



SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR
CENTRE FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

(Optional English : Paper IV Semester III & Paper VI Semester IV)
(Discipline Specific Core (DSC-C6 & DSC-C30))

Partition Literature

(Academic Year 2020-21 onwards)

For

B. A. Part II

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Shivaji University,
Kolhapur. (Maharashtra)
First Edition 2020

Prescribed for **B. A. Part II**

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Copies : 500

Published by:

Dr. V. D. Nandavadekar
Registrar,
Shivaji University,
Kolhapur-416 004.

Printed by :

Shri. B. P. Patil
Superintendent,
Shivaji University Press,
Kolhapur-416 004

ISBN-978-93-89327-89-2

★ Further information about the Centre for Distance Education & Shivaji University may be obtained from the University Office at Vidyanagar, Kolhapur-416 004, India.

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Students,

This textbook is prepared keeping in mind that you are distant learners. This course book is organized in such a way to help you study it on your own.

We hope that this book containing the Self-Instructional Material on Semester III and IV is basically learner-centered and will surely meet the needs of our dear students offering English as their optional subject at B. A. Part-II. The material is designed and presented in such a way that it will encourage the students to read and enjoy the units independently. The Module writers have tried their best to present the relevant material in a simple manner, expressed in lucid, clear and easy but dignified language. You will find this book innovative in its approach, method and technique.

The course book offers the students opportunities for remediation, consolidation and extension of the language already learnt.

Each module is divided into sub-sections and at the end of each section, there are small tasks. You are expected to write answers on your own. Though at the end of every module, answers are given, do not look at them until you have written your own answers.

You are expected to read each sub-sections, answer the questions given in the tasks, check your answers and then go ahead. If you do this sincerely and honestly, it is hoped you will enjoy bright success.

We wish you great success.

– **Editors**

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Each Unit begins with the section Objectives -

Objectives are directive and indicative of :

1. What has been presented in the Unit and
2. What is expected from you
3. What you are expected to know pertaining to the specific Unit once you have completed working on the Unit.

The self-check exercises with possible answers will help you to understand the Unit in the right perspective. Go through the possible answers only after you write your answers. These exercises are not to be submitted to us for evaluation. They have been provided to you as Study Tools to help keep you in the right track as you study the Unit.

Module I
General Topic 1
Partition : Causes and Effects

Content:

- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction
- 1.3 What is partition?
- 1.4 Why study Partition Literature?
- 1.5 Causes of Partition Literature
 - Check Your Progress
- 1.6 Effects of Partition Literature
 - Check Your Progress
- 1.8 Terms to Remember
- 1.9 Exercises
- 1.10 Answer to Check Your Progress
- 1.11 Suggested Reading

1.1 Objectives:

- To acquaint the students with the concepts of Partition Literature
- To study the origin and meaning of Partition Literature
- To study and discuss the causes of Partition Literature
- To study and understand the effects of Partition Literature
- To enable the students to analyse and criticize partition literature

1.2 Introduction:

The partition of India in August 1947 is the most noteworthy incident of the 20th century. The subcontinent was divided into two separate nations for Hindus and Muslims. This was the darkest event in the history of the subcontinent. All people of the united India were directly or indirectly severely affected by the event of partition. 15th August 1947 symbolizes the end of the British Colonialism from the Indian subcontinent. The departure of the British from the Indian subcontinent led to the creation of two independent countries. The division was based on 'Two Nation Theory' supposing that the Hindus and Muslims can't live together as one nation since both have distinct social, cultural and religious identities. These two communities are separate nations. The existence of Hindus and Muslims mutually together was finished and 'Nation within Nation' came to an end.

It is very aptly said that 'Literature is the mirror of society'. So naturally whatever happens in the society is reflected in literature. The split of Hindustan into India and Pakistan totally finished the peace of the region. As a reaction to all this, both Indian and Pakistani writers came forward to put the theme of partition on paper. Many writers brought forward the actual scenes of partition days in their writings. Hence, to get acquainted with it Partition Literature has been prescribed for B.A. II English students.

1.3 A) What is partition?

Partition is a division, a split, a disjuncture, a parting, a breakup. Partition is a kind of obstruction, hindrance, divider, and septum. It can be said that Partition is a kind of separation of that or those who were together/ united for years or a period over years. In the years of togetherness a kind of affinity, proximity, closeness, bondage and concern for others is/are created automatically. And partition finishes all that, destroys it completely, breaks it off, and shatters all those things into pieces.

In other words, Partition is going and being away from each other; being away from our close ones, our loving, caring and sharing ones. Partition is a kind of separation that cuts off us from our own people, state, country or nation, parents or even our family.

Partition may it be of families, groups of people, parties, states or countries/nations; it always crates destruction, devastation, havoc, horror, terror and what not.

In a way, Partition is always grieving, agony, anguish demise and sad end of so many established things.

On 15th August 1947, the subcontinent was partitioned into two independent nations: Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. This led to one of the greatest migrations in human history, as millions of Muslims trekked to West and East Pakistan and millions of Hindus and Sikhs headed in the opposite direction. Most part of the recorded history of India's Partition has stories of suffering of men, women, children, of how the event shook the lives of all those who lived through it. But Partition, like wars and other forms of violence do, affected women differently than it affected men—mostly because of the specific roles and responsibilities attached with the specific gender.

Women faced violence at various levels; communal, at family level and at the macro level. They were being abducted, kidnapped, raped, and killed. They were forced to commit suicide in order to protect the family honour. Furthermore, in the name of recovery, they were disowned by their families; their children were deprived of basic rights as they were considered illegal and wrong. The voices of abducted women during partition were lost under the dominant ideologies of martyrdom, purity and nationhood.

1.4 Why study Partition Literature?

The partition has generated extensive literature. Our understanding of partition is very necessary not only as a division on the map but a division on the ground and in the minds of the people- the uprooting and looting, the rape and recovery operation, riots and the moments of uncertainty in the life of the people.

The partition of India was a grave shock for millions of people across the Indian subcontinent. The diabolic episode of division of India and the communal riots that followed affected millions of people. Neither a religion, nor a community remained untouched to this horrible incident. All the people of united India were directly or indirectly were affected by the event of partition. Wickedness, violence, communal thoughts and pure evil exploded into powerful massacre came in its course.

But the partition is not necessarily an event of the past only. It has its own impact on the present. Besides man should always build his present on the foundation of the past to handover a better world to the prosperity. He should learn

lessons from the past. We have been celebrating the Independence Day and the birthdays of the leaders, who won the independence for us, we have been looking forward towards development and progress of the nation but not looking backward towards the partition out of which the present nation has been formed. Without a solid formation of the past, it's difficult to build a strong nation in the present.

According to Dr. Rajendra Chenni,' "The memories of the partition should become a part of our moral awakening, political awareness and collective consciousness." So to make people human beings, to make them know about partition tragedy and to make the strong enough to resist the repetition of such tragedy we need to study partition literature.

1.5 Causes of the Partition

The Partition was and continues to remain a highly controversial arrangement along with being a cause of much tension in the Indian subcontinent today. It can be said that the seeds of the Partition of India were sowed in the Partition of Bengal when the province was divided on a religious basis. Popular outrage and protests against this move forced the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, to reverse the decision.

1. British divide and rule policy: The British had been horrified, during the Revolt of 1857, to see Hindus and Muslims fighting side by side and under each other's command against the foreign oppressor. Hence they planned that the seeds of division were sown to prevent a unified nationalist movement that could overthrow the British. Both communal conflict and Muslim separatism in India are seen as being created by this strategy.

The British policy of Divide and Rule could succeed only because of internal social and political conditions in India. The British government used communalism to counter and weaken the growing national movement and the welding of the Indian people into a nation. The Partition of Bengal in 1905 based on the hidden agenda of separating people on communal lines was the first important step towards Divide and rule policy. British appointed unelected Muslim Leaguers in their place and openly helped the Muslim League take advantage of this unexpected opportunity to exercise influence and patronage

2. Morley- Minto Reforms in 1909: In 1906 Agha Khan led a Muslim delegation (called the Shimla delegation) to the viceroy, Lord Minto, to demand separate electorates for Muslims at all levels. The demand for separate electorates for Muslims was awarded under Morley- Minto Reforms in 1909.

3. The Lucknow Pact: The 1916 Lucknow session of the Congress was a scene of unprecedented mutual cooperation between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. The Muslim League joined the Congress towards the goal of greater self-government; in return, the Congress accepted separate electorates for Muslims both in the provincial legislatures and the Imperial Legislative Council. This came to be known as the Lucknow Pact.

4. The Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms: Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu and Viceroy Lord Chelmsford presented a report in July 1918 following a long fact-finding trip through India. And that Government of India Act of 1919 (also known as the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms) was passed in December 1919. The separate electorates were further expanded for Sikhs, Christians and Anglo-Indians by Montague- Chelmsford reforms.

5. The two-nation theory: The appointment of the Simon Commission (1927-30) and the Round Table Conferences at London (1930-32) again brought the Muslim League into activity by 1934 and Mohammed Ali Jinnah became the undisputed leader of the Muslim League.

The *two-nation theory* is the ideology that religion is the determining factor in defining the nationality of Indian Muslims was undertaken by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who termed it as the awakening of Muslims for the creation of Pakistan. It also states that Indian Hindus and Muslims are two distinct nations regardless of commonalities. The two-nation theory was a founding principle of the Pakistan Movement and the partition of India in 1947.

Choudhry Rahmat Ali had produced a pamphlet, entitled *Now or never*, in which the term *Pakistan*, 'land of the pure,' comprising the Punjab, North West Frontier Province (Afghania), Kashmir, Sindh, and Balochistan, was coined for the first time

6. The Lahore Resolution: In March 1940, in the League's annual three-day session in Lahore, Jinnah gave a two-hour speech in English, in which were laid out

the arguments of the Two-nation theory, stating, in the words of historians Talbot and Singh, that "Muslims and Hindus...were irreconcilably opposed monolithic religious communities and as such, no settlement could be imposed that did not satisfy the aspirations of the former." On the last day of its session, the League passed, what came to be known as the Lahore Resolution, sometimes also "Pakistan Resolution," In August 1940, Lord Linthig low proposed that India be granted a Dominion status after the war.

In June 1947, the nationalist leaders, including Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad on behalf of the Congress, Jinnah representing the Muslim League, B. R. Ambedkar representing the Untouchable community, and Master Tara Singh representing the Sikhs, agreed to a partition of the country. The predominantly Hindu and Sikh areas were assigned to the new India and predominantly Muslim areas to the new nation of Pakistan

7. The Mountbatten Plan: Mountbatten suggested the freedom-with-partition formula. League's demand was conceded to the extent that Pakistan would be created and the Congress' position on unity was taken into account to make Pakistan as small as possible. Mountbatten's formula was to divide India but retain maximum unity.

The division of British India between the two new dominions was carried out according to what has come to be known as the "Mountbatten Plan". It was announced at a press conference by Mountbatten on 3 June 1947, when the date of independence – 15 August 1947 – was also announced.

At the All India Congress Committee meeting, Vallabhbhai Patel said, "Nobody likes the division of India, and my heart is heavy. But the choice is between one division and many divisions. We must face facts. We cannot give way to emotionalism and sentimentality. Whether we like it or not, Pakistan already exists in the Punjab and Bengal. Freedom is coming. We have 75 to 80 percent of India, which we can make strong with our genius. The League can develop the rest of the country."

Conclusion:

Thus the partition of India was consequence number of reasons and a prime factor being the 'divide and rule' policy of British Government to prolong their

colonial rule in India which began as offshoots of Indian nationalism beginning to appear in 1857.

A.6 Check Your Progress:

Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/ sentence.

- 1) Which major event happened in the year 1905?
- 2) What policy undertaken by the Britishers regarding Indian freedom?
- 3) In which event were the seeds of partition sown?
- 4) Who led the Shimla (Muslim) Delegation in 1909?
- 5) When was the Lucknow Pact passed?
- 6) What is also known as ‘the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms’?
- 7) Who put forth ‘*The two-nation theory*’ for the first time?

- 8) Who coined the term *Pakistan* for the first time?
- 9) What was announced on 3rd June 1947?
- 10) When was the Lahore Resolution passed?

1.7 Effects of the Partition:

Partition was marked with large scale communal violence. The partition is the most terrible tragedy in Indian history. The human suffering created before, during and immediately after its happening has been enormous and continuous. Tormented voices mourning for the dead, for the lost were beyond imagination. Let us see the effects of Partition.

1. The end of colonial rule in India: 15th August 1947 marked the end of colonial rule in India and the country found itself standing on the threshold of a new era wherein the task was to build a strong nation. While India found itself independent from the British, it was still to find independence from social, economic and political problems that hindered India’s growth story.

2. Shattered Dreams: Partition triggered riots, mass casualties, and a colossal wave of migration. Millions of people moved to what they hoped would be safer territory, with Muslims heading towards Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs in the direction of India. These people were torn apart from their near and close people,

neighbours. All their dreams were shattered into pieces. Their lifetime earnings and treasures of life were mingled into the dust. They became homeless, shelter less without any ray of hope. Though India received independence, the condition of its citizens became very wretched and beyond their imagination

3. Mass Violence: Riots were rampant during the partition. Estimated death toll post-Partition range from 200,000 to two million. Many were killed by members of other communities and sometimes their own families, as well as by the contagious diseases which swept through refugee camps. Women were often targeted as symbols of community honour, with up to 100,000 raped or abducted.

Many eyewitnesses narrate the nightmarish and barbaric incidents of violence that included mutilation of victims including chopping off their limbs and genitalia; hitting the heads of babies against brick walls and pregnant women.

Families were uprooted from the soil of their ancestors. People had to leave all their unmovable property and move to the other side. Millions of people were displaced and refugee camps were overflowing with people. Apart from the violence, diseases due to unhygienic conditions also killed many people.

4. Huge exchange of population between India and Pakistan: The partition was followed by a horrific period of intense communal violence and population transfer that was not foreseen by any of the Indian leaders.

The traumatic partition of India and Pakistan included huge population exchanges. People in millions were uprooted from their homeland and had to leave behind literally all their properties and belongings overnight and travel on feet, bullock carts, trains and whatever they got for travelling in the new hope of new life and home. Around 4.7 million Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India from West Pakistan. And 6.5 million Muslims migrated to West Pakistan from India. Also from Eastern side 0.7 million Muslims migrated to East Pakistan and from there 2.6 million Hindus migrated to India. As per Census of 1951, around 2.23 million people went missing during this mass transfer.

5. Challenges created for India:

Mass poverty: At the time of Independence, the rate of poverty in India was about 80% or about 250 million. Famines and hunger pushed India to take external help for its food security.

Illiteracy: When India gained Independence, its population numbered about 340 million. The literacy level then was just 12% or about 41 million.

Low economic capacity: Stagnant agriculture and poor industrial base. In 1947, agriculture accounted for 54% of India's GDP. At the time of independence, 60% of India's population depended on agriculture for a living.

Linguistic reorganization: Boundaries of the British Indian provinces had been drawn and redrawn in a haphazard manner without any thought to cultural and linguistic cohesion. Continued demand for linguistically homogeneous provinces led to emergence of separate states and their identities.

This is how it took years and years for both India and Pakistan to resettle the refugees. In India the refugees were given shelter initially in different military barracks like Kingsway Camp and historical places like the Red Fort and Purana Qila. In pursuit of re-settling the refugees, the Indian government later took up several building projects like the Punjabi Bagh, Lajpat Nagar and Rajinder Nagar. The Indian government also came up with several schemes across India to provide provision for education, employment and other opportunities for refugees. Thus, Partition not only led to the division of assets but also created huge refugee crisis followed by the origin of Kashmir problem and developed a strenuous, complex and largely hostile relationship between India and Pakistan that prevails even today.

1.7 Check Your Progress:

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

- 1) ----- marked the end of colonial rule in India.
- 2) ----- triggered riots, mass casualties, and a colossal wave of migration.
- 3) The traumatic partition of India and Pakistan included ----- .
- 4) During Partition, apart from the violence, ----- also killed many people.
- 5) As per Census of 1951, around ----- went missing during this mass transfer.
- 6) At the time of Independence, the rate of poverty in India was about ----- .

7) When India gained Independence, the ----- level then was just 12%.

8) Partition not only led to the division of assets but also created -----.

1.8 Terms to Remember:

Partition: Partition is a kind of separation that cuts off us from our own people, state, country or nation, parents or even our family.

Viceroy: a royal official who rules an area in the name of the King (or Queen).

British Raj: rule by the British in India. This rule was upto 15th August 1947.

Lucknow Pact: In the 1916 Lucknow session of the Congress, the Congress accepted separate electorates for Muslims both in the provincial legislatures and the Imperial Legislative Council. This came to be known as the Lucknow Pact.

The Lahore Resolution: In March 1940, in the Muslim League's annual three-day session in Lahore, **Lahore Resolution** was passed in which were laid out the arguments of the Two-nation theory. It is also known as "Pakistan Resolution."

The two-nation theory: This two-nation theory was a founding principle of the Pakistan Movement and the partition of India in 1947.

1.9 Exercises

1. What were the chief causes of Partition?
2. What are the major effects of Partition?
3. Explain in brief British divide and rule politics.
4. Explain in brief Two Nation Theory.
5. What challenges were created before Independent India?
6. Comment on the huge exchange of population between India and Pakistan.

1.10 Answers to Check Your Progress:

Answers to 1.6

Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/ sentence.

1. The Partition of Bengal

2. 'Divide and Rule'
3. during the Revolt of 1857
4. Agha Khan
5. In 1916 Lucknow session
6. Government of India Act of 1919
7. Barrister Jinnah
8. Choudhry Rahmat Ali
9. the Mountbatten Plan
10. In March 1940

Answers to 1.7

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1. 15th August 1947

2. Partition
3. huge population exchanges.
4. diseases due to unhygienic conditions
5. 2.23 million people
6. 80%
7. literacy
8. Kashmir problem

1.9 Suggested Reading.

Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Penguin Books India, 1998.

