed by the troops, who represent the authority of the state, to subdue the entire population who presumably sheltered the Islamist militants fighting the might of the state, in a manner that the necessary message goes across to the entire region as regards the consequences should the civilian population help renegades. Gardam & Charlesworth (2000) argue that women of all ages are easy victims in an armed conflict and are usually more insecure, disadvantaged and marginalized. Women are often found in a persistently disadvantaged social situation due to the deep-rooted patriarchal cultural values and the vulnerability in war zones. Socially they are viewed as care-givers and nurturers. Thus, rape of women not only destroys the physical and psychological existence of these women but also acts as a "symbolic rape of that community" (Seifert, 1996). This was also reiterated by **Abdul Aziz Shah**, who commented, *"Our honor has been stolen".* Clearly it is not just trauma to the victims but the whole community. Twargiramariya and Turshen (1998) argue that women are not just made targets because of their ethnicity but mainly because of their gender, where their bodies are

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[9] Conscious decision to remove part of the interviewees statement by the Author because of the heinous and shameful nature of the incident.

made the sites of combat. Women in the Valley are not just victims in the hands of the militants but also the guardians of the land, the security forces. Asia Watch (1993) reported that the rape by the soldiers of the Indian Army is to 'punish and humiliate the entire community.' **Aziz** also had a similar memory to share, *"the soldiers came out* [after committing the night long barbaric rapes] *smiling and declared the operation as complete, with a sense of pride and achievement."* This brings to light an important aspect of the deliberate damage to the culture of a certain people by soldiers motivated in their zeal to punish a people of a different religion through tarnishing their honor. They are aware of the social pressures that raped women face and thus the soldiers achieve the motive of disorienting the community. Also the soldiers portray the power they have to threaten the very existence of a community they were sent to guard. Soldiers rape women in the house-to-house searches, like in Bosnia and Chechnya. Rape is also viewed by feminists as more about power than sex. Rapists gain a sense of control and power over their victims. They express aggression, anger, authority and control through the forced sexual route.

Violence against women in Kashmir demonstrates the personality dynamics and the psychopathology of assailants in a unique manner. Whereas one would expect Islamist militants to be slightly sympathetic to local women since they are also Muslims and provide them shelter and food; the opposite is the case. They too have exhibited extremely inhuman psychopathological behavior while dealing with women. When soldiers are let loose in a situation where they suffer from a combination of feelings of fear and revenge; the militants display obsessive ideation, compulsive repetition, poor impulse control, diminished affective reactivity, depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, paranoia, disassociation from their own feelings, antisocial tendencies, failure to empathize and display of imaginary feelings of machismo.

Consequent to this tragedy, **Aziz** reports that, *"our daughters refused to go to schools. Marriage with a Kunan girl is refused by other villages. Many married women got divorced. Only our relatives are accepting our girls. Soldiers brutally trampled our honor and left us with horrendous trauma to be lived for generations and generations to come. We can never forget the humiliation, helplessness and wretched cruelty of that night of rape."* He also reports how national and international investigating agencies visit the place with false hopes of justice. **Zafar**, another interviewee commented that, *"we are deliberately being left out and not helped."* This clearly brings to light the sense of alienation, powerlessness and injustice felt by the community in this village. **Aziz**, with anger comments that *"That is what they do with*

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Kashmiris; treat us as sex slaves and forced labor. Not even a single person from this village has any respect or feeling for India. We want freedom from India. Although peace has returned to this village, because there was nothing left to be disturbed; the horrible memories of that night haunt us twenty four hours a day. The trauma is being lived by us perpetually and continuously in every activity, be that a marriage, a death, a rejection or the sight of an Indian soldier. We gather in groups from time to time and recall the memories of that horrible night to keep the mauled feelings of our lost honor alive in the memories of our younger ones so that at a future date they avenge our lost honor."

Case 2: Chittisinghpora Massacre

The reason for including this case was because it was the first incident against the Sikhs in the Valley (Amnesty, 2000; Dugger, 2000). The Chittisinghpora massacre took place on 20 March 2000, when 25 (number debatable) heavily armed men dressed as Indian soldiers and claiming to be in search of Kashmiri separatist insurgents entered the village in two groups and shot down 36 Sikhs (Appendix C for Newspaper clip). At this time President Clinton was on a five-day state visit to India, a visit which was being seen as bringing some peace in Kashmir. It also marked the first ever visit by a United States president to India in 22 years. According to Jameel (2000) the attack on the Sikhs was only a way to grab the attention of the President to the issue of Kashmir. Reports suggest that militants entered at separate ends of the village where the two Gurdwaras were located and lined up the Sikhs in front of their Gurdwaras and opened fire. People of the community were celebrating the Holi and Hola Mahalla Festival at the time of the attack. The sole survivor of this gruesome episode was Nanak Singh, who somehow managed to lie still under the pile of dead bodies. **Gurpal**, the village head recalls, *"They singled us out. The village also had Hindus and Muslims. The Sikh men were being called out by their names."* The fear psychosis still hangs over the families. Though many left the village with their children and stayed away from the Valley in the initial years after the tragedy, others were financially weak to migrate. **Gurpreet Kaur** commented on her economic situation, *"we are mostly uneducated, both our men and us. We live out of our land. Women stay at home and men do the tilling. Our economic condition was never good but socially it was fine."*

The first and most visible damage was the disproportion it created in the number of men and women of the community. The village now has mostly women and children, most of whom

are girls. These women now face the challenges of survival all by themselves. As **Amrit Kaur** one of the Chittisinghpora inhabitants said, *"People from other villages are slowly encroaching upon our fields, taking our trees and land. They claim our crops and fruits. It is difficult for us women to fight them."* There is relentless poverty, amid constant fear of the seemingly unending war and the constant threat of being a minority group. Thus, aside from gender issues, women in war torn Kashmir confront more economic and social injustice. Amid the destitution, women face a bigger challenge to survive. Some men did survive the incident, although there is only one survivor of the shooting, the others (only a handful) were out of the village at the time of the incident. These men, now mainly elders, prefer to stay indoors and not talk about what their village and people had to witness. There is an eerie silence in the village even after twelve years of the massacre. Details of the horrific night never leave the minds of the villagers no matter what the age group they belong to. Villagers continue to brood over their loss and often talk about its impact on the current generation. At the same time they fear irreparable damage on the coming generations. People of the Sikh community engage in collective bereavement and complaining to keep memories alive. Like Tota (2004) in her analysis of the Bologna massacre says, "As if suffering, pain and anger are victims" (p. 145). President Obama's visit in 2010 was welcomed by protests and tensions among the Sikh community of the Valley. They became paranoid of the massacre being repeated. **Gurpreet** remembers, *"We feared the worst. This time we ladies were worried about our safety."*

Case 3: Nadi Marg Massacre

On 23 March 2003, 24 Kashmiri Pandits were massacred at Nadimarg in the Pulwama district. The incident took lives of 11 men, 11 women and two children (New York Times, 2003). These were the five families comprising about 54 people that did not migrate out of Kashmir in 1990 when the majority of the Kashmiri Pandits did. Again the perpetrators were dressed in military uniforms. The village headman, **Kachru** reported that, *"They were calling us by names, selecting people to kill, looted cash, snatched ornaments and gold. After looting the valuables they started firing at us indiscriminately."* A common tactic employed by perpetrators here is the use of military uniforms, like had been done in Chittisingh Pora. This can be viewed as a way of inciting hatred against the Indian army while at the same time advancing their macabre goal of ethnic cleansing. These families did not move out of their native place because

they had been part of that place for centuries through their ancient ancestors. Kachru narrated that, *"We have our land here, and we do not have anything anywhere else. This is where we belong. The government did not offer anything to us in return for this."* People of the village live the trauma on a daily basis. **Kachru** commented that, *"The village organizes meetings to discuss and inform people on what the government has been doing or not doing for us. We also organize prayers because we have left justice in the hands of the God."* Men and women of the village gather everyday as a ritual and talk about their plight with each other. **Kachru** said that, *"Talking helps everybody. We feel connected and our pain subsides. This way we are also able to discuss future action."*

Case 4: Rape of Nilofer and Asiya

In 2009, Nilofar, two-months pregnant, and her 17-year-old sister-in-law Asiya Jan, were raped and murdered allegedly by the security forces in the apple town of Shopian in south western Kashmir. Their bodies were found near a mountain stream in Rambasa in Shopian on May 30, 2009. It was reported that both Asiya Jan and Nilofer had gone to visit their nearby orchard. And on their way back they were stopped by a group of around a dozen security forces men, asked for their ID cards, although it is a known fact that women in the Valley never take their ID cards with them. Upon not producing the ID cards they asked what they were hiding in the bundles of wood. It was also around this time that Nilofer's husband gave her a call and she told him the names of some of the soldiers, which Nilofer had ostensibly read on the soldiers' breast pockets. Various versions of what would have happened to the girls in their captivity in the camp have been reported. However these could not be verified since the girls were found dead the next morning abandoned in a nearby stream. However people of the village allege that the girls were tied up and raped repeatedly. The village head, **Mohammad Rasool**, recalls, *"Nilofer and Asiya were martyred due to severe sexual torture. The army men dumped the bodies on the bank of a stream."* The killings sparked protests with demands for justice and shut down the Valley for over two months; in these protests many people were killed and scores were injured (Polgreen, 2009). **Rasool**, with anger and grief, reported, *"we do not have any hope of ever getting justice from the J&K government or the Government of India, so freedom is our only hope now."* He continues, *"We feel for the family, but it is our community that was raped, we feel collective humiliation, and guilt of not being able to bring justice to the bereaved family."* It

can be argued that rapes have happened before in the Valley and there is nothing new in this case. However, why this case assumes importance is the manner the crime was executed and then covered up. And this was the first case that had conclusive evidence of the involvement of the security forces, yet was declared as not being investigable. The perpetrators raped, murdered, and threw the dead bodies into the river. The state later claimed that the women had drowned in the water, despite conclusive evidence. This incident catapulted women into fierce action and a marked change in their attitude was seen as they marched thumping their chests and shouting slogans, carrying swords, braving bullets, abuses, tear gas and the like. This was agency in vivid display. First time women were seen to be exercising agency in a visibly grand manner.

Case 5: Diary of a 'custodial killing' household

Manzoor Ahmed Khan, 65 years old, is the village head of Gooshi in Pulwama. He is well-educated and gave his impressions of the custodial killings in his village. Clearly he had bitter memories of insurgency. He even stressed on the disadvantage of the location of the village for its people. The village falls on the route of militants who cross over from Pakistan to infiltrate into the southern Kashmir. As a result of which he comments, *"We have always been on the receiving end from both militants and the army."* He continues to express his feelings on the huge emotional, psychological and physical losses the village has borne since the start of insurgency. *"We have suffered huge mental and material losses at the hands of the militants and the security forces. There is not a single household that has escaped unhurt or unscathed."* It was clearly visible that the village has a large number of widows and orphans. Khan also spoke of how at the slightest trigger, be it a curfew, or seeing an Indian soldier, people of the village start narrating stories of what is going to happen next based on the patterned experiences of the past. This ensues the constant ritualistic reliving of trauma. He then spoke of how badly the village has been affected by the custodial killings. Since it is so close to the border, the Army is always suspicious of the men and women of the village. He narrated the story of one of the victim's family. Raja Begum lost her husband in 2002. He was arrested by *Ikhwanees* (surrendered militants working for the state government) and the security forces stationed at Pulwama camp. They charged him with the false accusation of supplying food and accessories to the militants. According to Khan and Raja Begum, the man was an ordinary *mazdoor* (menial

labor) and was only working to make ends meet because of the poor economic conditions of the village. Such abuses of power in a conflict zone are not uncommon.

Raja Begum recalls her plight when she had to run from pillar to post for almost three weeks pleading the innocence of her husband but no one listened to her. Then she approached the Ikhwan commander for the release of her husband who demanded 50 thousand rupees, which was next to impossible for Raja to procure. She protested against the cruel and unjust demand, but she was warned that serious consequences will emerge if she fails to pay fifty thousand rupees. She was totally confused and had to sell her only piece of land to raise the funds demanded by the government agency to secure the release of her husband. Her husband was released but he had been so severely tortured that he was as good as a cripple. Poverty caught up with Raja and her husband and daily life became a dredge and traumatic. They have three sons and a daughter to support. Then on 14 October 2002, the same year, the Ikhwanees came back for Raja's husband and assured the family that he would come back and it is just a routine inquiry. Later that day **Raja** remembers, *"The local police came with Shabir's corpse. He had been gunned down in a nearby nallah (canal) that night. We were shocked and could not understand why it happened."* Khan reported that after the husband's death, Raja's condition worsened. She would run helter-skelter in the by lanes and streets of the village; hurling abuses and wailing incessantly. She would catch a passer-by and narrate her story. This probably gave her some relief. She would undertake humiliating job of begging in nearby villages to collect food items and old clothes for her children. Raja Begums's health deteriorated dramatically. Now she and other women of the village who have faced similar tortures collect together in their houses frequently and engage in the recitation of the horrors of the past. **Khan** ended his interview saying that, *"Kashmiris have been tortured, raped and ruined both by the security forces and the militants alike."* It is clear that women are in fact the real victims of insurgency. With the male head of the family gone, it falls on the lady of the house to fend for herself and her kids in an extremely vulnerable environment. And in most of these villages, women are illiterate, do not even have the skills to irrigate their land and earn some money off it. And those who have some skills like carpet weaving, are often scared of being exploited and raped.

Case 6: Fazi Begum

Fazi Begum, around 80 years old is a widow of Dardpora in Lolab, northern Kupwara district lost her husband and only son to the millitants. Fazi's husband was a Patwari (a minor revenue official) by profession. He was killed by Pakistani sponsored militants in 1992 and was the first man to be killed by militants in Dardpora. Fazi with fear recalls, *"Some twenty militants cordoned our house. Four militants entered the house and asked my husband to accompany them. When we resisted, they locked me with my children in one of the rooms in our house, and threatened us to keep quiet otherwise they would wipe out the entire family."* They took her husband to the nearby fields and killed him in cold blood by shooting him in the chest. Next day police brought his dead body back to the house for burial. Since Fazi's husband was killed in harness, the state government appointed her son, Mushtaq Mir in his place as Patwari. **Fazi** said, *"He began to look after me and my two unmarried daughters. It was a huge burden upon his shoulders as he was too young to take charge of family responsibilities after his father's murder. Our economic condition was desperate."* Fazi mentioned how her desire to get the answers to why her husband was killed is a constant source of unremitting pain and mental re-visitation to the day of the event. It has made her anxious, which was visible during the interview. She commented that, *"Our whole family is traumatized, no matter what the age the children are, they suffer equally. Our community was the biggest support. They visited us and talking to them helped ease the pain."* Fazi was later able to get her son married and that brought some happiness back and helped Fazi to overcome the pain of losing her husband. *"We were learning to reconcile with our fate and the birth of the grand child had given me that hope."* However Fazi's happiness was short-lived. Soon in the winter of 2000, her son was kidnapped and murdered in the local bazaar by some unknown militant. *"He was brought home dead like his innocent father. When we saw Mushtaq's body, it was most brutally vandalized. He was horribly tortured to death by severe beatings and asphyxiation."* Again she confirmed how the community helped her and the family in preparing for the funeral, which was scared by the threats sent by militants commanding not to bury Mushtaq in the local graveyard. The locals thereafter buried Mushtaq next to their house for the fear of reprisals. *"This humiliation totally shattered us and we lost faith in everything in life. We live like living corpses. The trauma and the memories tear at our guts and we feel extremely agitated. Our anger and hopelessness never*

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leaves us; it tears on us like some invisible demons. God wants us to keep living in this trauma and a life that is miserable than anything that one can imagine."

