Summary

The research work entitled, *Contemporary Representation of Kashmir: A Study of the Novels of Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir* is a modest descriptive attempt to present the contemporary representation of Kashmir in the analysis of realism embodied in the works of Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir *The Collaborator*, and *The Book of Gold Leaves* and *The Half Mother*.

The contemporary literature generally arises in English literature after the World War 2, usually refers to the written works from all round the world. Writers of this period generally found themselves face to face and revealed cultural, social, economic, and political conflicts in their possible ways. In case, it can said that the contemporary literature is a global institution in which we find literature from every corner of the whole world. It is ironical in nature but rich in different and regional taste, whilst the subject of contemporary literature is itself the lamentation of alienation of people.

The present thesis is an attempt to explore realistic elements in the selected novels into the light of contemporary literature. The researcher has comprehensively analysed the Themes, Characterization, Plot-construction, Style, Setting in the novels of Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir to explore the facets of realism in their works. This work does not claim to be exhaustive, but to some extent serves the purpose sought to be achieved. Various publications, reports and websites have been consulted during the research. Discussion with different officials at various levels has immensely helped the researcher in understanding the research work and in arriving at the conclusions.

Mirza Waheed, in his first novel, *The Collaborator* is totally pertained with despair, anger, and trauma of war in Kashmir. The unnamed protagonist of the novel is a nineteen year old boy lives in a village ‘Nowgam’ near the Line of Control. The Indian army captain Kadian employs him as an informer to collect all the identity cards and
weapons of the corpses down into the valley for the PR (press release) purpose. The novel is divided into three sections. The first part moves between the present and the past about protagonist and his family and about his village ‘Nowgam’. The second section portrays the departure of his friends for arms training and the reason of their departure and the brutal image of crackdowns. The final section of the novel gets back to the story and relationship of collaboration between the protagonist and the Indian army captain Kadian.

His second novel ‘The Book of Gold Leaves’ is a love story between Faiz and Roohi, Faiz belongs to Shia sect whereas Roohi belongs to Sunni sect, but the focus of the novel is not only between Shia and Sunni love affair, it also focuses on despondency, antagonism, and melancholic trauma of war. And the central concern is armed change of the movement in the valley. The protagonist of the novel comprehensively reasons what made him to join armed ranks against Indian Military Forces rather to live his life in the world of art and crafts.

Shahnaz Bashir in his first novel ‘The Half Mother’ is concerned with the issue of disappearance which began after the deployment of new governor of the state. Indian paramilitary forces abducted and kidnapped children, and young people of Kashmir and never returned them back to their homes, and no one knows what happened to them. Though, even their relatives do not know whether they are dead or alive. The novel rests on the quest of their relatives, who lost their loved ones in the ongoing conflict.

The whole research work is consolidated on the two major novels of Mirza Waheed, The Collaborator, and The Book of Gold Leaves, and one major work of Shahnaz Bashir, The Half Mother. The present research work is divided in seven chapters.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of the thesis presents a general survey of contemporary literature along with the beginning era of English writing in Kashmir and is devised in five aspects that represent Kashmir conflict in its realistic realms of historicism.

In contemporary literature, the authors of the age, generally focus to make their writings as realistic as possible. Their writing always deal with social issues or social conflicts like race, sexism, crime, poverty, and colonialism etc. In broad terms its chosen subject is contemporary (present) violence which has fenced almost the whole world, interestingly, perhaps, the most problematic entanglement of the postmodern world. It is quite apparent that the writing contains realistic accounts of public temperament. It is an expression of conflicted stories in realistic mode set in modern times. It summarizes indirectly in a written body of literature especially novels, poetry, and criticism, historical changes and self-determination. It has also brought out many new-historical facts.

The collaborator is the first attempt by Mirza Waheed that reveals anguish and fear of people of his land. It is pertained to the valley’s mayhem since 1989. It also gives a glimpse of history of accession of Kashmir with the Union of India by revealing the content of arrival of Pakistan tribesmen and Indian military forces which connects study to the historicism that interprets the conflict in its realistic realms.
Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir belong to a same period and celebrate same social, political, economic, and cultural circumstances and shape their notion of truth with art and politely. Therefore the recommendation of historicism in literature is recognised as the ability of literature to challenge social and political authority. It also challenges the hierarchical distinction between ‘literary foreground’ and political ‘background’.

