

# MARGINALISED LITERATURE OF KASHMIRI HINDUS IN EXILE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN GLOBAL CONTEXT

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**Abstract:** *This is an attempt to unpack the concept of literature written in alienation, in exile by the estranged Kashmiri Hindus originally written in Hindi. This work is based on Indian Epistemology and tries to narrow down the distinctions of separatist/ divisive Epistemology of Europe as against Indian, which is integrating. For India, that is Bharat, the Vedic and Upanishadic knowledge tradition becomes edifice to all. The epistemology of co-existence, integral yoga (Aurobindo), Integral Humanism (D DUpadhyay) and integral education becomes the key aspects of existence of, not only humans, but also the entire cosmos. The writings of Kashmiri Hindus are looked at in this perspective, comparing those to the Jewish writings. This research will provide valuable information regarding defeat, despair, frustration, faintheartedness and pain of Kashmiri Hindus expressed in their literature of exile. It also deals with concept of exile, concept of minority, concept of reverse minority, genocide, conflict of civilization and politics of marginalization in Indian literary perspective. The immediate reality of Indian Culture is that it is multi-lingual and multi-religious, which necessitates a dialogue. What are the factors that enhance or inhibit dialogues in such complex environment? This case study involves historical perspective of comparative study.*

**Key Words:** *Marginalization; Epistemology; Minority; Genocide; Co-existence*

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Bharat (India) has a distinct knowledge tradition springing out of the Vedas and the Upanishads that we call as the Vedopanishadic knowledge tradition. What is known as 'Religion' to European minds is 'Dharma' to us, but here Dharma differs from religion. Our Dharma, the Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and the Sikh etc. is based on this one knowledge tradition that says 'Dharayati iti dharmah'. Dharma did not evolve as a first step in our civilisation; the Vedic people did not have Dharma in this present form. Probably there were no temples, priests and no central place for worship. Each one living in the Saraswati Valley, used to perform their own rights and rituals from their very homes without the assistance of any priest. For us, the Vedas came first, first ever written texts by mankind. But then it should be remembered that before Veda Vyasa actually edited the Vedas in Naimisharanya, they were already in existence through our oral tradition of Sruti and Smriti, and Maharishi Vyasa had only compiled and edited them, as this is the case with most ancient texts of Bharat.

From the Vedas came the Upanishads, as their essence and metaphysics, and we see Upanishads belonging to one or the other of the Vedas. This philosophy gave rise to a culture, civilisation, and it is from this civilisation and culture the Dharma evolved.

For us the very basis of culture is an epistemology of co-existence. It is just not a co-existence between humans; it is a co-existence with the entire nature: living and non-living and the very cosmos itself. Hence we come to respect every aspect of existence, animated and unanimated. The question of 'the other' is unknown and strange to us.

The concept 'tolerance' is an anachronism to us, since it is some nonsense that one really has to tolerate, like 'snoring' of a person. Religion, to us, is not any nonsense to tolerate. A religious Hindu respects 'the other' by default, and it becomes spontaneous for us to respect whatever is the faith of the other. Religion, as understood commonly in Europe has a common structure, of prescribed patterns of faith system, stipulated practices which are binding, a belief that one is perfect and correct while the other is not so and above all, there is a central concept of God. But Dharma does not have any of these; and hence it may be inappropriate to equate Hindu Dharma with a popular concept of religion. Since the scope of this paper is limited, it shall be incorrect on my part if I go on elaborating this aspect and hence I leave this here with the above sketchy remarks.

Indeed I am proud of being a humble descendent of this great knowledge tradition and civilisation that had accepted all faiths from all over with welcome smiles. Perhaps Bharat is the only nation where the Jews were welcomed, they lived their religion, made their synagogues and became a happy party to our co-existence. Parsis came to Bharat and lived and are living with the people of Bharat as sugar and milk. And let me also say that the Jews and Parsis were the only people

who lived their welcome in all nobility, without being improper in the freedom they found in Bharat. All others who came, unfortunately, ended up in abusing our nobility and welcome, by trying to entice Hindus to convert into their folds, some with swords and some others with glitters of gimmicks.