Case 7: Fauzia Begum

This case study helped bring out the element of anxiety among the people of the Valley. The locals are seen caught between the militants and the security forces. Such situations give rise to a lot of fear and anxiety among the people over the safety and security of their families. Fauzia, a widow from Shopian, about 60 years old, narrated her family's story of being victimized by the militants who saw her husband as a traitor (informer). **Fauzia** has five children; four daughters and a son, who was only two years old when his father was killed. On 8th of January 1992, around twenty Islamist militants entered their house and kidnapped her husband Abdullah Ganie who was the village Headman (Numbardar) of Dardpora village. *"Militants came to our house and asked my husband to accompany them to discuss some important matter. On our request not to take him away since he was a polio stricken person with his right leg disabled from childhood, they threatened us of dire consequences should we create unnecessary fuss. I continued resisting their forcibly taking away my husband. They put a gun on my temple, and dragged my invalid husband away."* Later she recalls he was taken to a nearby jungle and shot him over twenty times. She said, *"Later we learnt that the sentence given to my husband was that he was a Mukhbir (an informer of the Indian Army). This of course was patently untrue; may be someone had misled the militants."* Apparently Fauzia's husband was a member of the Congress Party and was an active participant in the local party meetings. Fauzia believes that this is another reason for militant action against her husband since Congress Party is perceived as Indian. *"The militants do not want Kashmiris to be part of the activities of the Indian government and anybody doing that is seen as a traitor."* After the death of her husband their economic condition worsened and her daughters had to work in order to live. This resulted in their not going to school and instead doing menial work most of the time. Her daughters took the job of weaving carpets which is very common in Dardpora, but is a very low paying job and has major health consequences. Fauzia worked in the fields like all other male farmers did. She eventually had to give up outside work because of the deterioration of her health as a result of the juggling between household chores and outside work, and extreme malnutrition. *"Due to poverty and no real source of income I was not in a position to marry off my elder daughter. I sold my*

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land and some poplar trees and married off my elder daughter to one of my relatives. Government appointed my daughter in education department as a peon." Again Fauzia commented on how the community was their support system. She said, *"Local people supported us morally but not economically. We did not expect them to help us financially but emotionally, the community helped us cope with our torturous life. Ladies from other homes would help us with food…talk to me about their problems and I was able to relate. Hence feel my pain less."*

Case 8: Ghulam Hassan Bhat

Another village head, Ghulam Hassan Bhat of Kanthpora village in Lolab, is a senior citizen and is considered a land-lord of Kanthpora, a village otherwise poor and backward; besides being a highly respected senior citizen whose opinion matters. **Ghulam Hassan Bhat** shared his experiences of insurgency and the current situation. His insights were particularly essential because his family did not suffer any human losses though they were tortured and always lived in fear. Kanthpora is the most backward mountainous part of district Kupwara. Only Muslims live in this village for centuries. *"There was never a Pandit or a Hindu living in this village."* When asked to describe the situation in the village at the time of insurgency, Bhat said that, *"The situation was very volatile. Our village has suffered heavily in last 20 years of insurgency. Militants in large numbers used to hide in our village since it lies in the foot of the mountain pass between Kupwara and Bandipora districts. Militants infiltrating from POK use this route to go to Srinagar and other southern Kashmir districts.   Everyone was frightened to refuse any service to militants. Food, clothes and money was provided by us. The honor of our daughters was in danger. Militants plundered us economically. After every 15 days donation for Kashmir cause was collected by militants during initial stages of insurgency. Many innocent people were killed by militants in the entire Valley."*

When asked on the role of army and the use of counter-insurgency measures, he commented that, *"The role of army has been brutal. They have always treated us like worms, like slaves, totally at their mercy; therefore they treat us like animals."* He then without provocation or asking started talking about the ways the army would torture the civilians. *"I myself was tortured, abused and hammered by security forces and surrendered militants. I was given electric shocks in my private parts. In harsh winter temperatures, army would command us to stand in cold water with our feet bare. In 'chilai-kalan'* [the coldest period in January-

February when temperatures dip to minus five to ten degrees centigrade], *I was kept in water for two hours. People of every age have been terrorized and tortured. I was kept in custody for 14 days in Kupwara camp as my only fault was not having an identity card on my person at the time of a cordon and search operation. I was also falsely implicated for possessing a gun."* He even narrated the different kinds of tortures that the security forces used, *"cutting muscles with blades, burning the feet with kerosene oil, holding burning cigarette stubs against our skin, forcing wooden rods in the rectum and electric current."* The army stands in full authority and they usually make the torture victims sign a document which certifies that nothing illegal was done to the person signing the document. *"Governments gave security forces full authority to crush the militancy by crushing the civilians."* They have instilled fear in the minds of people and hence nobody has the courage to raise their voice against them. Torture is a common means of coercion, extracting information and politically suppressing people in a conflict zone. People in authority use torture as a way to oppress people and inflict sufferings as a result of such violence for Gordimer (2003) is usually senseless, persistent and demoralizing. Mills (1959) contends that politics is nothing but the struggle for power and "the ultimate kind of power is violence" (p. 171).

Other techniques of torture are the routine search operations conducted by the security forces. **Bhat** recalls inhuman treatment during such operations, *"Beating and torturing the people was a routine. People of all ages were frightened of the army. Soldiers during search operations would destroy utensils, cupboards, grain containers, mirrors etc. Sometimes kerosene would be poured into the container containing rice so that the rice would become inedible. Boxes full of rice were thrown away. Some houses were burnt down on ordinary pretexts."* They equally torture the women during such operations. They are frisked and beaten. Bhat reported how out of fear women would hide in the local mosque. He also said how *"locals have learnt to live with their hopeless and helpless situation and left it to the Almighty."*

The more severe damage of insurgency and counter-insurgency operations is the emotional and material damage. From development point of view, the village is the *"most backward village in Kupwara district, not properly connected with rest of the Lolab valley."* There is a lack of health facilities and no education for children. *"85% of our households are below poverty line (BPL). This is all because of militancy.*" Such deteriorating conditions also forced some families of the village to migrate to nearby towns. *"Many citizens of our village*

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migrated from here to nearby villages, i.e. Cheerkot, Doniwari etc in search of a better livelihood. Some migrated to Kupwara. Few citizens sold their entire property and migrated to Srinagar to avoid daily harassment by the army and the militants; and to save their honor. Some eight boys fled to Pakistan and never came back."

Case 9: Collective Trauma and Memory in Exile: An Account of life in the displaced Pandit Communities

January 19 is celebrated every year in the state of Jammu and Kashmir by Kashmiri Pandits as the black day when they took to mass exodus. The migration began in late 1989 and early 1990, when thousands of people were displaced and a major demographic change was brought about in the Kashmir Valley. With the start of the insurgency and subsequent clashes between Kashmiris and the Indian security forces, the campaign gained a religious tone (Sikand, 2004). This gave rise to a sense of insecurity and vulnerability among the Hindu community (Evans, 2002). These feelings were also a result of the growing threats against the community, like the attacks on prominent Kashmiri Hindu politicians, academicians and advocates. People of the community were selectively targeted. Some newspapers carried direct threats on regular basis engineered by the Islamist lobby. One of the interviewees, **Motilal Bhat** reported that, *"Hit lists were prepared; names were announced on the clandestine radio stations, also printed in the daily newspapers, hateful slogans were shouted from the loudspeakers of mosques to people commenting on the streets…"* But those interviewed also reported on the relations between the Hindus and Muslims during that time, clearly proving that the whole campaign was politically motivated and choreographed. **Taploo** said that, *"We were always comfortable with our Muslim brothers. When we were against leaving they were ready to offer shelter and discouraged us from moving out of the Valley."* **Ghulam Bhat** (a Muslim) also said a similar thing, *"We never wanted them to leave, nor did we trouble them. As far as migration of Pandits is concerned, nobody forced them to leave Kashmir. Pandits left Kashmir on the advice of Governor Jagmohan, who was a die-hard Hindu fundamentalist and thought that it would be better for the safety of Pandits to leave the Valley so that army operations against the Islamist militants and Kashmiri Muslims could be carried out unhindered."* Most of the people interviewed voiced the same sentiment. Migration was a source of immense trauma to the Pandit community. There was a loss of property, community, social networks and a comfortable physical environment.

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Attached to all these elements is the sense of belonging and culture. A loss of these is a sure recipe for anxiety and trauma. There was also a sudden shift in the socio-economic status of the people. They had to leave the valley with whatever little they could gather in the short span of time. There is also anxiety over the new place and the opportunities or difficulties it hosts for the migrants. **Suman Bhat** reported on how her family, once affluent, but presently reduced to penury: *"Life in a new place is difficult. We are not getting any jobs, living in poor camp-like conditions and no education for our kids."* Clearly migration causes major adjustment issues having a direct impact on the mental health of families. Trauma in such cases occurs at every stage: pre-migration, during transit, asylum/temporary settlement, and settlement in the host country (Foster, 2001). The case of Kashmiri Pandits also goes back to Yusin's (2009) argument that partition acts as a site of trauma (historical) and not just geography. Yusin (2009) makes a case for a *'geography of trauma,'* where a traumatic history shapes memory and makes individuals revisit their disturbing pasts.

Chapter 6 - Significance of memorabilia, rituals, attire, symbols and customs in perpetuation of collective trauma

Trauma is "an emotional state of discomfort and stress resulting from memories of an extraordinary catastrophic experience which shattered the survivor's sense of invulnerability to harm" (Figley, 1985, p. xviii). Trauma is also defined *behaviourally* as "a set of conscious and unconscious actions and behaviours associated with dealing with the stresses of catastrophe and the period immediately afterwards" (p. xix). Despite over two decades of brutal civil war and innumerable casualties, for many in the world Kashmir exists only in the realm of the imagination, bound by headlines, the empty spaces between newspaper article lines are left to be filled by the mind. Despite over two decades of near civil war, Kashmir still only evokes a prosaic landscape of army convoys and *fidayeen* attacks against the backdrop of the Himalayas. This ignorance is the result of the decades of mainstream reporting and government propaganda; whose only reference point for Kashmiri culture is the doctored tragedy of disinformation. Yet even for well-informed and avid followers of events in Kashmir, there are few authentic alternate sources of information. In such a situation perpetuated by the involved parties and the neglect shown by the world community towards this problem, there is very little room for the possibilities of histories spoken, yet left to be heard. Also in such a scenario Kashmir has become too dangerous for an ethnographic fieldwork for those scholars who might genuinely wish to reach out to people. As a consequence, sociological and anthropological perspectives on this violent region are missing; thereby marginalizing in the public debate the sociological consequences of the conflict. With over twenty years of bloody insurgency Kashmir has become a state under siege, a well-executed and long-standing military state caught between the twin evils of Islamist insurgency and Indian security forces' counter-insurgency operations. In this bloody duel running for over twenty years now almost every house hold has lost a person, many have disappeared and then conveniently labeled as "missing" and yet many more have fallen victims to custodial atrocities. There appears to be no end in sight. From every street corner scabs still bleed from years of political conflict and almost every house has a near one consumed in the conflict to mourn. Barbed wire litters the environs needlessly and grave yards in the last twenty years have swollen to unbelievable proportions. This perpetual state of armed conflict where civilians are caught in the bloody and violent battles joined between Islamist terrorists and

the security forces, an eerie and strange melancholic state of affairs has come to be established among the local communities. People have lost interest in getting back to normalcy and have devised ways and means of perpetuating the memory of the horrific incidents of the past. Any possible clash bet wean the armed forces and the militants raises the specter of fear among people and they resort to induced trauma, wailing and protests as a possible means to ward off the looming adversity. Besides imparting a sense of martyrdom which manifests in the rural lore as motivators to young men to take up guns and cudgels to perpetuate the struggle, such a situation has also accorded a sort of permanence to the collective trauma that the Kashmiri society is going through.

The interviews conducted in Kashmir and a look at the commemorative activities that people engage would give us an insight into the phenomenon of collective trauma that has almost become a culture with repeated incidents of violence and terror. People in Kashmir have been victims of traumatizing situations as a result of insurgency. Insurgency can be viewed as a 'social change' that threatened and ultimately damaged and permanently changed the fabric of social life for the people. So even when the traumatizing events that people have gone through are not directly related to the culture and have only affected the actual social life of the members of the society, they are often times perceived as a direct attack on the culture. People then bear a sense of *'cultural disorientation'* defined by Sztompka (2000) as a condition that leaves people feeling more vulnerable, sensitive and victimized and anxious. People assign meaning to traumatizing events only after they come into contact with other people. Before they assign these meanings these events are always too personal and rarely spoken outside the family setting. But once these are given a larger platform of the collective, they seem to gain meanings from the shared culture of that community. Therefore for Sztompka (2000) "traumatizing events are always a cultural construction" (p. 457). Now one needs to also differentiate between people who actually have been victimized as compared to those whose experiences or feelings of being traumatized are not real or emanating from a traumatic experience. Sztompka's (2000) analysis is particularly important in the context of Kashmir since the traumatizing incidents of one village or town generate shock and trauma in people of far flung villages who then are able to relate and experience something that has not actually happened to them. Thus the feelings of pain experienced by them may be 'real', but at times these would also be extremely heightened or exaggerated versions of the real happenings.

Taxonomy of Collective Trauma Formation in Oppressed Societies

A possible taxonomy of collective trauma formation is attempted below.

Figure 6.1 Taxonomy of Collective Trauma
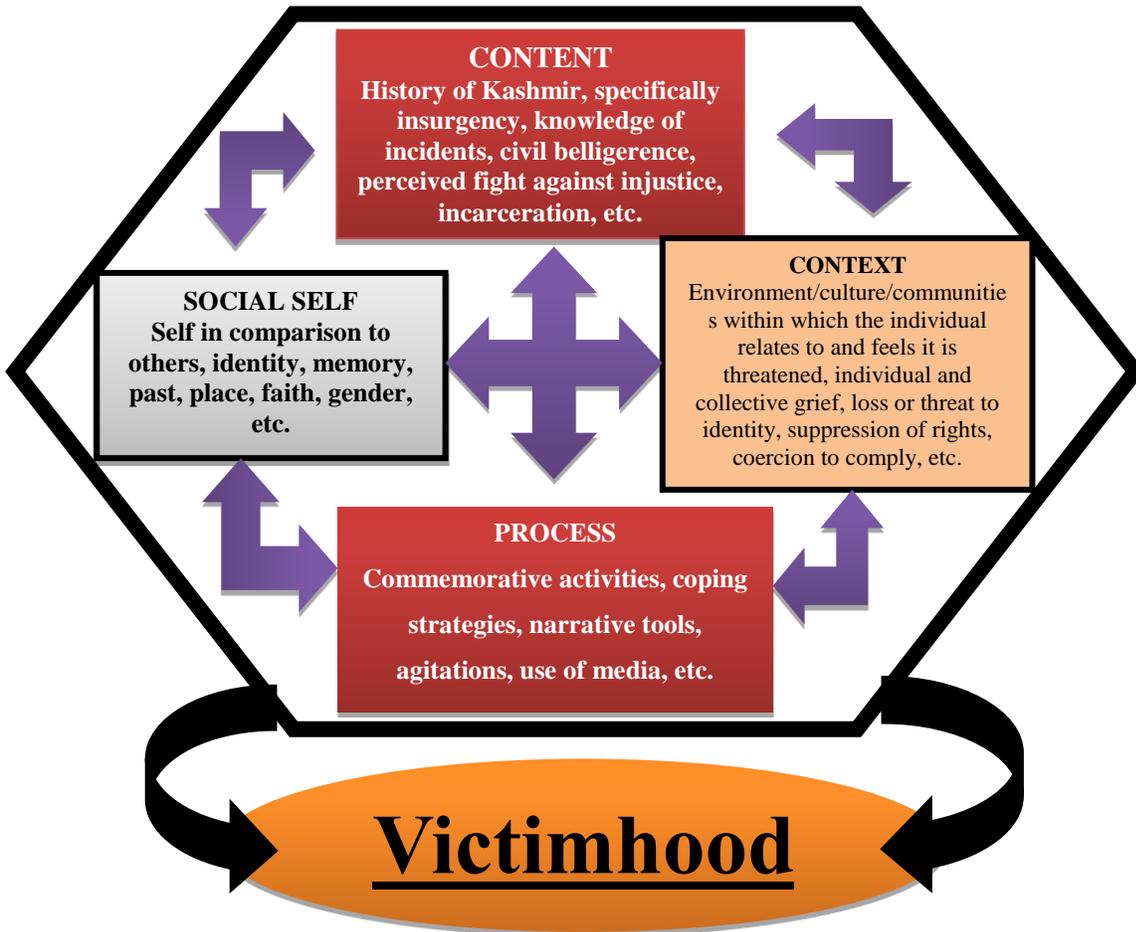
At the vortex of the entire process is the individual and in a larger context the group or community or ethnic gathering that is formed of more than one individual. The individual who epitomizes the 'victim' receives 'victimhood' through a cycle of 'process' that is facilitated by 'content' that includes the prevailing conditions in the society and the environment that enables it. In the context of Kashmiri society the long years of incarceration and human rights abuses, fear and loathing and hurt caused to self-esteem, violence and related evils are all part of the content of that process. Once the content alters the environment around the individual, the 'social self' changes for the worse. Trauma sets in, which then becomes the victimhood. As I proceed in this chapter I shall attempt to explain the taxonomy given here.