The conflict brings two nations India and Pakistan at nuclear war. So far, as it is mentioned above that the chapter is devised with historical aspect, within the aspects of India, Pakistan, and above all Kashmiri and humanitarian aspect.

**Indian aspect:** As for as Indian perspective is concern the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir is integral part of India and Pakistan has illegally occupied a part of it. The accession of the state ‘Jammu and Kashmir’ signed by the Maharaja Hari Singh on 26th October 1947 to the Union of India is valid and final, therefore the opinion of plebiscite will not be practiced in the state, and the plebiscite option is dead.

The state’s election in 1987 which is the major cause since Kashmir people start to support to the insurgents. The participation in 1987’s elections, of MUF (Muslim Union Front). the MUF is comprised of two Muslim streams Jamaat-i-Islami, who never accepted Maharaja’s accession to India and Non-Jamaty Muslims, who demanded more democratic rights for the people of the state. It is obvious to understand the movement was not only indigenous one but Islamization drive of the state. Following the elections of 1987, Muslim Union Front won only four seats out of seventy six. While as, the opposed parties like National Congress and Congress won the rest of the seats, National Conference won forty seats and Congress obtained twenty six seats.

Muslim Union Front argued that the elections were not fear, there was malpractice in the counting process of votes. A special intellectual group pushed and
preached young men to join insurgency. This group was later labeled by native’s that they sent others to sacrifice, whilst, save their own ones. However, the group was paid by both India and Pakistan. The youth taking arms in Kashmir became a fashionable celebrated family pride. On the night of 18th January 1990, Jagmohan is reappointed governor of Kashmir, the last effort from Indian government to save the Kashmir valley.

Between, January 01 to January 19 1990, in Kashmir there were, 319 violent acts, 21 armed attacks, 114 bomb blasts, 112 arsons, and 72 incidents of mob violence. This resulted the exodus of Kashmir Pandits from Kashmir to Jammu and other states to India.

Pakistan Aspect: As for as Pakistan perspective is concerned Kashmir is the “Jugular vein of Pakistan”. Pakistan claims, Kashmir is a disputed territory and cannot be termed as an integral part of India, as the final status is yet to be determined according to the principal of partition and according to the will of the people of Kashmir.

Kashmir Aspect: The socio-political history of Kashmir delineates the genesis of the conflict since the formation of the state in 1846, including 1931 revolt against Dogra monarchs, the states accession to the Indian Union on 26th October 1947, and the insurgency of late 1980’s.

The concept of self-determination initially began in early twentieth century in 1931 against tyrannical Dogra rule. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah lead ‘All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference’ that was later converted into ‘All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference’ the sole aim of the party was to unite every community in the state against Dogra rule and to attain freedom from Dogra’s oppressive rule. In May-June 1946, the National Conference launched ‘The Quiet Kashmir Movement’ that proclaims to all the people of the state, the movement has accepted the principle of self-determination not only in respect of creed, but also within the framework of culture. This was the initiative phase of democratic, political, and cultural identity among the people.
of Kashmir. The Quiet Kashmir Movement was based on to setup a democratic
government system in the state.

The accession signed by Maharaja Hari Singh to the Indian Union was temporary
and conditional. While considering the statement or opinion of the viceroy of India, it
was thoughtful consideration, that the state has majority population of 85% percent of
Muslims and seven hundred (700) miles borderline proportionment with Pakistan,
therefore it was apriori part of Pakistan. But British and Indian National Congress
collaboratively played an abhorrent complicity by transference or handover Gurdaspur to
Indian Union. Otherwise India would have to cross Pakistan first to enter into the valley
of Kashmir, and how it is rightfulness of Maharaja Hari Singh to let India decide the fate
of Kashmir by signing the instrument letter of accession, whilst the state had no border
connection.