This paper has three parts:

- History of Bharat and separate history of Kashmir
- Core concerns of the problems of Kashmiri Hindus
- Literature of Kashmiri Hindus and the marginalisation therein

To discuss the core issues, let me try to bring out how ‘minority’ is conceived, the questions of ‘reverse minority’, what is ‘genocidal terrorism’, what happened through an ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Kashmir, how the Hindus of Kashmir had to go in ‘exile’ in their own land, the Hindu Muslim conflict and the article 370 of Indian Constitution which is introduced to appease the Muslims of Kashmir by short sighted politicians of Bharat.

With a total area of 3.287 million square kilometres, Bharat measures 3214 Km from north to south and 2933 km from east to west, with distinct languages, dialects; one can find diversity in food, attire and tradition, with a diverse culture which is more than 8000 years old one nation. Situated in the north of Bharat, Jammu and Kashmir state is the land of Bharatiya Rishi-Muni (seers), Philosophy and poetics and bears Vedopanishdic culture of co-existence. It has always been crossroad for outsiders and invaders and so up bear oppression since centuries. After division of Bharat-Pakistan in 1947 and merging of all kingdoms into one nation; only this state stood exception and article 370 was introduced. I have discussed article 370 in detail in the coming paragraphs of my paper, which became curse for the peaceful living of Kashmiri Hindus in the valley, became reason for complete expulsion of the entire community and closed doors upon them to their beloved land. But let me also tell you that this is not the only reason for the cultural genocide of Kashmiri Hindus. There are certain other factors too.

In spite of all this, Hindus co-existed with their counterparts – Muslims of Kashmir - who are actually converted, in cordialness. Now Islamic terrorism has besieged the whole world, Hindus of Kashmir are victims of the same kind of terrorism. Mass killing of Kashmiri Hindus and their mass exodus in 1990 has actually been done with the purpose of making Jammu and Kashmir an Islamic state.

For any step for return of the exiled Hindus of Kashmir, the article 370 has to be either nullified, or modified in the least. This makes it mandatory to discuss the exodus of Kashmiri Hindus from Kashmir, and I propose to do this in three stages.

The first stage is the division of Bharat and the carving out of Pakistan in 1947, the second stage is in 1984 and the third and largest is in 1990. The state of Jammu and Kashmir consists of three areas, Ladak which is largest and is inhabited by predominantly Buddhists, Jammu, second largest mostly by Hindus and Kashmir, the smallest by mostly Muslims. While forming the special constitution of J&K, (Jammu & Kashmir) only the Muslim interests in Kashmir was taken into account, and only the Kashmiri local party of National Conference (mostly Muslims) was involved. No other political party was involved in the formation of a separate constitution for Kashmir. Even the Ladakis, who are a part of the J&K state though Ladak is not even mentioned in the name of the state, were side-lined.

Just like the Jews from Arab countries who recently began an online campaign called “I am a refugee” with the object of digitally grouping all the Jewish exiles from Arab countries on social media, [1] Kashmiri Hindus have also founded an association named ‘Panun Kashmir’. Its founder Dr. Agnishekhar expresses himself in an interview with me: –“This Kashmiri Hindu... whom you call *Pandit*, You call displaced.... to understand them you will have to understand their oppression gland. They have been oppressed since 700 years. They have been beaten, attacked, converted forcefully. Once they were left with just 11 houses (families) in Kashmir, rest of them left their homeland and fled, died or got converted. They again stood with this 11.” [2] And till date they are fighting with the spirit :