Use of cultural practices to strengthen collective trauma

Culture has the power to maintain stability between the past and the present by dismantling barriers in its way. Here I can take the liberty to generalize the importance of culture to all societies and not just Kashmiri society. It is one's culture, cherished and nurtured for generations, that individuals seek their unique identities from, groom and mould themselves to its many ways, is a precious investment for their community, core of their identities and holds a lot of historical significance and hence valued even more. Culture embodies the intellectual development of a society. Culture is a repository of our indigenous knowledge and values. Our ethos, manners, way of communicating with one another, are important components of our culture. So there is a heightened sense of *'cultural consciousness'* among people of all communities and religions towards their culture. And it is under this umbrella that its people flourish. But when culture comes under threat or is damaged by external forces, it is people's unique identities and their social life that is threatened. Indigenous Kashmiri culture, which is famously known as *'Kashmiriyat'* promotes diversity and social cohesion. With the harsh legacy of partition and the outbreak of insurgency in Kashmir, the indigenous Kashmiri culture, its assets and ethos have been lost with time. But to preserve this culture one needs to know what is lost or is being lost in the process. What activities are the people engaging in to keep memories of the past alive and how are they being sustained become important questions. Here is an attempt to identify and characterize the elements which form the basic components of Kashmiri culture.

Linguistic mutilation and social relationships

Language is the biggest asset and wealth of a culture. It provides expression to a culture. It is by the use of language, unique to every culture, that thoughts of oneness are transmitted. Individuals in a society socialize using the language tools at their disposal. *'Language socialization,'* Schieffelin and Ochs (2007) propose that language socialization begins the moment a human being (from birth) has contact with the social world. So the socialization process begins at a very early stage. It is often the case for a region facing a separatist movement that there is loss of material wealth, physical and emotional loss and cultural loss. Linguistically, the vocabulary of the common man in Kashmir has irrevocably got changed by the long period of insurgency, repression, curfews, cordon and search operations, killings, kidnappings, and

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destruction of Kashmiri self-esteem. Youth have become rougher and their language has lost the sweetness and candor, and humour and docility so unique to that language. They have become more direct, blunt, abusive, sarcastic and abrupt. It has also accumulated usage over these years that reflect hatred, indifference and loathing towards non-Kashmiris, armed forces and outsiders. Many English, Dogri (predominant security forces language) and Hindi words have made their way into Kashmiri language, *Koshur zabaan*, badly mutilating its grammar and context. **Suman Bhat**, a Kashmiri Pandit points to such loss of language by commenting, *"We have lost our language and traditions. There is nothing left in the name of cultural legacy to give to our children. The language has lost its sweetness and is disrespectful now."*

Expression and Heritage

Kashmiri culture finds expression in folk art like *chhakker* (duet)*, rouf* (solos) *, and ladi shah* (lyrical satire), poetry, theatre, *sufiana* (mystic) music; and, aesthetics including the heritage that comprises of *Pheran* (long gown)*, Kangri* (earthen pot with hot coals)*, wood carving, carpet-weaving, samovar* (Russian style copper pot with hot coals in a central container to keep tea warm), etc. It also includes cuisine (*wazwan*), architecture (*dab, dajji diwari, khatamband, talav* etc). These unique forms of art, cultural practices and livelihoods have been irrevocably damaged or lost over the last twenty five years of armed insurgency. This steady drain of cultural heritage has filled people with anxiety and concern over because it has started threatening the subtle nuances of their identity. Many religious and spiritual places, resting sites (graves with tombs) of sufi saints, mass prayer enclaves, and many other sites that preserved ancient cultural and civilizational testimony of Kashmir's rich ancient history were targeted by militants and at times damaged by security forces' actions as collateral lie in ruins and disrepair which further exacerbates peoples' sense of despair and loss of belonging. Such a state of affairs incites feelings of sadness, anger and helpless frustration that in turn trigger the trauma talk in the communities. To illustrate this, in 1998 the armed forces burnt down the 700-year-old Shah-e-Hamdan shrine in Tral in Kahmir's southern district of Anantnag in an encounter with armed militants, which they claimed was an 'accidental fire'. This was the third shrine that was destroyed in the armed action between militants and security forces that was seen by the people as being a deliberate attempt to annihilate Kashmir's rich ancient heritage and symbols of culture. This has caused untold trauma and sense of frustration and anger among people. These

shrines and cultural symbols are extremely dear to Kashmiris for whom these are sacred heritage, and any disrespect to these monuments is considered blasphemous consequently triggering a sense of fear and catastrophe in them which in turn leads to wailing and trauma. Previous incidents included the destruction of the 600-year-old shrine at Charar-i-Sharif in a confrontation between the dreaded and notorious jihadist terrorist from Afghanistan Mast Gul (Radhagovind, 2010) and the Indian security forces on 30th May 1995; the tomb housed the grave of the patron saint of Kashmir, called *Allam-dare-Kashmir*, meaning the standard bearer of Kashmir. Then in 1998, the library at Srinagar's main mosque was set ablaze. A large number of priceless ancient manuscripts were destroyed. Destruction of the sacred places like the mausoleum of Shaikh Noor-ud-Din Noorani at Charar-e-Sharif, the Islamic library at Dargah Hazratbal, Khanqah Shah Hamdan at Tral and a number of other mosques and Islamic religious centers in Kashmir is seen as a deliberate conspiracy to destroy Kashmir's rich and precious history and culture. To defend themselves and to prevent any further damage to their heritage, Kashmiris hold rallies to protest the **o**utrage against their heritage, but it does not fetch them any justice. The government's attempts to investigate the incidents invariably end up in feeble promises and come to naught with time. People view it as part of a larger scheme where they allege government aims to undermine the uprising through military might, religious subversion as well as demoralize the people by resorting to human rights abuses, abuses to women and the destruction of Islamic monuments. **Abdul Aziz Shah** narrates: *"Security forces were also taking locals by force for work of constructing bunkers and barracks. No wages were paid. Even some days no food was given. We were not allowed to leave our homes after 5 PM evening. No security personal was talking politely. Each and every one was abused. They had the authority from the government."*

Such acts have immense social and psychological impact on the people. The shrine of Shah-e-Hamdan is considered the soul of Kashmir since it was the great sage Shah-e Hamdan who was responsible for rapid spread of Islam in Kashmir in 13th century. Shah Hamdan wrote a famous text called "Zakhirat al-Muluk" which laid down the rules for good governance and rights and duties of the rulers and the ruled. This text has mainly been responsible for influencing the formation of Indo-Islamic principles of governance (Alam, 2004).These incidents, their importance and the pain that pours out while recalling from memory were distinctly noticed in my interviews with the people in Kashmir.

Music and Art

As a result of the constant curfews and destruction of places of public eminence since the start of the insurgency, Kashmiri folk theatre like *Band Pather* (street folk theatre) is now rarely performed. This art form was a popular satirical expression of internalization among the communities and an avenue to let their hair down in a relaxed and tension free atmosphere. *Sufiyana* (mystical) music, which has had a telling influence on the Kashmiri way of life, is slowly breathing its last. This form of music instilled the fear of God among people and is considered as a message from divine to follow the path of righteousness. Kashmiri people acutely mourn this loss of such precious cultural heritage and this incites feelings of nostalgia and mass trauma among communities. Music is glue between the past and future; it carries generations of heritage, pleasure and pain in its resonance and is considered an immense treasure of the cultural repertoire of any community. It provides a route for expressing one's feelings of anguish and happiness. It also rouses a sense of hope for a better future in the people and connects them with their souls. Many Kashmiri musicians and a growing number of its youth have now resorted to commemorating events through the rich nuances of their music and whole lore is carried forward through this medium to constantly remind people of their duties towards the community in view of the prevailing helpless situation. Many of these newly coined songs tell of pathos and recount war years with heart wrenching candour. Such commemoration through music is part of the oriental cultural practices; like in the famous 1961 Bollywood movie *Kabuliwala*, actor Balraj Sahni in an extremely anguished state of mind recounts the loss of identity and longing for his beloved homeland Afghanistan from where he has been uprooted and is living in India in heart cricking lyrics[10]:

> *Aye mere pyare watan, aye mere bichhde chamana,Tuj pe dil qurban;*
> *Tu hi meri aabroo, tu hi meri aarzoo, tuj pe dil qurban….*
> *Tere daman se jo aayein un hawawon pe salam……*
> (O, my beloved motherland, o my lost paradise, I sacrifice my life for you,
> You are my honour and you are my desire, my all for you,

---

[10] "*Kabuliwala*", Bollywood movie written by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and directed by Hemen Gupta; lyrics available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cIYebqbF1fo.

I salute the winds that come from your bosom…..)

Another rock band, Indian Ocean, considered as the pioneers of fusion rock genre in India integrate *shlokas* (Indian epic verse in Sanskrit), *sufiyana* or *taṣawwuf* (Islamic mysticism), environmentalism, mythology and revolution. One of the songs they dedicated to Kashmir in their album Kandisa (2000) was:

> *Kein Dhafna, Gil Mashrao, Dayotshi Dayotshi Mell Bahar*
>
> *Lo Luk Chayi Bahar Vesiye, Loluk foliya Gulzar*
>
> *Dilan Hind Taar, Achav Kinn, Sar,*
>
> *Tliya Meli Bahar*
>
> ("Bury the hatchet (differences), forget about complaints;
>
> By sincere effort shall we get the spring back (happiness).")

More recent echoes of longing for freedom come from MCK or M C Kash, Kashmir's first emcee/rapper, who is also being called a rebel and a revolutionary at home and abroad. At 20, MCK or Kash is convinced to take a stand and protest with his words against the atrocities of the security forces and the government. His official Facebook page reads his profile as: "[Kash, whose] words cut deeper than the barbed wire that are everywhere[11]". Kash shot into limelight with his song *I Protest* (Remembrance) in September 2010 which marked the period of Kashmir's *second intifada*, and since then has been featured on BBC, Washington Post, Times of India, and other national and international news media. His song *I Protest (Remembrance)* became an 'anthem' for the Kashmiris who are protesting the killings of civilians by the armed forces. His song ends with a tribute to all those who were martyred in the 2010 unrest. The situation triggered into a five month long protest / clash between the locals and the security forces. The lyrics to the song which became an international hit (Lyrics in Appendix B):

> *By Treacherous Puppet politicians Who Have No Soul Inside*
>
> *My Paradise Is Burnin'*
>
> *With Troops Left loose With Ammo*
>
> *Who Murder n Rape, Then Hide Behind A Political Shadow*
>
> *like A Casino Human Life Is Thrown Like A dice*

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[11] http://www.facebook.com/MCKashKashmir?sk=info

The song was used extensively and almost ritually to make the youth aware of their sufferings and it also revived memories of incidents like the Kunan Poshpora Rape: "*A whole village gang raped, A cry still lingers, These are the tales from the dark side of a murderous regime, An endless occupation of our land and our dreams.*" MC Kash's other songs like *Why We Rebel* carries a rallying cry for the youth to go on despite odds:

> *They gave us blood and hate then wondered why we all are rebels…*
> *It's time for the lockdown, brother do you hear? Brother do you care?*

The final lines of this song are a clarion call to the youth of Kashmir, urging them to rise against the atrocities of the state and not just sit and watch. His songs were used in the 2010 *intifada* to keep the spirits high and inspire young Kashmiris to fight on. Another band that grabbed considerable media attention during the 2010 unrest was *Sangam* originated from the volatile town of Sopore. Their songs are a fusion of Western and Sufiayana music. Use of language as a means of expression is at the core of human existence (Nesbit & Philpott, 2009). It encompasses symbols, speech, characters, numerals and nonverbal gestures and communication. Individuals are able to attach meanings to these associations giving rise to a 'social self.' This social self then derives meanings from perceptions of about oneself and how one is viewed by others. Language thus enables social interaction, gives rise to social conflict and also social coherence. Language facilitates the learning of social behavior which then also means it is culturally determined by the identity that the man seeks for himself or tries to guard if that identity appears diminishing.

> The 'ethnic pride' and 'self-esteem'…. are elements of social identity, which ….consists of individuals' knowledge of their group membership and the emotional significance they attach to that knowledge. In this conception, self-identity can be thought of as a knowledge structure [based around their language] individuals use to categorize themselves. Because language is an important basis for social categorization, it is a consequential marker of social identities[12].

And its expression in various forms of art also shapes behavior, attitudes and perceptions in a society and hence its importance as a form or tool of commemoration is even greater. The use of Kashmiri language in poetry began with the poet Lalleshwari or *Lal Ded* in the 14th

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[12] Krauss, Robert M. and Chiu, Chi-Yue. (1998). "Language and Social Behavior." In D. Gilbert, S. Fiske & G. Lindsey (Eds.), Handbook of Social Psychology (4th ed.), Vol. 2. (p. 80). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

century with her mystical verse and sayings; "Lal Ded recognized essential oneness of all religions. According to her, love and sincerity are the core of religion and these are the monopoly of no one religion" (Ahad, 2006, p. 116). Her verses resonate with the sufferings of her people at that time, but still retain the pain and luster in the present context. Consider the following:

> *"Shiv vaa Keshava vaa Zin vaa, Kamalajanaath naamadhaarin yuh,*
>
> *Mey abali kaastan bhavaraoz Su vaa su vaa su vaa suh.*
>
> *Shiva or Keshva or Jina.*
>
> *Brahma, the lotus-born Lord,Whatever name He bear,*
>
> *May He remove from me, the sickness of the world!"*

Kashmiris now are increasingly making use of music, videos and poetry to articulate their opinions and anguish. The medium of poetry is being seen as a potent way to reveal their pain and document the trauma of the hidden tragedies they are facing. This process has led to a change in the tenor and context of poetry coming out from this trouble-torn region; the idiom has changed from romance to depicting bloodshed and gore. Below is a poem from an anonymous Kashmiri poet portraying this trend (Poem in Appendix D):

> "*I cannot listen to the roar of the gushing stream*
>
> *It reminds me of a wailing mother next to the bullet-ridden body of her only son[13].*"

Another poem, written by *Shan* for his friend who went missing after he was picked up by unidentified gunmen from his home reads:

> *"Who knows where my friend is?*
>
> *Who knows where my friend is hiding?*
>
> *Who knows whether he is scared in the dark night?*
>
> *Who knows whether he is hungry and unable to stand on his feet?*
>
> *Who knows if the place where he sits is damp?"*

The memory of the traumatic event is enhanced by such commemorative practices yet they seem to be so much important especially in a society like Kashmir where citizens are under considerable pressure to express themselves freely. Noted Kashmiri poet and Sahitya Academy Award winner *Farooq Nazki* (1995, p. 37-38) in his collection of poems expresses a Kashmiri's yearning for peace and the uncertainties of life (Poem in Appendix D).

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[13] Available at http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=FL2kYJRLs1VupnmnVZsTJLmg.

"The blood dappled apparel of bridegrooms, Is washed at the river by mothers
And the dress of brides is set ablaze, The milky mothers pine
And quiet flows the Vitasta."

Another internationally known Kashmiri poet, *Agha Shahid Ali* (1997), in his collection, *'Country Without A Post Office'* succinctly portrays the terror and uncertainty the people live in on a daily basis (Poem in Appendix D).