In October 1947, the arrival of Pakistani Tribesmen have been misinterpreted to
decoy the people of the world, that due to the infiltration in valley by Pakistani
sponsored Tribesmen compelled Maharaja Hari Singh to accede to India. But the actual
truth is, the Pakistani tribesmen really entered into the valley of Kashmir, not to threaten
the Maharaja of the state, but during partition, when the partition effects recurred,
Maharaja’s traditional hostility towards Muslim community emerged. He disarmed
Muslim troops and Police in the state and ordered them to collect all their weapons in
their nearest police stations. Thereafter with the help of Hindu extremists near borderland
regions especially in Rajuri, Punch, and Jammu borderline regions slaughtered and
massacred more than four hundred thousand innocent Muslims. The reports of massacres
reached Trans frontier nearby regions. They entered into the valley to help their
oppressed Muslim brethren. This is not the first time that they have entered into the
valley for help, rather, in 1931, when 22 innocent Muslims were martyred in Srinagar in
the compound of central jail. The nearby Trans frontier Muslims felt restless and they left their homes for valley’s help. Hence, that time British has arrested thirty thousand Muslims, such as they could not enter into the valley. Therefore, the arrival of tribesmen is never evil minded, but just the expression of affectionate emotions for innocent Muslim brethren for Kashmir. But prestidigitators brought hooligans along with them and sophisticated, on other hand they played apolitical or diabolic trick for states accession to the union of India.

The accession accepted by Lord Mountbatten is conditional because on 27th October 1947, Lord Mountbatten writes a letter to Maharaja Hari Singh:-

“Consistently with their policy that in the case of any state where the issue of accession has been the subject of dispute, the question of accession should be decided in accordance with the wishes of the people of the state, it is my governments wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil cleared of the invaders. The question of states accession should be settled by a reference to the people”.

On the same day 27th October 1947, Indian Prime Minister Pandit Jawharlal Nehru in a telegram to Pakistani Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan :-

“I should like to make it clear that the question of aiding Kashmir in this emergency is not designed in any way to influence the state to accede to India. Our view, which we have repeatedly made public, is that the question of accession in any disputed territory or state must be decided...
in accordance with the wishes of the people, and we adhere this view.

Pakistan became an independent nation on 14th August 1947, and Eastern Part was its legal and admit-able part. But with Russia’s help India helped those people in Eastern Pakistan who wanted to be independent. In 1971 Eastern Pakistan became an independent nation and today is known as Bangladesh in the world map. Whenever India is questioned about armed infiltration in Eastern Pakistan they argue, that it is our full right and authority to help the nations politically, militarily, and morally who struggle for freedom. And For the freedom of Palestine India Government taunting political, moral, and material help and boastfully manifests in front of the whole world that we will help Palestine mujahedeen at every step in their freedom struggle from tyrannical domination of Israel. Thus, if it was legal for India to help and support Bangladesh and Palestine for their freedom, so, if the state of Jammu and Kashmir summons to India for the same right for past 70 years, so how it is rightfulness for Indian government to suppress the Kashmiri emotions of freedom, whilst India had pledged to Kashmiri people for this right.

India fought against British domination for freedom, Mahatma Gandhi was engaged in the freedom struggle by democratic and constitutional way. On the other hand Bhagat Singh and Subash Chander Bose were engaged for freedom with armed struggle. Bhagat Singh’s bombing attack on British personnel brought renaissance in the movement of Indian freedom struggle. Subash Chander Bose formed liberate Indo Army Front against British Colonial Empire. In the process of armed struggle for nation’s freedom Bhagat Singh admitted capitalsentence. Subash Chander Bose has embraced expatriation. Both mujahidin are known as Indian freedom fighting heroes and the martyrs of the nation.
Thus, the people of Kashmir, who have adopted the way of armed struggle for their nation, Jammu and Kashmir, against the domination of Indian Paramilitary and military Forces, on what basis and principles India is trying to inculpate our freedom fighters by calling them terrorists, separatists, and malady. Rather, they are heroes, mujahidin, and libertarian of their nation and motherland. They are not terrorists. They are freedom fighters because these mujahidin freedom fighters are struggling to emancipate their nation and motherland from coercionary and colonizers.

Humanitarian Aspect: Kashmir conflict emerged as an international issue in 1947, after British Indian Empire divided into two independent sovereign states. While increasing unrest in the valley Maharaja Hari Singh left Srinagar to Jammu on 26th October which is the publishing date of Maharaja’s sign in the instrument letter of accession to India. India claims that the parties of Pakistani Tribesmen crossed the Jhelum on 21/22 October, and consider them as aggressors. And Indian presence in the state was based on Maharaja’s invitation on 26th October to repel these aggressors from the state. Therefore the presence of Indian forces in the state is legitimate. Alistair Lamb puts a question here, ‘Who was “aggressing” on whom? He debates; the crossing of the Jhelum by Pathan Tribesmen on 21/22 October was the response against the presence of Patiala troops (The Patiala state had already acceded to the government of India on 5th May 1947), who were there before the invasion of Pakistani Tribesmen and also before the legal Indian intervention on 27th October. The presence of Patiala troops in the state before the invasion of Pakistani Tribesmen raised a plenty of questions which have yet to be answered.