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Kidwai, A. (2011). In *Freedom's Shade*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.

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Sukirta P. Kumar, *Narrating Partition* (Delhi: India, log 2004)

Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press,1953)



Module II
General Topic 2
Communal Conflicts and Violence

Content:

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 What is Communal Violence?
- 2.4 Communal conflicts and Violence after Partition
 - 2.4.1 Pre- Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence:
Check Your Progress
 - 2.4.2 Post-Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence:
Check Your Progress
- 2.5 Terms to Remember
- 2.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 2.7 Exercises
- 2.8 Suggested Reading

2.1 Objectives:

- To acquaint the students with the aftermath scenario of Partition literature
- To understand Communal conflicts and Violence
- To enable students to relate Communal conflicts and Violence to their life situations
- To enable the students to analyse and criticize Communal conflicts and Violence

2.2 Introduction:

The Partition of India of 1947 was the division of British India into two independent dominion states, India and Pakistan. The partition was outlined in the Indian Independence Act 1947 and resulted in the dissolution of the British Raj, or Crown rule in India. The two self-governing countries of India and Pakistan legally came into existence at midnight on 15 August 1947. There was large-scale violence, with estimated loss of life accompanying or preceding the partition disputed and varying between several hundred thousand and two million. It created communal conflicts and Violence on the larger scale.

2.3 What is Communal Violence?

Communal violence has a long history. In fact, communal violence had started before the arrival of the British rulers in India. The British rulers exploited the feelings of Hindus and Muslims by their policy of 'divide and rule'. The British obviously did not create the Hindu-Muslim communal problem, but they did exploit it for their own purposes from time to time. It will be wrong to believe that the British rulers were responsible for religious or communal feuds. However, the British rulers did play an important role in the promotion, spread and growth of communal problem in India. In India, the problem of communal violence did not grow up suddenly. It is rooted in the past. The communal violence has continued even after India became Independent. The British sowed such seeds of hatred that today Indians are facing its consequences even after 65 years of independence. The British rulers made religion a tool of hatred instead of love. It is, therefore, necessary to look into the problem of communal conflicts and Violence

Communalism is a term used in the world to denote attempts to construct religious or ethnic identity, incite strife between people identified as different communities, and to stimulate communal violence between those groups. It derives from history, differences in beliefs, and tensions between the communities. Communalism is a significant social issue in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Communal conflicts between religious communities, especially Hindus and Muslims, have been a recurring occurrence in independent India, occasionally leading to serious inter-communal violence.

2.4 Communal conflicts and Violence after Partition:

2.4.1 Pre-Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence:

Communal conflicts and Violence between the two communities based on religious and other issues already existed even before the advent of Muslims in India. The religious conflicts between different beliefs also existed at that time. The communal differences were already important aspects of Indian society when the British gained control of India. During the first half of the 19th century, there were several communal disturbances in North India. Therefore, it is important to note that in India, communal disturbances were regular feature before the arrival of the British. Prof. Donald E. Smith is of the view that British obviously did not create the Hindu-Muslim communal problem; they did it for their own purpose from time to time.

In fact, two factors contributed effectively to divide the common people along communal lines. There was a forceful communal thinking and systematic nurturing of communal atmosphere. The partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon on October 16, 1905 into two zones - Eastern and Western Bengal, was another instance of creating a gulf between Hindus and Muslims. The British rulers wanted to cut the very source of Indian nationalism and to divide the people of the region into two separate communities. After establishment of Muslim League gulf started appearing between Hindus and Muslims and several riots took place in areas, and places, which later on became part of East Pakistan.

Lord Minto wanted to inflame communal disharmony between Hindus and Muslims along with introducing the constitutional reforms. Thus, in 1909, the British rulers introduced 'Moreley-Minto Reforms', which propounded the principles of separate electorates. Under these reforms, a Muslim could vote only for a Muslim candidate and Hindu only for a Hindu candidate 'Montague Chelmsford Reforms' introduced in 1919, again reinforced the principles of separate electorates. These reforms largely affected the communal harmony. Development such as the 'Partition of Bengal' (1905), 'Moreley-Minto Reforms' (1909), the 'Indian Councils Act (1909)', 'Montague-Chelmsford Reforms' (1919), the 'Communal Award (1932)', and so on, are examples how the British systematically created rift between Hindus and Muslims.

During the period between 1858 and 1919, severe communal violence occurred in the country in which some occurred in places where no earlier history of

communal clashes discord. In the 20th century, the picture of communal violence gradually changed. During this period, the communal violence was planned, organized and well financed by socio-religious organizations, property owners and bureaucrats. From the point of view of damage suffered, the riots of Bareilly, Pilibhit, Mau, Mumbai, Nasik, East Bengal, Peshawar, Ayodhya, Agra, Shahabad and Katarpur are remarkable. The effect of Hindu-Muslim unity against Jallianwala Bagh massacre and its joint struggle in 'Khilafat' and 'Non-Cooperation Movement' (NCM) had a clear effect on the graph of communal violence occurring in the country.

In 1922 serious communal disturbances broke out in Bengal, Punjab, Sindh and UP on Muharram celebrations. In 1923, V.D. Savarkar propounded his thesis of 'Hindu Rashtra'. While defining the meaning of the word 'Indian', V.D. Savarkar and M.S. Golwalkar of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), argued that India consisted of one nation—the Hindu nation, with Muslims forming a foreign element in the land. This further increased communal tensions between the two communities. There were terrible communal riots throughout the country from 1923 to 1927, which greatly affected the freedom movement.

In 1925, the extreme Hindu Mahasabha came into existence and designated itself as Hindu Party caring for Hindu interests only. Communal antagonism between the Hindus and Muslims became intense and widespread throughout the year. In 1926-27, Bengal, Bihar, Punjab and the UP were worst affected areas. The leaders of Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha actively used communalism to promote their class interests. Communal violence was the most effective weapon that they never hesitated to use, in order to prevent unity of the working class of Hindus and Muslims. In 1928, communal violence was also recorded from Bangalore, Surat, Nasik and Hyderabad. In 1931, there were serious communal rioting in Agra, Varanasi, Kanpur and Mirzapur.

In 1935, The Government of India Act was passed which provided for separate electorates for Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, and Europeans and broadened the franchise to women and to small percentage of the 'untouchable caste', which further intensified the communal situation. In 1937, communalism entered into extreme or fascist communalism based on lies, hatred and violence. Consequently, one religious group was incited to hate another religious group. Therefore, the phase of mutual hatred and malice and separation on religious grounds began.

In 1940, the Muslim League passed a resolution calling for the formation of a separate State of Pakistan for the first time. In 1942, 'Quit India Movement' was launched. This movement once again threatened Hindu-Muslim unity. The expectancy of partition and frustrated feelings were responsible for the large number of communal violence in the year 1946. Serious communal disturbances were recorded from Allahabad, Patna, Bhagalpur, Kolkata, Mumbai, Noakhali and Dhaka (now in Bangladesh). The Kolkata killings of August 1946 was an immediate consequence of Jinnah's call for 'direct action' for the achievement of Pakistan

It is clear that with the active help of the British Government, the communal organizations were able to convince their co-religionists that their problems were because of the other religionists and the solution to these non-religious issues were available in religion. This was the basic cause of widespread communal violence between the two communities. It is a widely accepted fact that communalism and communal violence became a major problem. It grew along with the growth of the independence movement and reached a catastrophic climax at the time of partition of the country.

2.4.1 Check Your Progress

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1. The partition of Bengal was declared by ----- on October 16, 1905.
2. In 1909, the British rulers introduced -----, which propounded the principles of separate electorates.
3. ----- introduced in 1919, again reinforced the principles of separate electorates.
4. Jallianwala Bagh massacre happened in -----.
5. In 1923, V.D. Savarkar propounded his thesis of -----.
6. In -----, the extreme Hindu Mahasabha came into existence and designated itself as Hindu Party caring for Hindu interests only.
7. In 1942, '----- Movement' was launched.
8. August 1946 was an immediate consequence of Jinnah's call for -----
- for the achievement of Pakistan

1.4.2 Post-Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence:

The havoc of communal riots caused at the time of the partition, led to unprecedented loss of human life and property. The independence of the country was born in the wake of terrible communal holocaust. It is estimated that about 1,80,000 people were killed in the partition violence. Around six million Muslims and four and half million Hindus and Sikhs became refugees. The country witnessed the violence and massacres in both sides in 1947. The partition of the country triggered off a wave of violence—loot, arson, rape and massacre—unprecedented in the history of the world. Thus, freedom brought a great calamity for both Hindus and Muslims in India. It was believed that partition of the country had solved the problem of communal violence. However, partition further aggravated the problem of communalism and communal violence rather solving it. This was perhaps due to the one community's heightened distrust towards other and vice-versa. Indian Muslims faced problems of security and identity from the day one after India became Independent. The innocent Muslim masses in India continued to pay heavy price for creation of Pakistan. It created hatred in the minds of upper caste Hindus towards Muslims.

The period between 1947 and 1950 witnessed eruption of communal violence on an unprecedented scale. This was direct result of partition and displacement of population on large-scale. The partition of the country created a great deal of bitterness and communalized political processes in post-Independent India. Indian Muslims, even after 65 years of independence, face a host of problems. They are economically quite backward and illiterate than others in the country.

After analyzing the different periods, we find that the answer to the Hindu-Muslim unity lay in the ruler, not in the religion. Wars were fought between rulers regardless of religion. The clash was of interests, not of religions. The fight was for power, assets, territory or because of political grievances, not for religion. The British rulers created communal consciousness among the Indian people. It slowly seeped through our civil society. Thus, the society we have inherited from the Colonial past was a communalized society and no conscious effort was made in post-Independent India to get rid of this communal legacy. Communal forces aggressively exploit religion for political ends and use communal sentiments in spreading

communal violence for their social, political and electoral base. Thus, communal violence in post-Independent India is planned, skilful, organized and deftly executed. Communalism and communal violence is the result of widespread communal propaganda, and law taking no serious notice against this communal propaganda. Communal violence must be curbed before it forces secular citizens to think communally and join forces with the communalists. The injection of hatred in tender minds through widespread historical and media distortions is dangerous. Ignorance is a fertile ground for the growth of communalism. The media should exercise their freedom within the ambit of Indian ethos and values. To override communalism and communal violence, honest political determination is required. To put an end to communalism and communal violence, it is necessary that people of India embody such values as tolerance and mutual respect. The communal violence would be lessened if it is made clear to all that the government is both strong and impartial and determined to put down at any cost communal violence or any talk of communal violence. The government should give confidence to the people and put fear in the hearts and minds of the potential perpetrators and organizers of communal violence. Thus, the problem of communal violence calls for serious attention. Thus, even after the partition, the menace of communalism was very well present.

2.4.2 Check Your Progress

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1. It is estimated that about ----- people were killed in the partition violence.
2. ----- faced problems of security and identity from the day one after India became Independent.
3. ----- created communal consciousness among the Indian people.
4. It is necessary that people of India should embody values as ----- .

2.5 Terms to Remember:

Partition: Partition is a kind of separation that cuts off us from our own people, state, country or nation, parents or even our family.

British Raj: rule by the British in India. This rule was upto 15th August 1947.

Communalism: a term used to denote attempts to construct religious or ethnic identity and to stimulate communal violence between those groups.

Moreley-Minto Reforms: In 1909, the British rulers introduced ‘Moreley-Minto Reforms’, which propounded the principles of separate electorates. Under these reforms, a Muslim could vote only for a Muslim candidate and Hindu only for a Hindu candidate.

Montague Chelmsford Reforms: These reforms were introduced in 1919, They again reinforced the principles of separate electorates. These reforms largely affected the communal harmony.

2.6 Answers to Check Your Progress:

Answers to 2.4.1 Check Your Progress

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1. Lord Curzon
2. ‘Moreley-Minto Reforms’
3. ‘Montague Chelmsford Reforms’
4. 1919
5. ‘Hindu Rashtra’
6. 1925
7. Quit India
8. ‘direct action’

Answers to 2.4.1 Check Your Progress

Fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

1. 1,80,000
2. Indian Muslims
3. The British rulers
4. tolerance and mutual respect.

2.7 Exercises

1. Write a note Pre- Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence.
2. Explain Post- Independence Scenario of Communal conflicts and Violence
3. What is Communal Violence?
4. How can Communal Violence be avoided in today's times according to you?

2.8 Suggested Reading

1. Das, Sisir Kumar. *History of Indian Literature, 1911–1956, Struggle for Freedom*. Delhi: Sahitya Akademi Publication, 2006.
2. Jalal, Ayesha. *The Pity of Partition*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 2013.
3. Leonard-Mookerjea, Debali. *Literature, Gender, and the Trauma of Partition*. New York: Routledge Publication. 2017.
4. Pandey, Gyanendra. *Remembering Partition*. New York: Cambridge University Press Publication. 2001.
5. Das, Sisir Kumar. *History of Indian Literature, 1911–1956, Struggle for Freedom*. Delhi: Sahitya Akademi Publication, 2006.
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Module III

Train to Pakistan

Khushwant Singh

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3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

Summary of the Novel

Train to Pakistan (1956), first published under the title of 'Mano Majra' named after a tiny village on the Indo-Pak border affected by the partition is the very first novel in English on the most sensitive and explosive theme of partition. Later on it is named as *Train to Pakistan* to make it more significant and impressive. It portrays

the gruesome tragedy of the partition of Indian subcontinent. Let's see the summary of the present novel.

3.1.1 Dacoity

In the summer of 1947, the heat felt strange, hotter, dustier. Monsoon was late. Due to the riots in Calcutta the country would be divided in Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan. They blame one another, both sides killed, tortured and raped. Hindus and Sikhs abandoned their homes on the Northwest Frontier, where they had resided for decades and fled east where their religious groups dominated. Some of them travelled on foot, in bull-drawn carts, others crammed themselves into trucks or held on the sides of trains. Ten million people were leaving their homes in the summer of 1947. Mano Majra is tiny place. It has only three brick buildings. The home of the money lender Lala Ram Lal, a Sikh temple and a mosque. The rest of the village is a hut of mud. Lala Ram Lal is the only Hindu family, others are Sikh and Muslim families. Sikh has the land, and Muslims are only tenants.

The town is located on the Sutlej river, the largest river in Punjab region. The station is always busy and some trains stop at Mano Majra. In August 1947, five armed dacoits come out of Keekav grove near Mano Majra. The goods train arrives hindering their laughter about Juggut (also called Jugga) Singh's just for Nooran and telling them that it is time to go home of Lala Ram Lal. The leader pounds on the door with the butt of his gun, but there is no reply. The woman replies Lala Ram Lal's absence at home. They enter forcibly and out of the two women, the older begs them to take the family's things and offers them her jewelry. One of the robbers snatches boy from them and holds a gun on his face. Shaking with fear the boy stutters that his father is upstairs. They head to the upstairs and find Lala Ram Lal under a charopy. They drag him out and demand the keys to the safe, kicking and slapping him. He offers them money from his pocket and begs their lives. The leader hit's Lala Ram Lal with the butt of his gun.

After much insisting one of them stabs Lala Ram Lal in the belly with his spear. The robbers walk down the lane. They remember to give their gift of the bangles which they toss over the wall into the courtyard. For both Juggut Singh and the dacoits the sound of the goods train's arrival is a signal. Jugga argues with his mother about his probation. She worries that, if he goes to jail, he will hang like his father Alam Singh. Nooran is his beloved with whom he makes love. Nooran worries that

Imam Baksh, her father will worry about her. Juggat and Nooran see five men walking in the dark with spears and guns. They walk downstream. The couple heads back to Mano Majra. Nooran tells him that she won't meet him again.

On the morning the dacoity, the rest house is cleaned, swept, dusted and organized to receive an important guest. Hukum Chand steps out. He has been travelling all morning and is somewhat tired and stiff. The sub-inspector reports about the coming and departure of Sikhs and Muslims. Hukum Chand gives them a detailed account of the incidents that are taking place.

Iqbal walks out of the village feeling that the police are watching him. In town he sees Meet Singh bathing beside a well. Iqbal Singh says that he belongs to district Jhelum which is now in Pakistan. He is surprised to hear about a village murder. He asks Meet Singh many questions. One afternoon Iqbal can't sleep. His room is hot and smelly. There are flies buzzing around. Iqbal finds the code of morals puzzling in the village. He stands up to take a walk. Iqbal finds the door of Lala Ram Lal's house open and two women crying. He walks in the shade of alongside the wall of Gurudwara. Children and men have used it as a bathroom. Iqbal comes back to his home and lies down on his charopy. Later at the Gurudwara Iqbal meets Banta Singh and a Muslim man. They talk about the partition. Meet Singh talks favourably about English officers and recalls the photo of white British people including 'Big Lord' and his daughter at a prayer meeting with Gandhi. Iqbal tells them about English people and tells them English are cheaters culturally. Banta Singh is in favour of Britishers for the sake of security they provided. Later on Iqbal falls asleep and dreams of a peaceful sleep in jail. Subsequently Iqbal is arrested the next day. His attitude makes them uneasy. Ten men are sent to arrest Juggat. His mother comes out and starts crying. The constable slaps Jugga and leads him out of the house.

When Alam Singh was convicted of a dacoity, Jugga's mother mortgaged their land to pay lawyers. The sub-inspector goes to Hukum Chand to tell the magistrate about the two arrests. When the sub inspector goes back to Hukum Chand he says that he is sure that Iqbal is a member of the Muslim League. The police take the prisoners into the police station in Chundannger. In the evening, the sub-inspector goes to Iqbal's cell and says that Iqbal's circumcised penis and his inability to declare his purpose in Mano Majra are evidence of his being a Muslim. After this he goes to Juggat's cell. He asks him where he was on the night of dacoity. Jugga insists that he was not involved, but the sub-inspector doesn't believe that. The sub-inspector asks

for the names of robbers. After forcing both of them for the information the inspector thinks how frustrating it is to deal with two such different people.