"I am writing to you from your far-off country. Far even from us who live here
Where you no longer are. Everyone carries his address in his pocket
*At least his body will reach home."*

Many scholars have also stressed the expository role of mass media in commemoration of collective memory and trauma. Hobswam (1983) called these commemorative techniques as 'invented traditions' which help solidify the communal identity and keep the cause alive. In the context of Kashmir problem 'film' as a medium to portray the trauma suffered by the people has been used extensively to a pronounced effect. Films on partition of Jammu & Kashmir and its consequent adverse effects on the divided families, the harsh reality of living dangerously in the Valley, punitive and repressive actions associated with insurgency-counter insurgency conundrum, and atrocities faced by all sections of society in Kashmir, have been used to a devastating effect. Dramatizing incidents of violence, rape, custodial killings, stone pelting, and other tortures on the big screen, arouse anger and intensify the sense of loss in people thereby also arousing trauma in them. Bollywood movies like *Adharm* (unholy), *Tamas* (darkness), *Lamha* (moment), *Rosy* (name of a girl caught in the whirlwind of violence), and many more have evoked strong and deep pathos among people and heightened their sense of trauma. Such movies are seen again and again to highlight and rekindle the sense of anger and grief and arouse collective trauma[14].

Kashmiri painters and cartoonists also share similar feelings. Their sketches and paintings reveal the sufferings of the people through brush strokes and color. Instead of the previous pink, orange and other light colors, artists are using darker shades like black, white, red and tinges of blue. Colors carry a lot of meaning. For Example, red is considered a very emotionally intense

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[14] For a detailed discussion on the effect of movies on their audiences see "Re-inscribing the Historic Film Frame" by Dirk de Bruyn in "Art & Lies I - Society; Politics; History & Performance", Issue Eight, 2007/08.

color. It denotes fire, blood, war, danger, power, desire and love. Blue on the other hand, symbolizes eternal hope and faith. It is the color of sky and sea, of depth. So for the purpose of this thesis and to see how and in what ways people commemorate in Kashmir, I analyzed Bashir Ahmad Bashir's (BAB) cartoons. BAB is a famous cartoonist from Kashmir whose work drools with incisive satire on government action, atrocities of the security forces and the terrorists and the plight of the common man in his drawings. A sampling of BAB's pencil strokes is given below which are self-explanatory.

Figure 6.2 BAB version of a house arrest

(Source: Bashir Ahmad Bashir. Retrieved on January 16, 2012 from Facebook:

(http://www.facebook.com/bashirahmadbashir?sk=info)
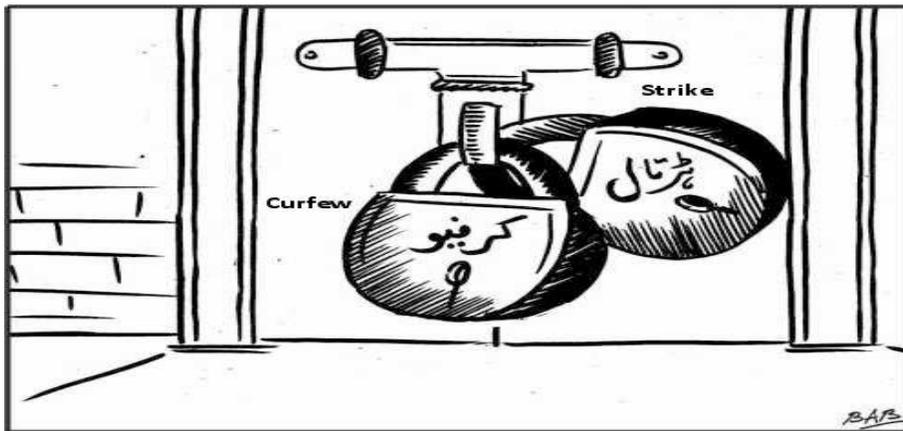
Figure 6.3 Portraying the traffic of coffins

(Source: Bashir Ahmad Bashir. Retrieved on January 16, 2012 from Facebook:

(http://www.facebook.com/bashirahmadbashir?sk=info)
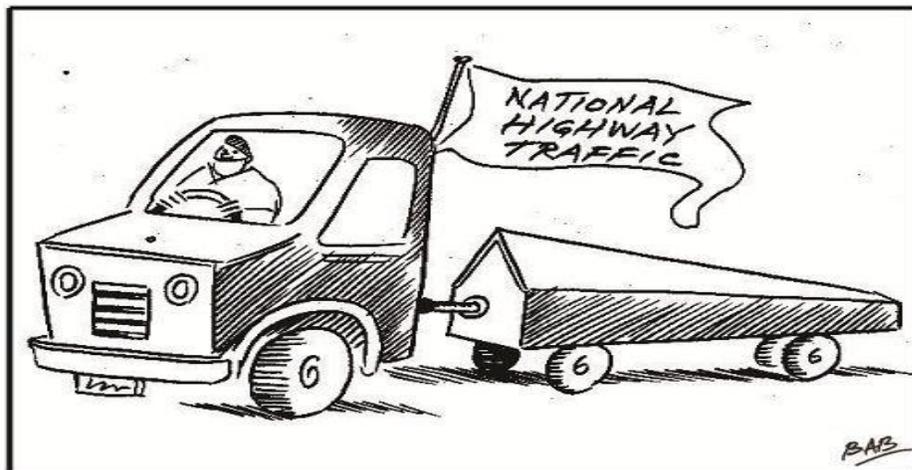
Figure 6.4 Security man scanning a small firepot for a possible grenade

(Source: Bashir Ahmad Bashir. Retrieved on January 16, 2012 from Facebook:
(http://www.facebook.com/bashirahmadbashir?sk=info)
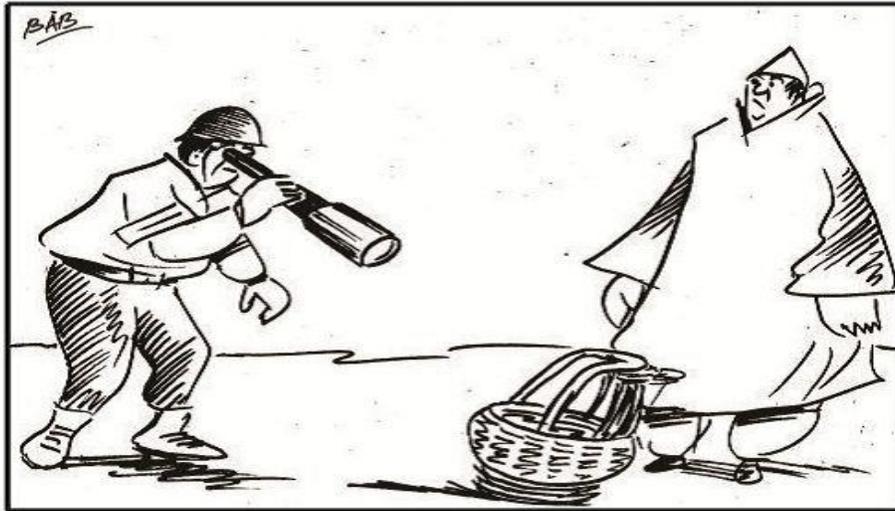
Trauma displayed through use of processions, attire, burial practices, rituals and eulogizing language

In the long years of the current insurgency in Kashmir a distinctive pattern has emerged over commemorative practices. For example the burial rituals have become more elaborate. Placards, posters, hoardings and other attention grabbing materials are pasted all over the place loudly announcing the martyrdom of the deceased and highlighting the injustices meted out by the security forces. Many such commemorative events are grossly exaggerated and contain considerable amount of fiction. However this is performed in a manner that it becomes part of the memory narrative and oral history. Speeches are made at the burial site that inflame passions and spur younger generations to remember such sacrifices and devote themselves to the cause. I would analyze each of these practices and exhibit how at every step there is a reliving of the past and emergence of trauma in the process.

Processions and Marches

The most common and frequent method which often tends to serve dual purposes: of protesting, making themselves heard by higher authorities and of re-inciting feelings of hatred and bitterness especially in periods of calm to keep the struggle alive, is the use of marches and processions. It is observed that every major incident that has taken place in Kashmir is being

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commemorated ritually on an annual basis. **Gurmeet Singh**, one of the interviewees has been actively participating in the demands for justice over the Chittisingh pora massacre. He said, *"We will continue for the next 20 years till we know who the perpetrators were."* And cases that are pending or investigations that have been promised and not initiated are still the demand. **Nanak Singh**, the lone survivor of the Chittisingh pora incident, commented, *"The government has been ignoring us, deliberately. They do not want to help our community. We have submitted documents for the investigation but they are always turned back because of lack of evidence. All of Kashmir know who committed the crime (militants) but nothing is being done."* Women normally shower the protestors with flower petals and dry fruits from the rooftops and windows of the houses. Others sing folk songs recalling great sacrifices by the slain sons of the land. It is a combination of blood, tear-smoke and the spirit of freedom. Another group in Srinagar that has been working for the same cause is the All Parties Sikh Coordination Committee has been equally organizing marches to force the government to start investigations. Some more pictures of protest, banners, and marches are shown below to exemplify how individuals of different communities make use of these tools as a collective investment in maintaining solidarity in the community and also as an anthem for the future generations.

Figure 6.5 Kashmiri protestors in Canada

(Source: Punjab Newsline Network (2010). Retrieved January 17, 2012:
http://forumpunjab.wordpress.com/2010/09/27/toronto-canada-kashmiri-protest-at-consulate-general-of-usa-in-canada/)

Attire, Burial Practices, Rituals and Eulogizing Language

Long periods of repression and terror has given birth to stories, songs and various *lores* reflecting the experiences of entire generations of people who have grown up under the shadow of terror since the start of the insurgency. With renewed hardships and terror, these lores have woven around them many half-truths eulogizing and glorifying the sacrifices of the slain thus giving them larger than life stature. This has served to enthuse younger generations with energy and a sense of such belonging that they voluntarily opt for acts of jihad and martyrdom to prove themselves. Lore also contributes to the collective trauma suffered by the society because of their powerful motivating narratives that by recalling past sacrifices renews the feelings of love and longing and creates fresh pathos. **Fauzia** mentioned *"our community gathers at festivals and different occasions like on the important religious days and sing songs for the martyrs and recite stories of bravery and freedom struggle to the kids."* This pathos hardens into solid resolve for defiance of authority. This analysis supports Mannheim's (1928) argument that there exists a dialogue and an interaction between different generations naturally that influences the coming generations' consciousness. So each generation leaves some kind of legacy or heritage for the next one. Each is defined and expressed in relation to the other to some extent. One such lore by Shad Ramzan illustrates this well:

"*Khash koruth meinan amaran jan gauw; pana beuthukh shalamaran jan gow*"

(Having slain my desires and hopes, beloved you are sitting pretty in Shalamar enjoying life with serenity and pleasure)

This song depicts trauma due to separation or going away of dear ones. It is heart wrenching and causes extreme distress when it is sung. Similar lore has been woven around the many legends that are half fiction and half-truth. This again adds to the collective trauma – both its formation and reliving. Also some highly *exaggerated terror narration* transforms into lore and thereafter helps create *urban legends*, although, of course, the reason for the birth of the terror lore should be more specific. However in Kashmir almost all terror lore has achieved the status of urban legend among those who have undergone and experienced the trauma. These urban legends have become rallying points for younger generations to come forward for the cause. As Neal (1998) has argued, "the creation of legendary figures to symbolize the aspirations of the nation provide (d) sources of inspiration for future generations" (p. 22). Part of this argument also relates to the concept of '*Historical Trauma,*' a concept put forward by Dr. Maria

Yellow Horse Braveheart (1995). She defined it as a grief that emanates from historically unresolved issues of massive trauma experienced by groups. Historical Trauma then is the combined emotional and psychological damage over generations. Such a trauma then involves collectively remembering and experiencing events and passing on to generations more or less in a 'cyclic' manner (Muid 2006, p. 36). Traumatic grief is most painful for those primarily afflicted. Even though the following generation does not really understand the depth of that pain or what exactly are they grieving for, yet they are infused by the losses and are more than often seen carrying the scars. This is true of Kashmiri society as well.

Now I analyze the burial practices of the region which have undergone enormous changes from the traditional somber, quiet and simple rituals to more elaborate, loud and collective affair. Traditionally everybody recites verses from holy Quran as laid down in the religious practice for heavenly peace of the departed soul. Then the corpse is bathed and wrapped in a shroud, carried to the graveyard in a wooden coffin *(tabut)* covered with a black cloth. Over the years, especially after the outbreak of insurgency in the Valley, the burial ceremony has in itself become a grand occasion for subversive oratory, venting of suppressed feelings and a stage for protests. There are incidents where the funeral procession takes ugly turn and end up in clashes with the security forces.

Figure 6.6 Police brutality during a funeral procession

A Kashmiri man tried to protect the body of a relative, Muzaffar Ahmad Bhat, after the police stopped the funeral procession for Mr. Bhat in Srinagar, in Indian-administered Kashmir. The Indian police fired at hundreds of stone-throwing protesters in Kashmir on Tuesday, killing three civilians.

(Source: Umar Gamie/Reuters (2010) in "Truth Alone Triumphs": of David, Goliath, Stones, and Speech. *Retrieved January 17, 2012:* http://pulsemedia.org/2010/07/21/truth-alone-triumphs-of-david-goliath-stones-and-speech/)

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Another important change that has occurred is the way the funerals are staged. The corpse is paraded from street to street; anti-India slogans are shouted at the foot of a large crowd. So it is not just the immediate family members but people from every village or town around that join in. Exaggerated parallels are drawn between the slain and the great warriors of Islam.

Figure 6.7 Parading the corpse from door to door

(Source: Farooq Khan / EPA (2011). Retrieved on February 1, 2012 from Photoblog: http://photoblog.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2011/12/24/9679255-pro-india-party-member-killed-in-kashmir)

Figure 6.8 Glorifying the slain

(Source: Shabana Bashir (2010). Retrieved on February 1, 2012 from Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/JammuKashmir/photos#!/media/set/?set=a.124477448557.105489.11 2849003557&type=3)

Militants or insurgents killed are buried with great fanfare and in open defiance of authorities thereby adding great gusto and heroism to the slain ones. This becomes part of the collective trauma repertoire and narrative. Behera (2006) mentions in her book how a Kashmiri family views having a *mujahid* (Islamic warrior) in the family as a *'status symbol'* (p. 150); and

that how families compete to send their boys across the border for training. Some of the pictures below depict the funeral scenes in Kashmir replete with symbolism and social consequences. Thus funeral ceremonies facilitate reemergence of collective trauma among people and keep the memories of the past alive.

Figure 6.9 Thousands of women gather to pay tribute to Anis Ahmed Ghanai who was martyred by Indian forces.

(Source: Shabana Bashir (2010). Retrieved on February 1, 2012 from Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/JammuKashmir/photos#!/media/set/?set=a.124477448557.105489.11 2849003557&type=3)

Another important site of memorialization is the social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, blogs, YouTube, and Myspace. The unrest in 2010 in Kashmir, which came to be called as *'Kashmir's second intifada',* marked the beginning of the use of networking sites as a means to showcase their protest that could have the global reach. Figure 7.21 is a snapshot of a Facebook group dedicated to the protests that happened in 2010.

Figure 6.10 Snapshot of one of the Facebook page maintained by Kashmiri youth

Figure 6.11 Flyer of the Facebook page, in local language, commemorating the Chittisingh Pora massacre

Figure 6.12 Poster from a

Facebook page

(Source: Shivam Vij (2010). Retrieved on February 1, 2012:

http://kafila.org/2010/06/30/if-protest-could-kill-what-would-bullets-do/)

Members of the group have posted banners which depicts the true story behind the veil. The growing use of social media in the world and especially in Kashmir is seen as an important tool in broadening the social movement horizon and a faster medium in bringing about social change. It serves the dual purpose of spreading their message and also of creating a strong sense of community organization offline, bringing people of the religion from different parts of the world on the same platform. The youth in Kashmir were able to synchronize and integrate the online and offline communities and their presence was more strongly felt than ever before. Nobel laureate Paul Krugman while Friedman's book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, said: "We are

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heading for a world that is basically democratic; because you can't keep them down on the farm once they have Internet access". The act of using the social media as a tool for spreading the movement beyond the borders of a nation is a way of creating memory-making practices generated through narratives, stories, pictures, and videos.

