

Subjugation of Humans in Kashmir Valley; A Semiotic Study

* **Sajida Bibi,**

Lahore Leads University , Lahore.

Dr. Tariq Usman,

University of Sargodha, Sargodha.

Mr. Abdul Karim Hussain,

University of Mianwali, Mianwali.

Muhammad Rashid.

M.Phil English Linguistics. Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan.

*Email of the corresponding author: <mailto:ramzanmalik122@gmail.com>

ABSTRACT

Signs are great sources to describe the intended meanings and the living situation of any region. These signs and their analysis is made through the semiotic analysis. Present study is conducted in the descriptive way and the subjugated life of Kashmiris is exposed in this research. Adopted tools of analysis are the framework of Peirce (1985) and Leeuwen (1996, 2008). Peirce 's model discusses representation of the objects, their illustrating way and their description while Leeuwen (1996, 2008) model of semiotic analysis discusses the representation of the signs, objects and their angles. Model of Leeuwen (1996,2008) also discussed the relationship of the signs and society in the explored way. Five images are selected as the sample of the study and their analysis is made under the selected sample. The results describe the subjugated relationships of the suppressors and the suppressed people through the analysis of used signs, objects, and angles.

Keywords: Signs, Semiotics, Semiotic Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Kashmir was a unique situation during partition of 1947. While the bulk of the people was Muslim, Maharaja Hari Singh, the king, was Hindu and he decided to make Kashmir as the part of India. Since the early 1990s – indeed, since the first Indian boot landed in Kashmir – the people of Kashmir have been suffering as a result of the atrocities perpetrated by the Indian security apparatus against them. According to some estimates, 100,000 Kashmiris have been slain since 1989, while the official Indian figure is 50,000. Furthermore, many Kashmiris have departed the Valley, fearing that living there is no longer safe. The federal government of India changed the status of Kashmir in August 2019, adding to the hardships of the people in the Valley by separating the state into two sections, with Ladakh and Kashmir both becoming union territories. This basically revoked the limited degree of authority they had previously been afforded under the Indian constitution. While protests in Kashmir continue, there are only minor rallies in other parts of India.

The plight of the Kashmiri people is difficult to comprehend. People have been living in constant fear for years, and youngsters have been pelted with rubber bullets, leaving their faces disfigured for life. The Kashmiri people have refused to submit in the face of such crimes, and militants have continued to stage whatever action they can. However, in a circumstance where tens of thousands of Indian security troops have flooded the area, this is difficult. Pakistan, on the other hand, has been a crucial player in the conflict. It has also suffered dangers of its own, with constant fire across the Line of Control over the last year and has spoken out about the predicament of the Kashmiris at every international venue it can reach.

Over the last few decades, Kashmiris have been subjected to torture, rape, and deliberate harassment by security personnel, confinement, and a situation in which they no longer feel safe.

Semiotics, according to Peirce (1985), is a set of rules for studying signs based on specific social behaviour. In a similar vein, Peirce (1985) presented a definition of semiotics and showed his point of view by stating that signs are required to describe words since words cannot be adequately defined without the presence of signs in society. As indicated by Barthes (1974) in his work on fashion, boxing, and other components, the term semiotics has a strong feature. "Because there is difference in the culture and traditions of different cultures, semantics is based on contextual sense and changes from culture to culture, meaning extraction is very important."

To present the meanings and descriptions of subjugations of Kashmiris, the adopted models of Peirce (1985) and Leeuwen (1996, 2008) are there.

Statement of the Problem:

Freedom of living is the core aspect in the age of modernization which requires a peaceful environment. Subjugation of the people, even exists in the age of modernization but in the official records, it is neglected by the occupying states.

Objective of the Study:

- To present the subjugated life of Kashmiris under occupation through analysis of images.

Research Questions:

- How Kashmiris are subjugated in their daily life?
- Which pains and issues, they have to face?