3.1.2 Kalyug

In early September, the trains become less punctual than ever. Additionally, a unit of Sikh soldiers arrive and a pile of a six foot – high square of sandbags are piled near the railway bridge. Armed sentries start to patrol the platform and no villagers are allowed near railings. One morning a train from Pakistan stops at Mano Majra station. It seems different from others. It is a ghost train, men and women gossip about it.

Imam Baksh says that they are living in bad times. Meet Singh agrees that and says they are living in dark age Kalyug. The empty train was the center of discussion at Mano Majra. Mano Majra people start forgetting about their afternoon routine. At night, a soft breeze, blows into village, carrying the smell of searing flesh. No one asks about the smell. It has been difficult for Hukum Chand, who has been out his fatigue from all the corpses he saw earlier in the day. The headlights of a car light the verandah. Haseena enters and stands. He invites her to his bed and fondles her. Hukum Chand snuggles against her and falls asleep like a child. He feels guilty about his affair with Haseena. The sub inspector tells Hukum Chand that the Sikh officer counted more than a thousand corpses. Another five hundred were killed on the roofs of the train. The roof was covered with dried blood. However the Muslims of Mano Majra remain in their village. The sub inspector assures to keep the situation under control. Hukum Chand inquires about the dacoity and Jugga.

Haseena insists on going home but Hukum Chand doesn't allow her to go home. After inquiring about her age Hukum Chand learns that Haseena is an illiterate. Haseena tells him about her profession and her situation at Mano Majra. Hukum Chand frequently remembers his daughter to see Haseena. She mentions that she doesn't like Sikhs. Hukum Chand enjoys story of Haseena. Hukum Chand says her that he can sacrifice his own life for Haseena beyond money.

Iqbal is left alone in his cell. One morning, five men enter the station in handcuffs. Jugga becomes furious to see them. Iqbal overhears their conversation which is the mentions of spree of looting and killing. Juggat takes Iqbal's feet and massages them with his large hands. He asks Iqbal to teach him English. Jugga is unsure but says that the police have arrested Lala Ram Lal's murderers. But Jugga

denies killing Lala Ram Lal and tells Iqbal that Lala Ram Lal lent him money to pay lawyers while Alam Singh was in jail.

The sub-inspector drives as fast as possible to the police station and files a report about Malli's arrest. Later on the sub-inspector tells that he is going to release Malli's men, a decision which puzzles the constable. Then he sends the constable to see if the head constable has finished his tea. The sub-inspector also tells the head constable to ask if anyone knows "the Muslim League Iqbal" was doing in Mano Majra before his arrest.

Malli is frightened of Juggut the most violent man in district. However, Malli is also the leader of his gang and must not appear weak. The head constable leads them away. As he leaves his cell, Malli mocks Jugga and his companions laugh Malli mentions Nooran but Jugga ignores him. When Malli bends near Jugga's iron bar and starts to say 'Sat Sri Akal', Jugga's hands shoot through the bars and grab the hair that protrudes from Malli's head, as though to bring him through the bars and shakes him. While smashing his head into the bars, Jugga curses Malli.

3.1.3 Mano Majra

A brooding silence falls over village when Mano Majra finds the ghost trains bringing corpses. People are frightened. Villagers are looking at Iqbal and Juggut for their innocence in the dacoity. The head constable speaks privately to lambardar, Banta Singh about Sultana and his gang. The head constable writes to commandant to send trucks and soldiers to evacuate soldiers.

The head constable's visit to the town divides the town. Both Sikhs and Muslims start hating one another. Still there is the unsolved murder of Lala Ram Lal. There were lot of rumours about Muslim's disloyalty. Lambardar and Banta Singh try to settle down the matter but without success. Hence they advise Imam Baksh and other Muslims to go to refugee camps until things settle down. Eventually they agree to go. The Lambardar embraces Imam Baksh and starts crying loudly. His sadness ripples around the house. Imam Baksh tries to convince Nooran to go to Pakistan. But it is love of Juggut which stops her at Mano Majra. She goes out of house in rain and finds the whole town in great sadness as if someone has died.

Nooran goes to Jugga's home and gets blamed by Juggut's mother for the plight of Jugaut. Nooran starts crying and tells that they are leaving Mano Majra but it doesn't affect the old woman. The old woman asks Nooran to stop crying. She says

that she will ensure that Jugga will marry Nooran. A Muslim officer tells the Lambardar and Banta Singh that the Mano Majra Muslims are going to Pakistan. Muslim officer is skeptical about Lambardar's talk.

All of a sudden Malli and his gang of five companions appear in the crowd. They are accompanied by the few refugee that are staying at the temple. In this way the truck engine starts. The Pathan soldiers round up the Muslims and the Muslim officer drives his jeep around the convoy to ensure that everything is in good order. The Sikhs watch the convoy, which moves towards Chundannugger.

The Sikh officer then summons the Lambardar and Banta Singh, arrives accompanied by all Mano Majra people. The Sikh officer says that anyone who interferes with Malli's role as custodian of the Muslim's property will be shot Malli's gang and the refugees then unyoke the steers, loot carts and drive the cows and buffalo away.

3.1.4 Karma

Mano Majrans find the Sutlej river rose so high in so little time. The river is a terrifying sight but Mano Majra is far from its banks and the mud bank looks solid and safe. Still he arranges for men to keep watch over it throughout the night. He can't sleep. The sun comes up. The river has risen further. It's 'turbid water' carries carts with the bloated carcasses of bulls still yoked to them. The sky becomes overwhelmed by scavenger birds. Banta Singh still insists that a village flooded overnight. Seeing stab wounds, they all finally accept that these people were murdered.

That night no one could sleep. Late night visitors arrive in jeep and go door to door. The Lambardar angrily asks them what they want. One of those Sikhs replies that the village looks quite dead and, if it is not, it should be. The boy leader says that 'an eye for an eye' will stop the killing on the other side. People stunned by the boys remark. Meet Singh insists that there is not bravery in killing innocent Muslim people. The boy puts forward then a plan of how to kill three hundred to four hundred people sitting on the roof of the train. All the listeners are delighted by the plan.

In the midnight all go to sleep and the Lambardar with Banta Singh goes to the police station in Chundunnugger. The subinspector talks about the situation in Chundunnugger, which they evacuated the night before. He says that if he had shown

up five minutes later, there would not have left a single Muslim alive. Hukum Chand confirmed that all the Muslim family have gone. The subinspector asks about Nooran and Hukum Chand tells him that she is pregnant with Juggut Singh 's child.

Back to the station, the sub-inspector looks at Juggut and Iqbal and tells them that they will find that Mano Majra changed. Neither Iqbal nor Juggut knows what to make of the comment. The subinspector once again warns them about the see change in Mano Majra. He then says that all the Muslim have left and this night they will leave for Pakistan by train. If they do not leave, Malli and his men will kill them.

Juggut thinks of Nooran, he no longer cares about Malli. He assumes that Nooran will remain in Mano Majra, for no one would want Imam Baksh to go. Iqbal asks Meet Singh if there has been any killing in the village. He guesses that Juggut will also join the mob. The priest tells him that no one asks to an old bhai. In bad times, there is no faith or religion. Iqbal insists that this can't be allowed to happen.

Meet Singh changes topic by asking how Iqbal was treated at the police station. Iqbal tells that he barely does anything to these people as he doesn't know them. Iqbal puts his things into his sack. He wonders if he should face the mob and lecture them about their immorality. He pours himself a whisky and thinks that if one's mission is to wipe the slate clean, "may be it would be best" to connive with those who make the conflagration.

At the Gurudwara, Meet Singh is awake and sweeping the floor. Juggut comes to him. Jugga insists him to read a verse. He feels very strange. Hukum Chand is no longer feeling the elation that his plan gave him that morning. He feels anxious and foolish. He is skeptical of the depth of love of Jugga for Nooran. Hukum Chand also thinks about Sundari, and how she was not married to Mansa Ram. Finally Hukum Chand thinks about Sunder Singh. Singh was a big brave Sikh who had fought in battles in Burma and Italy. Food and water ran out and it was over 115 degrees in the compartment. Sunder Singh's children cried for food and water. He gave his children his urine to drink. Then the train began to move. He hauled the bodies of his wife and children and came to India.

Hukum Chand starts thinking about Haseena and asks himself why he allowed to go back to Chunddunnugger. He starts to cry as he listens to the rumble of the train in the distance, knowing that she is on it. It is a little after 11 p.m. There is little moonlight near the railway bridge. A jeep sits at a good distance from the

embankment. No one is in it, but its engine rumbles. A big man (implied) Juggut climbs the steel span of the railway bridge. The other thinks that he is testing the strength of the knot as he stretches over the rope. When the train engine was a few yards away he slashes the rope with kripān. A leader fires at him but still he wrapped around that rope. A tough strand holds the rope in place. He hacks at it with kripān, then he uses his teeth. The man collapses at the moment that the rope snaps. The train goes over him and moves on to Pakistan.

3.2 Plot of the novel

In summer 1947, ten millions Muslim, Hindus and Sikhs flee from their homes on each side of the new border between Pakistan and India. Northern India was in turmoil, though the isolated village of Mano Majra remains, for now at peace. A tiny place with only three bricks buildings a Gurudwara, where Meet Singh presides as its resident bhai, a mosque led by the Mullah and weaver Imam Baksh; and the home of the Hindu money lender, Lala Ram Lal. Mano Majra becomes the town of dacoity, which ensues in Lala Ram Lal's murder. While fleeing from Lala Ram Lal's house, the robbers pass by the home of farmer robber Juggut Singh. One of the robbers throws stolen bangles into Jugga's courtyard to implicate him in the crime. Jugga meanwhile, is having a tryst with Nooran when they hear the shots fired during the dacoity while the couple laying in the dark. Jugga recognizes one as Malli the gang's leader.

Hukum Chand the magistrate and deputy commissioner, arrives to Mano Majra the morning before the dacoity. He asks the sub-inspector of police if there has been any trouble between the religious groups and the latter assures him that there have not been any convoys of dead Sikhs as there have been in a nearby town. Mano Majrans even may not know about the partition. Some know who Gandhi is, but the sub-inspector doubts that anyone knows about Mohammad Ali Jinnah. He inquires about a prostitute. That evening, an old woman and a young girl wearing a black, studded sari arrive at the rest house. The girl's name is Haseena.

The next morning the railway station is crowded. When the train from Delhi to Lahore arrives, twelve policemen and the sub-inspector disembark. The young man steps out, whose manner suggests that he is not from the village. This young man goes to Gurudwarra and meets Meet Singh, asks him if he can stay for a few days. The priest asks him his name which is Iqbal. Later Iqbal meets Banta Singh (the

village Lambardar) and a Muslim man (implied to be Imam Baksh) Imam Baksh says freedom is for only the educated.

After the men leave, Iqbal is skeptical that he can do much in a land in which people's heads seem full of cobwebs. He doubts himself as a leader.

Jugga & Iqbal are led away. The police suspect that men are innocent. The sub-inspector recognizes Iqbal. He later checks Iqbal, whether he has circumcised, a sign of being Muslim. This leads him to conclude that Iqbal is a member of the Muslim League.

In early September, a train from Pakistan arrives one morning, but no one gets off. It is a ghost train. Officers ask in exchange for money, woods and kerosene. Around sunset, a breeze blows in, carrying the smell of burning kerosene, wood and charred flesh. Hukum Chand doesn't bother about it and asks for whisky and Haseena. Hukum Chand keeps Haseena overnight for comfort, but they don't have sex. The next morning the sub-inspector visits the rest house and informs Hukum Chand that forty or sixty Sikh men entered town. Hukum Chand orders the sub-inspector to free Malli and his gang, and then to ask the Muslim refugee camp commander for trucks to evacuate the Mano Majra Muslims. After a week alone in jail, Iqbal shares his jail with Jugga, whose own cell is now occupied by Malli and his gang.

By midmorning, the sub-inspector drives to the police station at Chundunnuger. He tells the head constable that he wants him to release Malli's men in front of the villagers. Next he asks the head constable that anyone from villager know "the Muslim League Iqbal" was doing in Mano Majra. The subinspector strongly suggests that the head constable go with the story of Iqbal being a Muslim leaguer named Mohammed Iqbal. Following orders, the head constable takes back and Malli to Mano Majra. The villagers are surprised by the implication of Iqbal an urban babu has no reason commit a dacoity.

Imam Baksh goes home and tells Nooran that they must leave. She was not willing but if they don't go willingly they will be thrown out. She visits Jugga's mother, she assures Nooran that when Jugga comes out of jail she will ensure their union. Meanwhile the Sutlej river is rising. Banta Singh and some villagers see the corpses of men, women and children float by marked by stab wounds. They realize that these are the victims of massacre.

The Sikh's plan to kill the Muslims on the roof of train but Banta alerts the police to the plan. Hukum Chand at police station is exasperated with growing pile of dead bodies. Hukum Chand releases Iqbal and Jugga to restore peace. That night Jugga goes to Gurudwara, where he asks Meet Singh to recite a prayer. Hukum Chand agonizes over having allowed Haseena to return to Chundunnugger. If she were with him, he would not care what happened. He is less secure in his role as magistrate.

A little after 11.00 p.m. men spread themselves out on both sides of the train tracks. They hear the train coming "A big man climbs the steel span of the bridge; it is Jugga, though no one recognizes him. The train comes closer and the leader yells for Jugga to come down. Jugga pulls out a small kirpan and slashes at the rope. Realizing what he is doing the leader raises his rifle and shoots. The rope is in shreds, but a rough strand remains. Jugga snaps it with his teeth. A volley of shots then rings out, sending Jugga to the ground. The rope snaps and falls with him. The train goes over his body to Pakistan.

3.3 Themes in the Novel

Theme is a general concept implied in the work of art, which an imaginative work is designed to involve. Theme is central to any work of art. Let us see the themes in this novel.

3.3.1 Theme of Partition and Freedom :

The action of the novel revolves around Mano Majra and its vicinity. The novel deals with the period of partition. It is a sensitive depiction of human beings. It is the main concern which gave birth to two political boundaries India and Pakistan. The only remaining oasis of peace was a village called Mano Majra. The harsh realities that people faced during the partition is the primary concern of the novel.

The very beginning of the unusual weather condition which is extremely hot and dry in the month of August sets the tone of the novel. It is interesting to note that nature in the novel appears in various moods – summer, monsoon flood and rain is functional in the novel. This mood exerts a great effect on the framework of the novel. It is the skilled hand of Khushwant Singh, takes the novel to the pinnacles and puts forward the short sightedness of Indian leadership; who failed to foresee the consequences of division of partition.

The section dacoity shows how calm, placid and indifferent to the greatest political event in the life of nation – independence – is the life at Mano Majra. As the lambardar questions "But what will we get out of this? Freedom becomes important for the villages only when it brings more land, more buffaloes?" As Muslim says. "we are slaves of the English, now we will be slaves of the educated Indians or Pakistans." They can't welcome freedom at the cost of obstruction. Mano Majra retains its integrity and age-old communal harmony and brotherhood.

So, in the beginning, the peaceful coexistence & communal harmony prevail in the village. It stands as a replica of unity and integrity in diversity that is fundamental feature of Indian culture.

The train is important symbol in the novel that stands for the routine life of Mano Majra before independence and distorted life after independence. Daily life at Mano Majra runs parallel with the train.

The partition caused the communal riots in Mano Majra. Muslims are ordered to live the village to take shelter in the refugee camp. Sikhs decided to take revenge by killing the Muslims. The complete village is distorted due to the partition. It is the grave side of the partition that turns Muslims Shikhs and Hindus turning against one another, who had been very much innocent earlier.

In this way the novel has masterly composed the pity and horror involved in the partition tragedy. The third person omniscient narrative technique helps the novelist dive deep into the mind of characters and presents his candid view with precisely and objectively on the different shades of the tragedy.

3.3.2 The survival of Humanism in *Train to Pakistan*

The novelist happily confesses that he is the product of both east and west. He values the Indian art that deeply rooted in Indian soil. He portrays India as both outsider and insider. His novel brings out the Sikh ethos. The village Mano Majra is dominated by the Sikhs, but it has Hindu and Muslim inhabitants. He doesn't talk about the feedback on the partition of the entire country. His area is only Punjab, which he skillfully depicts in the present novel. The novel opens with dacoity, led by Malli, who in the course of action murders Lala Ram Lal. Juggut Singh who popularly known as 'budmash' is in love with Nooran, the daughter of the Muslim weaver. Despite Muslims and Sikhs are being rivals from early period, Jugga gets

ready to lay down his life for the Muslim girl. Iqbal, western educated social worker, arrives. He too, is arrested for Lala Ram Lal's murder.

The magistrate Hukum Chand releases both Jugga and Iqbal for the sake of peace. To be on the safe side, the Muslim start evacuating the village. Muslims leave all their property behind. Ironically, Malli is appointed to look after their belongings. Nooran receives no encouragement from Jugga's mother.

Meanwhile some Sikh fanatics gather near Gurudwara and plan to blow off the train which carries Muslim refugees. Jugga comes to know this plan, he cuts off the rope tied across the steel span and the fanatics shoot at him. The train goes over him to Pakistan. The novel reaches the glorious end with the sacrifice of such a bad character. The only force of love forces him to pay his life. He represents the duality of quality bad and good, noble and ignoble, sacred and profuse Singh depicts as a humanist.

The author is the witness to the holocaust that followed in the wake of partition of the country. It has been the blot on our history. But there were several humanists who were trying to avoid the same and trying hard to restore peace. Such humanistic approach has crafted the character like Jugga in the present novel.

3.3.3 Sex, Violence and Horror

Partition caused unlimited miseries, sufferings. It has stirred Indian people. It has challenged the harmony of Indian people. It is divided into four parts and the first part sets the tone of the novel which is rightly named dacotiy. The brutal murder of Lala Ram Lal shows the height of violence. The way Malli and his gang treated Lala Ram Lal is cruel. This incident rotates in the novel. And creates a sense of violence and horror.