Figure 6.13 Poster on Facebook page on Kashmir

(Source: Admin (2010). Retrieved on February 1, 2012 from Facebook:
http://www.facebook.com/JammuKashmir/photos#!/media/set/?set=a.124477448557.105489.11
2849003557&type=3)

In the picture below the hangman's knot clearly indicates the resolve against the perpetrators.

Figure 6.14 Banner showing comparison to the perpetrators of 2011 Mumbai blast

Figure 6.13 is a pamphlet of the Facebook group WWCPM, where they are seen appealing to the people in authority and also to Bill Clinton whose visit triggered the massacre.

Figure 6.15 Sikh Committee Brochure

There are also *memorials* that are a kind of sacred site for people to perpetuate trauma. For Example, in Chattisingh Pora, soon after the incident three memorials were built to honour the slain. One of these has been set up near a gurudwara and another outside Baldev's (one of the victims) house in the village. The *site of execution*, which was the outer wall of a gurdwara has now become a *sacred spot* for the villagers. They have preserved the wall by covering it with glass and wire mesh. Bullet marks have been circled with yellow markers. The memorial near the massacre site says '*unknowns'* killed the Sikhs. As a daily ritual, villagers pay homage at the site every morning and evening. Such a ritual is so embedded in the community that even small children who might not understand the significance of what they are doing, innocently come and embrace the wire mesh. Thus the Sikh community is keeping the bitter and anguished memory of the massacre alive in the minds of their community lest they forget the great tragedy perpetrated on their brethren. This serves to relive trauma almost on daily basis. Similarly, another such memorial has been constructed in Sopore. It is called the "Wall of Memory" which bears names of the 65 places where Indian forces have allegedly committed rape in the last 20 years.

Figure 6.16 Shopian Wall of Memory

(Source: Shivam Vij (2010). Retrieved on February 1, 2012:
http://kafila.org/2010/06/30/if-protest-could-kill-what-would-bullets-do/)

On the inauguration of the wall, women of Shopian organized a rally to mark the one-year of the rape and murder of Asifa and Nilofar. On the occasion, women wore black armbands and carried black flags demanding justice for the victims. Their placards read: *'We will sacrifice our lives to safeguard our honor'* and *'Asmat Hamari Jaan Say Pyaari'* (We value our chastity more than our life).[15] Another news report carried these slogans: *'Behnoo hum sharminda hai tumhare qatil zinda hai'* (Sisters we are ashamed that your killers are roaming free), *'Asifa tumhare khoon se inqilab aye ga'* (Asifa your blood will bring revolution)[16].

The celebration of martyrs at the famous Martyrs graveyard in Srinagar is ritually celebrated every year on July 13th. The celebration though is not just restricted to that particular day. People often revisit on various occasions like a recent killing or event that reminded them of the past. And hence the visitation. Such graveyards are found in every district of the valley. Below are some of the pictures of such graves at different sites.

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[15] Available at http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/2010/May/31/memorial-for-aasiya-neelofar-46.asp.

[16] Available at http://www.freshinitiative.net/kashmir-news/news/5676-a-year-after-shopian-tragedy.

Figure 6.17 Unmarked graves in Bimyar, west of Srinagar.

(Source: Mukhtar Khan/AP (2011) in "The dead begin to speak up in India." Retrieved on February 2, 2012 from:

http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2011/sep/30/kashmir-india-unmarked-graves)

Figure 6.188 Martyrs Graveyard, Srinagar

(Source: Soutik Biswas (2010). Retrieved on February 3, 2012 from:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11380059)

Figure 6.19 Martyrs Graveyard, Sopore

(Source: Farhad Shah (2011). Retrieved on February 3, 2012 from:

http://www.thekashmirwalla.com/2011/07/martyrs-day-of-sopore/martyers-graveyard-sopore/

Figure 6.20 Headstone at Martyrs' Graveyard

(Source: Jason Motlagh (2008). Retrieved on February 3, 2012 from:

http://pulitzercenter.org/slideshows/kashmir)

Use of symbols as displays for collective trauma

Symbols are mostly used in protests in order to achieve solidarity among adherents. All kind of interaction that happens between individuals, language, culture and development of self happens through the use of symbols. Symbols can be gestures, object or word that form the basis of human communication. Symbols are culturally defined and vary across cultures. When story-telling takes place repeatedly, many fictitious and exaggerated versions are continuously attached to it. This then distorts the 'real' reality and gives birth to perceived reality, constructed socially

by the meanings the collective attaches to it. So therefore the use of symbols allows society to translate 'raw' reality into one that can be manipulated. Hence it facilitates socialization. Though the use of symbols by people in Kashmir in processions, funerals and memorials have also been mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, this part of the paper will specifically look at slogans, use of headbands in protests, gestures, face masks and banners. Behera (2006) in her book *'Demystifying Kashmir'* mentions on how Kashmiri youth are ready to lay down their lives for the cause of freedom. For them they have only two options, *"to die or to be liberated"* (p. 150); and the slogan *"Jo kare Khuda ka khauf, Utha le Kalashnikov"* (All God-fearing men should pick up the gun, (p. 150). Slogans are used as *'social symbols'* that have the power to incite and arouse strong feelings of unity and purpose in individuals and the collective. Some of the slogans that are used by protestors in Kashmir are '*Azadi ka matlab kya, La Illahililillah'* (Freedom means the rule of Islamic law), '*Hum kya chahte hain – Nizam-i-Mustafa'* (What do we want – Islamic law), '*Indian Dogs Go Home,'* '*Go India Go Home,' 'Quit Kashmir.'*

Figure 6.21 Protest Headbands

(Source: Reuters (2010). Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from: http://cryptome.org/info/kashmir-protest/kashmir-protest.htm)

A masked Kashmiri youth, in the picture above attends a protest on the outskirts of Srinagar September 13, 2010. The headband reads: "Allah is great". Mark the fabric pattern of the mask, which is trade mark Islamic symbol of defiance.

Figure 6.22 Kashmiri protester

(Source: Reuters (2010). Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from: http://cryptome.org/info/kashmir-protest/kashmir-protest.htm)

      A Kashmiri protester shouts pro-freedom slogans through the broken wooden mesh of a clock tower during a demonstration in the heart of Srinagar on September 11, 2010. Other communities have been making similar efforts in the demand for justice. Some of the pictures below are the protests on part of the Pandit community. The head band of the protestor below reads '*ignored'* clearly explaining their agony.

Figure 6.23 Kashmiri Pandit – Protests on World Refugees Day 2011, demanding the status of Internally Displaced Persons.

(Source: Reuters (2011). Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from: http://kashmiris-in-exile.blogspot.com/2010/06/kashmiri-pandits-living-in-exile-stage.html)

Figure 6.24 Pandits protesting for their rights

(Source: Raman Raina (2009). Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from:

http://www.shehjar.com/list/106/1039/1.html)

The Pandit community migrated from Kashmir after the start of insurgency and soon spread to other parts of the world, where they have kept the struggle alive.

Figure 6.25 Protesters in support of Kashmiris at the G20 Summit in Toronto on 26 June 2010

(Source: Admin (2010). Retrieved on February 4, 2012 from: http://kashmir.ca/page/2/)

In this chapter I have attempted to analyse the ssignificance of memorabilia, rituals, attire, symbols and customs in perpetuation of collective trauma. In doing so we have seen that it

is the narrative that is central to human conscious, through which the society attempts to relive its past, preserve its identity and recall and preserve those episodes, howsoever bitter those may be, to avenge their 'social self'.What happens, we have seen, when we consider narrative as a cultural tool in forms of mediated action whose purpose is to represent the past. What aids and abets this 'narrativity' is the 'memory'. So far as memory is concerned, it is as an act of being inscribed in traces, or survivals of a past, which mark every on-going inscription. It does not have any concrete existence in itself and it is always contiguous to the act of being narrated through folk lore, sloganeering, eulogising, art and music, speech and agitation or any other symbols that aids its articulation. Together, memory and narratives, through the active crutches of symbols, memorabilia, commemoration and such like props helps awaken the episodes of unpleasant happenings in the society, which then lapses into traumatic events. This cycle repeats itself as and when there appears a trigger on the horizon.

Chapter 7 - Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was not to understand the origins of the long standing conflict in Kashmir, which has been discussed and dissected in great detail by scholars and chroniclers; and neither a roadmap to a possible solution; which is the usual route explored by many scholars. The endeavor has been to take a step back and sociologically look at the sufferings of the people in a conflict ridden society. This thesis is generalizable to most of the conflict regions of the world, primarily because it is dealing with the commonplace violent techniques used by the state to coerce a people into compliance, to deliberately and indiscriminately inflict collateral damage, of life, limb and property of helpless communities caught in the crossfire between the state and the revolutionaries; in turn perpetrating great pain and suffering that generates trauma and a sense of loss of identity. Kashmir, like many other conflict zones in the world, is a society where grief, helplessness, pathos and destruction mark the routine discourse of the people. This endless persecution and living dangerously has created peculiar socio-psychological conditions for the people in Kashmir threatening their identity, culture and the very existence as a unique ethnic entity. Consequently the coping strategies adopted by the people whose daily routine is a struggle for survival include recall to memory and narrative telling that gives rise to collective trauma. This ritual helps bond people together in their despondent situation and affords them a sense of cohesion and community. Therefore this thesis is an attempt and a personal motivation to bring to light some of the 'not so obvious' sociological aspects of the problem afflicting the Kashmiri society. I conclude by suggesting future steps for research.

Answering the research question

The research questions, as stated earlier, are:

How has memory, narrative, and social symbolism aided the formation of collective trauma in conflict ridden society in Jammu and Kashmir?

- *What experiences of life have people in insurgency ridden Kashmir gone through and why the memories of trauma are kept alive even after the insurgency has ebbed?*

- *What strategies or ways of recovery are used by the community elders to lead their communities back to living a normal life?*

Beginning with a review of the research literature, I observed that much of the previous and current scholarship on Kashmir is influenced by the political question, and the Islamic ideology; both of which largely ignore the human and social aspects of the problem because of their vested interest in the issue itself. This became my motivation to explore the sociological aspects of the conflict which, to a large extent, has manifested itself in collective trauma among the sections of the society. In this concluding chapter, I shall attempt to summarize my findings about the research questions in the form of important themes which can be broadly characterized into two groups: grievances (symptoms of a traumatic community or the experiences of people) and why and how memory is kept alive. Data analysis facilitated bringing the grievances of the people to surface and their way of reliving their past through their traumatic experiences.

Grievances

This section of the chapter helps answer one of the sub-questions of this research. The question asked was: "*What experiences of life have people in insurgency ridden Kashmir gone through and why the memories of trauma are kept alive even after the insurgency has ebbed?*" At various points in this paper it has been brought out abundantly that since the start of insurgency, people have been victimized, tortured and alienated on their own soil. Interviews conducted point out how survival and coping with grief has become a daily dredge for the people in Kashmir. Communities across a broad spectrum of religions have been psychologically and physically mauled. Grievances are retained as agonizing memories and in an insurgency milieu these become collective memories with the passage of time since most of the community members suffer similar or near similar grievances. Such collective social memory thereafter becomes the moving force of all narrations of identity, national or otherwise, displacement or movement, good times as well as bad times.

Religion

Religion has emerged as the single most powerful and common factor binding communities together in their quest to see their land as free from their perceived sense of alien occupation. For almost all the people interviewed only *faith and religion* emerged to be giving a glimmer of hope for redemption, if not in this life, then in the afterlife. The origin of the Kashmir conflict has its roots in the political and economic conditions of the people but an even bigger factor that precipitated the issue was religion. The partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, that in its

aftermath also resulted in the partition of Jammu & Kashmir, was a result of the communal tensions and political considerations of the newly born states of India and Pakistan, which ultimately divided the people on the basis of religion, since the "religious dynamics [in an ethno-religious conflict] are the products of historical legacies" (James and Ozdamar (2005), p. 464). When people in Kashmir protest, they shout out anti-India slogans primarily targeted at the majority Hindus and demand a Muslim state. Also since Kashmir is a Muslim majority state, ongoing guerrilla war and counter-insurgency has led to violence which is targeted mostly against the Muslims, since they are seen to be abetting and aiding terrorism and insurgency. Leger (2000) argues that the source of any religious belief is the continuation of its believers in the foundational events of the past. Religion has all the elements necessary to keep collective trauma alive. As argued by Rodriguez and Fortier (2007), "religion heightens our communal experience of life" (p. 3). They suggest that cultural survival then is a product of "both biological and ideological construction" (p. 4). This became apparent once the interviews started. One of the interviewee, **Abdul Aziz Shah**, said, *"One day our local masjid was cordoned off by security forces and we were ordered to sit on the snow without shoes. Some security persons entered our mosque with their dirty shoes. That was most shocking than beating, abusing and torturing. Religious freedom was not prevailing. It was curbed deliberately."* Yet another interviewee **Hasan Bhat** narrates a similar story: *"Religious freedom was not prevailing in our village. We were not allowed to offer late evening (Isha) Nimaz in Mosques."*

This clearly explains the reason for the hatred against the armed forces. This also explains why religion appears to be the magnet between the militants and the local population where local population believes that the militants, since belonging to their own religion, are fighting for a common cause in the path to salvation. This blurs the distinction between the hidden political agenda of the perpetrators and their supposed religious affiliation.

Toni Morrison's 'National Amnesia'

Essentially what emerges is the significant role that the oral tradition has played and continues to play in the chronicling of events that have occurred in the past, especially with reference to the insurgency in Jammu & Kashmir, which is now in its twenty third year. However, as folklorists have observed, oral records are largely based on memory, and as a scholar has pointed out, human memory is fallible, and information may be lost, misinterpreted both accidentally and deliberately or even become untraceable with the passage of time.

Somewhat similar to what Toni Morrison (1989) describes as "national amnesia," there seems to have been a reluctance to actually put down in writing the horrific experiences of the affected people during this long period of conflict and bloodbath. Morrison (1989) explains how people willfully engage in forgetting horrific details of the past. In the case of Kashmir because of the tense conditions and close state control over the movement of the journalists and writers particularly in the initial decade of the high key insurgency, real inside investigation of the events that have led to death and destruction has largely been ignored. Thus in Kashmir national amnesia appears to have become a norm with the authorities. There are incidents like the Kunan Poshpora mass rapes, an incident that evokes extreme and hysterical reactions among victims and the community at large. Also since incidents like these which have changed the course of the lives of the victims for worse since the social stigma of rape in a closed society like Kashmir carries far reaching social stigma with it; victims and the community elders counsel that forgetting was probably the better way out of the bitter memory to avoid social castigation and segregation. At the same time Morrison's concept is also applicable to certain other events that have occurred en-mass like killings and torture etc. which serve to ignite passions among the community, are exaggerated and narrated with greater relish to relive trauma so that the perceived cause is served and kept alive in the memories of the community and those outside forces that carry out an audit of the human rights violations. Over the years many stories have been attached to these incidents and nobody really wants to agree or disagree. For example, in the Kunan Poshpora rape case, sources state that the actual number of women raped was around 53. But the interviewees told a different story. The numbers were exaggerated. One of the interviewee, **Abdul Aziz Shah** recounted that: *"Soldiers entered in our houses during search and gang raped about 100 women in their houses…"* Ironically, with the passage of time more fictitious details and untruths have been tagged to these incidents. Such fictitious representations only provide people with experiences that only aggravate the pain.