Significance of the Study:

Present study is going to present the subjugation of Kashmiri people under the control of occupying forces. Present study helps to understand the semiotic analysis and its illustrations to present the hidden meaning, ideologies and social relations that existed between the suppressed and suppressors. The study is descriptive and it has analyzed the pains and sorrows of subjugated people so it will help to understand the living standards even in the age of modernization.

Literature Review:

Haussamen (2008) made a study on "*United States media depictions of the developing world: A eeping world: A semiotic analysis of the One campaign's internet web site*". The purpose of this study was to see how the website of one organization supports or refutes existing literature that claims that U.S. media portrays the developing countries in a negative light. The visual and verbal images of people in Africa on the One -organization's Home, About, Issues, and FAQs Web site pages, as well as how these portrayals build or combat cultural imperialism, are the subject of this thesis. On One's website, there is a combination of positive and negative representations in the visual and textual representations. Many of the messages follow the all-too-common images of negativity; nevertheless, there are a few messages that portray positive depictions of the developing world's problems. While there were a few positive representations of Africa's developing states on the four Web pages under scrutiny, the overall conclusion is that One's picture of the developing world confirms the broader conclusion of unfavorable portrayals in US media.

Ermakova& Fedotova (2015) conducted a study on "*Social Marginality as an Object of Scientific Research*". In this research, marginality issues in their lighting are discussed in Russian doctoral and candidate theses. It is demonstrated that the existence of strong social and philosophical traditions, the fact of unclear repercussions of welfare developments on various social communities, and the identity of a specific person define interest in studying problems of marginalization. The spectrum of distributions of dissertation research on marginality problems from 1991 to 2013 is disclosed using content analysis. The essay differentiates the perspectives considered in theses in several fields of research and vocational training. It has been demonstrated that many philosophical and psychological writings lack a practical purpose. It has been proven that theses in philosophy, psychology, and philology are based mostly on descriptions of a phenomena of marginality found in philosophical and literary works. The bulk of dissertation works are unified by the idea of recognizing population marginalization as a result of societal economic, political, and sociocultural processes. Some aspects of the emergence of indicators of marginal culture among military troops who have been sent to the reserve have already been looked into. Problems of marginalization and) migrants and children of labor migrants, b) the homeless who do not have a constant abode due to their involvement in financial swindles, c) jobless diverse typological groupings, d) re-emigrants are discussed in recent research. Prevention of marginal behavior and socialization of children and teenagers receives insufficient attention. These topics are current and will be the focus of future research based on real observation of a social exclusion phenomenon.

Anxiety and angst originate from the identity's existential dilemma. Angst and anxiety are reactions to power discourse that render people prone to reacting and so suffer from 'nothingness.' Hedigger further propagates on the topic, by claiming that "nothingness" and "selflessness" are the outcome of speech hierarchies that wield authority over the oppressed (as cited in Para, 2016). It is referred to as 'nihilism' by Nietzsche, in which a person becomes detached from his own identity and attempts to flee the world.

Manzoor (2017) did a study on "*Semiotic Portrayal of Marginalized Identity in Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man*". The goal of this research is to look at how semiotic resources are used to frame societal and individual identities. Social-semiotics is a theory that

emphasizes the social and cultural processes that propagate ideologies, generate power, and frame identities. The social semiotics theory is used to investigate the semiotic signs that form oppressor and oppressed identities in a social context. Furthermore, African thought (Black Existentialism) is used to demonstrate the subjugated retribution against power-dominated spheres in society. The qualitative research paradigm has been used as a primary research methodology for data analysis. The data is analyzed using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive technique. The data is made up of lines from the film *Invisible Man* that show how social semiotic signs influence individual and collective identities. Conclusions are reached as a result of this, answering the research questions and fulfilling the goals. The semiotic cues that define human behavioral patterns are displayed in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, as well as the struggle of the quiet subaltern invisible man for self-attainment and liberation.