Such actions speak louder than words. On the night Jugga returns to village and finds all villages gravely disturbed by the murder. The violence and murder permeates the whole novel. The detailed depiction of sex between Nooran and Jugga also indicates a kind of violence in the story. The same is the case between Hukum Chand and Haseena Begum. Singh has contrasted between these both couples one represents the spiritual love and the other just physical love which has resulted out of lust of Hukum Chand.

The second part of the novel Kalyug also comprises the scenes of horror violence and death. The train symbolizes both life and death. The ghost train is full of dead bodies with not a single person alive in it. The entire picture is indeed terrible. It focuses the horrible drama of communal violence, the sinking of human values in the name of such an action of division.

In the last part Karma the reader is horrified when he sees the villagers wiping off the tears from their faces and turning back to homes at the time of parting of the Muslims from Mano Majra. Besides the readers are terrified when the train loads of dead bodies come over to Mano Majra. The horror was too terrible to forget. Singh imposes cleverly on the minds of the readers. Many villagers couldn't sleep at all. They sobbed in their sleep and their beards were moist with tears.

That is to say the novelist brings out forcefully that love in man is as deeply rooted as the urge for violence. Love is an antidote to violence. But the effect of violence and horror as far the range of the novel concerns.

3.4 Check your progress

Q. A) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives from that given below.

1. The nearest river to Mano Majra was the
a) Ganga b) Sutlej c) Jhelum d) Kaveri
2. was the priest of the Gurudwara.
a) Juggut Singh b) Iqbal Singh c) Meet Singh d) Banta Singh
3.murdered Lala Ram Lal.
a) Jugga b) Iqbal c) Malli & his men d) Muslim Men
4. The name of the young singer cum prostitute was
a) Haseena Begum b) Nooran c) Sundari d) Bano Begum
5. Uncle Imam Baksh's previous occupation was that of a.....
a) farmer b) farmer c) weaver d) money lender
6.train loads of corpses were sent to Mano Majra.
a) two b) one c) three d) five

9. Three

Q. 1B)

1. Malli & his men
2. Seventy families
3. Lala Ram Lal & his family
4. From the Morning Prayer
5. Refugee camp at Chandannager
6. Bhai Meet Singh & The Lambardar
7. The term ghost train means the train loaded with hundreds of dead bodies sent from one place to another place.

3.6 Exercises

Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

1. Write a detailed note on the themes in the *Train to Pakistan*.
2. Write a detailed note on the plot construction of the novel *Train to Pakistan*.



Module IV

Train to Pakistan : Setting, Symbols and Characters

Index:

- 4.0 Objectives
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4.0 Objectives:

After studying this Module you will be able to:

- Understand about the life and work of Khushwant Singh; about setting, symbolism and characters in the novel.
- Explain the symbolism and characterization.
- Find relationship between setting, characters, symbols and theme of the novel.

4.1 Introduction:

In this Module

4.2 Content:

4.2.1 Khushwant Singh: Life and Works:

Khushwant Singh is one of the most significant writers of contemporary Indian English novel. He was born in 1915 at Haladi in West Punjab, now in Pakistan. He was educated at St. Stephen's College, London. He started his career as a professor

of Hindu Law at Lahore Law College. In 1947, he was appointed as Information Officer of the Government of India. Both Indian and Western traditions shaped his mind. Thus, he was the product of both the East and West. For the major part of his life, he had been associated with the world of journalism. He was founder editor of *Yojana* and editor of the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, the *National Herald* and *Hindustan Times*.

Khushwant Singh was a Member of Parliament from 1980 to 1986. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1974 but returned the decoration in 1984 in protest against the storming of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Indian Arm. In 2007, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan. Among the other awards he received were the Punjab Ratan, the Sulabh International Award for the most honest Indian of the year and honorary doctorates from several universities.

Singh started his literary career in 1950 with the publication of his remarkable collection *The Mark of Vishnu and Other Stories*. All these stories are based on real-life experiences or those related by his colleagues and friends. These stories reveal Singh's extraordinary craftsmanship. In 1956, Singh published his first novel *Train to Pakistan*. This novel brought Khushwant Singh recognition and wide acclaim. The novel won for him the Grove Press India Fiction Prize for the 1956. In 1967, Singh published another Short Story collection entitled *A Bride for the Sahib*. Singh published his second novel *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* in 1959. The action of the novel takes place during the war years, from April 1942 to April 1943. It is about five years before the country's attainment of freedom. In it Khushwant Singh presents the colonial encounter between Indians and the British Government against the background of the Punjab. The novel presents the conflict between imperialism and nationalism. The novel treats Indian nationalism in a most detached and critical manner.

Singh's third novel *Delhi* appeared in 1990. In it he unfolds the saga of Delhi. It is considered as a great piece of history-fiction. It stayed as bestseller for several months. There is very bold expression of love and sex. A significant feature of the novel is the portrayal of a *hijra* as the central character. The central character, Bhagmati, a *hijra*, represents the city Delhi. His fourth novel *The Company of Women* (1999) is centered on the individual's search for the truth of existence within society. It is focused on the modernized, westernized urban men and women. The novel is fuel of erotic celebration of love, sex and passion. Naturally, it aroused

extreme reactions from the reading public. It is Singh's most provocative and sensational novel.

In *The Collected Short Stories of Khushwant Singh* (1989) Singh captures wide range of Themes, aspects and comic ironies of Indian life. His novels and stories reveal that Singh is an artist of rare caliber.

4.3 Setting:

The story of the novel takes place in Mano Majra. Mano Majra, a tiny village in Punjab, serves as the fictional setting of *Train to Pakistan*. It is situated on the India-Pakistan boarder. It is half mile away from the river Sutlej. It is known for its railway station. The village is portrayed as epitome of India: it has Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus living in harmony and amity. There are three brick buildings in the village: one is the house of the Hindu money-lender, Lala Ram Lal; and the other two, a Gurudwara and a Mosque. The other houses in the village are mud huts. There are only about seventy families in Mano Majra. Lala Ram Lal's is the only Hindu family in the village. At the Western end of the village, there is a pond. The pond is ringed by Keekar trees. The novel has greater unity of time and place. Its action centers in the vicinity of Mano Majra and it covers a period of not more than a month. Life in Mano Majra is regulated by the passing of train across the Sutlej bridge nearby.

4.4 Symbols in the Novel:

The Train:

The train, in the novel, is an important symbol of mobility. It stands for all that is dynamic. At the outset of the novel the train acts as a regulator for the people of the village. The train represents 'mobility'. It stands for the routine life of Mano Majra before independence and disordered life after independence. Daily life at Mano Majra runs parallel with the systematic arrivals and departures of trains there. Later on it acquires a sinister and horrific dimension. The irregularity of trains creates disturbance in the smooth flow of life in Mano Majra. It brings chaos and disorder. It also causes riot and violence. The train has symbolic of the rhythmic pattern of the novel. It is at the heart of Mano Majra. The village has always been known for its railway station. The activities of villagers are patterned by the 'to and fro' movement of the train. The train to Pakistan and the train from Pakistan is the symbol of man's inhumanity to man. The 'Ghost Train' creates commotion in the

village. With the arrival of ghost train there starts the horrible and ghastly drama of communal violence. The train to Pakistan reveals the humanity in Jugga. It also reveals his sense of integrity in love and self-dedication. The train to Pakistan thus becomes a unique symbol in the novel.

Nature Symbolism:

Nature symbolism dominates in the novel. Nature in its different moods is functional in the novel. Summer, monsoon: monsoon flood and rain is used symbolically in the novel. Nature's holocaust in the month of monsoon coincides with the holocaust of partition. The two movements are taken together throughout the novel to reinforce the total effect of the events in the novel. Flood in the river suggests and foreshadows the flood of violence.

Monsoon is a constant symbol in the novel. It suggests the flux of human destiny. The nature of communal frenzy is like monsoon. "Once it is on, it stays for two months or more. Its advent is greeted with joy.... But after a few days the flash of enthusiasm is gone. The earth becomes a big stretch of swamp and mud" (98). Violence in the human world is symbolized by the violence in the natural world. The flashing crush of lightning and thunder symbolize murder and lootings of the people after partition.

The summer sun going on, day after day, from east to west, scorching relentlessly is also a very significant symbol. It suggests the disillusioned, dejected, thirsty and sweating people of the time. The monsoon, giving boost to the tempo of life and death, is symbolic of the inhuman acts done by the people as a result of communal violence.

Mano Majra:

Mano Majra represents the spirit of India – the unity of Ahimsa. In Mano Majra, the readers get a picture of unity in diversity. Here the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims lived peacefully together as they had been living since times immemorial. Though in the other parts of India and Pakistan, there are riots and massacres, everything is calm and quite in Mano Majra. Partition does not affect the normal tenor of life in Mano Majra. Mano Majra's are unaware of the political situation of the country. They even do not know that the British have left India and India has been partitioned. The village is a symbol of staidity, immobility and passivity. There is harmonious atmosphere in the village. 'Deo', the local deity, is the symbol of

communal harmony in the village. People of Mano Majra live in amity. They are god-fearing and religious. Friendship and philanthropy is the be-all and end-all of their life. The reader gets this kind of picture of the village in the early part of the novel. But at the end of the novel, the same people, when irritated by the leader of a group, feel that the Muslims are their enemies. They also help the leader to execute his plan of massacre. The two contrasting pictures of the village coincide with the contrasting nature of the people of Mano Majra.

4.5 Characters in the Novel:

Jugga or Juggat Singh:

Juggat Singh is the protagonist of the novel. He is the son of the dacoit Alam Singh. He is a very big fellow. He is the tallest man in the area. He must be six foot four and broad. Jugga is an arm's length taller than anyone else. He is like a stud bull. He has a liaison with a Muslim girl Nooran. Juggat Singh is not a perfect Sikh. He has no notions of any political ideologies. His creed is simple: he and the authority are on different sides of law. He is *budmash* and proud of it. He is simple man of violent, strong emotions. He is jailed on the false charge of committing murder of Lal Ram Lal. He has spent quite as much time in jail as at home. His association with police is an inheritance. His name is entered in number ten and hence behind his back everyone refers to him as a 'number ten'. He is the most violent man in the district.

He has faith in God. He believes – no one can escape from God. However, he breaks many of the Guru's injunctions – related with lust, anger, pride, attachment and thieving. Despite all these failings, he is the only admirable character in the novel. He risks his life to save innocent people. His love for Nooran stimulates Jugga to an act of self-sacrificial heroism. He saves the refugees and falls under the wheels of the train. He is shot by his co-religionists. His heroic death unveils the hypocrisy and duplicity of the so-called civilized society. He represents the best of human values. Thus, he emerges as the hero of the novel.

Iqbal:

Iqbal is a politically committed figure. He is fully aware of political ideas. He is weak, cowardly and self-serving. He is twenty-seven and unmarried. Iqbal is from

district Jhelum. He is a small-sight man, somewhat effeminate in appearance. He has poor digestive systems. He is the communist social worker from the city. He is admired by the villagers of the Mano Majra as “the England-returned”. He creates a mild sensation in the village.

People’s Party of India has sent him to Mano Majra thinking Mano Majra a vital point for refugee movements. He approaches Bhai Meet Singh with a request for shelter. Meet Singh takes it granted that he is Iqbal Singh. Iqbal has come to Mano Majra to do something – to stop the bloodshed going on as a result of partition. It is an irony that he had come to stop killing but becomes upset when learns about dacoity and murder of Ram Lal. He is too much concerned about his safety.

The police arrest Iqbal in connection with the murder of Lala Ram Lal. He refuses to tell the police his father’s name and says that he has no religion. The sub-inspector obliges Iqbal to take off his pyjamas and finds him circumcised. In the warrant of arrest, the police write his name: Mohammed Iqbal. The sub-inspector declares him a Muslim Leaguer. In the police station Iqbal is given A-class treatment. He is given furniture in his cell – a chair, a table and a charpai; newspapers and magazines. His food is served on a brass plate and a small pitcher and a glass tumbler are put on the table beside his charpai.

Iqbal is very rational and logical in his criticism of social evils in the country. He lectures Meet Singh on rural indebtedness, the average national income, and capitalist exploitation. He has his own views on morality: Morality ... is a matter of money. Poor people cannot afford to have morals, etc. He is of the view that criminals are not born. They are made by hunger, want and justice. He believes that if the fear of cell had stopped people from killing or stealing, there would be no murder or theft. The population explosion also is a great concern to Iqbal. Through, Iqbal Khushwant Singh reflects on the nature of human action and on the price of freedom.

He has all the theories but lacks the courage to put them into action in the time of crisis. His good intentions never ripen and bear fruit. He is unable to carry through his Marxist ideals when faced with the real world. He takes no action thinking that his sacrifice will be useless if none is present to see and appreciate it. Iqbal has none of Sikh virtues. He indulges in some of their vices: he drinks whisky and cuts his

hair, and does not fight for *dharma*. He is really a moral decrepit respected by the society. Thus, he is not an admirable character.

Imam Baksh:

Imam Baksh is mullah of the mosque. He is a Muslim weaver. He is a tall, lean man. His appearance commands respect. He has a neatly trimmed silky white beard. The cataract in his eyes gives him a misty philosophical look. Despite his sixty years, he holds himself erect. All this gives his bearing a dignity and an aura of righteousness. He is known to the villagers as ‘Chacha’. He is a sort of leader of Muslims of Mano Majra.

A series of tragedies in his family have made him an object of pity, and then of affection. His wife and only son had died within a few days of each other. His eyes which had never been very good suddenly became worse. Due to which he could not work him looms any more. He was then reduced to beggary. His daughter, Nooran was a baby girl then. He began living in the mosque. He started teaching Muslim children the Quran. Small offerings – flour, vegetables, food and castoff clothes – from the villagers kept him and his daughter alive. He had an amazing fund of anecdotes and proverbs which the peasants loved to hear. As a result of Partition, he has to leave Mano Majra and go to Pakistan.

Banta Singh:

Banta Singh is the headman of the village. He is a collector of revenue – a lambardar. The post had been in his family for several generations. He didn’t own any more land than the other villagers. Nor is he a head in any other way. He has no airs about him: he is a modest hard-working peasant like the rest of his fellow villagers. He has an official status, since government officials and the police deal with him. Nobody calls him by his name. He is ‘O Lambardara’ as his father, his father’s father, and his father’s father’s father had been before. He was in the last war and fought in Mesopotamia and Gallipoli. He liked English officers.

He is a tall, lean man with a clipped beard. He is a simple and straightforward man. Independence means little or nothing to people like Banta Singh. He says: “freedom must be a good thing. What will we get out of it? Educated people will get the jobs the English had. Will we get more lands or more buffaloes?” He further says: “the only ones who enjoy freedom are thieves, robbers and cutthroats. We were better off under the British. At least there was security.” He informs the

government authorities about the planned massacre and becomes instrumental in saving the lives of the people on the train to Pakistan. Banta Singh represents the common folk.

Bhai Meet Singh:

Bhai Meet Singh is a Sikh priest. He is a good friend of Imam Baksh. He was only a peasant. He has taken to religion as an escape from work. He has a little land of his own. He has leased out his land. The income from the land and the offerings at the temple give him a comfortable living. He has no wife or children. Meet Singh is a man of peace. Envy has never poisoned his affection for Imam Baksh. Their conversation always has an undercurrent of friendly rivalry.

He is not learned in the scriptures, nor has he any faculty for conversation. Even his appearance is against him. He is short, fat and hairy. He is the same age as Imam Baksh, but his beard has none the serenity of Imam Baksh's. It is black, with streaks of grey. He is untidy. He wears his turban only when reading the scripture. Otherwise, he goes about with his long hair tied in a loose knot held by a little wooden comb. He seldom wears a shirt and his only garment – a pair of shorts – is always greasy with dirt. Bhai Meet Singh, who is religious and respected in the public, crouches in a safe corner till the storm blows over.

Malli:

Malli is a dacoit. He, with his gang of robbers, robs and murders Lala Ram Lal. After the dacoity they throw the glass bangles in Jugga's courtyard. It is because Jugga had refused to join them in their venture. By throwing bangles in his courtyard, they wanted to insult Jugga for not coming with them. They also abuse Jugga. Malli was at one time man of Jugga's gang. Malli belongs to village Kapura two miles down the river, Sutlej.

The police arrest Malli for Ram Lal's murder. However, they release Malli and his men as a policy without a trial and acquittal. Then the police take Malli and his men to Mano Majra. In the police station Jugga crashes Malli's head very violently against the bars. Jugga smashes his head repeatedly against the bars. As a result Malli's head is spattered with blood. His skull and forehead are bruised all over. Malli begins to wail. Jugga holds up Malli's head with both his hands and spits in his face. He pushes Malli away with more abuse. Malli cries like a child. The police lets Malli loose not in his own village, but in Mano Majra where he had committed

the murder. Malli is then appointed custodian of the evacuated Muslim's property. He, with his gang, unyokes the bullocks, loots the carts and drives the cows and buffaloes away. Malli and his men loot Muslim houses.

Sundari:

Sundari was the daughter of Hukum Chand's orderly. She had been married four days. Both her arms were covered with red lacquer bangles. The henna on her palm was still a deep vermilion. She had not yet slept with her husband, Mansa Ram. Their relatives had not left them alone for a minute. She had hardly seen his face through her veil. She was going to Gujranwala with her husband, where her husband worked as a peon. Suddenly, they were ordered off the bus by the mob. She who had not really had a good look at Mansa Ram was shown her husband completely naked. One man from the mob cut off Mansa Ram's penis and gave it to her. The mob made love to her in the road. Thus she met her tragic fate for no fault of her.

Sunder Singh:

Sunder Singh is an army man. Hukum Chand had recruited in army. He is big brave Sikh. He has done well in army. He has won a row of medals in battles in Burma, Eritrea and Italy. The government has given him land in Sindh. He meets his tragic fate on a train. He was on a train along with his wife and three children. The train holds up at a station for four days. No one was allowed to get off. Sunder Singh's children cry for water and food. Sunder Singh gives them his urine to drink. Then that dries up too. So he pulls out his revolver and shoots them all. He also shoots his wife. Then he loses his nerve. He puts the revolver to his temple and tries to commit suicide.