*Hum bachaenge*

*Apane beej*

*Aur virodh apna. [3]*

*(We will save our seed and antagonism.)*

Perhaps it is an irony and at the same time horrific tragedy that a group of people are becoming refugees in their own land. The Hindus of Kashmir are made victims of Jehadi terrorism, they were tortured in the present ISIS style, I don’t have to elaborate. The welcome Hindus extended to Muslims got brutally abused. Novel ‘Dardpur’ by Kshama Kaul talks the torturous history of Kashmir in three layers. She predicts consequences of Kashmir insurgency in her novel ‘Dardpur’ – “*Hindustan par bahut badi kaalratri chhane vali hai, aur bahut badi kranti aane vali hai – dono ke beej Kashmir mein hain.*” (A very big insurgency is going to be happen in Hindustan, and a very big revolution – and the seeds of both is in Kashmir.) [4]

The Hindus of Kashmir, predominantly Brahmins are intrinsically knowledgeable and it is but natural for them to engage in literary activities, no matter what their contextual situation of exile and “subaltern-ness” may be. Our ancestors had been doing the same thing of revering knowledge for ages; when the Muslims came to settle in Bharat

after their horrendous invasion saga, the Hindus then fled to forests leaving all their gold and material properties, but always carrying their knowledge texts; to educate the forthcoming generations.

Persecuted Kashmiri Hindus took refuge in several other parts of the country. But the question here is can Kashmiri Hindus be brought under the definition of refugee? Can Kashmiri Hindus be called 'refugees' at all? Look at the definition of refugee as defined in the 1951 convention:

*"The term 'refugee' shall apply to any person who.... as a result of events occurring before January 1, 1951 and owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership to a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."* [5]

The Jews, who are a religion and arguably a race, fall right in this definition, because they were fleeing from the tortures of the Arab regimes that carry an inherent hatred to them. European Jews were ill-treated always and they never had anything like equality. They were insulted in every walk of life in the 'other's' land. Even William Shakespeare calls with scorn, "Shylock the Jew". But just look at the Kashmiri Hindus: they obtained independence after eight hundred years of Muslim domination and two hundred years of British rule, and even after all these, they simply had to run from their very own homes and land in the name of Kabaili attack, Jehadi terrorism, genocidal terrorism. I don't recall any such parallel anywhere in the history of mankind.

Now the next question that comes to my mind is whether or not Kashmiri Hindus' literature in exile can be called diasporic literature? For more clarity to this question I would like to quote Somdatta Mandal's definition of diaspora – "Living in Diaspora means living in forced or voluntary exile and living in exile usually leads to severe identity confusion and problems of identification with and alienation from old and new cultures and homelands." [6]

Taking into account the above definition of diasporic literature when we take a glance on the literature of Kashmiri Hindus in exile originally written in Hindi, whether poems, stories, diaries or history write ups, we find hair-raising pain with nostalgic feelings. There shall be no doubt at all that these writings do fall under the European category of Diaspora.

We have an excellent example of diaspora from a Jewish poet - philosopher from Spain, who is a physician by profession. Longing for the promised land of the Jews, He writes:-

My heart is in the east, and I in the uttermost west.  
How can I find savor in food? How shall it be sweet to me?  
How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet  
Zion lieth beneath the fetter of Edom, and I in Arab chains? [7]

Ample literature has been written by Kashmiri Hindus in exile, which is the output of their nostalgic remembrance for their homeland and the insurgency. Look at the poem written by the Kashmiri Hindu in exile, to see a corollary. Longing for their roots is expressed in the following lines:

*Are, mera karo apaharan  
le jao mujhe apane yatana – shivir mein  
kuchh nahi kahunga main  
karo jo kuchh bhi karana hai  
mere sharir ke sath  
zinda jalao, kato  
ya dafan karo kahin mujhe  
nadi ke kinare  
barfeele pahadon par  
kisi gaon mein  
ya kasbai gali mein  
kahin ghure ke neeche  
main taras gaya hoon  
apani zameen ke sparsh ke liye. [8]*

(Oh! Kidnap me, take me to your torture camp, I will not say anything, do whatever you want to do with my body, burn, cut or bury me near the river, on snow covered mountain, in a village, in a street of a town, I am dying to touch the soil of my birth.)

