

Postmodern Novelistic Techniques in *Khas o Khashak Zamanay*

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the influence of Western Postmodern literary forms on Mustansar Hussain Tarar's writings particularly his novels Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay and Raakh. Both the novels are enriched with historical characters and events. All that resulted into the decline of the state has been innovatively revealed by the writer in such a way that makes these novels distinct narration of a troubled nation. The novel Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay revitalizes the history of many generations of a family in the post-9/11 socio-cultural changes as they occur in both Euro-American and Afro-Asian societies. The novel also reveals the postmodern debates about the multiplicity of identity.

Keywords: *Postmodernism, Narrative techniques,, novelistic discourse*

1. Introduction to *Khas o Khashak Zamanay*

Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay is a novel containing multiple and wide range of characters, stories within stories and questioning of colonial and neo-colonial workings in contemporary Pakistani and American society. The narrative of *Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay* is more complex than *Raakh*; it is an extension of the novel *Raakh* in terms of thematic multiplicity and use of narrative techniques. This novel contains two parallel layers of events: one that goes with the surface level of the text, easily recognizable through a number of tangible metaphors; and the other one is that falls in the category of new metaphorical system of symbols associated with the past and historical events. For understanding these ideological and metaphorical construction,s a reader has to have historical and political consciousness of the social constructs.

2. Magical Realism in *Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay*

Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay is considered as one of the most significant novels that subscribes to the postmodern novelistic techniques and incorporates a wide range of symbols and metaphors from indigenous and global culture. The writer has employed the concept of willing suspension of disbelief in order to highlight some of the magical happenings in the novel.

Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay is abundant with instances of magical realism that can be traced out in characters and events at the same time. Among many symbolic characters the use of dwarfs is quite intriguing. The first example of magical realism in the novel is that of the event of well-digging that involves revelation of the dwarfs. It is a belief among the villagers that there lives strange creatures, also known as Bonas in local language, roughly translated as dwarfs. Muhammad Jahan, The Numberdar of the village, is one important character who makes villagers dig a well for him. A number of local people coming from the surrounding areas have gathered there to witness the proceedings in anticipation of water and dwarfs coming out of the well. Since they believe in the existence of *bonas*, they claim to actually have seen the dwarfs jumping out of the well as it is dug deeper and deeper. A small naked child while playing with his running nose exclaims:

I have seen them....i have seen themthey have entered in the sugarcane field....Some people rose and entered the sugarcane field after them. That child had such confidence that an old man also declared that he had also seen them....but they have gone through his armpit after doing some tickling. (Tarar, 2010, p. 79)

At the surface level this incident appears to have a magical touch for denoting supernatural element, having no connection with reality. However, the writer wants to relate this particular magical event with a real event taking place in the Indian sub-continent, generally known as the Great Divide or Partition. This pre-partition incident of dwarf and well digging as it appears in the novel is in fact foreseeing post-partition condition in which the inhabitants would have no more value than dwarfs. The well represents a country i.e. Pakistan, giving nation their identity, life, abode, and pride. But soon after embracing life and liberty, they stand on the verge of degeneration because political pigmies and worthless bonas rule the nation. Muhammad Jahan Numberdar, who is one of the various characters from the novel, is a positive character when compared with Bakht Jahan. Though the myth of dwarfs has been a folk lore tradition in many villages of Punjab this image has narrated the power culture of that very particular time. These villages shared no colonial effects on social structure because the land distance and economic marginalization had kept them alienated. The symbol of dwarf has another aspect in the story as well. It is not merely an agent of power but also a symbol of individual and social fear. Bakht Jahan is in a state of fear and feels that dwarfs dwell in his chest and sometimes they come out and dance on his chest. He is a brother of Muhammad Jahan, the

Numberdar. He is in a state of terror because he has actually murdered the daughter of his elder brother. Now his guilt has been transformed in the form of dwarfs who now become part of his subconscious.