Grillo's Cultural Anxiety

With growing harassment over the years, Kashmiris have developed a *sense of fear and revulsion*, and the slightest mention of the armed forces triggers near hysterical reactions. This fear is the consequence of the reign of terror inflicted upon the people of Kashmir by the Islamist militants and the Indian armed forces fighting each other for control. Almost every small or big action either by the security forces or the militants has resulted in violence, loss of life or limb

and destruction of property. A general sense of suspicion and fear pervades the atmosphere in the entire Valley and Muslim dominated areas in Jammu region bordering the Line of Control with Pakistan. This atmosphere has been created by the security forces by instituting a system of offering rewards to anyone who would act as an informers giving away to the security forces the identities of probable collaborators. Such modus operandi creates suspicion of each other among people and thereby divides the community. Also, this angers militants, who see such informants as 'traitors' and kill them at the earliest possible opportunity to cover their trails. Resultantly the entire society is living in an atmosphere of suspicion and fear. Neither the security forces nor the Islamists waste any time in investigating the truth of the allegations and reports, announce swift punishments, that carry the unmistakable message that 'others' are warned not to repeat such acts of rebellion or betrayal. **Fauzia** narrated a similar experience: *"...militants were accusing my husband that he was a Mukhbir(informer) of Army...He was taken near the nallah and was killed."*

      Motilal Bhat, a Kashmiri Pandit shares his story how they were seen as informers: *"people started asking us as to why we did not leave when the others had...and we eventually came to be seen as informers. We suffered intimidation all the time. This is where we belong and we will not let it die. They have ruined our traditions and trampled our roots."*

      However, the above atmosphere of suspicion has created another phenomenon, the phenomenon of 'cultural anxiety'; this 'anxiety' has catapulted families and clans into action of getting together more tightly than they were before. This coming together and bonding helps them in collectively warding off any misfortune that might befall them as a consequence of the modus operandi adopted by security forces as explained above. The interviews revealed that families, who lost their earning member, were helped by the people of the community. **Fauzia** mentioned: *"Local people helped me in providing alms and 'sadqa fitr'* (Islamic charity towards destitute) *which I spend to fulfill my mundane needs."* This also gives rise to collective complaining and wailing that further exacerbates collective trauma. **Fazi** said: *"taking our problems with the other women of the community helps ease the pain; I feel my son is still alive..."* Similarly **Raja Begum** said, *"Local people supported us morally but not economically."* This is another manifestation of 'cultural anxiety' since in Kashmir the ancient practice of donating rations and clothes to destitute and those in need was considered a very noble activity mandated by the rich culture of *Kashmiryat* and Sufi traditions. Also, in these

collectives, narratives are told, refined, added on and retold. Resultantly an entirely new narrative or piece of story emerges that becomes lore thereafter. This serves as recall to memory, narrative telling, and formation of collective trauma. This constant 'living on the edge' has also made the locals realize the damage that is done to the culture as explained in chapter 7. Such a realization has further paved the way for bringing people together to undo the damage. R.D. Grillo (2003) uses the term *'cultural anxiety'* to explain such a feeling. Cultural anxiety occurs when people get anxious of the damages to the culture and 'what is happening to it' (p. 158). Culture is a "precious investment" (Gellner 1983, p. 111), has a huge historical significance, in which people develop a sense of self. It is the culture that gives them the sense of belonging and identity. Kai Erikson (1976) describes such phenomena as a 'loss of communality'. Pandits share their experiences: **Taploo** said, *"They (security forces) used to sometimes pick people up … from both sides* (meaning from the other community*) …they would often respond by beating civilians and there was a lot of these crackdowns where people would be gathered…"*

Socio-economic Deprivation

Another dominant theme that has emerged is the economic deprivation of the people. In conflictive regions, particularly those which were economically weak before the outbreak of violence, insurgency and illegal activity often are the easy ways to make a reasonable living. Most of the insurgent families which I interviewed were deeply affected by poverty and were worn down with the struggle to make ends meet. **Fazi Begum** said: *"Our economic condition was so bad. We were spending our days with the memories of my husband. I was always thinking and was totally shocked and confused with my life and that of our children. The burden was very heavy. Militant leaders were offering money and incentives and therefore I decided to send my boy also. This helped us come out of our abject poverty."*

Sultana had a similar story, *"Our condition is not good these days. It has never been since the start of insurgency. We have been destroyed by cruel days. In older days, my father-in law and my husband was a landlord of Dardpora. Nowadays, we are considered in the families of absolute poverty. Many times I have been thinking that my children should also join the underground movement. It helps in restoring your social and financial status."*

Mehraj said, *"Our condition was so bad; we had no land of our own, except the piece of land where we are living. Because of no source of income I worked in the fields of other people*

to collect food for my infants. But always the thought of joining the militancy for easy money and power has been upper most in my mind."

The inability to provide for families has been a source of anger and frustration for young men, thus making them receptive to the only employers actively hiring: the insurgents, terrorists, politicians, and Islamist groups spreading jihad. **Abdul Aziz Shah** reported that, *"Jamat-Islami workers inveigled people to join the movement. Thousands of young, adults and old people were recruited and then sent across LOC for arms training. They were adequately compensated monetarily."*

Another aspect that the interviews revealed was the reluctance of the militant groups to look after the welfare of the families of their foot-soldiers who have been killed or even the militants, who surrendered and later joined the security forces, conveniently forgot their families. **Razia**, whose elder son Abdul Hameed Chahra was initially a militant and later on joined Indian Army after surrendering his arms, narrates this: *"Two militants gathered the property i.e. mating, mattresses and cloths of children. They opened a tin of petrol and put that on the property and set fire to whole property and our house. They took revenge...My son never helped us after the tragedy, he was not coming home. He did not care about our poor condition. He married a girl of Dardpora (upper) and later on joined Territorial Army in 2004."*

Sultana reported that, *"My surrendered son, Ghulam was not coming home. He was living near Dardpora Army camp. He did not care much about me after my husband's death."* When such people join the ranks of militants and are subsequently killed, great turmoil takes place in their families. **Razia** said, *"My elder son Ab Hameed Chahra was initially a militant. He died a martyr's death."* Families therefore ascribe great deeds and pious upbringing with the ultimate loss in their sons lives. This adds to the memory and narrative. The trauma thus created or caused is a complex mixture of fact and fiction and one laden with great eulogies and valor. Life in the rural and urban Kashmir is missing meaning, structure, and a sense of identity due to the continued harassment and hardships faced by the people. Insurgency has provided a route or a vent for these people to find a sense of belonging by internalizing with the Islamists who are coreligionists and profess to fight on their behalf. This fills, so to say the psychic void created by the terror. This has caused a major problem for the state authority. Although many poverty alleviation and economic development schemes are launched by the government, people look at such programs with suspicion and doubt. **Mehraj**, a graduate is sitting unemployed and works in

a local grocery store to make ends meet. He spoke about the lack of job opportunities in the Valley primarily because of the constant shutdowns and counter-insurgency operations. *"there are no opportunities, job-wise in the Valley."* **Raja Begum** narrated her daughter's condition: *"Poverty was catching us very fast, my daughters, educated, worked really hard. Daughters took the job of weaving carpets instead of a good paying job in the town…it is not safe to send our girls out. They (daughters) earned money to fulfill the mundane necessities. I (Widow) worked in fields like all other male farmers did."*

        Fauzia said, *"Due to poverty and no real source of income I was not in a position to marry off my elder daughter, who finished high school. I sold my land and some popular trees (2 kanals out of 5) and married her off to one of my relative. Later government appointed my daughter in education department as a peon."* Rekhi (1993) points out that there is evidence of a serious mismatch between the rate of unemployment, poverty and underdevelopment and the government efforts. This makes reconciliation process difficult and time consuming. Scholars like Sten Widmalm are exploring possibilities of the poor socioeconomic conditions as a reason for violence and the conflict that erupted in 1989.

Gender Issues

        Widowhood in the Valley tends to heighten their vulnerability, sexual and emotional, increases their economic insecurity, and impacts women's right to property and the children's education. It also subjects them to sexual abuse by the military and the militants. In Kashmir security forces and the militants have used it to punish, intimidate, coerce, humiliate and degrade women. However most of the crimes committed in Kashmir through security agencies usually go unnoticed. There are also women who out of social stigma do not report their sufferings to their family members, they as **Khalid** said, *"silence is their only medicine."*

        Abdul Aziz Shah reported that, *"with the start of insurgency, militants ordered women not to walk without the veil (Burqa). The movement which militants started to liberate Kashmir from Indian occupation was a good thinking by militant leaders, but they practiced it in wrong way. Being illiterates they misinterpreted the actual Jihad. Some bad character and greedy militants confiscated property and chased young women."*

        Hasan Bhat mentioned, *"Militants soon forgot the goal and began to fight with each other on local issues like land, water, property, leadership and women. 80% of militants were*

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illiterate, not knowing the real meaning of Jihad. They looted people, killed innocent Kashmiris and fought with each other on leadership issues."

Women in Kashmir in general face problems in the fields of education, employment, health, hygiene, family, marriage, discrimination, exploitation, harassment, culture and so on. Following this, the processes of emancipation of women in the valley faced difficulties during the past fifteen years of militancy. Another startling finding was the number of Kashmiri women committing suicide as compared to the men. Also the number of women under psychiatric treatment is even greater. **Zafar** reported that, *"Our women are suffering; they are easy prey at the hands of the militants and security forces. We are unable to save them. Most of them take their own lives and some lose their minds."* Women in Kashmir are largely politically marginalized. They are trapped in a conservative and patriarchal society. **Rasool** reported that, *"Our girls are traumatized by social pressures. Late marriage, increase in divorce rates and insecurity have marred all potential for growth. The sense of insecurity was greater among girls and young women who became virtual prisoners in their houses because of the threat of abduction and sexual abuse."* Rape in the construction of trauma, only adds to the misery of the women and their families and hence does not relieve them off the painful memories, rather aggravates them. Suicide in this case is clearly a reflection of the social ills associated with the conflict, which then contribute to the breakdown of the family ties and gives rise to mental and physical misery. Rape victims are then shamed into suicide. Durkheim explained how suicide is a function of the individual and the society and that individual reasons are alone not sufficient to explain the reasons for suicide. It should also be noted how people in these communities would commemorate and sing songs of valor for the martyrs killed off the militants or the security forces bullet but not the women who for years been victimized. It is such ignorance and stigmatization that extends the double punishment on the women.

Ghanie on the other hand said, *"Girls are a burden for us…illiterate, unemployed and raped girls are not accepted by anyone."*

But for the past couple of years, precisely with the start of the 2010 Kashmir unrest, women have increased their participation in public protests and as supporters. They also provide moral backup to the men folk of the region. They are the primary vehicles of the narratives and instilling the younger generation with the notion of freedom. Even though they do not have any decision-making rights in the separatist parties, they exercise agency via the indirect way by

starting their own movement at the village level. They have started to resist immoral and unjust instructions and orders from the security forces and the militants. They are seen defying curfews and seen in protests brandishing swords. They have refused wearing of veil where it is forced through an injunction by the militants or the separatist Islamic parties and groups. They have emerged as survivors by not only continuing with their lives but also providing support to their families in both economic and emotional terms. Despite tragedies and hardships these women have overcome many difficult challenges of life. They are coming out of their shells and facing the stigma squarely in the face. Widows are now able to think of getting remarried and starting a new life. **Sultana** narrates, *"Government sanctioned an ex-gratia relief in my favor and I built these rooms to survive with my family. When condition became worse day by day for survival with five children, I married my husband's brother and somehow came out of the trauma. To marry my younger brother-in-law was also shocking and painful for me, but it was important for me to save myself and my five children. My new husband is working as a carpenter and earns for him and for us."* Women also had to offer shelter and food to militants in order to protect their families. Fauzia in her interview mentioned how she had to feed the militants on their insistence in the middle of the night.

The culture of rape, although a universal phenomenon to intimidate and bring women to submission, has had an especially devastating effect on the lives of women in particular and the families in general in the Valley of Kashmir since the inception of insurgency. Such has been the intermingling of the security forces and the militants with the population that no desirable woman is seen as 'pure' 'anymore'. In rigidly traditional societies a raped woman or a woman who has lost 'virtue' is seen as 'game', an easy prey for sexual contract. Such a female is considered every man's property because she has had sex with many men. If a 'good' woman is raped, we often say that she has been 'ravaged,' 'ravished,' 'despoiled,' or 'ruined,' as if she were a piece of property that has been damaged. Globally, when conquering armies commandeer the conquered population's property, they also tend to rape the women as if they were part of that property. In Kashmir this concept of coercing a population into submission raping women has been the easiest and most potent instruments of the security forces and the militants. And this has been used with alarming alacrity by both. Says **Fauzia**: *"Militants enter the house, put the gun at the temple of the father and tie up younger men. They demand food and after consuming it, they just hold the hand of the most beautiful and young daughter /sister in front of the parents*

and brothers and take her to another room and rape her throughout the night. Sometimes they take turns in raping us. Same thing happens when army comes searching for militants in the thick of the night. They separate men folk in to a group outside and molest and rape women inside although little discreetly because some officers accompanying army forces are good and follow the rule of law. But officers do not always accompany soldiers. We have to obey; otherwise the consequences are very dire; they either kill our men on flimsy grounds or beat them to pulp or do something like that. Once the family honour is lost, nothing matters thereafter. What follows is a life of shame and submission."

Frequent confinement and restricted movement

Restrictions on movement of population within their localities, villages or towns are a common feature in conflict zones. This is the worst human rights abuse in a democracy. At the slightest suspicion or provocation or even scant information about a militant movement, authorities impose curfew. This disrupts daily life. Over time people have developed hatred and indifference to the rule of law. And once they have to remain indoors, the collective retelling of stories by recalling bitter memories of the past begins. Forcing people at gun point to remain confined indoors in Kashmir reproduces a natural stimulus to counteract even when there is just the slightest indication to that effect. However with their regular frequency and collateral damage suffered during these curfews people have learnt to come to terms with their fate. Many a heinous crime has taken place during such curfews and this has further added to trauma of the common masses. Besides the governmental restrictions on movement and frequent confinements, the separatists and militant leaders too impose 'civil curfew' at times; which means that when they wish to defy the authority of the state they impose their own curfew to enforce their authority. Additionally, after days of forced indoor confinement people *self-impose a 'stay at home curfew'* as a mark of protest for the denial of their right to live. Basharat Peer in his book *'The Curfewed Night'* captures the pathos associated with the plight of the people in the Valley during these prolonged and frequent curfews. This was also highlighted in the interviews where **Mansoor Ahmad Khan** said *"we defy the curfew at times to show them our indifference. Our leaders tell us when we have to observe a self-imposed curfew."* Thus caught between the twin evils of separatist leadership and the government, the poor and hapless masses do not get the respite and the opportunity for a closure they need to their grief.

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Alienation and Injustice

Another theme that has emerged that fuels the collective trauma is the sense of alienation and injustice experienced by the Kashmiris. This is their major grievance vis-à-vis the Indian state. They believe that the existing political and economic system, or specific government policies or practices are unfair and heavily loaded against Kashmiris, since they are Muslims. The dominant separatist and Islamist propaganda over the decades has embedded this perceived sense of injustice into the Kashmiri psyche. This has resulted in trivial matters also getting highlighted and exaggerated. Many injustices and heinous human rights violations like Kunan Poshpora mass rape, Machhal fake killings and Chhiti Singhopra massacre remain unpunished till date although some of these events and many more like these have taken place almost twenty years back. This kind of arrogant attitude by the government taking shelter behind the draconian laws to (so-called) guard the sovereignty of the state by providing a legal shield to the security forces, has added to the sense of alienation and injustice and anger of the local population. **Mehraj** narrated that, *"government has been unfair to us…they did investigate the case of the next village (Hindu) but not ours."* This suggests the distrust in the authorities in control. The general narrative in such a situation is of mass victimhood by the groups. Stryker and others (2000) argue that once individuals identify with a group they are more sensitive to comparing themselves with the 'other' groups and hence an increased sense of relative (collective) deprivation. At the same time there is also heightened sense of collective victimization, which in turn enhances their collective experience and helps develop strong identities to avoid becoming socially alienated. Social alienation is a predictable outcome for a narcissistic self.

Living the Trauma

Personal identities of the people in Kashmir have been challenged ever since insurgency broke out in Kashmir. Their perception of themselves being successful and useful members of the community is greatly disfigured. This has forced people to use the agency processes at their disposal to cope with the injustices and the related trauma. For the people of Kashmir, this social identity is more or less a compilation of negative self-feelings, experiences of dejection, and failure. It then makes them participate, rather unconsciously at times in activities that help enhance these feelings of self-dejection. By engaging in self-enhancing techniques, on the

individual level, people are able to gain a hold of their culture, values, identities, and notions of justice, even if there are no 'real' gains. Such participation also gives them a sense of belonging.

