

# Social Protest in Kashmiri Proverbs.

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## **ABSTRACT:**

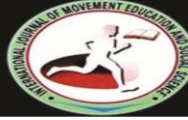
A proverb is a short sentence, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation. Therefore, it is common that they preserve words that became less common in society. At times proverb is rhythmic, including advice, sage themes and experiences, comprising simile or irony which is well known among people for its fluent wording, clarity of expression, simplicity and generality, is used either with or without change. Interpreting proverb is often complex. It can easily be transferred from one language to another. There is nothing to say certain as the derivation of proverbs, the same proverb being often found in so many nations and it is impossible to assign its pertinent. Proverbs are used in conversation by adults more than children. Proverb is a skill that is developed over years. There is a growing interest in deliberately using proverbs to achieve goals, usually to support and promote changes in society. Proverbs which present a value to be emulated or a convention to be observed are attributed to a group and not to a single person. Monitoring the actual use of proverbs in real life situations would give rich detail essential for determining their actual function and meaning. Proverbs are the treasury of culture and history. The major part of the Kashmiri folklore is full of social protest in the form of proverbs. The value of social protest in Kashmiri proverbs has not been studied in the light of various insights. The present study aims at critical and systematic analysis of Kashmiri proverbs in terms of social protest.

**Key Words:** *Ancestors, Wisdom, Rapacious, Misery, Peasants.*

Folklore is one such means where the conscious and unconscious mind of a man creates ways and means to overcome regulation and barriers. It is the traditional knowledge of the experience and practices of mankind. Only on this folklore and tradition, all art forms and the characteristics of culture have their foundation. Folklore is embedded in the lives of our ancestors. The beliefs they cherished, the rites they observed, the songs they sung and the wisdom they exhibited by proverbs, kept them as a well-knit society.

The proverbs contain grains of everlasting wisdom. It is distilled even to the present day. The popular traditions whether in the forms of fairy tales, fables, music, ballads and proverbs were transmitted from one generation to another. This kind of popular tradition is an important source of information helped the social scientists to identify the missing links and unknown facts. It is the mirror of society. Social protest is the main portion of Kashmiri proverbs. (1)

- 1) Proverb: (Lat. Proverbium), a familiar saying, which has been variously defined. In point of form there are two species of proverbs; one containing a maxim directly expressed in a concise and familiar style; the



other in which a maxim is expressed metaphorically, for example, Honesty is the best policy and strike iron while the iron is hot. In point of substance proverbs are for the most part rules moral or still or more properly, of prudential conduct.(2)

2) Proverb according to Merriam Webster's dictionary.(3)

2.1) A brief popular epigram or maxim.

2.2) A form of the verb do used to avoid repetition of a verb.

3) Proverb according to Cambridge dictionary:

A short sentence, etc. usually known by many people ,stating something commonly experienced or giving advice ; the appetite ,says the proverb, grows with eating (that) there is an old Arab proverb that everything you write or speak should pass through three gates ; is this kind ? Is this necessary? Is this true? (4)

4) According to oxford Dictionary:

Proverb is a, short pithy saying in general use, adage, saw, by word, thing that is proverbial or matter of common talk. Proverbs, didactic poetical book of O.T consisting of maxims ascribed to Solomon and others. (5)

According to Kashour Laguat:

The phrase used repeatedly in his own shape. (6)

The genius wit and spirit of a nation are discovered in its proverbs.-Bacon. (7)

Proverbs embody the current and practical philosophy of an age or nation.-Fleming. (8)

Proverbs teach the real peoples speech, and open up the hitherto sealed book of the native mind.-john (9) Beams.