Tarar repeatedly introduces such incidents in his novels that can be classified as magical reality. This time he incorporates birds and snakes embedded in a narrative style that leaves its interpretation up to the readers. This is purely a postmodern approach that aims at concealing the writer's intentions and his status as a sole determiner of the text. This particular incident centers on Ameer Bakhsh, another major character of the novel, who had to cross a certain river occasionally. During his journey he used to observe some magical elements such as emergence of birds in fog hovering over his head. When he discloses his observation to his uncle Mohakam Deen, the latter does not seem to believe his concocted stories.

Mohakam Deen defies his nephew's fancies regarding the birds saying that:

Dear son! The fog that has been dwelling over the calm waters of the river Chenab for ages has nothing like birds in it. Sparrows don't chirp and cranes remain always high above the sky; how can they come down the level of the river? It is all your fancy, illusions and false perception. Had they been existing I would have also witnessed them, because I can see everything walking and crawling in my fields. (Tarar, 2010, p.93)

Since he is a man of logic and purely a modernist in his vision, he finds it hard to accommodate such aspects of reality that are punctuated by magical knitting. On the other hand his nephew much younger than him is bestowed with a vision capable of deriving the meaning out of the apparently magical elements existing around. To him the logical and the physical are not the criteria for an idea of something to be called reality. His interpretation of reality reflects his postmodern intent based on subjectivity. Keeping in view the plot of the novel and its unique chain of Intertextual references depicting historical ground realities and underlying psychological meanings, this incident of birds can easily be related with previous episodes of dwarfs having intended background of partition. As water is a symbol of life, it has now acquired a completely different status. The newly born geographical state has spoiled its lifeline which gets polluted under the influence of complex variety of crisis that has potential to challenge the integrity and solidarity of the state that came into being on the basis of ideology. The birds hidden in fog are in fact those political and social discourses defining the destiny of the people.

On the textual level, postmodern techniques adopted by Tarar make him distinguished from his contemporary fiction writers in a way that they only go for a realistic and grounded evidence and end up with texts having singular interpretation. On the contrary, Tarar, a postmodernist writer treads on unpaved tracks with variety of discourse. Both the pre-partition and post-partition scenarios of an ideological state have been translated in a misty style that ends up in open to multiple interpretations.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, who is known as the pioneer of magical realism, applied this narrative technique by means of blending real and surreal episodes in his works. In his story *The Old Man with Enormous Wings* he portrays a protagonist to be like a human and a non-human --akin to an angel--simultaneously. Though possessing human body an old man is a victim of many diseases; therefore when a doctor examines him he is astounded to see that such a person can be alive at all. Tarar depicts a very similar technique in another episode of his novel related to a young man Ameer Bakhsh.

Ameer Bakhsh is the same person who observes magical birds in foggy weather. Now that he has done his matriculation , his mother (Noor Begum) wants him to leave native village out of fear of her uncle Bakht Jahan, also mentioned earlier as a man influenced by his colonial instincts. She sends him to Lahore, a metropolitan city in the subcontinent, known for its cosmopolitan and colonial influence, to fetch some job in accordance with his qualification. Furthermore she advises him to contact one of his tribe fellows, Khushi Muhammad, a police inspector by profession.

While following his mother's advice Ameer Bakhsh meets the inspector and requests him to fetch him some job. The inspector who has forgotten his past considers this young man a threat to his present social status. The inspector is sick and tired of Ameer Bakhsh's repeated visits consequent to which he unleashes his bulldogs at him. Ameer Bakhsh runs hard to escape the brutal attack of the dogs but one of them catches up with him and bites on his shin. As a reaction, he is transformed in at least two ways: one, his black hair turn into white, all of a sudden out of fear; second, the reality and mystery of the human condition is revealed to him. Tarar calls these changes a punishment which the young man entailed as a consequence to his second journey. What enlightenment he gains through this experience? Tarar writes thus:

Community was just an illusion
Tribe was addictive stupidity

And religion.....an assuage

All these carried no value (Tarar, 2010, p.113)

The episode of dog biting Ameer Bakhsh is Tarar's two folded narrative technique. On one hand young man's acquisition of white hair accompanied by enlightenment is a reality surrounded by magic. Realistically the young man was bruised by the dogs but it is followed by a magical revelation that opens upon the young man some realities of postmodern era, namely, worthlessness of community and tribal systems, and illusion of religious beliefs. These are the Meta-narratives propagated by the powers-that-be for the purpose of concentration of power. However, postmodern perspective has proved that these metanarratives hold no water for had any significance, the expectations of Ameer Bakhsh, a seeker, would not have turned upside down.

On the other hand, Tarar's narrative technique is reflective of the then political Grand narrative in same manner as Jonathan Swifts' Gulliver's Travel depicts the British political scenario of that time. Tarar employs magical realism in the character of Ameer Bakhsh, who provides a plat form to synthesize pre-partition and post-partition grand narratives that appeared as a failure soon after the acquisition of a new ideological state. If they were sound and reliable, the state would not have gone through a divining turmoil in the form of the Fall of Dhaka.

3. Cosmopolitanism in *Khas o Khashak Zamanay*

The postmodern concept of cosmopolitanism has been changed from the pre-postmodern intellectual spirit to a global perception marked by transnational, trans-religious, and trans-political ethos. In the 18th century a major problem that had been troubling cosmopolitanism since its inception was whether or not the world we live in was interlinked enough to develop institutional harmony and global solidarity. The philosophers such as Kant and Marx through their respective pre-nationalist cosmopolitanism and socialist nationalism argued that the world has innate attraction towards normative solidarity. In contemporary era traditional arguments about cosmopolitanism that focused on translational connections among global cities have failed to entertain postmodern urge for "we-attitude", as a normative force.

Today the mainstream concept of cosmopolitanism is rooted in normative characteristics that combined human beings together under a single global order. Cosmopolitanism is now a phenomenon that brings humanity into a single "WE", having no room for "OTHERS". Although individuals belong to

different geographical spheres, religions, cultures, schools of thought, and professions, they bear a global identity which discards all individual and other micro narrative. After the failure of nationalist narratives as a post-World Wars scenario in the first half of the previous century, a need was felt to stimulate global harmony and solidarity among divergent peoples. For this the narrative of cosmopolitanism was propagated to such an extent that it left far reaching effects on cultures, economies, literature and art across the globe. The acceptance of diverse range of people in major cities of the world, incorporation of characters emanating from different countries in cinematographic representations, and rapid extinction of unipolarity in favor of multi-polarity are significant offshoots of postmodern concept of cosmopolitanism.

Khas o Khashak Zamanay as a fictional narrative conforms to cosmopolitanism to comment on political reasoning that led to the popularity of this concept. Taking one of the major protagonists, Inamullah, a Pakistani by birth who migrates to a global metropolitan New York, Tarar reveals world politics behind this narrative that aims at developing convergence rather divergence. Inamullah, after escaping from his indigenous version of colonizer, becomes a victim of a larger colonizer. Tarar explains through this character the story how the United States and its allies have been using concepts and processes such as globalization and cosmopolitanism to get their national, political and economic interests fulfilled. This is why these nations manipulate this idea when it comes to waging war in Iraq and Afghanistan following the 9/11 episode, under the pretext of protecting world solidarity (cosmopolitanism) from those elements that act as catalysts to “We Attitude”, just as militants, terrorists and fundamentalists do. Manzoor Nazar, another Pakistani-American character who runs a grocery store, inculcates into Inamullah his American concept of international solidarity while drawing a binary by excluding those countries that still adhere to the pre-postmodern concept of nationalism:

You, a broad and progressive minded person, want to stand with regressive forces? You have no other option to stand with United States, that is open hearted and provides asylum to the downtrodden and empower people from across the world.....Stand with the United States ...Does your Saudi Arabia provide you with refuge...treats you like dogs...this country (United States) considers you and me, human beings, and offers provision, which its earns from wars...you have nothing to do with what is going on there, it is not your business (Tarar, 2010, p. 586)

The developed countries establish their hegemony over under-developed nations by adopting a liberal approach towards various regional narratives. For this they are willing to transform cultural characteristics of their cities by allowing the members of other cultures to socialize on a large magnitude, so much so that, sometimes, indigenous populace is reduced in numbers in comparison with migrant communities. Manzoor Nazar is one of such persons, who under the significant influence of cosmopolitanism has not only become a part of a new world but also got ready to influence others likewise. Emerson in his book *Double-Consciousness in American Identity* highlights the same phenomenon in the following words:

The asylum of all nations...the energy of Irish, Germans, Swedes, Poles and Cossacks, and all the European tribes, of the Africans and Polynesians, will construct a new race...as vigorous as the new Europe which came out of the melting pot of the Dark Ages (Emerson, 1846)

New cosmopolitan race comes into existence when its members accept such narratives as collective consciousness, world peace and inter-continental harmony. Those who are not ready to accept these narratives are excluded from cosmopolitan powers and considered as “others”, deprived of basic human rights. Manzoor Nazar tries hard to convince Inamullah who is still resisting cosmopolitanism:

I am also aware that the world has really changed after 9/11, and a new cast system has been developed in which we are all untouchables (inferiors) and they are all barahmans (superiors) and enjoy high ranking in the society.....but this does not mean that we should feel this disgrace and commit suicide in reaction. We should rather stand head to head with these powers which are desirous of taking us to the stone ages. (Tarar, 2010, p. 587)

This quotation shows that mainstream global powers are not willing to give any space to those involved in any resistance. More often than not it becomes the matter of their survival if they oppose the current, pseudo-unifying forces. In this novel Tarar draws a parallel between cosmopolitanism in powerful countries and concept of nationalism in dependent countries. To support his binary-based argument Tarar introduces another character namely Roshan, a son of Ameer Bakhsh, who gets killed in Pakistan at the time when people are protesting against blasphemous sketches of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), published in Denmark. The only reason he is assassinated is that his eyes and

complexion share resemblance with those of Europeans involved in the blasphemy.

4. Metafiction in *Khas-o-Khashak Zamanay*

Metafiction owes multidimensional linguistic and narrative explanations. This technique bridges the gap between images of consciousness and narrative of real historical episodes. The text inherits the fictional fibers from outer world, and shares contemporary status of social and psychological responses to the society in a way that real historical scenarios seem to be artifact. Many a writer has been employing this narrative technique by blending this with fictional elements and historical events, to link fiction and reality of a particular era. The element of belief by directly addressing a reader through a protagonist has been a tool to avoid the impulse of fabrication, traditionally. *Khas O Khashak Zamanay* is difficult to grasp in first go for many reasons, and one of them is excessive use of Metafictional elements.

The plot of the novel begins on fifth page. It is the depiction of a village house where an old, time-stricken rooster is about to die, and an old man Bakht Jahan is greedily staring at it. The owner of the rooster Noor Begum, a niece of Bakht Jahan, stares at her uncle with displeasure. This story lasts till page seventeen from where a new plot starts:

This wedding procession came from distant area, all of the people were riding horses, and this reflected that they were well off. Even their musicians were not on foot. At night when people were enjoying smoking, one of them asked “Is there any Bakht jahan in this village?”
(Tarar, 2010, p. 17)

This paragraph ends in six lines, and another plot starts:

My land is situated in Yazman Mandi at the far end of Cholistan, away from Bahawalpur. That land is not like yours, just throw seeds and they would come out...its barren , desolate and a kind of deserted area....
(Tarar, 2010, p. 17)