The Leader of the Group:

The Leader of the Group has an aggressive bossy manner. He is a boy in his teens with a little beard. He is small in size, slight of build. He is somewhat effeminate. He is in a bright blue turban and khaki army shirt. The strap across his narrow chest is charged with bullets. He is having a revolver and a dagger. He looks like an American cowboy. He is an educated city-dweller. He is having a superior airs. He has no regard for age or status. With his irritable speech he succeeds in creating commotion in Mano Majra. He plans to attack the train taking Muslims of Chundunnugger and Mano Majra to Pakistan. The refugees, Malli and his gang and some villagers help him to execute his plan.

Lala Ram Lal:

Lala Ram Lal is the money-lender of Mano Majra. He has a brick building in the village. His is the only Hindu family in the village. Like all other villagers, Lala Ram Lal too venerates the local deity, the *deo*. On one heavy night in August five dacoits enter his house. They beat him with butts of guns and spear handles. He is killed by the gang of dacoits. In the novel, the murder of Lala Ram Lal is given a communal colour. The police release the real culprits and the villagers are asked about Sultana Budmash. The dacoity and murder of Lala Ram Lal is but a prelude to the acts of murder and violence across the frontier.

Haseena:

Haseena is a Muslim prostitute. She is only a child. She is not very pretty. She is just young and unexploited. She is hardly sixteen and completely innocent. She is brought up by her grandmother. She is a motherless child. Her mother has died in childbirth. She is illiterate. She could not record her date of birth. She is a singer and dancer. She is asked to please Hukum Chand. She does prostitution unwillingly. Hukum Chand falls in love with her. To save her life Hukum Chand releases Jugga and Iqbal.

Hukum Chand:

Hukum Chand is the magistrate and deputy commissioner of the district. He is a Hindu. He is a worldly-wise man of easy morals. He is a kind man. He is charitable and tolerant. Even he is cheerful in adversity. He has little time for ideology. He drinks, sleeps with women. Thus he is fond of wine and women. He has a completely pragmatic view of life. He is in his fifties. He has a corpulent body.

He always keeps his seniors pleased. By keeping them pleased, he has got one promotion after another – from a foot-constable to the magistrate and deputy commissioner of the district. His style of smoking reveals his lower-middle-class origin. Since childhood he has been obsessed with the idea of human mortality. He firmly believed that the only absolute truth is death. The rest – love, pride, ambition, value of all kinds – are to be taken with pinch of salt. He is true to his friends and always gets things done for them.

4.6 Check Your Progress

A. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/ sentence.

1. Where does the story of the novel take place?
2. Who is the money-lender of Mano Majra?
3. How many families are there in Mano Majra?
4. Which three religious communities live in Mano Majra?
5. What starts the horrible drama of communal violence?
6. Who has sent Iqbal to Mano Majra?
7. Who declares Iqbal a Muslim Leaguer?
8. Who is full of Marxist ideals in the novel?
9. What is meant by lambardar?
10. Who informs the government authorities about the planned massacre?
11. Who murders Lala Ram Lal?
12. Who is the protagonist of the novel?
13. What stimulates Jugga to an act of self-sacrificial heroism?
14. Who shoots his wife and children?
15. Who is asked to please Hukum Chand?

B. Fill in the blanks.

1. There are only brick buildings in Mano Majra.
2. Mano Majra is on the bank of ...river.
3. Mano Majra is known for its
4. ... represents 'mobility' in the novel.
5. ...creates commotion in the village.
6. ...is the symbol of communal harmony in the village.
7. ...is a politically committed figure in the novel.
8. ... is mullah of the mosque.
9. ... is the headman of the village.
10. ... is a Sikh priest in Mano Majra.

11. was the daughter of Hukum Chand's orderly.
12. ...has a liaison with a Muslim girl Nooran.
13. ... is badmash number ten.
14. ...plans to attack the train taking Muslims of Chundunnugger and Mano Majra to Pakistan.
15. ... is the magistrate and deputy commissioner of the district.

4.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

- A.**
1. in Mano Majra
 2. Lala Ram Lal
 3. about seventy families
 4. Hindu, Sikh and Muslim
 5. the arrival of ghost train there
 6. People's Party of India
 7. The sub-inspector
 8. Iqbal
 9. a collector of revenue
 10. Banta Singh
 11. Malli
 12. Juggat Singh
 13. His love for Nooran
 14. Sunder Singh
 15. Haseena
- B.**
1. Three
 2. Sutlej
 3. railway station
 4. train
 5. The 'Ghost Train'
 6. 'Deo', the local deity

7. Iqbal
8. Imam Baksh
9. Banta Singh
10. Bhai Meet Singh
11. Sundari
12. Juggat Singh
13. Juggat Singh
14. The Leader of the Group
15. Hukum Chand

4.8 Exercises

A. Answer the following questions.

1. Discuss the significance of trains in *Train to Pakistan*.
2. Jugga represents the best of human values in *Train to Pakistan*. Discuss.
3. Give a brief character-sketch of Hukum Chand.
4. Discuss in detail the symbols used in *Train to Pakistan*.

B. Write short notes on the following in 8-10 sentences each.

1. Iqbal
2. Imam Baksh
3. Banta Singh
4. Bhai Meet Singh
5. Malli
6. Haseena
7. Nature symbolism in the novel



Module V

Impact of Partition on Women

Contents:

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5.0 Objectives:

- To examine the socio-cultural and psychological issues of women who lived/ experienced partition.
- To understand and analyze these socio-cultural and emotional difficulties and issues experienced by these women.
- To understand women across the cultures, irrespective of their caste, class, creed, religion, community, nationality and on the other, it focuses upon the social, cultural, emotional and physical experiences of these women.
- To sketch/ create a wholesome picture of woman during the partition.

5.1 Introduction:

In August 1947, the British left India, and the subcontinent was partitioned into two independent nations: Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. This led to one of the greatest migrations in human history, as millions of Muslims trekked to West and East Pakistan and millions of Hindus and Sikhs headed in the opposite direction. Most part of the recorded history of India's Partition has stories of suffering of men, women, children, of how the event shook the lives of all those who lived through it. But Partition, like wars and other forms of violence do, affected women differently than it affected men—mostly because of the specific roles and responsibilities attached with the specific gender.

Women faced violence at various levels; communal, at family level and at the macro level. They were being abducted, kidnapped, raped, and killed. They were forced to commit suicide in order to protect the family honour. Furthermore, in the name of recovery, they were disowned by their families; their children were deprived of basic rights as they were considered illegal and wrong. The voices of abducted women during partition were lost under the dominant ideologies of martyrdom, purity and nationhood.

5.2 Content: Impact of Partition on Women:

The Partition of India had a huge impact on millions of people living in India in the 1940s. In August 1947, British India won its independence from the British and split into two new states that would rule themselves. This forced millions of people

to leave their homes to move to the other state. This was the largest forced migration of people that has ever happened.

Women of all ages, ethnic groups and social classes were victimized, tortured and raped -- some even were stripped naked and paraded down streets to intensify their trauma and humiliation. In many even more tragic cases, fathers, fearing that their daughters would soon be raped (and converted to another faith), pressured and coerced the girls to commit suicide lest such an event “taint” their family's “honour” and standing in the community -- or they killed their own female relatives themselves.

Several women had completely detached themselves from their pasts and formed new bonds in their present situations. A few were even married legitimately. Some women had married their abductors and were pregnant. Who would care for these children? After all, they were products of a mixed union!

Women remain a voiceless entity, pushed into the shadows and confines of their homes. One of the main reasons women faced uncountable hardships during this time was a skewed sense of “manliness” and “honour” that prevailed. It was believed that women, being the reproductive force, were instruments to maintain “purity” of blood and race.

The fastest and perhaps most effective way to sully the honour of the other religion was to sully the honour of its women to assault, rape, and impregnate women. Women became easy targets of violence and got drawn into a war that was most definitely not their own.

5.2.1 Partition: Familial Consequences

Sunny Hundal, a Sikh columnist, wrote in Britain’s Guardian newspaper that womens’ bodies become highly coveted and treasured symbols of political and familial power in India and Pakistan. “In patriarchal and feudal societies, women are almost always seen as the bearers of culture and ‘honor,’” he wrote. “Traditional, conservative South Asian culture fetishizes women to such an extent that, while the official line says they are held in high esteem and regard, in actual fact, they are treated simply as vessels of that honor, and their lives are forced to be structured around preserving that. They are not allowed to do anything that compromises those ideals, while men have much freer [rein] without the same burden.”

These deeply ingrained attitudes manifested themselves in the worst forms of violence during Partition. “When Muslim, Hindu and Sikh men wanted to take revenge for their peers being killed by the other, they deliberately went out searching for women of other religions to rape and kidnap,” Hundal added. “When villages were confronted with angry baying mobs, the women were told to commit suicide by jumping in the well for their own benefit rather than fall in the clutches of the other. It intensified bigotry on all sides, and this was frequently expressed in a battle by besmirching women's honor.”

Violence against women included the violence inflicted on women by their own family members. This could vary from honour killings to the insistence of male kin that their mothers, daughters, or wives commit suicide in order to safeguard the purity and chastity of the community. Both forms of violence substantiate the claim that women were not treated as humans but rather as markers of communal and national pride.

5.2.2 Partition: Religious Consequences:

As the partition was primarily based on religion, peoples' identities of being Hindu, Muslim or Sikh became a major ground of opposition. Religious minorities in several regions were hunted down and killed. Faced with the immediate prospect of losing their homes and livelihood, and with their security at risk, people took to the streets as wanton killings and violence escalated along communal lines. There was senseless communal slaughter and a fratricidal war of unprecedented proportions. Unspeakable atrocities were perpetrated on the minorities in both India and Pakistan. In the span of a few months, nearly 500,000 people were killed and property worth thousands of millions of rupees was looted and destroyed. Communal violence threatened the very fabric of society.

Pakistan's population ended up more religiously homogeneous than originally anticipated. The Muslim League's leaders had assumed that Pakistan would contain a sizeable non-Muslim population, whose presence would safeguard the position of Muslims remaining in India – but in West Pakistan, non-Muslim minorities comprised only 1.6% of the population by 1951, compared with 22% in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). These transitions affected the physical, mental and emotional well-being of those who underwent these experiences.

This ethnic genocide witnessed two kinds of gender-based violence. Firstly, the violence inflicted on women by men of the opposite religious group that involved kidnapping, rape, and mutilation of the genitalia or public humiliation. The supposed aim of this kind of violence was to abase the men of the rival religion to which the women belonged.

Aside from the sheer horror of sexual violation, some rape survivors had to literally wear physical signs of their shame -- rapists frequently mutilated and disfigured the girls' skins with markings and graffiti that reflected the violators' political or religious affinities, including tattooed phrases like "Pakistan Zindabad" (Long Live Pakistan") or "Jai Hind" ("Long Live India") or symbols like the Hindu trident or Islamic crescent moon.

The partition did not solve the Hindu-Muslim problems; it caused the situation of the Muslims in India to deteriorate. They were blamed for the division of the country, their leadership had left and their power was further weakened by the removal of all Muslim-majority areas except Kashmir.

Check Your Progress

1. Women, being the reproductive force, were instruments to maintain "purity" of blood and
a) Race b) creed c) sect d) class
2. ----- were not treated as humans but rather as markers of communal and national pride.
a) farmers b) freedom fighters c) men d) women
3. ----- violence threatened the very fabric of society.
a) familial b) Communal c) political d) economical
4. The Muslim League's leaders had assumed that ----- would contain a sizeable non-Muslim population.
a) Baluchistan b) India c) Pakistan d) Bangladesh
5. The violence inflicted on women by men of the opposite----- group that involved kidnapping, rape, and mutilation of the genitalia.
a) political b) religious c) rational d) cultural

5.3 Content: Impact of Partition on Women

The bloodshed, sweat of terror and the tears of helplessness made the Partition of India and the creation of Pakistan simultaneously the most signifying and the most traumatic moment.

5.3.1. Partition: Psychological Consequences

The trauma of this violence has impacted at least three generations since 1947, as some survivors are now elderly women and only beginning to reflect on the brutality they endured. “Much of this has involved unearthing hidden histories and bringing women’s accounts into the mainstream of understanding partition,” Pippa Virdee, a professor of South Asian studies at DeMontfort University in Britain told the Women Under Siege blog.

Butalia told the tragic story of a Partition survivor named Prakashvanti, whom she met at the Gandhi Vanita Ashram in Jalandhar in Punjab, India.

In August 1947, Prakashvanti was a 20-year-old Hindu wife and mother living in the village of Sheikupura (which is now in Pakistan, close to the Indian border). As Muslim hordes approached their home, her husband implored her to kill herself in order to prevent her rape and defilement. When she refused, he threatened to kill her. He hit her and she fell unconscious. Thinking she was dead, her husband departed and the Muslim attackers who arrived left her alone also thinking she was dead.

When she woke up, she found both her husband and child were dead. Devastated, Prakashvanti moved to an ashram, where she spent the rest of her life.

Stories (some unconfirmed, others proven) abound of husbands, brothers, nephews and sons killing their female relatives to spare them the shame of rape and forced conversion. But some women voluntarily killed themselves (as well as their female children in some cases), often by self-immolation or by throwing themselves into wells. Even women who survived these atrocities could not live with their dark realities and committed suicide.

The trauma of partition continues. Women as ‘site of memory’ and ‘site of violence’ repeatedly serve as the primary target of any communal violence in the Indian subcontinent.

5.3.2 Partition: Social Consequences

Partition, as a whole, affected the social lives of everyone. However, it affected the women contrastively. Women were not the ones who were deciding their fate, their killing or living or migrating. Women faced violence at various levels; communal, at family level and at the macro level. They were being abducted, kidnapped, raped, killed. They were forced to commit suicide in order to protect the family honour. Furthermore, in the name of recovery they were disowned by their families, their children were deprived of basic rights as they were considered illegal and wrong.

Urvashi Butalia, an Indian feminist and author, told the Indian Express that some of these women were sold into prostitution. "Some were sold from hand to hand," she said. "Some were taken as wives and married by conversion. And some just disappeared."

Many women had their breasts chopped off, others suffered the abuse and torture of their genitals -- in most cases leading to death. The Indian government now estimates that 83,000 women and girls were abducted and raped during Partition, but other believed this estimate is far too conservative.

Once a girl was raped, she lost her value and place in society -- she was unwanted even by her own family. In many cases, rape victims married their rapists, converted into their religion and never saw their natal families ever again.

Amid the massive confusion and panic, up to one million people (perhaps many more) died; while untold numbers of women suffered a fate worse than death -- they were raped, sometimes tortured, gang-raped and murdered.

In the immediate years after independence though the communalization was contained and weakened but not eliminated, for conditions were still favourable for its growth. Starting from partition, the country has witnessed a number of severe riots: dramatic events occurred in Calcutta, Rourkela, and Jamshedpur, Kashmir, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Moradabad, Nellie and Gujarat. The controversy over the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya was gaining strength and was becoming a national matter of concern a bone of contention between the two communities in each and every Indian city. And recent clashes occurred in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli districts of

Uttar Pradesh, in 2013 also perceived the long term effects to the growth of communalism in India.

5.3.3. Partition: Literary Consequences

The partition of India is much more than just a historical fact. It is a compelling literary theme that continues to inspire creative outpourings by writers. Perhaps this is both an attempt to process the tremendous trauma created by partition, and to bear witness to the forces of communalism, class divide and patriarchy behind the violent division, which continue to play out across the Indian subcontinent today.

Partition has also been extensively portrayed in films, novels and stories. Short stories, give a chilling account of the brutalities committed to the women. There are works like *Toba Tek Singh* by Manto on Partition. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* are internationally acclaimed novels dealing with the theme of Partition. Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* is the story of a young woman during the turmoil of Partition. Movies like *Pinjar* (adaptation of novel of the same name by Amrita Pritam) and *Khamosh Pani* and portray the violence women were subjected to during the Partition. Other famous movies include *Garam Hawa*, *Earth* (adaptation of Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India/Ice Candy Man*) and *Begum Jaan* (remake of the Bengali *Rajkahini*).

Many social workers have written memoirs describing their experiences and those of the abducted women, of their joy as well as reluctance at being 'rescued'. Some among them include Anis Kidwai's *In the Shadow of Freedom* (the original is in Urdu- *Azadi Ki Chhao Mein*), and Kamlaben Patel's *Torn from the Roots* (the original is in Gujarati- *Mool Suta Ukhde*). There is also extensive regional literature on Partition.

Whilst the historical and historiographical works about partition have their own place and value, literature has a vital role to play in preserving events in collective memory, and interpreting the implications for posterity. Partition literature exists across all major literary forms: novels, short stories, poems and non-fiction. Rajendra Prasad's *India Divided*, Gauba's *Consequences of Pakistan* and Ambedkar's *Thoughts on Pakistan* are all the non-fictional narratives, particularly historical ones which trace reasons and effects of the partition and are basically committed to the

facts. These writings record the political issues of the partition but completely neglect the sensitive human dimensions.

Bapsi Sidhwa, as a partition novelist, becomes a prominent name with the publication of the partition novel *Ice Candy-Man*, upon which, South Asian film director, Deepa Mehta, made a film entitled *Earth 1947*. Like most of the other Partition novels, *Ice-Candy Man*, can also called as *Cracking India* for the understanding of the international readers, presents the horrifying details of cruelty, human loss and dislocation but it does so with a subtle irony, witty banter and parody.

One of the most famous novels is *Train to Pakistan* (1956) by **Khushwant Singh**, made into a movie by the same name in 1998 by **Pamela Rooks**. In the book, **Singh** focuses on local events in a fictional village called Mano Majra, to illustrate how even a relatively peaceful and secluded village, where Sikhs and Muslims have always lived as kin, was seared by the fire of communal violence that spread through India at that time. Singh brilliantly captures the moral confusion caused by an unprecedented event like partition.