It is also worth quoting here that the poet in exile co-relates this insurgency with the persecution of Jews :

*utho!  
tamas chhantane laga hai  
kal ka sooraj  
tumhare saath hoga.  
tumhara dard bhi to  
yahudiyon ke dilon mein pala tha  
unhonne bhi bhinchi thin mutthiyan. [9]*

(Get up! Look at the dawn, tomorrows sun will be with you. Jews experienced the same pain)

The Rig Veda proclaims, “*Ano Bhadra, Krutavo Yantu Vishvatah*”, meaning, let all good things, no matter by whom, when and where, be welcomed to Bharat. We live this tradition. We welcomed everyone: and most people blended into our love and affection without losing whatever identities of their own. The Jews are the best example to this: and they comfortably lived here. But both Christians through their evangelisation and Muslims through conversion through swords abused the culture and hospitality of Bharat. This indeed had been irrevocably nasty. “The Islamic conquest of India is probably the bloodiest story in History. It is a discouraging tale, for its evident moral is that civilization is a precious good, whose delicate complex order and freedom can at any moment be overthrown by barbarians invading from without and multiplying from within.” [10]

Divisiveness through hatred gives rise to Jihadi terrorism. They wish to establish a “Dar-Ul-Islam”, an exclusive Islamic nation. It is a matter of surprise that none of them ever take any lessons from their own history of mutual destruction; they still aspire for an ideal state, like the communists, where Islam is ‘the’ solution to all their problems. No one realises that they have a number of Islam’s contradicting and conflicting one another, and let alone the point that they will all kill one another in their so called ‘Dar-Ul-Islam’. But so long as every one of them keep thinking of such an Islamic state, this menace of terrorism shall go on and it is here that world nations must put a stop to this at once.

The plight of Kashmiri Hindus is one that of an untold suffering of all kinds. Ever since the independence of Bharat in 1947, Kashmiri Hindus were suffering through thick and thin: and in 1990, it crossed all limits and every single Kashmiri Hindu had to flee his home, village and land. Col. Tej Kumar Tikoo recalls it – “January 19, 1990. Twenty years (now 26) have already passed since that dreadful day which turned into a never ending night, when dawn that ends the darkness of the previous night so very naturally, seemed to be a distant dream. When you think of those agonizing and tormenting hours of that night even today, your heart misses a beat and if you do not come out of that nightmarish experience immediately there is every possibility of going into convulsions that could lead to a catastrophe. Such is the impact and the imprint of that day on our lives that you have to carry those scary and torturous memories with you till you are alive.” [11]

Militants used to sing –

*jago jago subah hui  
roos ne bazi hari hai, hind pe tarja tari hai;  
ab Kashmir ki bari hai  
jago jago subah hui...*

*(Awake! Awake! Its morning, After Russia, now it's turn of 'Hind')*

There is yet another paradox and contradiction with the article 370 and conception of Jammu and Kashmir. As mentioned earlier, Jammu and Kashmir also include a much larger area, Ladak, which does not get reflected even in the name of the state. Ironically, area wise, that is the largest portion as well. The situation is interesting indeed. Ladak is mostly Buddhists and Jammu is mostly Hindus. Kashmir used to be mixture of Hindus and Muslims, but the Muslims chased away all the Hindus from their own houses, with the implicit support of Pakistan and the disinterested congress government. From day one, both the Buddhists of Ladak and the Hindus of Jammu were suffering under the hegemony of the Muslims of Kashmir. Majority of assembly and parliamentary constituencies belong to Kashmir, and hence they are always in the majority, lime light and rule. What is this democratic logic produced by Nehru dynasty and the congress government all these years is unintelligible and enigmatic. Both Ladak and Jammu wanted to be liberated from the Muslim hegemony of Kashmir, but no one ever heeds their prayers. Congress government hardly took the matter serious, and the states where Kashmiri Hindus remain in exile do wish that they should go back to their own land of Kashmir. Panun Kashmir demands that Kashmir must be made a Union Territory under the Government of India's direct rule, and the article 370 should be done away with. Kashmir should be a union territory, while ladak and Jammu should get independence from Muslim hegemony of Kashmir, and be full states of the Union of India.