Alistair Lamb writes that some members of the Indian Government were aware about all this “While it is probable that some members of the Indian leadership, including perhaps Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Baldev Singh, were aware of this development, there is no evidence that it had been brought to the attention of Jawharlal Nehru; and it is
likely that the Indian Prime Minister was kept deliberately in the dark about such covert operation”. So in this perspective, comparatively, Indian presence in the valley is as much illegal as in Indian perception is Pakistan’s presence in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir.

Both countries, India and Pakistan, claim over Kashmir as the part of their countries, rather never realizes the fact that the right to rule belongs to the sons of the soil. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was technically independent till 27th of October 1947.

Not only United Nations Security Council put the proposal of plebiscite for Kashmir, but the government of India also promised Kashmiri soil that the future of Kashmir will be decided on the will and plebiscite of Kashmir people after the law and order have been restored properly. On 2nd January 1952, while replying Dr. Mookerji’s question,

“It is not the property of either India or Pakistan, it belongs to Kashmiri people. When Kashmir acceded to India, we made it clear to the leaders of the Kashmiri people that we would ultimately abide by the verdict of their plebiscite. If they tell us to walk out, I will have no hesitation in quitting. We have taken the issue to the United Nations and given our word of honour for a peaceful solution. As a great nation, we cannot go back on it. We have left the question for final solution to the people of Kashmir, and we are determined to abide by their decision”.

The conflict has taken change with the failure of an election that was conducted in 1987 in the patronage of Indian Election Commission. Every Muslim party collaborated and made MUF (Muslim Union Front) and decided to participate in
elections. But the election proved ridged and unfair. Since 1989, the conditions of everyday life in Kashmir became more dreadful and melancholic. Since then what Kashmir is facing is the oppression of overwhelming presence of the Indian paramilitary and military forces and police. Their killings, interrogations, detentions, rapes, abuse, abduction, and torture cells disordered the space of Kashmir life.

M. A. R Habib in *A History of Literary Criticism and Theory* writes, the colonial race in the world after the world war second, 1945, almost reached to its end but still upholds and continued in Taiwan, Tibet, Middle East, and Kashmir.

The second chapter of this research study explores setting and milieu of the novels. The study analyzed in this chapter Themes, Characterization, Plot-construction, Style, Setting in the novels of Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir to explore the facets of realism in their works.

The time in which novels are set do matter a great deal. If we look at the way in which Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir has evaluated the societal life in Kashmir is a tangible proof of atrocities of military forces over the people of the land and realistic setting of the novel. Indeed, the characters of the novels are fictitious but the melancholic mood and pain of characters with which verses are bursting reveals a realistic account that dictates every person’s realistic tale, actually living there.

The novels are set in the last decade of twentieth century when the military oppression and armed insurgency crossed the limits of conflict in Kashmir. The social life, rapidly in 1990’s in Kashmir has faced the whole tendency of callousness of conflict especially towards those less unfortunate innocent Kashmiris who were suppressed, killed, disappeared, tortured, humiliated, and raped. But this callousness of the conflict victimized almost every Kashmiri native. The ruthlessness that we observe in the texts of both novelists towards the people of Kashmir is the result of heavy deployment of
military forces in residential areas, in villages, in every city, every town, on the roads, highways, streets and colonies, and even in shopping market centers and on the tourist health resorts, almost everywhere in Kashmir. The oppression and military presence in huge amount still haunts the valley of Kashmir since 1989 to the present time. The daily tolls the novelists revealed in 1990’s are still counting in the ongoing unrest between Indian military occupation and Kashmir natives.

The third chapter of the study deals with art and culture of Kashmir. In this chapter the study discusses art and culture of Kashmir before the conflict and within the conflict accordingly demonstrated in the novels. The chapter also discusses, how the novelists show culture and art of Kashmir and how the conflict has affected the cultural heritage of Kashmir. This chapter also locates some colonial perspectives in the novels that interpret some concepts of colonial and post-colonial theories that traces the cultural devastation under the colonial subjugation.