Bhisham Sahni's novel *Tamas* (Darkness, Ignorance 1974), is set in a small village in the North West frontier province (now in Pakistan), where the killing of a pig, considered impure by the Muslims, and a cow, considered holy by the Hindus, leads to communal riots. Ironically, once the carnage has run its course, the very people who were secretly behind the twin triggers, go around appealing for peace. **Govind Nihalani**, who made *Tamas* into a television film in 1987, described it as a “grim reminder of the immense tragedy that results whenever the religious sentiments of communities are manipulated to achieve political objectives. It is a prophetic warning against the use of religion as a weapon to gain and perpetuate political power.”

Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children* (1981), which won both the Booker Prize and the Booker of Booker Prize, spans a period beginning thirty two years before independence and ending thirty one years after it. It is based on the premise that children born on the midnight of 14th August 1947 were endowed with special magical powers. They could step through mirrors, multiply fish, turn into werewolves, change their size, transform gender, inflict wounds with words, eat metal, fly higher than a bird and so on. The midnight of Indian independence is

represented through the refraction of the colors of the Indian flag onto national celebrations with “saffron rockets” and “green sparkling rain” and bodies of women giving birth: “green skinned”, “whites of eyes ... shot with saffron”. The story is a loose allegory for events in India before and after partition, and has been called a novel of India’s coming of age.

Among short stories, *Toba Tek Singh* is perhaps the most famous. Written by **Saadat Hasan Manto**, it was published in 1955, the year of his death. By setting the story in a mental asylum in Lahore a couple of years after independence, Manto generates comedy and uncomfortable satire. After partition, the governments of India and Pakistan decide to exchange Muslim, Sikh and Hindu lunatics. One lunatic is so bewildered with all the talk about partition that he climbs up a tree and refuses to come down, saying “I don’t want to live in India and Pakistan. I’m going to make my home right here on this tree.” The insane mutterings of a Sikh inmate in a mix of Punjabi, Urdu and English, though nonsensical, clearly transmits disdain for the very idea of Pakistan and India, and the displacement it creates. The story ends with him dying in no-man’s land between the two countries.

While some poets wrote celebratory odes to independence, many considered it a false dawn. In *Subh-e-Azadi* (Freedom’s Dawn, 1947) Pakistani poet **Faiz Ahmad Faiz** laments the violence of partition saying “this is not that longed for break of day, not that clear dawn in quest of which our comrades set out.”

Check Your Progress

1. The trauma of the violence has impacted at least ----- generations since 1947.
a) two b) three c) four d) five
2. Women were raped, sometimes tortured, gang-raped and-----.
a) murdered b) saved c) rescued d) safeguarded
3. Amid the massive confusion, up to ----- million people died.
a) one b) two c) three d) four
4. Partition novels, *Ice-Candy Man* is written by-----.
a) Shanta Gokhale b) Amrita Pritam c) Anita Desai d) Bapsi Sidhawa
5. *Pinjar* , the novel is written by -----.
a) Bapsi Sidhawa b) Amrita Pritam c) Shanta Gokhale d) Kushwant Singh

5.4 Content: Impact of Partition on Women

Partition is a tragedy of the twentieth century with the millions of people displaced and one million or more killed in communal violence and rioting as Partition resettlement occurred. India's Partition exemplifies the failures of colonial rule, violence from fear of persecution, and violence caused from uncertainty. Colonial politics, Partition, and subsequent policies of the Indian government have limited and controlled women's agency in a variety of ways. Partition is a tragedy because it resulted in millions of displacements and deaths. Even without the millions of deaths from sectarian violence, Partition would still be a tragedy because mass displacement is an atrocity in and of itself. Those who lived through partition ultimately lost their homes and roots in a violent way because of a state mandated decision. The nature of loss caused by partition makes it difficult or impossible to revisit and identify with one's roots. In addition, the organization, The 1947 Partition Archive claims that there is widespread public amnesia regarding Partition.

5.4.1. Partition: Political Consequences

Partition was about two specific incisions. Firstly, the territorial incision emerged from a political conflict over the ownership of a state – a conflict about who ought to acquire the moral and legitimate authority over the entire population and colonized territory left by the British Raj. Secondly, the creation of Pakistan was a partition not simply of the subcontinent but also of the Indian Muslim community itself.

During and after Partition, women in India have participated in politics, joined the workforce, taken care of their families and communities, and worked hard to resist oppressive structures of the colonially-imposed rules of the state.

Following partition, there was widespread violence and massacre on both sides of the border. Those who lived through partition almost universally recall seeing a variety of forms of violence and brutality. The violence was especially brutal in communities along the border of India and Pakistan, which was very hastily drawn by the British. Much of the violence was centered in Punjab, which was effectively sliced in half during Partition.

Historically, the violence is remembered as senseless. However, India in the 1940s was also a highly weaponized and militarized society, with one-third of

eligible men serving in the army at some point. With military training, these men who had served in the army were well-trained in modern weaponry and were able to organize and direct attacks. Villages, trains, and refugee camps were all targets of attacks. Trains were an especially common target of violence and trains would often reach their destination with hundreds of dead bodies on board, provoking strong feelings of anger and the desire for vengeance, creating a cycle of violence. (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2012, p. 221)

The Partition riots are also the story of the rape, abduction and widowhood of thousands of women on both sides of the newly formed borders. Incomplete and unreliable data make it hard to come up with the exact number of women and girls abducted during the Partition riots. The official estimate of the number of abducted women was placed at 50,000 Muslim women in India and 33,000 Hindu and Sikh women in Pakistan (Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin, 1998).

Indian and Pakistani authorities used the term ‘recovery operation’ to describe the carrying out of plans to return abducted women to their own states, communities and families. While the term ‘recovery’ appears to have negative connotations today, when women’s human rights are celebrated if not always upheld, soon after Partition, the Indian and Pakistani states decided that this was the most appropriate phrase for an ‘operation’ where women were not given any rights or choices to decide about their own future.

Through the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation in India and its Women’s Section, under Rameshwari Nehru, between December 1947 and December 1949, from Pakistan 6,000 women were ‘recovered’ and 12,000 from India. Most ‘recoveries’ were made from East and West Punjab, followed by Jammu, Kashmir and Patiala. Approximately 30,000 Muslim and non-Muslim women were recovered by both countries over an eight-year period. The total number of Muslim women recovered was significantly higher – 20,728 as against 9,032 non-Muslims. While most ‘recoveries’ occurred between 1947 -52, women were being returned as late as 1956.

The state was eager to control women’s sexuality by exercising its rights over the body, religion, family life and, most importantly, motherhood. The discourse of morality, the nation building process and the euphoria over the success of the anti-colonial movement offered limited space for ordinary women (or men) to express

their grievances. Moreover, it was impossible to challenge the political elite, who were in control of the nation-state. Women had little control over their lives. In most instances, this compromised women's agency and right to make their own choices. The state devised policies based on the national idea of how women's interests should be perceived, and no departure from this was acceptable.

5.4.2 Partition: Economical Consequences

This migration was the largest one in the world involving inevitable hardships, miseries, rape, looting, arson and massacre. These displaced persons moved on foot, in convoys, buses and by rail under the protection of the Military.

The government measures extended economic relief to the displaced persons since 1947 and continued for about a decade; government continued to extend economic relief to them for their rehabilitation and well being also. The displaced persons came from diverse background and therefore loans extended to them were also diversified. They were given assistance by way of agricultural loans to purchase bullocks, agricultural implements, fodder, seeds, repair of wells and houses.

The urban professional classes such as traders, shopkeepers, industrialists, artisans, students, lawyers and medical practitioners were also advanced loans to resume their callings further. The immigrants mainly belonged to trade, petty-business, industries, money lending and profession classes such as medical, legal, teaching and service and in some cases these were agricultural classes, Many non-cultivators and small landholders who had immigrated, engaged themselves in business and petty-business and changed the drab markets possessing only limited variety of wares. They not only provided new look to the markets but also transformed them into better shopping establishments where variety of wares such as cosmetics, soaps, face- powder, mirrors, oil, sophisticated toys etc. became easily available in large quantities. The displaced persons and local people began to interact with each other keeping their interests in view and it consequently led to the process of socioeconomic transformation which increased the urbanization rapidly.

Undivided India was an integrated economic region with people from all parts of the country freely trading with other parts. Partition suddenly created rigid lines across this economic region and divided it in several parts without any communication with each other. This new boundary between selling and buying regions shut down trade practices that were going on for hundreds of years. Without

significant linkages with foreign export markets economy of both the countries were severely affected. Although this troubled Bengal and Punjab most, other historical trade routes such as those along Brahmaputra river or Gujrat coast were also hampered.

More specifically than trade, industries were affected greatly. Jute growing regions of East Pakistan was separated from Jute mills of West Bengal that saw jute production almost stopping for years. This made international price of jute skyrocketing for years to come. Same thing happened with cotton mills of Western India and cotton growing regions of Pakistan. Apart from these macro considerations, industries were shut down because of communal disharmony where owners and workers were from different religions.

Although part of a much larger humanitarian disaster, the forced migration associated with the partition left millions of people in dire economic conditions. People were separated from their livelihood, be it agricultural land, industry or trade. People who were economically solvent were forced to move out of their land and became permanently dependent on governments to live their lives.

Check Your Progress

1. The territorial incision emerged from a ----- conflict over the ownership of a state.
a) Social b) cultural c) political d) moral
2. The official estimate of the number of abducted women was placed at 50,000 ---
----- women in India
a) Muslim b) Hindu c) Shikh d) Isai
3. Undivided India was an integrated -----region with people from all parts of the country freely trading with other parts.
a) social b) political c) economic d) agricultural
4. The new boundary between selling and buying regions shut down -----
practices.
a) agricultural b) industrial c) medical d) trade

5. The industries were shut down because of ----- disharmony where owners and workers were from different religions.

- a) communal b) political c) geographical d) social

5.5 Summary:

“Partition” – the division of British India into the two separate states of India and Pakistan on August 14-15, 1947 – was the “last-minute” mechanism by the British. Partition generated riots, mass casualties, and a colossal wave of migration. Millions of people moved to what they hoped would be safer territory, with Muslims heading towards Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs in the direction of India. As many as 14-16m people may have been eventually displaced, travelling on foot, in bullock carts and by train.

Women were subjected to various kinds of violence by different agents during the partition. Thousands of women, estimates range from 25,000 to 29,000 Hindu and Sikh women and 12,000 to 15,000 Muslim women, were abducted, raped, forced into marriage, forced to convert and killed, on both sides of the border. Women were also mutilated, their breasts cut off, stripped naked and paraded down the streets and their bodies carved with religious symbols of the ‘*other*’ community.

The agony of witnessing the near and dear ones dying due to malnutrition, sickness and fight, fear of losing home, belongings, dignity and identity wrecked women (Mehdi, 2010). There have been numerous cases of honour killing where husbands killed their wives, and fathers killed their daughters to prevent their exploitation by other communities. The women themselves jumped into wells in groups and threw themselves and their girl children in fires to escape abduction and rape by the enemy. Violence was also inflicted on women by their own men in the form of suicides they were coerced into, or killed in the name of honour. There were also women who committed suicide of their own volition to keep their ‘*purity*’ and were later glorified as ‘*martyrs*’. The mass suicide in Thoa Khalsa, Rawalpindi, with 90 women jumping in the well, was greatly publicized in the news. *The Statesman* in its report also compared this act to the *Rajput* tradition of sati, thereby giving it the sanction of traditions.

A large number of partition refugees crossed the border on trains and many partition refugees express clearer memories of trains than of anything else. Chawla

(2014) speculates this is because trains were the last physical connection many people had to their homelands (p. 196). Trains were a frequent site of violence because they were crowded, chaotic, and people carried only the most valuable possessions they could manage to hold with them. Refugees vividly recall looters and soldiers boarding the trains, stealing any valuables they could, and killing people in the process. Other than violence on trains, Partition survivors widely recall seeing violence and slain bodies in the streets of their hometowns and during Partition journeys along roads and in fields.

The issues of purity, acceptance, pregnancy, honour and shame, fear of rejection, trust, accepting the fate as it was/is, apprehending the fears and insecurities of future were the factors of refusal. There were instances as Kidwai (2011) records when Hindu women had been recovered from Pakistani Muslims, their relatives had refused to take them. To which Menon & Bhasin (1998) posed the question of belongingness of women. Hence, women who were active and passive victims of the process of partition, have their own individual memories to be looked into.

5.6 Terms to Remember

Partition: the act of dividing or partitioning; separation by the creation of a boundary that divides or keeps apart.

The two-nation theory: This theory supported the proposal that Muslims and non-Muslims should be two separate nations. It is the ideology that the main identity and unifying aspect of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent is their religion, rather than their language or ethnicity.

British Raj: rule by the British in India. This rule was before 1947.

Viceroy: a royal official who rules an area in the name of the King (or Queen). The word is made of 'vice' (Latin for 'in place of') and 'roy' (French, meaning 'king').

1.4 Answers To Check Your Progress

1.0.1 1-----a, 2-----d, 3-----b, 4-----c, 5-----b

1.0.2 1-----b, 2-----a, 3-----a, 4-----d, 5-----b

1.0.3 1-----c, 2-----a, 3-----c, 4-----d, 5-----a

5.7 Exercises

1. Why India and Pakistan are divided?
2. How did partition affect women?
3. What happened during partition?
4. How does this sense of home change during the partition?
5. What role do women play in *Tamas*?

5.8 Books for Further Reading

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Module VI

Home and Exile

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6.1 Objectives:

- To acquaint the students with the concepts of Home and Exile in Partition Literature
- To study the origin and meaning of Home and Exile
- To study and discuss various aspects of Home and Exile in connection with Partition Literature
- To study and understand the reflection of Home and Exile in Partition Literature
- To enable the students to analyse and criticize partition literature in terms of home and exile

6.2 Introduction:

In order to expand, develop and establish one's identity in the world, human beings left their native roots and entered in the web to exile. With the inception of their migration from one place to another, the process of civilization also took place. Here in the process of getting into 'exile', such exile is voluntary and on the other hand, it is forced one too. Such willing or forced dispersal of people is from their homelands in new regions or provinces. During the partition of British India, millions of people displaced from their homelands as Kavita Daiya writes "In the nine months between August 1947 and the spring of the following year, by unofficial counts, at least sixteen million people—Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims—were forced to flee their homes and became refugees;.." (Daiya, 06) or Rosemary M. Goerge comments "The 1947 Partition of British India into two nation-states, India and Pakistan, provoked the single largest population movement in recent history... It is estimated that between 1947 and 1948, 10-15million people crossed the newly created borders in both directions." (Rosemary, 135) Kavita Daiya also refers to the views of Sumit Sarkar on the migration as she writes "As the location of the territorial division was announced, whole villages were forced to migrate and relocate themselves (depending on whether they were Hindu, Sikh, or Muslim) in territories that were in the process of being marked as India or Pakistan, in what was, as Sumit Sarkar has aptly noted, the world's biggest mass migration in less than nine months." (Daiya, 06) In this connection, it is notable that the forced dispersal of people during and even after the partition from homeland to new lands (exiles) is a disturbing question that still causes to suffer innumerable people especially of India

and Pakistan. This massive forced dispersal of people during partition gave birth to the partition literature emerging from the experiences of exile. Such journey through a grotesque dance of violence affected innumerable people of India and Pakistan. After the partition, approximately twelve million people on both sides of the borders of Punjab and Bengal were forced in exile as refugee. Several million partition affected people had to leave their homes and roots. They had to cross the newly created borders in both directions as Gyanendra Pandey comments “Practically the entire minority population of certain areas was driven out: Hindus and Sikhs from the West Pakistan territories [what is Pakistan today] and Muslims from East Punjab and several neighbouring tracts in India, as well as Muslims and Hindus from the two halves of Bengal [...]”(Pandey, 134)

Such exile with its psychosomatic effects aroused out of the partition trauma, highly affected the writings of several partition writers such as Saadaat Hasan Manto as he remarks “I prepared myself for writing, but when I actually sat down to write, I found myself divided. In spite of trying hard, I could not separate India from Pakistan and Pakistan from India.” (Manto, 77) In the beginning period of partition, thousands of minority women left their homes overnight to save their honour. Various contemporary newspapers like *Amrita Bazar Patrika* recorded such hard journey of these women across borders. In *The Hindu* newspaper, Sukrita Kumar in the article “Where is Toba Tek Singh?: Rereading Partition Literature” underscores the resounding silence of partition affected people who became permanently exiled as he refers to the sentence from Gulzlar’s story ‘Raavi Paar’ “The child who reached safety is dead, it cannot speak. The living child, who could have spoken, has been lost on the way.”(The Hindu) In exile, people face utterly unknown and unusual culture. In this connection, Anuparna Mukherjee comments on the exilic dilemma in the life of partition affected refugees as she writes “For the refugees who were ousted from their *bhité* [ancestral home] and expatriated to a different land following the exchange of population after the Partition indeed faced a “grave misfortune” in their new country as they realized that the natural surroundings, social customs and the daily rituals of the people were sometimes starkly different from their own.” (Mukherjee, 97)

Twentieth as well as twenty first centuries are marked by sea changes in almost all dimensions of human lives and it is remarkable that South Asian Literature in English which has now become broader in its scope also handled prominently the

major theme of partition or separation of nations into separate political units around the world. In South Asian Literature, partition is a major concern that has dominated the English literature. In the articulation of partition, South Asian English writers emphasised the varying phenomena such as home, exiles, refugeeism, spark of communal conflicts and violence, etc. The writers thoroughly experienced the trauma and agony of the partition India and Pakistan. So they tried to give outlets to their voices in the literature of partition which is written in various languages. Partition of India is the darkest event happened in the history of our nation that left indelible and unforgettable marks in the mind of millions of people. The issue of dislocation and displacement is one of the major themes of partition literature. In the dilemma of home and exile, the pain and trauma of being labelled as exiles or refugees in one's own homeland is really heartbreaking.