Healing of the individual in part is also restricted because of the community pressures, exerted by the politicians and the community elders. Giving the people the chance for a complete closure from the pain or sense of victimhood would in a way put an end to the whole idea of freedom. And separatist organizations like the JKLF (Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front) do not want such a thing to happen as it would go against their political motives and ideologies. In such a situation, complete healing from the traumatic events is not possible and hence there is a lack of such measures as a collective. People adhere to what the community leaders suggest them to do partly because it is difficult for a human being to survive in a conflict zone without the support of other members of the society. **Abdul Aziz Shah**, a village head had a similar thing to say, *"If we stop taking the help of organizations, we will be left to die and we will have nobody to approach for our needs and demands. We need their support even for the paltry amount the village gets in the name of compensation. They have the power and we need it."* People can be seen as mere pawns in the hands of the authority.

During the long years of insurgency, almost over 23 years now, the people in Kashmir have developed coping strategies that help them to deal with stressful conditions. For example, every family in the border districts of Kupwara and Baramulla, and Kashmiri Pandits in Srinagar and Anantnag, in the initial ten odd years of the insurgency, had a bag packed with all important documents and some essential items to live through in case they had to flee in panic or emergency. In that way they were ready to leave at a moments' notice. **Ghanie** in his interview mentioned that, *"After the Kashmiri Pandits left the Valley, the Valley was tortured brutally and most of the families in the villages had some important stuff packed if there was a need to leave to save ourselves."* Another traumatic blow was when the head of the household had to leave the place and hide in order to save his life from the militants. These men were on the hit list of the militants since they were viewed as informers. **Fatima** told her husband's story, *"Militants were accusing my husband that he was a Mukhbir (informer) of Army…one day militants fired at my husband in the evening, he somehow managed to escape. After that my husband remained away from home. Five months passed and my husband had hid himself as he was afraid and terrorized by the militants…when my husband came home he was totally confused, restless and silent."*

The Pandit community faces similar problems. For example, the Pandit community has learned to be silent, to be not involved, and to stay in the background. Pandits have developed a deep suspicion and mistrust. In the initial years after getting dislocated to other parts of the state, Pandits simply attended to their immediate needs to survive to the next day. Any involvement or participation carried considerable risk, particularly at the hands of the informers and carriers. Those with leadership qualities, those willing to challenge and argue, the intellectuals, the dissenters and those with social motivation have been weeded out. They have been intimidated into leaving, killed or made to fall silent. Gradually people have been made very passive and submissive. These qualities have become part of the socialization process, where children are gradually taught to keep quiet, not to question or challenge and to accept the situation, as a too forward behavior carries considerable risk. The repeated displacement and the resulting disruption of livelihoods in the border districts have made people dependent on subsidies, army porter jobs and other menial work. Migration in this case was a forced decision on the people but can also be viewed as a coping strategy. **Taploo** responded to this saying, *"[Those who left] thought they would be gone for three or four months, and that they would return when things improved ... no one expected to stay there* [in the refugee camps in Jammu] *for years ... Kashmir had always been a peaceful state."*

Suman Bhat, another displaced Kashmiri Pandit, now living in a shanty tin shed in the Muthi refugee camp in Jammu said that, *"there was very little government support for us to return back, our houses were burnt down, lands confiscated and that even the Hindu community in Jammu voiced opposition to our staying back. So we were caught between the devil and the deep sea."*

People of all communities have lost their motivation for advancement and progress. Many people have lost their trust in their fellow human beings as well as the world order. Instead of trust in the system of justice, there is fear. Thus when someone breaks the law, a Kashmiri would normally not report it to the authorities for fear of reprisals by the security forces. The shining example of this is the umpteen protests and government announcements to repeal the draconian Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) that has been turned down by the federal government and the Indian military. Therefore, the loss of trust in the system of justice is understandable as a result of the many massacres and disappearances as well as the many cases of torture, rape, and killing of people in custody by the various factions in the conflict. Much of

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the violence has become structural and systematized into the very laws of the country through the above mentioned AFSPA. Though perpetrators have been identified, and in some rare cases arrested, impunity prevails. Many dreadful perpetrators, like Colonel Ajay Saxena of the Indian Army who was responsible for staged killings of six Gujjar men ostensibly the perpetrators of the Chhitisinghpora massacre, but which on inquiry later turned out to be false and only stage managing the dreadful drama to garner higher promotion and medals, were even promoted to the higher rank and responsibility, and roam freely till date.

Prayer as a coping strategy to overcome trauma

Muslim torture survivors are now seen more involved in the practice of their faith through attending mosques more frequently, taking part in religious congregations and pronouncements, and spotting beard as a symbol of religiosity. Prior to start of insurgency in late 1989, young men went around their job without attaching much importance to the outer religious accoutrements of dress like spotting of beard, wearing a skull cap, wearing trousers / pyjamas above their ankles etc. Similarly most of the young girls hardly cared to wear burqa. But as the insurgency intensified and matured men and women of all ages have become very religious. Mosques are filled to capacity, Islamic manifestations of religiosity like wearing of beards and skull caps is now a most prominent feature among the people of Kashmir. It is evident from this physical manifestation of hardened religiosity among Kashmiris since late 1989 that they find solace and peace, physical and psychological strength through prayer in an atmosphere and environment surcharged with melodrama, violence, instability, uncertainty and loss (e.g., Ai, Peterson, Bolling, & Koenig, 2002; Ai, Tice, Peterson, and Huang, 2005). While collective prayers where fiery speeches and sermons chanted from the sanctum or a public platform incite and agitate and thereby become a source for rekindling collective trauma; prayer offered on the individual basis in the silence of one's heart constitutes an attempt to create a meaningful relationship with the Almighty thereby reducing the effects of trauma and pain of loss, betrayal and misfortune.

Self-preservation

Violence in the Valley has led to the subjugation of the masses and an even bigger damage done is loss of self-esteem of the people. Taylor (1989) argues how identities shape a person's sense of authenticity, self-esteem and self-efficacy. In Kashmir people have witnessed

destruction of their culture, which is a defining factor for their identity. With their values and value-system threatened, people feel culturally robbed and more vulnerable. This has also evoked emotions like anger, fear, and frustration. People have been increasingly made to think of themselves as hopeless creatures whose only survival lied in their total obeisance and submission to terrorists and the security forces. Leary (1995) suggests that self-esteem functions as a *'sociometer'* which is like an "internal measure of one's belongingness" (quoted in Stryker, et. al 2000, p. 240). Such disorientation often paves way for the group membership where the individuals are able to gain a sense of self and belonging. This *loss of self-esteem* has instilled in almost everyone, howsoever poor or wealthy, powerful or powerless in Kashmir, a *sense of déjà vu* that negates any sincere effort at reconciliation or healing. Krapp (2004) argues how déjà vu acts "as a reserve". It is not part of memory that can be shared with anybody, is unique because an individual does not have the ability to repeat or remember déjà vu at free will. Krapp (2004) suggests that it also has the tendency to produce 'false memories'. Compelled by their situation, there are some who are not in a position to resist the temptation for the few favors given to them by the security forces mainly the Indian army. They therefore, become informers, and thus feel safe as part of the overall coercive machinery. Thus this becomes a ploy in self-preservation and coping strategy for some.

Healing with story-telling or narrative recounting

By engaging in story-telling or narratives, victims in Kashmir are able to tell others their experiences of terror and violence; and thus relieve themselves of pent-up feelings, which in turn helps reduce stressful effects of trauma. Narratives help people organize their thoughts (Wuthnow, 1994) and make sense of their experiences (Baumeister and Newman, 1994). Simple gossiping is also considered a form of remembering (Wickham, 1998). In Kashmir most of these narratives and gossips are a daily ritual of the rural women to find common cause in shared grief and melancholy. The common venues for such story-telling are their homes. With the start of insurgency, the men in Kashmir crossed over to Pakistan to receive training in arms, and came back to fight for freedom, the women were at the forefront of protests and rallies, and provided psychological and social support to their men folk. As a result, the men got killed and the women bore the brunt of it in the form of social pressures and loss of livelihoods. Majority of the homes have single mothers taking care of four to five children. They bore it with fortitude and consigned their fate to destiny. However as the insurgency progressed and there was no letup in

violence and terror women also started to become rigid in their stance. The story telling spread far and wide and the stories of resistance at a certain place spread like wild fire instigating and motivating larger groups of women in other parts of the Valley to rise up against the injustice. Thus a distinct display of agency came to be seen in Kashmir by women around early 2003 and thereafter. They started forming part of larger protests and agitations and faced bullets and police beatings bravely by throwing stones and displaying other forms of defiance. But this was not easy. **Fatima** reported that, *"Whenever our women tried to protest against the atrocities of army, they were beaten and their clothes were torn by soldiers. Overall role of security forces was brutal."* Thus, such retelling and narrating of incidents in the past with added emphasis for pathos or self-seeking pity adds to the longevity of collective trauma in societies under duress.

In Kashmir the situation has been extremely volatile for the last over twenty years of insurgency. Similar pattern of violence, agitation, lamenting and trauma keeps repeating itself. Small and mostly insignificant events trigger extreme reactions from the security forces and the Islamist militants alike. Such an episodic routine rekindles and fuels the desire to constantly share the grief or the traumatic experiences with others within the group or within the community. Thus narration gets a flip with every passing event and there appears to be never an end to the narrative telling and reliving of trauma. Whenever a fresh violent event takes place, the old memories come back haunting the victims. Newer narratives are thus born out of current events and the cycle of trauma, memory and narrative goes on endlessly.

Erosion of Trauma

In Islam the Lord enjoins: "And seek the forgiveness of Allah. Certainly, Allah is ever oft-forgiving, most merciful." (Quran; Surah Nisaa 4:106). And further: "With Him (Allah) are the keys of the 'unseen'; the treasures that none knows but He! He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf doth fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, but is (inscribed) in a record clear with Him" (Quran: Surah Anaam 6:59). Such Islamic beliefs work wonders towards erosion of trauma at the individual level. Like **Sultana** mentioned, *"We will find peace only in our after-life."* Majority population in the Valley being staunch orthodox Muslims blindly follows such scriptures and the advice of the religious teachers who interpret Quran for the rural masses. The mechanism is easy and straight forward. During the individual prayers five times a day the person recites these sermons and enjoins himself or herself as one with Almighty and seeks

solace. Slowly and steadily such beliefs take root in the hearts of the people and this works as balm on the mauled sentiments and feelings of trauma. In certain cases where the individuals and groups are infrequently visited by the traumatic events, the effects are durable and with time the traces erase completely. Whereas, with other individuals and communities where violence and terror visit frequently (like the rural areas) such solace does not work much and the durability is short lived. Other methods that bring about erosion in trauma include counseling by the clan chiefs, family elders and close relatives. Sometimes people relocate to other peaceful places where the effort is made to allow the traumatized persons live and interact in an atmosphere of peace and relative tranquility. Many Kashmiris have migrated to various places in India outside of Kashmir precisely for this reason and they are living relatively happier and peaceful lives. With time these individuals and families forget the bitter memories of the conflict in Kashmir and make peace with their inner selves. Yet another mechanism employed to forget the traumatic memories and conditions is marriages outside Kashmir. This phenomenon has also prominently displayed itself over the last decade of the conflict in the state.

Another factor that helps erode traumatic memories or experiences from peoples' minds is the environment around them. Whereas in urban settings like Srinagar and other large towns of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, a variety of attention diverting activities are available wherein people try and engage themselves to help forget or minimize the effects of trauma. On the contrary, in the rural settings where abject poverty rules and where society is too close and traditionalist, means of erosion are less because of the cloistered nature of the atmosphere, non-availability of means of entertainment, general gloominess of atmosphere and constant fear of being on the edge. In these settings people get stifled and the erosion of trauma too becomes difficult. Social symbols of commemoration of valor and deeds of martyrdom become enduring tools of resilience and help erode traumatic memories by comparing such deeds with something that has enabled the society to exercise agency and their genuine rights to peace, dignity and safety.

Hurdles in Collective Healing

Collective healing has been difficult in Kashmir. Although many NGOs and certain other international organizations have tried from time to time to spread awareness to enable suffering masses to come to terms with their fate but their purpose has been defeated by a variety of factors. Of these factors religious beliefs of martyrdom and eternal peace without going into the

nuances of the problem at hand, are the major hurdles in bringing about a closure or hastening the process of collective healing. Religious teachers keep blurting out from the mosque loud speakers in regular intervals the benefits of jihad and martyrdom in the way of the Almighty. The belief that a slain person in such kind of a fight goes to heaven and achieves eternal martyrdom has been one of the major causes of keeping the trauma alive among illiterate masses who are beset with superstition and dogma alive. Qur'an (4:74) enjoins: "*Let those fight in the way of Allah who sell the life of this world for the other. Whoso fighteth in the way of Allah, be he slain or be he victorious, on him We shall bestow a vast reward.*" This sentiment and religious duty is strongly felt by masses in Kashmir given their strong belief in the religion. Mothers in particular who had lost their sons, were often heard making statements which glorified the dead men and how lucky they were to have given birth to martyrs. Thus, an article posted on the Kashmiri Global Network called *Kashnet* noted:

> *Sara, 65, mother of a slain JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front] militant, Mushtaq Ahmad Kutay, said, " I am proud that my son laid his life for freedom of Kashmir…Ten days were left for Mushtaq's marriage when he left home on some mission. Before leaving, I offered him sweets and kissed him…I did not weep when his body was brought home. Instead I offered prayers at Dastgeer Sahib to thank Allah as my son laid his life for a noble cause*[17]*."*

Such forms of identity with the religion and belief that dying in the cause of the religion was achieving martyrdom work to keep traumatic events alive. Such events also help create generational consciousness (Mannheim, 1997). Generations are kept together by the memories of these historic events. The older folk in Kashmir give to the younger generation a legacy that they in turn need to preserve. This legacy constitutes previous traumatic events, resolve for revenge and anger against the perpetrators and motivation for keeping the struggle alive. The younger generation is expected to do something the parents could not do. This legacy is not just restricted to the people in Kashmir. It has a global presence. Edmunds and Turner (2005) talk about such a *'global generation'* and the creation of *'global trauma.'* They suggest that the happenings in one place trigger reactions across the globe. People belonging to the same place but settled in different parts of the world, even though not connected to the problem directly feel the pain and need to do something. This especially is true of Kashmiri diaspora in Europe and North America.

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[17] "'We're proud of our slain sons," *Greater Kashmir, Srinagar*, November 11, 2006.

They are seen protesting and shouting slogans in foreign lands against the atrocities faced by their people in Kashmir. Other factors are the vested interests of the terrorists and their supporters and abettors, the political parties who are secessionist in nature and who see people as their captive vote banks, and of course the society elders who too have a stake in retaining people at their whims and fancies, all together create the atmosphere where a closure to collective trauma or its healing has become difficult and complicated in the Valley of Kashmir.

Summary

The collapse of the colonial rule in the last century and the success of Bolshevik revolution in erstwhile USSR gave rise to ethnic nationalism throughout the world. The hitherto colonized people rose up in arms to claim independence from the colonizers. Terrible wars took place and in the wake of the colonized states gaining freedom, nations got divided into bizarre divisions leaving families and ethnicities divided too. This set the tone for long feuds between states which often culminated into bloody wars and armed insurgencies. The ambivalent role of the state in these ethnic conflicts using violence as the legitimate tools to ensure sovereignty created alienation among minority groups. Such alienation and state indifference slowly transformed into ethnic conflict. Kashmir has been one such ethnic conflict born out of regional politics between India and Pakistan for hegemony and power.

These ethnic conflicts are steeped in ideological and religious persuasions, which turn them into social conflicts as the pressures between communities mount to jockey for economic and political space. Religion has been a major influencing factor in almost all ethnic conflicts. In Kashmir the entire social conflict is driven by the religion. In Kashmir the majority Muslim sentiment has right from the partition of the state into two parts has been one of separatism and secessionist. The failure of the Indian political leaders to gauge the mood of alienation and their indifference towards the plight of the Kashmiris allowed the problem to simmer under surface till it broke out violently in late 1989. The violent conflict that ensued between the Indian security forces and the Islamist militants left thousands dead, injured and maimed. Many disappearances and custodial killings further added to the trauma and hardship of the people. Emotions and the necessity of self-preservation and identity further exacerbated the problem and reliving of trauma has been the single most important factor in keeping the conflict going. Since the ethnic identity of Kashmiris sought to be threatened the primary lines of cleavage have had the appearance of

unusual ferocity and resistance to termination. Such a phenomenon traps people in a vicious circle of perpetual suffering and trauma. This perpetuation takes place through the interested parties in the social conflict who do not wish the conflict to end. These cleavages are based on a variety of factors and perceptions, like the state control through coercion and power; the militant control through violence and appeal to religion. Women and children are the most vulnerable in such conflicts.

