



India-Pak Partition Of 1947: An Overview Through The Lens Of Literature

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Abstract

Partition of India in August 1947 is result of the political and social process, which begins in 1857 when first war of Independence breaks out against British colonial rule. It is the rise of communal and sectional organizations which transforms the course of events to such a degree that instead of India attaining true freedom from British colonialism, it becomes the victim of machinations of colonial power, as well as that of the communal organizations. These unwanted and unexpected events divide Indian people on the sectarian and religious grounds. Hence through this paper, an effort has been done to focus on various aspects of human life during partition. At the same time, it throws light on the causes and effects of partition that affects the Indian life and makes them Muhajir living faithless life.

Keywords: Partition, Tragedy, Ethos, Pathos, Utopia, Independence.

Introduction

The long fight for India's independence from the British Raj, which commences with the Indian Mutiny of 1857, gains momentum after World War II. However, India's desire for self-governance is coupled with severe inter-communal disharmony. The Indian National Congress and the Muslim League cannot reconcile their views, which further add to the chaos ensuing escalation of sectarian violence. So in the year 1947, when the British finally leaves India, the country is divided into two independent nation-states — India and Pakistan. Following this decision, millions of people are forced to leave their homes and move to the other state, laboring through corpse-littered landscapes and not knowing what their future would be like. They could never have anticipated how this political move, which is far removed from their individual wellbeing, would turn out to be one of the worst man-made calamities of the 20th century. Houses are demolished and looted. A deluge of bloated and disfigured bodies impedes water flow in canals. Thousands of people lose their lives to ethnic violence. Even if they make it to the other side, peace is hard to come by. Makeshift refugee camps become the breeding grounds for numerous diseases. The bloodshed that followed in the aftermath of Partition irrevocably mars the history of India.

Partition literature is a portrayal of the calamity of Partition, a phase in Indian history that is very difficult to describe. It is a mixture of history, conflict studies, border studies, and politics. The multi-layered dynamics of the Partition of India are evoked and revisited from multiple angles in Partition literature. Its end goal is to go beyond and expose the standardized, uni-dimensional narrative of India's Partition that has been memorialized by the state. The literary portrayal of India's Partition brings into attention the number of human experiences. It also challenges the uncertainty of a nation and discovers in-depth issues of class, gender, religion, ostracization, and the meaning of existence. The breakability of our humanity and the depressions we are willing to stop in the pages of fiction, once again urging us to assess the concept of civilization itself.

When school textbooks fail to expose ethos and pathos during the phase of Partition, it becomes necessary to discuss and focus on various such events of horror and emotional threat of partition imposed upon our people. It is a general saying that – those who do not know history, history teaches lesson to them. Also if we want to make history, we must know the history of the event or any nation. Hence, the history of Partition must be revealed so that in future, the human will not see the trains laden with decapitated bodies and limbs, brutal murders, and rape that accompany the mass migration.

Discussion

When we hear the stories during partition from various sources, it arouses our emotions; it touches our heart. Though physically, it is the partition of two countries, one creates the other but in true sense it is the partition of two brothers of same mother. It is the detachment of emotions; it is the dissociation of so called long lived relations among the members of the same family. It is the partition of culture and inheritance. It is the loss of faith and expectation. It is the partition of great artists and singers and what not? No doubt, it is the partition of property and power but more than that it is the great blow on human minds, great impact on human heart. And hence naturally the literature produced by various writers on Partition reflects the degenerating impact. In this context, Foucault uses the term "heterotopia" to describe spaces that have more layers of meaning or relationships to other places. In general, a heterotopia is a physical representation of a utopia. Heterotopia is built on the concept of utopia. Utopia means a place that is not or a place which doesn't actually exist. Heterotopia means a place that is different. It is a 20th century concept because it best describes 20th century life and beyond. A heterotopia is a place that embodies society, but in an inaccurate way which calls to us particular idealised features of the culture. Heterotopias try to inspire conversion from a space of chaotic governance and leadership to a mapped, organised one. Partition gives birth to Muhajir. Muhajir or Mohajir is an Arabic word meaning migrant which is also used in other languages spoken by Muslims, including English. In English, this term and its derivatives may refer in a general sense to individuals or groups.

Partition is commonly understood as the division of a state into two or more entities, where at least one successor state assumes continuity with the pre-divided whole. Partition leaves pockets of disputed territory such as Kashmir, a Muslim-majority region whose Hindu ruler opts to join India rather than Pakistan. The two states have clashed repeatedly over Kashmir, which remains one of the world's most heavily militarized regions. Partition triggers riots, mass casualties, and a colossal wave of migration. Millions of people move to what they hope would be safer territory, with Muslims heading towards Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs in the direction of India. Ever rising religious hostilities between Hindus and Muslims; Provincial Elections (1937); Compromise attempts fail; Violence breaks out in August 1946; Mountbatten decides on partition. Partition literature humanizes the anguish of the ones who get removed from their places of worship, who board trains hoping to reach "home" only to lose their lives to mass hysteria, and those who have to turn against their beloved neighbors to survive.