Displacement from one nation to another nation surely sparks new encounters about citizenship, access to public spaces, housing, employment, co-cultural conflicts, racial-ethnic and gender conflicts, nostalgic feelings, attachment as well as attraction of motherland, feeling of loneliness, language issues, etc, because one's history, culture and realization are highly challenged and stained by a new world's law and order, multifaceted society, but encounter with new or unknown land is an indispensable part of human life. Partition literature focuses the complex world of emotions rising amidst political upheavals like partition.

6.3 Home and Exile: Origin and Meaning

Home: In Oxford's Lexico, the term 'home' means one's permanent location of living as it states "The place where one lives permanently, especially as a member of a family or household." The term was first used in 12th century. Its origin is found in Middle English '*hom*'. In general, the concept of home is more than just a longed for destination. Its literal meaning is a structure build of bricks. On the other hand, it is a place where one is accepted wholeheartedly. It is the most sensitive and most intimate location.

Due to globalization, home has emerged as a changing and mobile location. Traditionally, the term 'home' is taken as belonging. There is the feeling of belonging and rootedness. The emic notion of 'Home is where the heart is' is very appealing. Sometimes, the home is depicted as conflated with house, family, haven,

self and so on. In this way, it is an emblem of one's identity and a place where one is accepted.

6.3.1 Exile: In Oxford's Lexico, the term 'exile' means the situation in which one is forced to leave one's native roots as it states "The state of being barred from one's native country, typically for political or punitive reasons." Geoffrey Abbott in *The Encyclopedia Britannica* explains the term 'Exile and Banishment' as "Exile and banishment, prolonged absence from one's country imposed by vested authority as a punitive measure." The term was first used in 14th century. Its origin is found in Middle English 'exil'. In general, the term 'exile' in a conventional sense, is a form of political punishment where the exiled persons had to be away from their home or native roots. Their return is strictly refused and they are threatened with imprisonment or death.

In general, the term stands for separation, banishment, displacement, expatriation and alienation. It causes the emotional expression of loss in the form sorrow and nostalgia. Besides, in the modern aspect of literature, the term 'exile' is explained by Nordin as "a result of experience of economic modernization, mass migration, extended warfare and breakdown of the traditional notions of individual belonging and social order." (Nordin, 09)

6.3.2 Home and Partition Literature:

In fact, the original "home" is a concept where is a certain strong desire and craving for it, but it is fact that in partition literature, people are caught in the land of displacement and alienation. Here partition-affected people are confused by the emotional distance between home and the displaced world. In partition literature, obsession of exiles with the lost home is effectively depicted. For them, "home" is a place of memory and history. Their displacement from the "home" is their separation from themselves and from reality, because traditionally, home is seen as an anchoring point, a place of security, of relative safety and comfort. It is a place of unproblematic identity. It is an emblem of one's emotional world. For exilic people, home becomes an ambiguous and ambivalent place. They always try to trace their lost ancestral roots through the memory lane. So the consistent engagement with the idea of 'home' often leads them to find out their lost native place. Here the poignant yearning for the original home is very strong among such partition affected people. Women in exile remain more attached to their lost home or culture than men as

Debali Moorkhajea-Leonard states “In Partition fiction, the agonizing experience of leaving home is frequently explored through women’s attachment to the home.” (Moorkhajea-Leonard, 118) Partition novels also depict the irony of being refugee in one’s own home. The present ‘ironic home’ is a striking aspect in the partition novels.

Therefore, their inner dilemmatic search for their lost home is never ending. They constantly search of the lost roots to hold themselves firmly in such lost places. For them, home means a fleeting image of the memory. The motif of uprootedness, homelessness and love for the native soil dominantly figure in the partition literature. Among these issues, the loss of the original home is very heart breaking as the very idea of home is the gist of one’s identity but now it is lost as Bohdan Boychuk underscores this loss:

“There was an essence somewhere,
only puzzles are left,
home stood somewhere,
but how to find it?”

6.3.3 Nostalgia for Loss of Home:

In exile, partition affected people (exiles) suffer nostalgic life. They always steep into the past memories of their lost native roots. They crave for their lost homes, lost country, lost relatives or even friends. Due to separation, in exile, such people look back that is lost forever now. They are haunted by some feelings of loss of their home or native roots. Being nostalgic for lost native place, they urge to reclaim what is lost but fail. Nostalgic feelings for home, native roots and belongings create issues of identity. Women in exile remain more attached to their lost culture or home than men. The sense of uprootedness is very dominant in such exilic people. Much of the partition literature is expressly sentimental as renowned critic Sisir Kumar Das writes “The most pervading emotion in the writing on partition is nostalgia, the memories of home and the acute agony of losing it forever...” (Das, 379) Exiles depicted in partition literature never break their psychological links with their points of origin. They always keep faith in the possibility of homecoming though not possible. For exile, their ancestral homeland is a place of memories of childhood and place of tranquillity.

6.4 Exile and Partition Literature:

Exile is universal. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, exile is seen in the character of Caliban, son of the witch Sycorax. His assimilation with Prospero's technology of language proves his engagement or adjustment (assimilation) with the new language and shows his sense of exile. Here the linguistic proposition of exile seems to be dominant. *The Tempest* carries certain threads of exilic feelings that the play matures from the seeds of exile as Caliban is exiled from his Gods as well as his nature. In general, exile is perceived as something akin to the in-between (liminal) phase. The major literary works such as V S Naipaul's *A House of Mr. Biswas*, George Lamming's *In the Castle of my Skin* or Frantz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Mask* are produced in exile and these works try to forcefully remove the condition of exile. Sometimes we feel that exile is within us from the outset. It is notable that exile has become a dominant term in the theorization of twentieth-century literature. So the sense of cultural, social and emotional orphanages is very dominant in the 20th century literature especially in partition literature or Diasporic literature. In such literature, exile is one of the most dominant tropes which evoked cultural, social displacement. V. S. Naipaul defines the term 'exile' as "one's lack of representation in the world; one's lack of status". Here Naipaul underpins the person in exile as a subaltern who lacks certain identity or position. Many authors have tried to transform exile or displacement into a powerful discourse also. Persons in exile often feel the frustration of loneliness throughout their several years of exile.

Strictly speaking, the term 'exile' refers to one's forced separation from one's native roots, without the possibility of return. An exile means also a person who cannot return to his or her lost home without facing imprisonment or death for illegal trespass against the governing regime. Exile is highly caused by the political strategies. In this connection, Glad remarks "exile is a political rather than an artistic concept." (Glax, viii) Now-a-days, the term 'exile' has widened considerably. Edward Said underscores its experimental and psychological impacts as he sees exile as "the perilous territory of non-belonging." (Said, 162) He also writes exile as "the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place." (Said, 159) Further Said also focuses on not only the miseries of exile but on its benefits. He ends his book *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* with the final remark on exile as "Exile is life led outside habitual order. It is nomadic, decentered, contrapuntal; but no sooner does one get accustomed to it than its unsettling force erupts anew." (Said,

172) In short, the term 'exile' is a psychological, philosophical and existential condition that undergoes the experiences of displacement, loss and homelessness. It can be banishment or nomadism. It can also be a desire for constant voyage or a search for home and even one's escape from it. It is a psychological or geographical displacement that leads to the sense of otherness.

Partition literature takes us through the trajectories of exile as from one nation to another nation. How the identity and status of a forced human being in partition is erased and called as refugee is depicted in partition literature. Here one is compelled or forced to assume a new identity in the countries so different and new from one's own land. In exile, refugees have to face an acid test. During partition, Muslims living in India migrated to Pakistan. Simultaneously, Hindus and Sikhs living in Pakistan migrated to India. During their forced migration, they left everything in terms of social, cultural, traditional, emotional identities or their ancestral homes behind and entered the world of exiles and became refugees with nothing in hands except memories. The prominent reason behind leaving their homes was to seek security amidst their coreligionists. In partition literature, the relationship between the margin and the center is reconsidered and focussed. In partition literature, the forced exile is also seen in the form of forcible abduction of women caused by religious or communal hatred. Due to the spark of religious hatred, innumerable women were abducted and forced to sacrifice their lives as they had to lead the life as a victim and a weak creature in the hands of men. Another type of the forced exile during partition is seen in the forcible religious conversion of women that caused women to accept new religion and face the psychological traumas in the whole rest of their life. On the other hand, we see some rare glimpses in partition literature in the depiction of people's faith in humanity in the religious hatred and partition traumatic times also. It is really a rare human moment of love in exilic life underscored by the partition writers. The exilic people are caught in the space of ambivalence or uncertainty. Such space characterises the lack of any fixed value, belief or identity.

6.4.1 Bleak Picture of Exile:

Partition literature depicts the bleak picture of exile and homelessness. The predicament of exiles in the hellhole is described by many partition writers. The portrayal of abysmal life-in-death situation of exilic families shows the pathetic and devastating effects of partition. Many novelists such as Khushwant Singh, Chaman

Nahal, Bapsi Sidhwa have depicted the bleak picture of exile and lost homes in their novels.

6.4.2 Home and Exile:

The terms 'home' and 'exile' are oxymoronic terms. These two mutually contradictory terms are depended on each other. So it is important to comprehend their meaning and nature in context with the partition literature. This combination of two incongruous or opposite terms ('home' and 'exile') forms a significant part of the partition literature. Both terms play the role of part and parcel as they lay a special emphasis on the core thematic development of the partition literature. The terms 'home' and 'exile' have roots in Diasporic literature. The Diasporic literature is an umbrella term that refers to the writing that unfolds experiences of dislocation, unsettlement, alienation, relocation, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, crisis of identity, cultural assimilation, disintegration of cultures, immigration, etc. The term 'Diaspora' is derived from Greek work *diaspeirein* which means to scatter. In general, Diaspora is simply the displacement of a community into another geographical and cultural region.

6.5 In-Between Space or Crisis of Identity:

Due to partition, refugees are caught in the doubled or dual relationship. They are caught in dilemma of present and past. It means their dual relationship shows the place they presently occupy and their own continuing emotional, mental involvement with their 'lost home'. In the oscillating journey of home and exile in partition literature, the characters suffer indeterminate space and crisis of identity. Partition literature explores the impact of nostalgia and feeling of exile felt after partition, on the both sides of borders. The problems of refugees and displacement are highly focused in it. In partition literature, women refugees seem to be caught in dual identities as those women who are abducted and forced to convert their religion face new culture, new name, and new language and so on. Thus, in exile, women suffer crisis of identity more than men. They lead the life of subaltern that are voiceless. The voice of women is stifled. The exile never fused with the new land nor returned to the lost home, as the partition left them in-between space without any specific and permanent identity.

6.6 Reflection of Home and Exile in Partition Literature:

Home and exile, one of the major thematic concerns in the partition literature, is studied with its reflection in the partition novels as below:

1. Amrita Pritam effectively depicted the forced exile of women in the form of abduction as well as the exile of women in the form of forced religious conversion. Her stories depict the exilic women characters of both nations, India and Pakistan. Pritam's *Pinjar*, a 1950 Punjabi novel, explores the exile of Pooro (Puro), a girl who is abducted by Rashid and forced to lead her life as a victim. Another example of such forced exile is seen in the abduction of Rashid's aunt by the uncle of Pooro. Another type of the forced exile during partition is seen in the forcible religious conversion of Pooro in Muslim religion that is later known as Hamida. Pooro always remembers her past in the form of mother's home. Her mind is always steeped in her mother's home. She suffers in the state of being homesick. In this way, in exile, her life is filled with nostalgia for her motherland. In exile, Pooro also suffers the crisis of identity as she is now named Hamida and adjusts with new name, new culture, new language and new religion. In exile, the problem of cultural assimilation causes Pooro to face devastating and deplorable life.
2. In Saadat Hasan Manto's short story *Toba Tek Singh*, Bishan Singh, a Sikh inmate of an asylum in Lahore is trapped in the violent unfolding of partition history. After partition, the governments of India and Pakistan decide to exchange exilic people to their cultural roots. Upon being told that his hometown Toba Tek Singh is in Pakistan, he is forced to send back to Pakistan. When Singh refuses to go back to Pakistan, he is left in the no man's land between the borders (barbered wire fences) of India and Pakistan. Here Manto emphasizes the idea that the two nations are unable to finalize whether Singh belonged to India or Pakistan and eventually forced him to live in exile.
3. In Manik Bandopadhyay's *The Final Solution* depicts exilic life of the Hindu families who left their homes in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and came to West Bengal of India after partition. The story depicts the bleak picture of these families as they could not find refuge in the overcrowded camps and they are forced to stay at any public places like railway stations, etc. The present story of Mallika, Bhushan (Mallika's husband), their son Khokhon and a widowed sister-in-law Asha depicts the life in death situation of such exilic families for survival. The story also reveals

the impact of the politics of power and sexuality and destruction of values on the life of refugees in Calcutta city.

4. Bhisam Sahni in *Tamas* narrates the exilic experiences where people's faith alive in humanity is shown in the religious-hatred and violent atmosphere of partition. An elderly Sikh couple Harnam Singh and Banto, was forced to leave their ancestral village during partition. Their house was burnt and shop was looted. In such pathetic and horrible situation, they were given refuge in a Muslim household where the Muslim elderly woman (Rajo) welcomes the homeless couple of Sikh.

5. Jamila Hashmi's story '*Banished*' (trans. by Memon) depicts the acute alienation and exilic life of a woman married to the man who abducted her. In the present story, the deep-felt consciousness and traumatic effects run too deep. The abduction and banishment of the woman in the present story reminds us the mythical story of Sita who symbolically stands for a woman whose exile is never going to end.

6. The dilemma of physical and mental loss is depicted in Ismat Chughtai's short story 'Roots' (*Jadein*) where Amma and her children had to lose their dear and near things and native land. When children asked her to pack luggage as they have leave their motherland and migrate to a new land, Amma was reluctant that she would not leave her home as her younger son imagines her dilemma of gulf between home and homelessness "After all, this game of one's land vanishing, and inhabiting a new land, is not very interesting." (Chughtai, 207). Finally, they had to leave everything behind and find a new land for survival. Amma attempts to cherish the memories of lost home. She rejects the idea of leaving her home and being forced out of her home. Suhashini in Sunil Gangopadhyay's *East-west (Purba--Paschim)* or *Bebe* in Joginder Paul's *Thirst of Rivers (Dariyaon Pyas)* also show the same deep attachment with their lost home.

7. Jhumpa Lahiri's 'The Real Durwan' depicts the story of Boori Ma (old mother) who displaced during partition from East Pakistan to Calcutta and started working as a gatekeeper (Durwan). The irony here is that the homeless Boori Ma protects the homes of others. She is separated from her husband and four daughters. She always steps into the past days of her affluent family as she tells "At our house, we ate goat twice a week. We had a pond on our property, full of fish. ...Yet, there was a day when my feet touched nothing but marble. Believe me, don't believe me, such

comforts you cannot even dream them.” (Lahiri, 171) In this way, in exile, she becomes nostalgic about her lost home caused by partition.

8. In the introduction (that appears between second last and third last chapters) to the novel *The Divided Village*, Rahi Masoom Raza underscores his everlasting attachment and belongings with the soil of Gangauli, Raza’s native place as he writes “I must say that I belong to Ghazipur. My bonds with Gangauli are unbreakable. It's not just a village, it's my home. Home. This word exists in every language and dialect in this world, and is the most beautiful word in every language and dialect.” (Raza, 201) Pandey in his book *Remembering Partition* underscores why this introduction was necessary to carry the story forward. Here Raza asserts his emotional bonds with his native place called Gangauli. For him, his home is like heaven, because he says that the word ‘home’ is the most beautiful in every language and dialect. It is the home that generates power to face any adversities in life. So separation from one’s home is heart breaking.

9. In Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man* novel, Muslim villagers of Pir Pindo have been forced to leave their soil of ancestors, their dear land without any concern for their emotion, but they oppose and question “And what about our harvest?...And the crop just we have sown?...Who will evacuate them?” (Sidhwa, 110) Further the novel reveals the communal revulsion and psychological impacts of partition in human minds. The novelist also underscores how innumerable families uprooted and migrated to unknown lands as Sidhwa writes “Within three months, seven million Muslims and five million Hindus and Sikhs are uprooted in the largest and most terrible exchange of population known to history.” (Sidhwa, 159)

10. Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi* depicts the circumstances where the ironic home is depicted as Lala Kanshi Ram and his family are optimistic about their living in Sialkot after partition, but the turbulent situation caused by partition imposed ‘involuntary exile’ them and they became refugee in their own land as he shouts “I was born around here, this is my— how can I be a refugee in my own home?” (130) Further the novel explores the imposed exile upon Hindus and Sikhs and sense of alienation among them. When the family of Lala Kanshi Ram reach India, they face the problem of loss of identity as they are strangers in the new land of India. Further they face the problems of shelter, rehabilitation or livelihood which also cause them to feel to be a subaltern or refugee in the new land.

11. The first novel that brought partition into limelight is Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956). In the present novel, the forced exile is very dominantly depicted by the novelist. When People of Mano Majra, the fictional village on the border of India and Pakistan, came to know that the government of British India was planning to transport Muslims from Mano Majra to Pakistan, they opposed this forced exile. The villagers were forced to evacuate Mano Majra and "Mano Majra is the only place left where there are Muslims."(132) Many natives of Mano Majra refused to leave it as Imam Baksh was unable to control his feelings and broke down "What have we to do with Pakistan? We were born here. So were our ancestors. We have lived amongst you as brothers."(133) Finally they became homeless as they had to leave the village with meagre belongings. The novel depicts painful partition of people of the village that further sinks into religious massacre.