Future research

The main argument of this thesis was to show how communities in Kashmir use various cultural practices and symbols to create social narratives of their own to help remember and perpetuate the collective trauma suffered by that community. In Kashmir this sociological phenomenon is used to live collective trauma that showcases their tragedies and sufferings and also serves to express their solidarity with their perceived cause. Scholars are now increasingly writing about trauma and related issues from a sociological point of view. The approach adopted in this thesis helped unravel issues beyond politics. It helped understand the creation of a comfort zone, carefully choreographed, where memories of the past could be collectively narrated and remembered. Numerous studies covering historical, political and psychological aspects of the Kashmir conflict have been conducted by various writers and researchers. However the sociological aspects have not received any discernible attention. This research therefore contributes to filling a large gap in the existing literature on the use of cultural productions - in this case, narratives, choice of words, memorabilia, commemoration, and sacred space - as a means of reliving trauma.

What was quite evident throughout the research is the way women are viewed in this conflict, more or less considered a group of invisible people. Even though the fact remains that they hold communities together in times of conflict. They are the care providers, and counselors and in the Valley they are the main source of all narratives. A more in-depth research into their role in conflict is seriously missing. The inclusion of women is critical in understanding trauma and its perpetual reliving. This thesis did not investigate that aspect in detail because the purpose was to bring to light the process of collective trauma formation, though obvious but not well researched. For future research investigation of the relationships between sex, gender and violence would be fruitful. Also women's empowerment issues and agency in the Valley should

be considered for research, since that is central to all sociological processes. An investigation into the socio-psychological aspects of the social-self and associated phenomenon in Kashmir too would be a possible area for future research. Other area of useful research can be the study of behavior of Kashmiri diaspora in North America and Europe when conflict intensifies back home or large scale casualties are reported. Lately the diaspora has shown great interest in happenings back home and have canvassed effectively at the UN and various other world bodies and forums, like voluntary non-governmental organizations and certain religious based formations. Such NGOs draw their financial support from many voluntary donors, governmental grants and from various international organizations like Action Aid, Amnesty International, Oxfam and such like other voluntary bodies. Yet another interesting field of future inquiry would be the pattern and type of funding received by these organizations, their effects on the society particularly on the type of change that their helps brings about in the conflict ridden society, or the conflict zone.

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Appendix A - Interview Question Guide

Date:

Unique Identification Number:

Introduction: My name is Tamanna M Shah. I am a Masters student at Kansas State. My research study is to assess how the reliving of traumatic experiences shapes the behavior and conduct of the people in Kashmir. We are hypothesizing that people make use of certain commemorative techniques that help them as a community, to keep the trauma alive. Even in relative periods of calm communities continue to protest by recalling traumatic experiences thus exhorting their younger generation into the perceived cause. This study attempts to research the tools that communities use to relive and rekindle that sense of trauma among them. These are the significant and essential questions that beget answers in the context of the State of Jammu & Kashmir. Your participation is confidential. All identifying markers will be removed from the interview materials. Any other descriptors that may arise through our interview will be disguised to ensure confidentiality.

I will first ask some background information about your life. After this first brief section, I will ask your permission to tape record the conversation simply so that I may be accurate in my reporting. The tapes will, of course, be held in strictest confidence and will be available only as a check for accuracy of statements. We can pause or discontinue the use of the recorder at any time. Do I have your permission to tape record portions of our conversation? +Tell them a bit about my background +
****
I. Background Information: Biographical: Age, employment, family, education
****
1. Is ___ a good place to live?

    a. What makes this so?

2. Have you always lived here?

    a. How long? Do you ever think of leaving? What keeps you here?

b. What changes have you noticed in your community? Good/bad?

c. Why do you think these changes have occurred?

3. What is the ethnic makeup in your area; I mean people from which religions and communities live in your area?

4. The situation here has been volatile in last many years. How would you describe the current situation?

5. The situation in the initial stages of insurgency, say between December 1989 and October 1991was very confusing; many Kashmiri Pandits left the Valley. What are your recollections of that period?

6. Did Pandits live in your village / villages too? Also, while the Pandits were being targeted by the militants during that period; would they have approached you for help and protection? And, if yes, what did you do?

7. Just the other day I witnessed a funeral procession. The speeches that various people made at the graveyard referred to various incidents of the past related to insurgency. Some say this kind of discourse is routine. How does this help?

8. Some say that for many of the boys that joined militant ranks, it is the visceral anger stemming from physical, emotional, and spiritual insult that prompts the taking up of arms. What are your thoughts on this?

9. Can you throw some light on the measures taken by successive governments at New Delhi to reassure the Kashmir community and assimilate them within the Indian mainstream? May I have your views on this?

10. In 1989 when the insurgency started here, many thousands of trained militants were reported to have crossed over from across the Line of Control. How do you feel such a situation came about?

11. During the last many years of insurgency local population gets inconvenienced because of the nature of counter-insurgency operations. In such a situation how do people go about their daily routine?

12. Well, precisely describe for me please a specific incident that took place in your area where people got killed in an army / militant action as collateral damage.

13. How did you learn to live with the insurgency / counter-insurgency over the past 20 years? What mechanism or routine; what I mean how do the people go about their daily routine in such a confusion and chaos?

14. As you just said and as has also been reported by various channels that almost every household has lost a dear one in this continuing civil war. What kind of environment or atmosphere, or what we may say the 'sense' has this kind of happenings created in the villages? What are the coping strategies that you all use to get along in such an environment?

15. Thank you so much for such a wonderful insight. You just said that to cope with the continuing terror you organized yourselves into villages and committees to register your protest against alleged excesses. But just for me to understand it better tell me the modus operandi of this type of resistance; if it is okay with you?

16. Now, so much of state controls, inconvenience because of continuing armed operations, interruptions in the daily routine of life, and other connected problems have forced you to take to streets protesting. What has been the government's response?

17. In 2010 which is now being termed by media as the *'second intifada'* in which educated young boys and girls took to stone pelting for over six long months from May to November

2010, and in which 170 young men were killed in the police action, what kind of community trauma did it cause or say the general 'sense' has it created among the people and how do people view such actions?

18. Last few years have been comparatively little peaceful. However some say that whenever there is a little respite in the situation or lull in the fighting, Kashmiris take to streets deliberately by recounting traumatic experiences of the past by narrating unpleasant incidents of the past. Can you explain this behavior and what motives underlie here?

19. Please tell me in a little more detail the modus operandi of narrative telling in the villages and households and reliving of traumatic experiences; and how does it help your perceived cause?

20. Certain incidents have received international coverage. To name a few of these incidents one may recall the Kunan Poshpora incident in Kupwara district in which security forces allegedly raped the whole village in the intervening night of February 21/22, 1991; or the Chhati Singhpura (Anantnag district) massacre in which 35 Sikhs were hacked to death on the eve of President Clinton's visit to India on March 21, 2000; or say the Nadimarg incident in which 24 Pandits were killed on midnight March 23, 2003 allegedly by the militants. What are your reflections of these incidents and how have these incidents impacted the situation here or say created further differences and fishers among communities?

21. (Only for Kashmiri Pandits living in Jammu).Where did you live in Kashmir prior to migration here and what happened that forced you to migrate?

22. (Only for Kashmiri Pandits living in Jammu). Could you please tell us about life in these camps and how do you retain your distinct identity by way of language, dress, rituals and other social mores in this alien place?

23. In Kashmiri society honor and its protection is considered supreme duty of the head of a household. Some say that during cordon and search operations by the security forces many

customs and routines that are followed by the local populace gets totally disrupted and exposed. Has this caused any resentment?

24. Given the tribal nature of society in Kashmir, communities live their happy moments and sad experiences together. How are the traumatic experiences shared?

Appendix B - List of Books and Texts

Abdul Ahad; Kashmir Rediscovered – The Vicissitudes of Kashmir's Historical Individuality & Assertion of Kashmiri Personality; (Srinagar; Humayun Publishing Company, 2007)

Aga Shahid Ali; The Country without a Post Office; (New Delhi; Penguin India, 2001)

Alastair Lamb; Kashmir – A Disputed Legacy 1846-1990; (Karachi; Oxford University Press, 1993)

Ali Husain Mir and Raza Mir; Anthems of Resistance; (New Delhi; IndiaInk – Roli Books, 2006)

Amartya Sen; The Idea of Justice; (London; Allen Lane, 2009)
        _____ Identity and Violence – The Illusions of Destiny; (New Delhi; Penguin / Allen Lane, 2006)

Arundhati Roy; The Algebra of Infinite Justice; (New Delhi; Penguin India, 2003)

Basharat Peer; Curfewed Night; (New Delhi; Random House, 2008)

Bashir A. Dabla; Domestic Violence against Women in the Kashmir Valley; (Srinagar; India; Jay Kay Bookshop, 2009)
        _____; Sociological Implications of Pandit Migration in Jammu and Kashmir (Srinagar; Jay Kay Bookshop, 2008)

Chitralekha Zutshi; Languages of Belonging – Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir; (New Delhi; Permanent Black, 2003)

David Devadas; In Search of a Future – The Story of Kashmir; (New Delhi; Penguin / Viking, 2007)

Dina Nath Raina; Kashmir – Distortions and Reality; (New Delhi; Reliance Publishing House, 1994)

Donald L. Horowitz; The Deadly Ethnic Riot; (New Delhi; Oxford University Press, 2002)

Farooq Nazki; Naar Hatun Kazal Wanas (Kazal Wan, Kashmir's tallest mountain is on Fire); (Srinagar; Gulshan Books, 2004)

Gary J. Bass; Freedom's Battle – The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention; (New York; Alfred A. Knopf, 2008)

GH Khan; Freedom Movement in Kashmir: 1931 - 1940; (Srinagar; Gulshan Books, 2009)

Justine Hardy; In the Valley of Mist – Kashmir's Long War: A Family Story; (London; Rider, 2009)

Lars Blinkenberg; India, Pakistan - The History of Unsolved Conflicts (two vols); (Odense; Odense University Press, 1998)

M. Ishaq Khan; Crisis of a Kashmiri Muslim – Spiritual and Intellectual; (Srinagar; Gulshan Books, 2008)

Michael Dibdin; Dead Lagoon; (New York; Vintage Books, 1996)

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri; Multitude – War and Democracy in the Age of Empire; (London; Hamish Hamilton, 2005)

M. L. Gupta; Kashmir – A Wailing Valley; (New Delhi; Anmol Publications, 2001)

Mridu Rai; Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects – Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir; (New

Delhi; Permanent Black, 2004)

M.S. Pampori; Kashmir in Chains – 1819 to September 2010: (Srinagar; Ali Muhammad and Sons, 2011)

Muzaffar Alam; The Languages of Political Islam in India c. 1200 – 1800; (New Delhi; Permanent Black, 2004)

Nyla Ali Khan; Islam, Women and Violence in Kashmir – Between India and Pakistan; (Srinagar; Gulshan Books, 2011)

Robert G. Wirsing; Kashmir in the Shadow of War – Regional Rivalries in a Nuclear Age; (Gurgaon, India; Spring Books, 2004)

Robin M. Williams Jr.; The Wars Within – Peoples and States in Conflict; (New Delhi; Manas Publications, 2004)

Sanjay Kak (ed.); Until My Freedom has Come – The New Intifada in Kashmir; (New Delhi; Penguin Books, 2011)

Sheikh Abdullah; Flames of the Chinar; (New Delhi; Viking, 1993)

Stanley Wolpert; Shameful Flight – The Last Days of the British Empire in India; (New York; Oxford University Press, 2006)

Sudha Ramachandran and S Mallavarapu; Gender and Armed Conflict in Kashmir; (New Delhi; Rupa & Co; 2010)

Tariq Ali; Clash of Fundamentalisms – Crusades, Jihads and Modernity; (New Delhi; Rupa & Co. 2003)

WPS Sidhu; etc. (ed.); Kashmir – New Voices New Approaches; (New Delhi; Viva Books, 2007)

Newspapers

Most texts from a variety of sources and most issues of the following newspapers that appeared between 1989 and 2011 were scanned for information:

1. The Kashmir Times, Jammu – India.
2. Greater Kashmir, Srinagar – India.
3. The Times of India, New Delhi - India.
4. New York Times, New York – USA.

Appendix C - Chittisingh Pora Massacre

Scan by Author

Appendix D - Music and Art

Poem by an anonymous Kashmiri poet:

"*I cannot drink water*

It is mingled with the blood of young men who have died up in the mountains.

I cannot look at the sky; It is no longer blue; but painted red.

I cannot listen to the roar of the gushing stream

It reminds me of a wailing mother next to the bullet-ridden body of her only son.

I cannot listen to the thunder of the clouds It reminds me of a bomb blast.

I feel the green of my garden has faded Perhaps it too mourns.

I feel the sparrow and cuckoo are silent Perhaps they too are sad.

Poem by **Farooq Nazki**:

"I fear

They will come

Whose eyes pierce like spears

And bruise over hearts

Those faceless people do talk

Doors of wine houses have been bolted

Guards have been stationed

On the temples of beauty

The city has been vandalized

Wailing bleak evenings seem to be descending[18]."

Poem by **Agha Shahid Ali**:

"Don't tell my father I have died, he says, and I follow him

Through blood on the road and hundreds of pairs of shoes the mourners left behind,

As they ran from the funeral, victims of the firing.

---

[18] Ibid; p.112.

From windows we hear grieving mothers, and snow begins to fall on us, like ash.

Black on edges of flames, it cannot extinguish the neighborhoods,

The homes set ablaze by midnight soldiers.

Kashmir is burning."

'I Protest (Rememberance)' By **M C Kash** (2010):

"They Say When you Run from darkness All You seek Is Light But When Blood Spills Over You'll

Stand And Fight

Threads Of Deciet Woven Around A World Of Plebicite

By Trecherous Puppet politicians Who Have No Soul Inside

My Paradise Is Burnin' With Troops Left loose With Ammo

Who Murder n Rape

Then Hide Behind A Political Shadow

like A Casiono Human Life Is Thrown Like A dice

I'll Summerise Attrocities Till The Ressurection Of Christ

Can you hear the screams Now see the revolution!!! Their bullets, our stones,

Don't talk restitution 'Cuz the only solution

Is the resolution of freedom

Even Khusrow will go back And doubt his untimely wisdom

These killings ain't random It's an organized genocide

Sponsored media Who hide this homicide

No more injustice We won't go down When we bleed

Alive in the struggle Even the graves will speak

I protest Against the things you've done!

I protest For a mother who lost her son!

I protest I'll throw stones and never run!

I protest Until my freedom has come!

I protest For my brother who's dead!

I protest Against the bullet in his head!

I protest I'll throw stones and never run!

I protest Until my freedom has come!

Democratically held elections Now that's completely absurd,

I'll tell you some stuff that you obviously neva heard!

A ten year old voted with all his fingers..A whole villae gang raped,

A cry still lingers…These are the tales from the dark side of a murderous regime,

An endless occupation of our land and our dreams

Democratic politics will cut our throats before we speak,

How they talk about peace When there's blood in our streets? (huh?)

When freedom of speech is subjected to strangulation!!!

Flames of revolution engulfs the population

They rise through suppression and march to be free,

Face covered in a rag labeled a revolutionary.

Through this flight for survival I want the world to see,

A murderous oppression written down in police brutality.

Stones in my hands Its time you pay the price,

For plunderin' and raping a beautiful paradise!!!

I protest Against the things you've done!

I protest For a mother who lost her son!

I protest I'll throw stones and never run!

I protest Until my freedom has come!

I protest For my brother who's dead!

I protest Against the bullet in his head!

I protest I'll throw stones and never run!

I protest Until my freedom has come!

And you will fight Till the death of it…."