Apparently it seems that the description of wedding episode has been interrupted with another irrelevant plot. However, the writer has incorporated a postmodern narrative technique, namely metafiction, so that the reader may not feel himself under the influence of the authorial presence and interpretation. The histographic plot of *Khas o Khashak Zamanay* follows the life of Pakistan starting from pre-partition and ending up to post-9/11 era. While taking the land

and time as major characters of the novel, Tarar subscribes socio-political, and economic scenarios faced by inhabitants of both the countries. In order to distance himself from conventional and traditional writers, Tarar comes up with a breed of characters and incorporates them in a number of plots within plots. Had Tarar adopted the traditional modes of narration as many of his worthy contemporaries do, such a large geo-political scenario could not have been justifiably covered.

Among many Metafictional episodes in the novel, a significant story is that of a Saansi. Saansis refer to “scavengers”, who consume carrions, mostly dead cats, mice, dogs, lizards, chameleons and such. This metafictional episode begins from page 155. It is about an untraditional character Sarv, a resident of a small hamlet, situated alongside the village Dunya Pur. In this hamlet live those who acquire no status at all in an ethnic society. Why are they deprived of social and human status? It is because they do not adhere to any religion or ideology, a sufficient excuse to drop individuals from the ranks of society. Their isolation from society is based on their belief that religion or ideology restricts a person’s freedom and directs him to lead his life in a certain way with pre-determined dos and don’ts. Since Saansis are not bound to any religion and subsequent restrictions, they freely adopt a life style they deem fit for themselves. Tarar elaborates a few characteristics of Saansi in the following lines:

Unlike other untouchable inferiors, Saansis are not physically weak; they are very strong, sturdy and tall...they ascribe their physical health to their belief that whatever nature has created in the form of animals and birds can be consumed, and people who cannot consume all these creatures while abiding by their religious restriction, end up remaining weak owing to the shortage of life force which the forbidden animals and birds possess. (Tarar, 2010, p. 161)

The subplot of Sarv Saansi draws a bifurcating line between scavengers having no social status at all and those who enjoy status in a social stratum. On one hand, Saansis are literally the sons of soil for their sustenance is dependent on inferior creatures and carrions, which makes them inferior in a society. However, their loyalty to the land remains unchanged. On the other hand, the people who boast off their status in a society are often the victims of such practices that mar their faithfulness to their motherland. This binary can be explained in another way: the scavengers are closely associated with their

motherland because they consume crawling creatures, and they themselves are socially considered crawling creatures.

In the process of bringing one plot after another Tarar repeatedly introduces new characters with new settings. Contrary to other pre-postmodern writers including Manto, Qasmi and Krishan Chander, who adopted photographic style of narration by depicting the crisis during the subcontinent-partition, Tarar stands distinct because he uses a vast collection of characters, numbering to almost seventy three, with diverse range of conscious and sub-conscious plots – all knitted together into a unified scheme of narration. One of such instances is a plot centering Sadiq Bhatti, a railway TT by profession, who is responsible for checking tickets of passengers on board. The story has been covered between page numbers 289 and 291 of the novel. The said TT narrates the situation to Ameer Bakhsh after the latter asks him for the reasons of un-cleanliness prevalent in the train. He unfolds one of the unfortunate events involving large scale massacre that often took place during the partition when extremist from both the Hindu and Muslim groups confronted each other. Their hatred for the other's religion forced them to slay innocent people regardless of the fact that they had been good neighbors for centuries. The novel reveals bloodshed taking place at Muridke Railway Station through the eyewitness account of Sadiq Bhatti:

In short, Muridke railway station was devastated within fifteen minutes. Hardly a single being could be seen, and it looked as if some supernatural creature had wreaked its havoc. The wheezing sound of death could be heard. Those who had expired were luckier than those fell wounded writhing with pain like half slaughtered chicken thrown into the slaughter drum. (Tarar, 2010, p. 291)

This segment of the novel is based on the writer's imagination and bears true resemblance with real situations that humanity has been suffering from since time unknown.