To the very extent it is necessary to examine with more originality that the fact which entirely involves in an investigation in the art and cultural aesthetic, where native people to be dominated are dislodged to the traditional and religion beliefs by the colonizers to eradicate their native culture beliefs. This resembles Kashmiri culture in the way when the accounts of crackdowns, massacres, and kidnapping and heavy militarization conveys native cultural disruption.

The fourth chapter of the thesis deals with the issue of enforced disappearance of people by Indian paramilitary and military forces since 1989. Shahnaz Bashir’s *The Half Mother* is totally pertained to the wake of disappearance of people ‘especially the youth of Kashmir’ comparatively Mirza Waheed’s *The Collaborator* and *The Book of Gold Leaves* too reveal the barbarism of military forces towards enforced disappearance of the inhabitants of valley.
The aim of this chapter is to set forth a realistic aspect of the novel (The Half Mother) in the light of enforced disappearance or missing people, in the simplest possible way. The theme of the novel rests on the missing people, who just once have been kidnapped or abducted by Indian paramilitary forces, some for investigation and some involuntarily and never returned them back to their families. The misery of these families in quest of their loved ones is panic and horrendous as shown in the novels. The theme follows the subject of disappearance from the beginning of armed conflict. The protagonist of The Half Mother is the demonstration of all those unfortunate, who lost their beloveds since 1989.

The fifth chapter of the study presents a realistic panorama of novels what lead Kashmiri youth to join armed ranks. The chapter presents the whole permissible and accurate summary of measures and conditions of the period described in the novels and a consideration of ideals which stirred the whole Kashmir as well as the whole India, since the late 1980’s. It explores a feasible study and analysis of armed insurgency and the presence of Indian armed forces that destroyed the stability of peace in Kashmir. In this chapter the study located some realistic elements in the novels that compelled a civilian to turn as an armed resistant.

In order to situate the primary texts within a larger context the chapter studies armed conflict in the writings of Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir and other writings as well that deal with the conflict, which has given the portable shape to the conflict or the works that tried to resolve the conflict of Kashmir. Since armed change of the conflict it is an important perspective to analyze the situation. The analysis attempts to show the ins and outs of armed race that has taken place after 1989. In order to understand the armed sprint of the conflict in realistic way the chapter provide us a perfect portrait of conflict within the gentlest touch of 1947.
In sixth chapter the narratives are logically connected to the idea of peace and self-determination. The perceptions of authors claim Indian authorities of falsifying their claims with decorated falsehoods. The narratives of novels directly and indirectly addressing the demand for self-determination for the reason the novels deal with the weird conflict in Kashmir which deeply contests disturbing narratives of people living in the valley. The exploration of conflict turbulence challenge widely ruthless and ferocious account of Indian administration and Indian military forces. The powers given to military forces like Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) and Public Safety Act (PSA), which Arundhati Roy in an essay ‘Azadi: The Only Thing Kashmiris Want’ calls Public Sentence Act, marginalized social life in the valley.

This chapter is also analyzed and evaluated as per the tenets of colonial and postcolonial theories in which the characters of the novels are in quest of peace, identity and self-determination. The engagement of conflict in libertarian struggle and armed resistance are combined in a societal solidarity manner. The reader who is aware about the Kashmir conflict will experience the significance of truth in the novels of the conflict that oversees the colonial facet. The question ascends here how we will judge colonial and post-colonial tenants in the novels that involve the Kashmir conflict in a larger or smaller context of colonial discourses.

The last chapter of the thesis has summed up all the issues that have been dealt in the previous chapters. The chapter assimilates and concludes all major aspects of the thesis. To get start with the interpretation of selected novel, it is thoroughly understood the conflict demands and needs what the people in huge demonstrations demand which Mirza Waheed and Shahnaz Bashir narratively comprehend us in their verses. The unfinished business of the partition has to come to an end with the resolution of the demand of the people of Kashmir, which according to fundamentals of literature and
humanitarian fundamentals is their fundamental right. In the first hands, the paramilitary and military forces from residential areas should be withdrawn which is the uncomplicated problem of conflict that has aggravated social life and to listen to the wishes of majority of people of the state.

**Signature of the Supervisor**

Dr. Savita Shrivastava  
Professor and Head,  
Department of English,  
Govt. K.R.G. Autonomous P.G. College,  
Gwalior, (M.P.).

**Signature of the Candidate**

Irshad Ahmad Rather

**Forwarded by**

Principal  
M.L.B. College of Excellence, Gwalior (M.P.)  
Research Centre