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Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Bijender Singh

Email : [editor@expressionjournal.com](mailto:editor@expressionjournal.com)

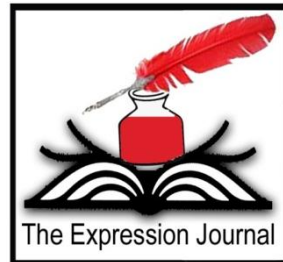
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## **DEGRADED AND WORST SITUATION OF KASHMIR: A STUDY OF KEKI DARUWALLA'S POEM "CHINAR"**

Dr. Satrughna Singh

Associate Professor, Department of English

Raiganj University

Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur, West Bengal

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### **Abstract**

As we all know Keki Daruwala is one of the most famous of Indian poets and he is truly regarded as one of the modern classics along with Nissim Ezekiel, Kamala Das and many more. He has written poems with the themes of current condition of India and "Chinar" is one such poem where he depicts the real condition of Kashmir which has been degrading. Chinar is one of the beautiful as well as symbolic poems written by Daruwala. Here, in this poem he tries to compare the current condition of Kashmir with the falling of Chinar leaves. Just like Chinar's metal-leaves are falling, the culture and the state of Kashmir is falling day by day due to terrorism, casteism, etc. However, it is one of the most symbolic poems ever written in Indian English literature. Let us try to understand in detail.

### **Keywords**

Chinar, Kashmir, Landscape, Symbolic, Falling, Condition

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## DEGRADED AND WORST SITUATION OF KASHMIR: A STUDY OF KEKI DARUWALLA'S POEM "CHINAR"

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The memoir says that Kashmir has not got what it deserves right from the independence of India. It has been divided into two parts so as the people. Kashmir's relationship with the Indian state has been a fraught one. Though it has the status of a 'special state', it does not have anything special except the pain and struggle of the people which cannot be found in any other state of India. From the time of Independence, more than 70 years have passed but Kashmir has not got what is truly its right. Although it is regarded as the part of India and is there in the communal and geological boundaries of the Indian nation, it is a province that is at the center of controversial political relations with Pakistan. It is also one of the areas of India that has always been subjected to militarization, political oppression and random state bloodshed.

*Chinar* is a poem written by Keki Daruwala was born in Lahore in 1937 and educated at Government College, Ludhiana and is a famous poet and story writer. He is also a former IPS officer. He has written twelve books and has published his first novel *For Peeper and Christ* in 2009. Daruwala's volumes of poems are: *Under Orion, Crossing Rivers, Winter Poems*, etc. "Keki Daruwala is one of the most substantial of modern Indian English poets" said M.K Mail and he is cent-percent correct in this as Donwala's poems are commenced as the treasure in Indian English literature. Vilas Sarang too shares his view on Daruwala as he calls his poetry as an outcome of a wide range of experience outside the ambit of Poets. He has joined the Indian police service in 1958 and eventually becomes special Assistant to the Prime Minister on international Affairs. His experience of being a policeman and the consequent encounters with the different people has led way to explore different situations, people and locales. His collection of poetry named *The Keeper of the Dead* in 1984 won him the most prestigious Sahitya Academy Award. Daruwala considers poems as a child e because "you like it in its totality and not because a line here or a limbs there." Daruwala has always been a poet who wanted to convey his concerns regarding social and national issues. His concern can be noticed by in his early poems such as *Ghaghra in Spate* where he displays the problems of the villagers who are- Starving for several days because of the floods. Makarand Pranjape in his *Introduction to Indian Poetry in English* portrays the literary scene and new artistic of Post Independence poets:

Delayed by the idealism of nationalism and romanticism of Tagore and Naidu, the aesthetic found rapid acceptance in the disillusionment of the post Independence era. Instead of usher golden age, independence India became a typical third world country, backward, corrupt, and hypocritical. The blood bath of the partition was the worst blow to those who professed non – violence. (Paranjape, 1)

*Chinar* is one of the beautiful as well as symbolic poems written by Daruwala. Here, in this poem he tries to compare the current condition of Kashmir with the falling of Chinar leaves. Just like Chinar's metal-leaves are falling, the culture and the state of Kashmir is falling day by day due to terrorism, casteism, etc. However, it is one of the most symbolic poems ever written in Indian English literature. Let us try to understand in detail.

The poem represents the darker reality of the world and of the life. Here, Chinar is a symbol to present such darker side of the society. With the fall of the Chinar the poet tries to convey the reality of the society and its evils. However, this theme can be clearly noticed by the reader throughout the poem and by the very image it creates.

In the very beginning poet gives us the picture of Chinar (a tree only found in Kashmir), who is decaying and is also facing the sunset, the decay of the day which is a symbol of decay of Kashmir. The poet beautifully compares these two elements with each other. In *Chinar* in the scenery, the original incentive is a falling of a Chinar tree. It is the time of evening. Naturally the tree is losing its leaves and at the same time the poet wanders and he happens to see the falling of these leaves which are putting along with the image of the red setting sun and the red leaves. However, what is noticeable here is the colour which is red, a colour of blood, and that evokes the idea of death. As the poet says,

The Chinar deals with the sunset with its own dusk.

You can hear the drip of crinkled leaf.

Isn't this what they call dry rain, this slow,

twisting dead-moth descent from the sapless branch? (Daruwala, 1-4)

Further, the poet says that we can hear the 'drip of crinkled leaf' which he compares with 'dry rain' and the picture is just like the 'descent of the dead-moth'. However, here the leaves are compared with the people of Kashmir who are 'descending' because of the tension between Hindu- Muslims and India- Pakistan.

In the second stanza the poet describes the beauty of Kashmir which will remain no longer as the poet fears that such tensions cause the decay in the beauty of the Kashmir. There are lakes and a river called Jhelum which flows in India and Pakistan. Poet compares the sound of the water with the 'clank of metal'. Then on he says that, "A wind alights on the tree."

Here, he notices the interference of the 'wind' which is forcefully causing the decay of the leaves. He further describes this wind a giant wind just like the terrorist who is forcefully causing the decay of Kashmir and its people.

"...the severed of from the mail of

the dying giant, each clenched

child-fist, of a leaf." (Daruwala, 7-10)

The above mentioned quote is a symbol of how the evil is succeeding in forcing the fall in the Kashmir. However, at the end of the poem, the poet declares that:

"...largesse of it the

the aching drift of it

the flame and the fall of it." (Daruwala, 12-15)

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The word 'largesse' which generally means 'reward' but here it is used in its satiric and ironic tone. The poet says that the reward Kashmir got for the bearing of such tension is the fall of its own. The terrorist causes the 'aching' on it and is now suffering from the pain and it is a symbol of its fall. Thus, this is how he compares these two contrasting elements with each other and creates a perfect picture of Kashmir.

Thus, in conclusion, we may say that this is one of the most symbolic poems ever written in Indian English literature and has the beauty of a poem in every sense. Just life Chinar's metal-leaves are falling, the culture and the state of Kashmir is falling day by day due to terrorism, casteism, etc. However, it is one of the most symbolic poems ever written in Indian English literature.

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