The literary depiction of India's Partition brings into attention the variety of human experiences. It also contests the unpredictability of a nation and explores in-depth issues of class, gender, religion, ostracization, and the meaning of existence. People who have never left their respective parishes are suddenly forced to pick one nation over another and migrate to lands unknown; leaving behind their kith and kin and everything they hold dear. Partition literature is an experienced illustration of the gory inheritance of religious fanaticism. It also showcases how ordinary humans are capable of acts of unexpected vehemence.

Crux of Partition Literature

Almost all the literary works about partition have this common characteristic and almost all authors who write about partition depict the hooliganism, treachery, barbarism, rape, murder, abduction and rage for each other in their works. It attempts to bring out a record how human disaster and the pitiable condition that have been taken place during the gruesome period of the partition. Partition Literature that generally talks about the human cost of independence and partition is mainly Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956), several short stories such as *Toba Tek Singh* (1955) by Saadat Hassan Manto, Urdu poems such as *Subh-e-Azadi* (*Freedom's Dawn*, 1947) by Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* (1974), Manohar Malgonkar' and many others. One reason for partition is the two-nation theory, which is presented by Syed Ahmed Khan and states that Muslims and Hindus are too different to be in one country. Pakistan becomes a Muslim country. All these poets try to convey the pain and sufferings of the people during partition through their poems. While recounting the trauma of Partition, they have described it as a 'division of hearts'.

Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh

This is the story of a village where Sikhs and Muslims coexist peacefully for ages. But overnight, everything changes, and the villagers find themselves amidst an abyss of religious

hate. This novel also has a love story between a Sikh boy and a Muslim girl blooming in the background, a love that transcends the pettiness of sectarianism.

Difficult Daughters by Manju Kapur

The book talks about unsatisfactory marriages, complex familial relationships, and the place of women in a society bent on misusing them. It draws the readers into a world where women's existence is identical with perpetual predicament.

Ice Candy Man by Bapsi Sidhwa

Lenny, our child narrator, puts forward the complicated and shifting political repercussions of the Partition of India. The abduction of her beloved nanny turns her life upside down. This coming-of-age novel is an extraordinary search of sexuality, love, class hierarchy, and women's role in the majestic scheme of things.

The Night Diary by Veera Hiranandani

This is a young adult novel of a half-Muslim and half-Hindu young girl who doesn't know which part of divided India she belongs to. What happens if we remove religion from the equation? Why is religion given so much importance if it is the source of all destruction? Attractively written and suggestive, this novel is flawless for every beginner trying to measure the events of the Partition. In August 1947, the British decides to end their 200-year long rule in the Indian subcontinent and to divide it into two separate nations, Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India. Spurred by the Pakistan Movement, which seek a homeland for the Muslims of British India, and election victories in 1946 by the All-India Muslim League, Pakistan gains independence in 1947 after the Partition of the British Indian Empire, which awarded separate statehood to its Muslim-majority regions

Ethos and Pathos in Partition Literature

Partition Literature is the literature of suffering and sorrows of human values and hatred. These human values cannot be regained like elastic once breaks. It is said that history repeats on itself. But we have to see if such type of history is not repeated in future that shatters the humanity. And that will be possible if we possess a cosmopolitan heart and view and with a vision to see any individual on this earth not as a person of particular religion or sect but as a human being. Here comes the concept of Vasudev Kutumbakam, i.e. the whole universe is mine. Here finds the need of teachings of great saints like Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj who puts man in the center in place of god and think about universal brotherhood saying- Sabke liye khula hai mandir yah hamara; Aao koi bhi panthi, aao koi bhi dharmi. Here we find the need of Walt Whitman's philosophy who believes that the Kelson of the universe is Love. Here we remind the teaching of Lord Buddha and Bhagwan Mahaveer who stress on love. Because love is such a thread by which the whole human beings on the globe would be bound. Love

does not discriminate between the rich and the poor, between the class and the creed; between the haves and have nots. It is possible when one has faith and respect for another.

Conclusion

The partition of Indian subcontinent into two nations on the basis of religion is seen as an inevitable price paid for the freedom of country from the British colonial powers. The partition literature produced by the writers of Indian subcontinent provides us an opportunity to understand how common people during the predicament of partition suffer, especially women are subjected to violence by the men of opposite communities, children are traumatized and men are brutally killed. Arson, bloodshed, rape, murder, lynching, abduction etc. are the common happenings during partition and very artistically and realistically represented by the writers of Partition Literature. Among all the dreadful consequences of partition there are still certain things for consolation i.e., though the subcontinent is divided into two nations but the language and literature are not partitioned. The Two-Nation Theory claims Hindi to be the language of Hindu and Urdu of Muslims. The Hindus who stay in Pakistan and Muslims who do not migrate from India to Pakistan keep the both languages alive in both Countries. The partition fails to destroy the languages of the people. Hence literature is not partitioned and will never be.

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