Research Methodology:

Present study is qualitative and is descriptive in nature. The frameworks of Peirce (1985) and Leeuwen (1996, 2008) are also applied to manipulate the social factor while in this regard, in perspective of pains, ideologies, inequalities, life living, gender, social practice and the intended meanings are also analyzed in the study. To analyze the data, firstly, the selection of the images is made, and then the thorough observation of the images is concerned to measure and analyze them under the selected models. The intended meanings, ideologies and the power relations are disclosed in the study to highlight the living experiences of the affected people of war zones.

Leeuwen (2008) proposed the theory of images analysis under the social actor's influence. Leeuwen described that the representation of the social actors can be made for the purpose of relating them with the viewer in which the early first category comes as the distance. Kress & Leeuwen (2006) says that the identification of the shot variety is possible in which the different aspects are important as the name, closing, medium and the time. Close, in view of Kress & Leeuwen (2006) are the heads and the shoulders of the image of the social actors. The second category of analysis of the image is the angle through which the images are shot. While the third category of the analysis is the gazing through which the different aspects of gazing and symbolic can be viewed.

Peirce's Classification of Sign:

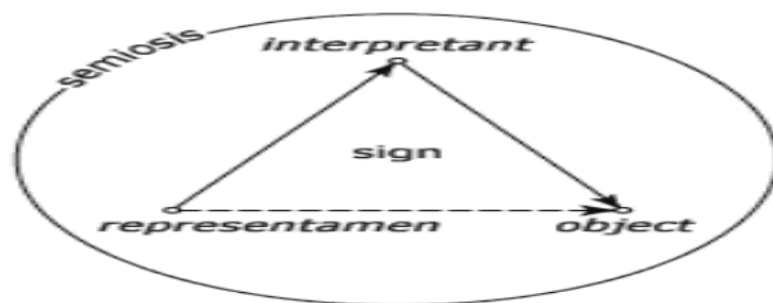


Figure 1: Triadic Semiosis Model
Source: Peirce, C.S (1994)

The main point of Charles Sanders Peirce's theory of semiotics is a tracheotomy that consists of three levels and nine subtypes of signs. The first level tracheotomy, presentment consists of qualisigns, sinsigns, and legisigns. The second level tracheotomy is an object which consists of an icon, index, and symbol which are the classification of signs based on the project. Icon is the sign which resembles the shape of the original object. The last level tracheotomy is interpretant, and it consists of rhyme, dicent sign, and argument.

Sources of Data Collection:

Selected sample of the study is the five images taken from different websites. The present study is based on the semiotics analysis of the images so these images are taken from the following sources.

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/30/world/asia/Kashmir-lockdown-photos.html>
- <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2021/1/27/a-ghost-that-haunts-living-with-landmines-in-kashmir>
- <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/kashmirs-war-orphans-suffer-in-isolation-and-pain/2465865>
- <https://ceasefiremagazine.co.uk/photo-essay-kashmir-bullets-for-stones/>

Data Analysis:



Residents run from the security forces' tear gas and riot guns in Srinagar on Sept 7.

Figure 1

Semiotic Analysis

Semiotic stands for the study of the signs and the present study has adopted the model of Peirce (1985) and Leeuwen (2008). Under the Peirce 's model, it can be observed that the objects in the present picture are the men, guns, and their interpretation is made as firing and the men are running while their representation is made in perceives of the affected zone in which the struggle is made by the running people to save their lives from the gunshots. This also illustrates that the people are prey of misery and they are not given the essential rights of living. It can also be observed that the people of Kashmir are mostly threats and their relationship is people-guns in which the daily wounds and the tears are there in the valley. Under the model of Leeuwen (2008), the three levels can be discussed. In the first

of the level, the first level is the tachometer in which the signs of escaping, saving, running and the human are used while in the second level the objects which are used as the weapons in the picture are shown which describes that the human is running to save their lives from the gunshots. In third perspectives, the angle is used, which denotes that the gunshots are being used in the picture in the straightway describing the no value of the people in front of the suppressors.



Afshana Farooq, 14, was treated in a Srinagar hospital on Aug. 9 after she was hurt in a stampede when Indian forces opened fire on demonstrators.