## 2. Article 370

The partition of Bharat was based on the two nation theory. Insertion of Article 370 and the provision of special status for J&K is the corollary of the two nation theory. The ongoing armed insurgency or militarization of Islamic fundamentalism in Kashmir is the fall out of the two-nation theory. If the justification of Article 370 and special status for Kashmir underscores the need of protecting the interests of J&K Muslim majority vis-a-vis Hindu dominated Bharat, the same logic has to be applied to the status of the Kashmiri Hindus as well.

## 3. What is two-nation theory?

Two-nation theory was propagated by All India Muslim League Party through a much unwilling Jinnah (for different reasons) suggesting that Hindus and Muslims of Bharat were two different nations, who could not live

together or co-exist. Therefore, Muslims should be given separate Homeland called Pakistan. This came as ‘the Lahore declaration of 1940’. Muslims of Kashmir do essentially belong to Bharat, but with the support of Pakistan and their attitude of abetting terrorism, the Muslims of Kashmir first drove away all Hindus, and claim that they should be separated from Bharat. They believe that they are completing the unfinished task of partition, after forcefully making Kashmir Muslim majority.

#### 4. Why Article 370 is corollary of two-nation theory?

This article 370 gave Kashmiri Muslims a feeling of special people, and a protection that, as such they are separate people, and Kashmir is only for them. Jammu and Kashmir is the only state in Bharat which has a constitution of its own, as provided through the article. “To begin with, Article 370 has built emotional and Psychological barriers between the people of Kashmir and the rest of Bharat, thus fostering a psychology of separatism. Existence of this statute is used by Pakistan and its proxies in the valley to mock at the very concept of ‘Bharat being one from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.’ It has kept alive the two-nation theory. Over a period of time, the separatist lobby in the state has used this barrier to build a mindset of alienation. Such a possibility had been clearly visualized by many political stalwarts who comprised the constituent Assembly of Bharat. While speaking in the constituent assembly of Bharat on Oct. 17, 1949, one of its distinguished members, Hazrat Mohani had said – ‘The grant of special status would enable Kashmir to assume independence afterwards.’” [12]

“...Article 370 has also helped create power elites and local sultans, who wield enormous power, which they use to trample upon the genuine demands of common people for public welfare. As no outsider can settle in the state and own any property there, the politically well connected people stand to gain enormously. It is these influential people who make the rules, decide the price and determine the buyer, since any competition from an outsider is completely ruled out.” [13]

“...To the gullible people of Kashmir, the abolition of Article 370 is projected as a catastrophic event that will sound the death Knell of Kashmiri Muslim culture, but in actual fact, this argument is a ploy to prevent assimilation of Kashmir into the national mainstream. That way, these power brokers continue to expand their fiefdom, perpetuate their hold on political and economic power and build a communal and obscurantist mindset, which in due course serve as a breeding ground for creating a separatist mentality.” [14]

Kashmiri Hindus and their literature as well have been completely marginalised and ignored from the national discourse and politics. Political parties for the mere sake of vote bank politics have continued to ignore the genuine plight of Kashmiri Hindus and hence they are still sailing through several tribulations. Kashmiri Hindus have been waiting for 27 years hoping that the day of their return with honour and security to their homeland would come but the plight of the Hindus has been gradually forgotten and thought about only during the elections. Everybody sheds crocodile tears over their sufferings, but no one is really ready to act. Sad but inevitable, the vital question is that, ‘will they ever get justice in their own homeland?’ Sri Narendra Modi led present government of Bharat has shown some rays of hope amidst much hue and cry from all others.

It is an inordinate human tragedy of modern times. The paradox of being a Kashmiri Hindu is that, he can’t live in his own land and yet he lives in his own country as a refugee. In fact, return of Kashmiri Hindus is their constitutional right. Kashmiri insurgency is a conflict between various Kashmiri separatists and nationalists. There is specificity to the context of conflict in Jammu and Kashmir which can be historically located in the identity politics of Kashmir.