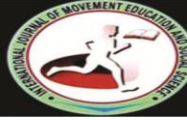
According to Lord John Russell:

5) A proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many.(10)

There is no doubt that a good deal of scholarly work has been done by the foreign and Indian scholars to highlight the social life of Kashmir's. But dealing with sensitive dimensions of Kashmir's social life no cognizance was given to the rich oral literature especially proverbs which otherwise forms the real mirror of Kashmir's social life. It reflects various aspects of kashmiri society and at the same time the dynamism behind those aspects during the critical period of its history that is 1819, A.D to 1947, A.D. (11)

The mentioned period was period of unique crises in the history of Kashmiri people. In the first place the Sikh rule and then maharaja's in Kashmir was marked by tyranny and oppression and regular drain of wealth and natural resources which led to the misery and poverty of the people. Besides that no one could have open their mouth in this situation, because freedom of expression was totally banned. Then the only way was to express him/her self that was talking in proverbial form. For example,

Shariki tu mazz cha vad vad



This proverb meant that Kashmir's are like meat, whether knife will put on it or meat will put on the knife, meat has to cut. It shows subjugation and oppression on Kashmiri people. It was silent and symbolic social protest from the people of the land. (12)

Another proverb of the same cadre is

Pooshukh ti nai tsulukh ti nai

Means if you couldn't overcome your adversary, why didn't you escape?

It helps us in explaining the most crucial questions of our history. The veracity of this tested experience of the society as the most viable means to survive annihilation on account of unbearable oppression and subjugation is so tangible that it is also borne out by written records, at least from the period when the state oppression became blatantly pronounced. (13)

Puz wanun chhuh achh kaduni

A man may as well take out his eyes as tell the truth.

Since there was a complete ban on the freedom of expression and close network of rapacious officials to monitor every activity of disgruntled Kashmir's, people recorded silently the agonies in their slates of their minds and transmitted them indirectly through various categories of oral literature especially through proverbs. Few examples are as mentioned under:

Dazihmatshih wanjijih zulahbuk

Clawing the burnt liver.

Dazanas dod.

There is pain from a burn. (14)

During the crises period, state being aware of the magnitude of the peoples discontent. It used every device to demoralize from expressing their heart-felt feelings against the corrupt practices of the official agencies. But inspite of every exercise of official restriction, people symbolically expressed their sad plight through innumerable proverbs.

Bati bati pyaadi pati

The entire produce of the peasant is a state monopoly. (15)

Yed dag che bed dug

Pain of stomach is a big pain. (16)



These proverbs not only depict the official oppression and the corrupt behavior of the rapacious revenue officials. It is the imprint of mentality of Kashmir's which was the indirect outcome of the inhuman principles of governance.

Beti betchy asun

Rice is only source of sustenance or

Beti phelyn pyon

To cry repeatedly for rice. (17)

These proverbial expressions suggest that rice though produced in abundance in the valley but failed to produce food to the tiller or peasants. They were heavily taxed and mercilessly beaten by inhuman revenue officials and their local agents like muqadams, patwaris, sozuwals and shakdars etc. (16) fate of the irony was that administration exported large quantity of rice to Ladakh, Tibet, Iskardu and other parts of Central Asia, but the poor peasants passed their worse days mostly on vegetables, like cabbage, turnip, potato and pumpkins. That is why people said, (18)

Wane gow sare pethe

Enough is enough now.

The frequent incidents of open encounter between the exploited peasants and their exploiters cannot be ruled out when it is borne in mind that they were almost robbed of their produce. When in the face of repressive policy of the state it became impossible to fight against oppressive masters, the peasants avenged their oppression by joining hands with oppressors or acted as mute spectators. Thus a proverb in Kashmir got birth.

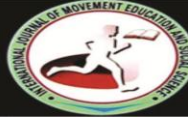
Akis dezan dar ti baiyekh washnavan athei

A man's beard is burning and another is warming his hands upon it. Or

Tul palove ti wuth tchalove

Take your clothes and let us run away. (19)

In the introduction I had identified three main areas of the proverbs, wisdom, information and social protest. It is proved that proverbs reflect the wisdom of the community; they acquired textual status when they are perceived by society and authored by elders from legendary times. The actual use of proverbs in real life situations would give rich detail essential for determining their actual function and meaning. It has been underlined that the importances of proverbs are source of information not only to supplement. What is already available to us, but more importantly to bridge the gap where the conventional sources are not forthcoming. Social protest is the main component of kashmiri proverbs as the society got so many cruel reigns, or situation which gave birth to the treasury of everlasting wisdom full proverbs.



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