Figure 2

Semiotic Analysis

The adopted model of the study is the Peirce model and the Leeuwen 's model of semiotic analysis. The model of the Peirce denotes that the objects in the image are used as the "victimized woman", "the suppressed people as in disgrace situation" and the "hospital". The interpretation is made to show the victimized woman in the hospital being treated for the purpose of her life for safety while the interpretation of the picture is made to show the victimized woman as she is affected from the oppression of the illegal occupation through which the pains and sorrows are portrayed in the picture. The visualization of the image can be observed as the women of the valley have to face gunshot despite of gender and age which denotes that they lived at the danger and risk and there is no one to support them. Under the model of Leeuwen (2008), it can be said that the triangular method is used as the victimized woman is portrayed as the object being symbolic of the pains of the woman in the valley while the angular description is clear when the woman is in the critical situation. There can also be an angle that the woman needs the support and she has to be given protection and security. The security of the woman as presented is at risk. Being the stereotypical (as a whole) representation, it can be observed that the women of the valley have to face the gunshots despite their gender and status in the world.



Figure 3

Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics analysis is the description of the signs and illustration by conveying the hidden semantics. The present picture is the describing the hurdles and the standing of a soldier in the valley for the purpose of controlling and subjugation of the people. As the Kashmir valley is of Muslim majority so the subjugation is the controlling of that marginalized people. Under the Peirce 's model (1985), there are three levels of description as “objects” is the first one. In the picture the objects are the shops and over them are the living houses, before them is a standing vehicle, there is also a soldier and beside them, there is wire of hurdle. It can be said that presentation of the objects is made based on the controlling and expelling the life routine through which the people are controlled. The next level of analysis is the representation of presentment of the picture. It can be observed the picture is presented to show that the inhabitants of Kashmiri Muslims have no freedom of business and living while they have to be controlled by the invaders and occupied forces of Kashmir. Living standards and freedom of living, have no meaning before the controllers while the life of the inhabitants is based on the choice of the controllers. Leeuwen (2008) in his model describe different aspects of analysis. At the early part of “tacheometry”, the signs are presented of the “controlling”, “power”, “no business” and “empty road”. At the second level the objects are used as army vehicles, armed force personnel, wire and the closest shops which denote that “the army is not in favor of giving permission to the people for freely living”. These objects are of the forces which denotes that the forces are at the state of occupation and they have not concern with the living freedom and living standards of the people at any cost. The third level of analysis is of the angle, angle of the picture denotes the subjugation of the Muslim majority place in which the natives are not seen. “Curfew” and “controlling” are the existing situations which denote the marginalization and subjugation of the Muslims for living standards. Leeuwen (2008) discuss about “the social relation with the object”. In this regard, it can be observed that the social relation is based on the “inequality”, “suppression”, “marginalization” and “subjugation” of Muslims.



Figure 4

Semiotic Analysis

Kashmir is the Muslim majority valley where the humans have to suffer and have live under the suppressions of the occupied forces. The present picture is the true representative of the Kashmir suppression in which the men have to live under the marginalized rules. Peirce (1985) denotes that the objects, their representing and then representation. Artificial legs of the person, sitting before wires on the earth and cut legs, denotes that the living aspects of the humans are disturbed as they have to live under the suppression. Suppressor enjoy the power and controlling over the people and do not care about their lives as well. The semiotics also preset at the final level, that the image is depiction of the cruel and lifeless living experience in which pains and sorrows denotes the dead future. Leeuwen (2008) mentions three level in which the early stage is the situation and object description. The picture describes the “stuck life”, “dead future”, “lifeless emotions under wires”, and “subjugation” by the controllers. This denotes that the life of the Kashmiris is at risk and there is no rule of their living. Leeuwen (2008), mentions ah the second level in which the representation of the objects is made. This illustration described that the things are “cut legs”, “artificial legs” and “wires” which denotes that the life of the men is under suppression too and there is no rule of living the life and “no rule to let them live”. The angle, as the third level, shows that the life of the natives is under suppression and they are dealt cruelly. Inhuman actions do not care for their freedom and living standards. Leeuwen (2008) says that there is relationship of the objects with the society so it can be observed that the social norms and values are complete described here. Ruling and occupied forces have no concern with the humans and their living aspects. This denotes that the life of the Kashmiris Muslims is at dispirit situation where they are dealt as animals rather than as humans.