This novel also narrates a multitude of protagonists existing in different plots and contributing to a series of historiographic representation of events related to the main plot. For this a representational stratagem adopted by Tarar is indicative of another postmodern trait, that is, existential crisis. Through this postmodern technique characters themselves are conscious of their fictional standing; it may be another possible fact that the readers take this fiction as a representation of history in a realistic manner. This brings us to a contemporary

debate regarding the identity of text as either an independent entity to illustrate only meaning or a tool to assign existence to historiographic events.

Similarly, the another subplot narrating the story of an Iraqi child, Ali Zaid is woven into the main plot. This character is the creation of another character, Inamullah; both suffer from existential crisis and are in quest for their real identity. Inamullah, the chief protagonist of later part of the novel, is found in his early infancy at the threshold of a mosque. Therefore, every one there considers him illegitimate and starts pelting stones at him to express their disgust. It is worth noting here that identity conscious society victimizes an identity-less infant. Paradoxically this infant is adopted by another socially identity-less character, Sarv Saansi. Later, the infant is owned by Ameer Bakhsh as well. Eventually he joins journalism as a profession and excels a great deal in his career but throughout his life remains conscious of his vague identity, searching hard for true parenthood. His quest takes him to the United States where he happens to witness such events that changed the geo-political scenario worldwide. He keenly witnesses 9/11 episode and its following consequences on different Muslim countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

Here he writes a novel entitled *Sparrows are Dead*, by using Ali Zaid and sparrows as main characters, describing the changing state of affairs in Iraq. It is to be noted that this is an extract of the novel which Tarar has embedded in his main plot through a protagonist Inamullah. In this excerpt, Ali Zaid is passing through his early childhood at a time when American forces are busy in Iraq to help people get rid of the dictator Saddam Hussain. In this war of freedom from dictator, Ali Zaid loses his mother while the sparrow loses its life. When seeing the sparrow on the verge of extinction he asks why she is laying down her life, in reply to that the sparrow says; "Because...I am an Iraqi sparrow" (Tarar, 2010, p. 661).

On textual level the characters of Inamullah and Ali Zaid are suffering identity problems, with the former being conscious identity-seeker and latter unaware of his identity on account of his infancy. On the other side the sparrow and Zaid's mother are able to identify themselves as Iraqi nationalists; this is why they accept death readily considering it a matter of pride, as is shown by the last words uttered by the sparrow.

Thus the preceding section enables us to state that historical meanings are unstable and provisional when the postmodern technique of metafiction is used in a literary work. The purpose of this narrative technique is to invite the

postmodern readers to explore historical links by themselves through the present text, though the text does not dictate him to choose any particular dimension of the facts. It is so because postmodern critics take the text as an independent entity, providing the readers liberty to trace out meanings, context and political history in consonance with his individual approach.

5. Intertextuality in *Khas oKhashak Zamanay*

The dependency of existing text on previously produced texts at large is called Intertextuality. The idea that contemporary piece of literature does not stand alone but has some cultural or linguistic relationships with the previous texts is the essence of Intertextuality. This idea was formulated by a French philosopher Julia Kristeva in the 1960's. Saussure emphasized the significance of association of a sign with the other that is assumed as one of the drawbacks of structuralism, because it considers the text meaningful in isolation. According to the structuralists, these are the codes which construct a structural paradigm. On other hand Julia Kristeva, who is a poststructuralist theorist, describes the texts developing on axes, horizontal and vertical. Horizontal axis develops a semantic comprehension that falls between the writer of the text and the reader, and vertical axis bridges up missing or existing links between previous texts. The theory of Intertextuality encompasses that the text is always associated with others. Their internal existence grasps external sources that even do not come into the mind of manufacturer. As Michel Foucault says:

The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network... The book is not simply the object that one holds in one's hands... Its unity is variable and relative. (Foucault, 1974, p. 23)

The themes of social reforms, independence, war and partition of Indo-Pak subcontinent in *Khas o Khashak Zamanay* have some Intertextual references with Tarar's previous novel *Raakh* and a number of other fictional works produced by different writers on these themes.