It is the same Bharat which has withstood the shocks for centuries, of hundreds of foreign invasions, of hundreds of upheavals of manners and customs. I am here to speak to you today about some practical things and my object in reminding you about the glories of the past is simply to bring home the point that “Bharatiya culture looks upon life as an integrated whole. It has an integrated viewpoint. To think of parts may be proper for a specialist, but it is not useful from the practical standpoint. The confusion in the West arises primarily from its tendency to think of life in sections and then to attempt to put them together by patchwork. Our ancestors already knew that there is diversity and plurality in life, but we have always attempted to discover the unity behind them. This attempt is thoroughly scientific. The scientists always attempt to discover order in the apparent disorder in the universe, to find out the principles governing the universe, and frame practical rules on the basis of these principles. Chemists discovered that a few elements comprise the entire physical world. Physicians went one step further and showed that even these elements pulsate with energy. Today, we know that the entire universe is a form of energy.

Philosophers are also basically scientists. The European philosophers reached up to the principle of duality. Hegel put forward the principle of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis in his method of Dialectics to unpack his notion of the Absolute. Karl Marx used his principle as a basis and presented his analysis of History and Economics as his Materialistic Dialectics. Darwin considered the principle of ‘Survival of the Fittest’ as the sole basis of life. But we, in this country (Bharat), perceived the basic unity of all life.” [15]

“When it is ‘Isavasyamidamsarvam’ (Isopnishad) how could one go about drawing differences? When Advaita says that there is no dualism, how can one think in terms of differences? This leads us to the ‘epistemology of co-existence’ as against the ‘epistemology of differences’; what we find in European thinking and doing. Vedic Hindu

wisdom long recognized plurality and multiplicity as the 'nature of nature'. But for them, they are not related through a relation of difference, but through a relation of variation, variety. The many are varieties of one ultimate reality as the Upanishads teach. But for European epistemology, the many are one different from the other. This creates a very serious problem." [16]

Peaceful co-existence was and is the message of Bharat. Bharat still practices this tradition. President Sri Pranab Mukherjee on his trip to Jordan, Palestine and Israel in October 2015 again reiterated the same.

##### 5. Exodus and Displacement: Reflections in literature:

Jammu and Kashmir, a Muslim majority state is the only state out of 29 federating units of the Indian Union where religious cleansing of a bare 3 percent Hindu Minority happened in 1990 at the hands of externally sponsored and armed insurgents in collaboration with their local operatives and sympathizers. What happened in Kashmir that led to the extirpation and displacement of the Hindu minority community? Let's have an idea of it through their literature.

Dr. Agnishekhar writes – "Since centuries Kashmir is known for its beauty, culture, Philosophy, Love, tolerance and co-existence but today it comes to my mind for violence, militancy, religious insanity and displacement of minority. Scene of destruction, burnt houses, wounded memories, presence of militants and security forces, stammering expressions, bomb blasts or sound of firing, long wide spread blood on roads and then situation becomes normal next moment.... that is everyday's Kashmir. Every evening safe return at home is where daylong achievement, where meaning of any sound in dense night is militant or soldier, moment of giving shelter or investigation, increased heartbeat or sweating – thinking or writing of that Kashmir is passing through extreme torture.

And one Kashmir is in displacement. Crying, sobbing, lamenting, floundering from insult, animal like condition, neglect of government... no human rights, political rights, fear of cultural genocide, cultural extinction, loss of cultural identity, obliteration of culture." [17] (Translated from Hindi by me)

To understand Kashmir's insurgency in exiled Kashmiri Hindus' literature requires sensitivity. Leaders of communal thought or so-called progressive intellectuals (can only return national awards) or Human rights activists are not sensitive enough to understand this situation and so the literature of Kashmiri Hindus is marginalized. Satire can be read in Agnishekhar's poetry –

*Ab main kahan raha doston ki nazon mein  
vo pragatisheel kavi  
maine sankat ki bela mein gayab  
vampanthiyon, kongresiyon ko dhundha  
aur jane diya  
sach kahte hain manav adhikar ke dalal  
ki mera nahi hua jatiya sanhar  
aur na khas karan tha koi  
ghar se bhag jane ka  
kahan mara hoon main nirvasan mein  
loo se  
chintaon se  
naye rogon se. [18]*

(Now I am not that progressive poet in the eyes of my friends. I looked for help at leftists and Congressmen in time of distress and let them go. Spokespersons of human rights truly say that neither is my genocide and there was not a good reason for flee from home. Where I have died in exile with hot winds, tensions and new diseases.)