Figure 5

Semiotic Analysis

Signs and the images are core aspects of semiotics analysis which denotes the hidden and intended meaning through the pictures. Peirce (1985) discusses the relationships of the objects with their representing way and then their representation. At the early stage, the signs are “smoke”, “tear gas”, “shells”, “forces” and “loaded vehicles” which denote that painful situation of the living aspects of the society as they have to face these aspects as routine. Representing the way of the signs is made, in a way that “there is only relation of gas, and smoke, between the occupied forces and natives of Kashmir”. This describes the restless living and subjugation of human rights. Standards of living can be observed as totally abandoned. The life of the Kashmiris is based on the “killing, controlling, marginalization and occupation of their essential rights”. At the third stage the images are presented based on their purpose, so it can be illustrated that the relationships of the objects are posed only based on “smoke and tear gas” which represents that one is a suppressor and the other is suppressed and the relationship is only “suppression”. Leeuwen (2008) discusses three level in which the early part is of “signs” and the signs in the images are “smoke, forces, shelling, gas and escaping people” which describe the situation in pains and rests that occupied forces are intended “to control the people by force” and “is not at the state to give them freedom of living”. The used objects in the image are “tear gas, guns, army vehicles and army” which describe that the army has come to control them and their control is based on the “suppression, oppression, cruelty, inhumanity, subjugations, marginalization, and occupation”. Third level is the angle of the image “it can be observed that “angles of the image is denoting the “straight shelling and cruelty” and existing of the relationships of “suppression”. Leeuwen (2008) discusses the relationship of the images with the society and it denotes that the society is burning in fire and shelling rather than of peace. Society is tolerating the intensity of forces for required behavior which denotes that the society is living on fire rather than of peace.

Conclusion:

Semiotic analysis is the core phenomenon through which the hidden discourses, ideologies and the power relations can be explored. Present study has discussed the subjugation of

Kashmiri people under the occupying force. The study describes the crucial living and unequal power relations in the age of modernization. These aspects illustrated the relationships of “suppressed and suppressors” as “cut and cutter”, “killer and killed”, “existence of wall of tear gas and smoke between natives and the occupying forces” and “subjugation of rights of the natives”. The things which are described in this sense, are of the crucial level as the unequal relations exist and the freedom of the natives is confiscated. Semiotics analysis of selected images also describe the power relations between the suppressed and the suppressors and there exist only the relations of “force (applied by occupying army) and hit on face (on natives)” rather than of “basic human rights and freedom of living.

References

- Barthes, R. (1974). *The Fashion System*, New York: Hill & Wing.
- Ermakov, P., & Fedotova, O. (2015). Social Marginality as an Object of Scientific Research, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 197(2015), 2484 – 2489.
- Haussamen, M. L. (2008). *United States media por United States media portrayals of the developing world: A eloping world: A semiotic analysis of the One campaign's internet web site*, California State University, San Bernardino.
- Manzoor, F. (2017). Semiotic Portrayal of Marginalized Identity in Ralph Ellison’s Invisible Man, *PUTAJ – Humanities and Social Sciences*, 24(2), 147-157.
- Parra, D. J. (2016). *Heidegger’s Nietzsche European Modernity and the Philosophy of the Future*, University of Toronto.
- Peirce, C. S. (1985). Semiotics; cited in A General Introduction to the Semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce by Liszka, J. K. (1996), Indiana University Press.
- van Leeuwen, T. J. (1996). *The representation of social actors. – Carmen Rosa CaldasCoulthard, Malcolm Coulthard (Eds.). Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Routledge.
- van Leeuwen, T. J. (2008). *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis. Oxford Studies in Sociolinguistics*, New York: Oxford University Press.