Writers on partition have been invoking themes of human condition, misery and loss during second largest migration of human history in 1947. Jaats, the sons of soil, whose association with mother-earth is stronger than any religion, fall

apart on the occasion of partition. Tarar fundamentally debates on the philosophy of religion that proves stronger than any other philosophy. Tarar endorses the notion of the father of nation through Intertextual references. The indigenous colonizers assumed that farmers whose religious awareness is mild, would not be showing resistance but historically these were the people who showed their association with religion and their mother-earth simultaneously. Punjab was a region that faced lot of bloodshed. The people, who have been living together sharing same cultural manifestations, finally slaughtered each other in the name of religious division. Then again on the occasion of the fall of Dhaka, philosophical ideology and religious ideology faced resistance.

He the tiger, son of bitch belonged to an impotent shameless race, surrendered before those Aroras, who were only Sikhs neither Sikhs nor Sardars. I did not allow them to sit on cart with me, for them I used to manage a stool, and he surrendered before them... (Tarar, 2010 P. 404)

The historical event of surrender by Pakistan's General Niazi has been referred to as a text to decipher political codes of a particular chaotic era. The General was known as the Tiger, but he surrendered and signs a document of surrender along with his fellow soldiers before Indian Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Arora, who was the commander-in-chief of Indian Army. Another ceremony of surrender in which Brigadier Baqir Siddiqui who was the chief of staff, eastern Command Pakistan Army surrendered with his 12,000 men before general Gandharv Nagra on 21st December 1971. When asked about his feeling on surrender, he repeats smilingly as if rehearses opponent General's words:

As the General has said, "It does happen, it's part of the game."

When he is further asked, why did he surrender? He utters a historical sentence that reflects the philosophy of prime military officer of that very time "For the consideration of Human life"

After putting their arms down on their own land they take some steps back as these are the standard orders, the Indian general sees that some of the men have not put their guns and pips down on the ground. Among such coward men, a man who was a true Sardar, a true Jaat the son of Bakht Jahan commits suicide. He does not bear this surrender, for him dying for his country is much more respectful than living as a prisoner in the custody of Indian Army.

Beside him (Bakht jahan) a man was lying on the ground downward, there was a hole between his shoulders, around which the uniform was

torn and had turned black. From the mouth and nostrils of this man the blood was flowing, in whose pursuit Bakht Jahan's horse had come here.... (Tarar, 2010, p. 409)

This intertext refers to the same scene which has been mentioned above depicting the surrender whereas some of the soldiers do not put down their arms. Here in *Khas O Khashak Zamanay* the son of Bakht Jahan Gobind Singh, later on embraces Islam and is named as Fateh Muhammad does not surrender before Indian Army and sacrifices his life for his country. As mentioned by Prof. Fateh Muhammad Malik, Tarar's nationalism is dominant in his writing and through Intertextual references he reveals the facts which remain overshadowed due to some political reasons. The reason behind this defeat is still a mystery, but the fiction writers like Mustansar Hussain Tarar dare to reveal through fictional-knitting, this dark chapter of Pakistan's history. *Khas o Khashak Zamanay* is deepened with many intertexts that remind us some of the important fictional works in Urdu and English, such as *Main Ne Dhaka Doobtay Dekha* by Siddique Salik, *Dhaka Se Farar* by A. Hameed, *Jab Dhaka Jal Raha Tha* by A.Hameed, *Falling Man* by Don DeLillo and *One Hundred years of Solitudes*.