Novel 'Dardpur' written by Kshama Kaul focuses on displacement the most. Sudha and Sumona, the two important characters of the novel associated for the same cause but their approach is different. These dialogues reveal that:

*"tum mujhe aankhe dikha rahi ho....  
Sumona ne kaha  
nahi. main kah rahi hoon tum gyani ho par samvedansheel nahi ho...  
tumhare paas lakshya hai par manviya sparsh nahi..." [19]*

Not a single writer or poet of Hindi literature world dares to write or talk about this tragedy, so the exiled poet expresses himself:

*sabon ki/ padi hain jo  
girvi zabanen  
kahe ja rahe hain  
akele akele. [20]*

(As tongue of all is mortgaged, I am keeping on saying alone.)

"There is no place like home – The mother, the originary home, the homeland haunts the diasporic consciousness, and this desire for the home is taken as the defining feature of diaspora." [21]

Much has been told about diaspora, theory of diaspora, diasporic condition but much still remains untold. If homelessness and nostalgia and alienation are the main vocabulary of diasporic theory, then I don't understand the mindset of the critics of a particular thought in Bharat for not taking the literature of Kashmiri Hindus written in exile within the frame of diaspora. We need to take measure of this literature and literary condition and recognize the tragedy that is at its heart. We need to comprehend the case historically and geographically. And it is the need for care of the human, a race, a culture and their rights. Kashmiri writer in diaspora is dying to touch his motherland –

*mujhse chheen liye gaye dheere dheere  
muskan, barf, pahadiyan  
ped, mausam, tyohar  
aur samoochi matribhoomi abki bar. [22]*

(I have been deprived of smile, snow, hills, trees, seasons, festivals slowly, slowly and complete motherland this time,...)

“Will Durant narration of Jewish Diaspora in the Story of Philosophy is worth quoting here :-  
“The story of the Jews since the dispersion is one of the epics of European history. Driven from their natural home by the Roman capture of Jerusalem (70 A.D.), and scattered by flight and trade among all the nations and to all the continents; persecuted and decimated by the adherents of the great religions - Christianity and Mohammadanism – which had been born of their scriptures and their memories; barred by the feudal system from owning land, and by guilds from taking part in industry; shut up within congested ghettos and narrowing pursuits, mobbed by the people and robbed by the kings; building with their finance and trade the towns and cities indispensable to civilization; outcast and excommunicated, insulted and injured; yet without any political structure, without any legal compulsion to social unity, without even a common language, this wonderful people has maintained itself in body and soul, has preserved its racial and cultural integrity, has guarded with jealous love its oldest rituals and traditions, has patiently and resolutely awaited the day of its deliverance, and has emerged greater in number than ever before, renowned in every field for the contribution of its geniuses, and triumphantly restored, after two thousand years of wandering, to its ancient and unforgotten home. What drama could rival the grandeur of these sufferings, the variety of these scenes, and the glory and justice of this fulfilment? What fiction could match the romance of this reality?” [23] (Rajesh Kumar Sharma, P.62-63)

The bloodiest history of Kashmiri Hindus persecution is completely indifferent from the Jews persecution. Yet to say in Rajesh Kumar Sharma's words – “an evacuation of historical reality has been perpetrated upon the sign ‘diaspora’, sanitizing and reinventing it as a commodity for safe academic consumption in the global intellectual market place.” [24]

Poet describes today's Kashmir which was once called ‘Paradise on Earth’ -

*Savdhan!  
yah prithvi ka svarg hai  
yahan darvaze kaanpate hain dastakon se  
aur khidkiyan hava se  
mausam ho chahe koi bhi  
yahan parindon ke lautane ka  
koi samay nahi  
kyonki yahan din ka avasaan  
soorya Doobane se nahi  
goli chalane se hota hai. [25]*

(Attention! This is paradise on earth. Here, doors shiever with knock and windows with wind. Whatever season it may be, there is no fix time birds return, because day end here with firings.)

## 6. Why is Kashmiri Hindus literature in exile written in Hindi marginalized?

One very strong reason to marginalize Kashmiri Hindus and their literature of exile is the separatist mindset of critics and scholars of Hindi language and literature world. Actually not only Hindi but I must say Bharatiya Literature. By using this divisive measure they cook their *Roti* of popularity. In the preface of ‘*kalvriksha ki chhaya mein*’ a long poem by Agnishekhar, Rajesh Joshi writes, “In our times when things are being tried to put aside, many times I feel that the face of the literature is more apathetic than politics, uninformed, selfcentred, autolatried...” [26]

Agnishekhar expresses himself in his poem ‘*hatyaon ke khilaf*’ (Against the killings) –

*chaurahe ke par se jhankate hain  
coffee –house ki khidkiyon se  
buddhijeeviyon ke uttar aadhunik huliye  
akhabar vale kheenchate hain tasveerein  
hawa mein tanav hai  
bhitari ek alav hai*

*hatyaon ke khilaf  
tootata ja raa hai hamara dhairya  
Mahatma Gandhi maarg par. [27]*

(Intellectuals peep out of the windows of coffee-house in Post-modern attire, journalists take photos. There is tension in the air, fire inside, we are losing patience against killings here on ‘Mahatma Gandhi Road’.)

One very important point that I noticed while studying this literature that there is not a single example of retaliation in this literature. Kashmiri Hindus want the same culture of co-existence after their return to their homeland –

*kal jab mera kafila  
sharanarathi shiviron se koochakar  
meel ke patthar ginata hua  
pahunchega apane ghar-aangan  
dilon ki dooriyon ko paatane ka  
us din ka vah lamha  
kaisa hoga.  
eid Milan jaisa hoga  
ya kaisa hoga? [28]*

(When my caravan reach my own home, homeland, from refugee camps, counting mile stones,.... how that moment will be, will it be like eid-e milan or what?)

I would like to share a few lines from ‘Jawahar Tunnel’ a long poem by Agnishekhar, He recalls –

*kanon mein abhi bhi goonj rahi thin  
jehadiyon ki galiyan  
unake udghosh  
dhamakiyan  
thayan thayan!!  
goliyon ki athkheliyan  
hathgole aur bamon ke attahas  
Al jehad!  
Al jehad!  
Al jehad! [29]*

(We still here the echo of jehadi’s abusive words, their announcements, their threats and the ‘thayan...thayan... sounds of bombs and al jehad... al jehad.)

Poet recalls his achievement at the moment and says :

*Ekmatra tha itmeen  
ki jaise taise bacha laye the  
ham khaufazada bahu-betiyan apane sath  
bachchon ke skooli baste  
aur krishkay buzurgon ki shesh zindagi  
yahi thi upalabdhi is vakt  
hamare paanch hazar varshon ki. [30]*

(We were calm and dignified with just one achievement of our 5000 years old heretage that we have saved our daughters, daughter-in laws, school bags of our kids and old and weak parents.)

Some people argue that Kashmir was never a part of Bharat, I want to ask them – When it was not Bharat? And why only Kashmir, where was Pakistan before 1947? Tarek Fateh, a writer of Pakistan origin also accepts that Kashmir is the heritage of Kashmiri Hindus. Let them keep arguing: no one can dispute the fact that the very name Kashmir originated from the name of Maharishi Kashyapa. With this concluding line I submit this thesis that, one, concept of minority must be seen in reverse order in the perspective of Kashmiri Hindus; two, literature of exiled Kashmiri Hindus is marginalised and falls under the definition of diaspora.

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