This is one of the reasons that Safeer Awan (2013) rates *Khas O Khashak Zamanay* as an equivalent to *One Hundred Years of Solitude* because it incorporates two historical events like Garcia's novels, i.e. the events of the great partition in 1947, and the occasion of second partition in 1971. Through Intertextual techniques Tarar debates postcolonial concerns too. The interference of military dictatorships, aftermaths of Martial law, injustice, power games among politician, lack of political and economic stability, wars with India and poor foreign policy, forced the generations into socio-political and ideological chaos.

Khas O Khashak Zamanay extends the political history of Pakistan to another tragic event which took place thousands of miles away from Pakistan but it directly laid the foundation of a new postcolonial-post9/11 narrative. Pakistan's political history as shared with Afghanistan is multidimensional and multilayered. After the cold war, power of mujahidin fueled by the establishment weakened owing to a U-turn taken by the military ruler General Musharraf. As a consequence, a new discourse on war on terrorism, Jihad and post-9/11 neo-colonialism prevailed in the world in general and in Pakistan in particular. Pakistan was again under the rule of a dictator, Again commenting

on the character of dictator of that time, Tarar associates his philosophical ideology with some previous tragic episodes faced by Pakistan and its people. The myth of 9/11 and its characters from the Muslim world had been extended to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The deconstruction of the character of dictator once again integrates indigenous narrative of Jihad with new post-9/11 discourse. This reinvention relates to a chain of dictators with such political hegemonies of the colonizers in the world as a power tool. The search for this predominant signifier and its association with signified leads to infinity in this regard. As Barth says in his own words:

The text, on the contrary, practices the infinite deferment of the signified, is dilatory; its field is that of the signifier and the signified must not be conceived of as 'the first stage of meaning'....the infinite of the signifier refers not to some idea of the ineffable (the unnamable signified) but to that of a playing; the generation of the perpetual signifier (Barth, 2010, P.158)

When the text practices infinite deferment of signified, it provides a multitude of interpretations that reveal a possibility of many folds interpretations. The symbol of General from the episode of Afghan War and from the latest venture of post 9/11 US war on terror has some significant meanings. Tarar comments:

At midnight a commando general whose valor and bravery had no limits hurriedly rises from his bed...and picks up the phone while holding his trouser string, stand in attention. ...Yes sir! Are you with us or not, if not we'll bomb you to stone ages.

We are with you sir..... (Tarar, 2010, p. 510)

Mustansar Hussain Tarar gives significant intertext references from other fictional works, such as Macbeth, Hamlet, Orson Wells, and H.G Wells. Though the references have been misquoted as mentioned by Safeer Awan;

It is strange that a writer of Tarar's stature and prolific reader has misquoted two such references. On page 352, he mistakenly associates the skull that Shakespeare's hamlet takes in his hands with Macbeth, and Hamlet's famous soliloquy ("To be or not to be") is also associated with Macbeth. The second misquotation occurs on page 444. Here while describing the surrealistic scene of the fall of Twin Towers, Tarar compares it with 'Orson Wells' novel War o the Worlds. In fact the novel is of H.G. Wells. (aAwan, 2010 P.149)

This skull has been in earth for 23 years, from 1947 to 1970 the time span is spread over 23 years. On 24th years Pakistan faced the tragedy of Fall of Dhaka. The significance of the phrase “to be or not to be” is manifold. This phrase, as has been uttered by Hamlet in the play, highlights the uncertainty of life and death. The character of Ameer Bakhsh in the novel has experienced the ruthlessness of many a fragile times.

Conclusion:

The major part of the text is based on the history of the subcontinent that signifies a rich blend of human civilization and sharing sensibilities of communities. The construction of social fabric that is influenced by the theological narratives influences the human psychology, prevailing in all the ethnic spheres of the subcontinent. In order to fictionalize such complex history of the multitudes of people and their human condition, Tarar has adopted and adapted a number of narrative techniques that justifies the claim of the writers of this article that Tarar is the only writer among the Pakistani writers who displays cosmopolitan consciousness and who is well connected with the spirit of our troubled times.

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