6.7 Conclusion:

In short, it is very shocking that in the era of globalization, one is an exile in one's home. Nothing is permanent in this world because the rule of the world is very obscure and beyond one's comprehension as Imam Baksh in *Train to Pakistan* says:

"This is the way of the world,
Not forever does the bulbul sing...,
Not forever lasts the spring...,
Friendships not forever last,
They know not life, who know not this." (135)

Life is an ordeal that is seen in the form of partition of nation. The changing dimensions of home and exile affected the life of human being. To perceive and comprehend the identity of exilic people in partition literature is nothing but getting trapped in a wayless 'aporia' or the endless chain of 'signifier' and 'signified'. Overall the journey of searching their roots or lost home is unending challenge before such exilic people but it is need of the hour that such people should not keep themselves confined to their 'lost home'. They need to come in contact with reality of the present world.

6.8 Glossary and Notes:

Inception: the time at which something begins

civilization: the condition that exists when people have developed society, art, science, etc.

dispersal: act of moving in different directions

exile: a situation in which one is forced to leave one's country or home

voluntary: willing and unforced

massive: very large and heavy

psychosomatic: caused by mental or emotional problems

trauma: a very unpleasant experience that causes someone to have emotional problems

resounding: leaving no doubt

refugee: someone who has been forced to leave a country

dilemma: a situation in which you have to make a difficult choice

expatriate: living in a foreign land

agony: extreme mental or physical pain

destination: a place to which a person is going or something is being sent

belonging: possession

rootedness: a state of being firmly fixed

punitive: extremely severe

expatriation: banishment

alienation: separation of a person from a position of former attachment

nostalgia: pleasure and sadness that is caused by remembering something from the past and wishing that you could experience it again

anchoring point: (here) a place where person returns regularly

ambivalent: having or showing two opposing or contradictory feelings at the same time

uproot: to make someone leave home and move to a different place

assimilation: an act of adopting the ways of another or new culture

Diasporic: related to a group of people who live outside the area in which they have lived for long time

Trajectory: a path or line of development

conversion: the act or process of changing from one religion, belief to another

bleak: not warm or hopeful

hellhole: a very dirty or unpleasant place

oxymoronic: related to a combination of words that have opposite meanings

abduct: to take someone away from a place by force

subaltern: of lower status

ordeal: an experience that is very difficult

aporia: a state of puzzlement

6.9 Check Your Progress:

Fill in the blanks:

1. In the process of getting into 'exile', the exile is _____ as well as _____ too.
2. Partition literary writers experienced the _____ of India and Pakistan.
3. In exile, persons have to stay away from their _____.
4. The term 'exile' stands for _____ and _____.
5. In exile, partition-affected people (exiles) suffer _____.
6. For exile, home is a place of _____ and _____.
7. The most pervading emotion in the writing on partition is _____.
8. For exile, _____ is a place of memories of childhood and place of tranquillity.
9. For V. S. Naipual, the term 'exile' means _____.
10. In general, the term 'exile' refers to one's _____ from one's native roots, without the possibility of return

11. For Edward Said, 'exile' is the perilous territory of _____.
12. In partition literature, the _____ is seen in the form of forcible abduction of women caused by religious or communal hatred.
13. Partition literature depicts the bleak picture of _____.
14. Due to partition, refugees are caught in the problem of _____.
15. In Amrita Pritam's *Pinjar*, _____ suffers crisis of identity in exile.
16. In Sadat Hasan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh*, India and Pakistan are unable to finalize the identity of _____.
17. Bhisam Sahni in _____ narrates the exilic experiences of the Sikh couple _____.
18. In Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* novel, Muslim villagers of _____ have been forced to leave their soil of ancestors.
19. In Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, the family of _____ face the crisis of identity in the new land of India.

6.10 Answers to Check Your Progress

1. voluntary, forced.
2. trauma and agony of the partition
3. home
4. banishment, displacement
5. nostalgic life
6. memory, history
7. nostalgia
8. ancestral homeland
9. one's lack of status
10. forced separation
11. non-belonging
12. forced exile
13. exile and homelessness

14. crisis of identity
15. Pooro
16. Bishan Singh
17. *Tamas*, Harnam Singh and Banto
18. Pir Pindo
19. Lala Kanshi Ram

6.11 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions in about 250 words.

1. Write a detailed note on the origin and meaning of 'home' and 'exile'.
2. Discuss the reflection of 'home' and 'exile' in partition literature.

B) Write short notes on the following in about 150 words.

1. Home and Exile
2. Identity crisis of partition-affected people
3. Home and exile in *Train to Pakistan*

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Module VII
A) Toba Tek Singh

Saadat Hasan Manto

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 - 7 A.5.3 Identity in Toba Tek Singh
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- 7 A.6 Partition its aftermath
- 7 A.7 Check Your Progress
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7 A.1 Objectives :

- To raise awareness of the historical circumstances surrounding the partition of India in 1947, and the subsequent consequences of mass migration, displacement, and terrible loss of life.
- To study narrative techniques of partition literature.
- To know partition and its impact on Women.
- To cultivate humanity with care and vigilance.

7 A.2 Introduction:

Saadat Hasan Manto (1912-1955) is an Urdu short story writer who wrote much about the communal riots of 1947. His stories are known as the depiction of the partition of the subcontinent immediately following independence in 1947. He wrote 22 collections of short stories, a novel, five series of radio plays, three collections of essays, two collections of personal sketches. Much of his writings are translated into English. Some of his most-praised works include Thanda Gosht, Khol Do, Toba Tek Singh, ISS Manjdhar Mein, Mozalle, and Bapu Gopi Nath. He was posthumously awarded 'Nishan - I- Imtiaz' award by the government of Pakistan. The story 'Toba Tek Singh' was written in the year 1953 but was published in 1955. The present story is taken from Saadat-Hasan Manto's collection Siyah Hashiye. It was originally written in Urdu and translated by Khushwant Singh. It is a partition story and has become a metaphor for the absurdity and mindlessness of politicians.

7 A.3.1 Characters:-

Bishen Singh: The main character of the story around whom the story revolves. He is from Toba Tek Singh. He has been living in the asylum in Lahore.

Roop Kaur: She is a daughter of Bishen Singh

Fazal Deen: Friend of Bishen Singh from Toba Tek Singh

The Hindu Lawyer: He is a lawyer from Lahore. He became insane after a failed love affair with a Muslim girl.

Muhammad Ali: A Muslim lunatic from Chiniot. He calls himself Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The Setting of the story: Isolated mental hospital in Lahore

Time: Two or three years after the partition

7 A.3.2 Summary:

The story "Toba Tek Singh" is about the incident that took place after the partition. After two or three years after 1947, the governments of India and Pakistan decided to transfer some Muslim, Hindu and Sikh lunatics in the asylums in India and Pakistan. The story revolves around Bishen Singh, one of the victims of the partition.

Bishen Singh is introduced as Toba Tek Singh in the story. He is the protagonist of the story, 'Toba Tek Singh'. He is a harmless old man who came to the Lahore asylum fifteen years ago when he went mad. He has not slept for 15 years. His feet and ankles are swollen because he spends the day walking around in the asylum, asking, "Where is Toba Tek Singh?". At best he leans against a wall at night. He seldom took bath, his hair on his head got entangled with his beard. It gives him a fearsome look. He used to be a landlord in his village but lost his mental balance because of the property dispute. He was brought to the asylum bound in chains. His family comes to meet him once in a while. On the day his relatives were to visit him, he would take a bath and put on clean clothes. He mutters his nonsense phrases, Upari gur gur. Bishen Singh has a daughter who has grown up into a young woman now. He couldn't recognize her as she weeps at his sight.

One day Fazaludin, an old Muslim friend from his village, visits Bishen Singh, but Bishen Singh doesn't recognize the man.

Fazaludin told him that his family has safely gone to India. He also tells him about the water buffalos left behind and calves they have produced. He gives information about his daughter Roop Kaur is quite well and has gone away with the family. Bishen Singh asks him, 'Where is Toba Tek Singh? His friend replies, In India ...no in Pakistan. Bishen Singh started muttering his usual incoherent words.

The story 'Toba Tek Singh' centers around Bishen Singh, and some of the lunatics. Bishen Singh and some other lunatics who live in the asylum. A Muslim lunatic from Chiniot, a past member of the All- India Muslim League, announces that he is Quaid -e -Azam and then promptly declares war on a Sikh, who, in his madness considered himself Master Tara Singh. Master Tara Singh and another young Hindu lawyer from Lahore did not wish to go to India. One Muslim lunatic called Pakistan as a place in Hindustan where cut-throat razors were made. One of the lunatics from the asylum shouted 'Pakistan Zindabad' with such force that he slipped down on the floor and died there. All of these lunatics have been almost abandoned by their families although some relations occasionally come to inquire after some lunatics majority of them are not ready to leave the asylum.

In the story, there is a Hindu lawyer who turns mad and experiences a sense of grief when Amritsar becomes part of India. And when he comes to know that he is now being sent to India. He doesn't feel happy and is not willing to leave his

ancestral home, Lahore, because his practice would not flourish in Amritsar. One of the lunatics climbed up a tree and decided to live there saying he would go to neither Pakistan nor India. Another lunatic whose name is Mohammad Ali declared himself as Mohammad Ali Jinnah. On the other, the Anglo-Indian lunatics were worried about their changed status in the asylum.

On the day the inmates are to be exchanged at the border, the asylum staff convinces Bishen Singh that Toba Tek Singh is indeed in Hindustan and that is where he is going. At the border, when his name is being entered, he asks the Indian official, "Where is Toba Tek Singh?" to which the official replies, "Of course in Pakistan." Bishen Singh rushes back to the other side only to be pushed back. Since he is a harmless person, the officials let him be for some time and continue their work. Moments later, they hear a scream and find Bishen Singh, lying face down on No Man's Land, with a barbed. Wire fences lay the body of Bishen Singh of village Toba Tek Singh. 'The heart –wrenching cry of Bishen Singh reflects the trauma of those who are forced to leave their homeland. The man who had not slept for 15 years finally found his resting place.

Thus, the story ends with Bishen Singh lying down in the no man's land between the two barbed wire fences. There behind barbed wire, was Hindustan. Here, behind the same kind of barbed wire was Pakistan. In between, on that piece of ground that had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh. When officers, tried to push him across the line into India. After a few seconds, all heard a sudden scream from Bishen Singh, who was laying flat face forward on the ground. And the piece of land where he fell belonged to neither India nor Pakistan.

7 A.4 Glossary :

lunatics: insane, mad persons

investigation: inquiry

escort: protection

transpire: become known, leak out

intriguing: confusing, complicated

profound: deep, serious

haughtily: proudly

strut: walk proudly

passed out: fainted

embroiled: implicated, involved

rigmarole: meaningless talk

perch(ed) : sit on/at a height

confabulation: discussion

imminent: about to happen, close at hand

intently: with full attention, carefully

kesh: hair

straggly: untidy, unclean

long for: wish intensely for something

flummox: baffle, confuse

persuade: convince

sky rending: very loud

gullet: throat

7 A.5.1 The theme of the story :

Toba Tek Singh is the story about the insanity of the partition. The story is set in the background of the biggest tragedy and episode violence in the history of independent India. The story is told through the warden of a mental asylum's perspective. The old man, Toba Tek Singh, is wondering where his village resides as the partition of India and Pakistan takes place. Bishen Singh gazes from the bars of his cell of a mental asylum, muttering a nonsensical sentence. He has not slept, laid, or even sat down for fifteen years back arrival from his village, Toba Tek Singh. The news of the British Raj finally leaving the country and India gaining their independence, all seems well. Though the inmates have their mental issues, they try and make sense of what is happening in the world outside. However, with the news of a partition happening soon after, there is confusion amongst the inmates as to which country they are now in; Pakistan or India. Where is Toba Tek Singh? Different characters represent different feelings, however, the protagonist Bishen

Singh, replicates the main emotion; being lost and unaware of where to find Toba Tek Singh. When Fazal Deen tells him that his relatives have gone to Hindustan, he shows no interest in it. He is not willing to migrate to India. He dies on the no-man's land between India and Pakistan. Thus, the story of "Toba Tek Singh is a masterpiece, which is interwoven with the theme of partition and its emotional and psychological effects on the human psyche. The writer has depicted the division of society into different sects after the partition in the name of the religion. Gulzar has also written a beautiful poem based on this story. Gulzar on Toba Tek Singh, Translation by Anisur Rahman. He recalls the mad character, Bishan Singh. He conveys a deep pain and trauma of a loss of identity, home, and being an exile.

7 A.5.2 The significance of the title –

“Toba Tek Singh” there was a kind-hearted man who served water and provided shelter to worn-out travellers irrespective of their caste and creed. 'Toba means pond, which eventually was called Toba Tek Singh. Toba Tek Singh was developed by the British toward the end of the 18th Century when a canal system was built. Bishen Singh apparently might have been one of those migrated to this place. The writer has portrayed a social and psychological territory in which madness is one of the important aspects. He wanted to show no world is born out of political turmoil and names of places are just irrelevant. In the end, humanity matters. In the story, the place got its name after a religious leader who was kind-hearted. In the turmoil of fanaticism and communalism, people never bothered where is Toba Tek Singh. The story takes after two-three years of partition, it seems highly unbelievable documenting from the time the inmates learn about the exchange. This proposal to exchange the lunatics that not only the lunatics, but the people around as well can not find out where the place is now. In the story, the name Toba Tek Singh is being given to the main character whose real name is Bishen Singh. Everyone calls Bishen Singh as Toba Tek Singh. The process of the exchange of lunatics becomes a tragic part of the story. Thus, the title of the story is very apt and symbolic so far as the main character of the story is a concern.

7 A.5.3 Identity in Toba Tek Singh

The writer has described the most traumatic episode in the history of the world. He brings out the confusion at the time of separation of India and Pakistan. ‘Toba Tek Singh’ mainly focuses on the fear of lost identities at the time of forced shifting.

Many inmates of the lunatic asylum find it hard to understand when they are asked to move. When the news of Partition reached the lunatic asylum, the inmates reacted differently. Most of them did not even understand the process of migration of Hindustan/Pakistan Pakistan/ Hindustan. Some of the Sikh lunatics in the asylum did not know where on earth is Hindustan. They showed their disinterestedness by saying they did not know to speak the Hindustani language. Religious divisions made no meaning among loving hearts. The whole idea of a separate nation to all Muslims and Hindu /Sikhs and moving across borders were meaningless to the innocent hearts.

Bishen Singh, who finds himself stranded between India and Pakistan - in no man's land that demonstrates the irrationality of the division of his country into two parts. His death is a symbolic refusal to be 'divided' into different religious groups and different countries. Bishen Singh has scarified his life for the place and he becomes Toba Tek Singh that lays neither Pakistan nor in India, but in between. The writer has depicted the impact of the decision, taken by the higher authorities, to divide people in the name of religion upon the psyche of the common people.

7 A.5.4 The lunatics in the asylum

The lunatic asylum consisted of people from all religions and no religion. Some of them were not lunatics at all. They were murderers. They were kept there by their family to protect from guards. Most of them were confused about the partition of Pakistan and Hindustan. Most of them did not want to leave the asylum. Some Sikh people did not want to go to Hindustan because they said they did not know how to speak their language and Hindustanis were arrogant people. One man showed his protest by climbing up a tree and when ordered by guards to come down he climbed even higher. He came down and cried bitterly hugging his friends. There was a Muslim from Chiniot, who claimed he is Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Quaid-e-Azam. There was a lawyer who lost his sanity when his beloved, from Amritsar, was now part of Hindustan. There was another man who bathed fifteen times daily, gave up bathing altogether. There were some Anglo-Indians who were sad to know that the British have left India. They thought they will have to eat Indian Chapati instead of English cuisine. There was another man who declared him to be God. There was a Sikh, who never slept or sat for years. His feet were swollen from standing too much. He listened about the matter of taking Sikh lunatics to Hindustan with great

seriousness and sometimes muttered gibberish. His name was Bishan Singh and he kept on asking where is Toba Tek Singh.

7 A.6 Partition its aftermath :

Toba Tek Singh is the story about the partition of its aftermath. The writer has represented how the geographical division and the forcible displacing of the common people by the political process of both - India and Pakistan. He has described the most traumatic episode in the history of the subcontinent. Toba Tek Singh is based on the partition of India and Pakistan, about hatred, violence, and sorrow. It shows a more emotional side of incidents. The characters are psychological disorders. It is a gripping short story that remains among the most renowned and original portrayals of 1947. It is an agonizing tale of asylum in Lahore preparing to transfer some of its inmates to India. In the chaos of division, one of the inmates of the mental asylum. Bishan Singh keeps asking others where is Toba Tek Singh. As part of the exchange, he is sent to India but comes to know that Toba Tek Singh, his hometown is in Pakistan. Thus, he refuses to cross the border. Hit by police, confused and helpless Bishan Singh lays down on the no man's land between the barbed wires of India and Pakistan

Narrative Techniques: Toba Tek Singh is one of the best stories based on the partition of Hindustan. It displays the scene of action with a strong suggestion that the madhouse we are about to enter is going to be a mirror of the world outside. The omniscient narrator remains distanced from the scene and records objectively the events in the story. The writer is omnipresent and the controller of the plot of the story. The story has a historical context and the narrator, narrates the events from his point of view. The writer has used irony and satire for exposing the horrible reality of the historical situation.

The story is told in third-person narration by a reliable narrator that only has access to informed about the Lahore asylum in Pakistan. The narrator of the story speaks Pakistani and his asylum situated in Lahore. The tone of the narrator is very factual and a non-judgemental presentation of the entire event. When the decision has already been made to exchange to lunatic long flashback when the narration begins we get to know that the lunatic has already arrived in Wagah Border then there is an abrupt.

Manto has presented a very serious matter in a mock-serious way. The writer debatably used detached cooled narration. The narration begins to the present moment. When the decision has already been made to exchange to lunatic and when the narration begins readers get to know that the lunatic has already arrived in Wagha Border and then there is an abrupt and long flashback documenting from the time the inmate learn about the exchange an about the various kind of a tenant of that they have this proposal to exchange the lunatics and finally toward the climax of the story, the writer takes back at Wagha Border where this exchange is about to take place. Thus, the author stands aloof and narrated the events in the story. He has expressed his compassion for the sufferers and presented the agony of the sufferings of the lunatics.

Bishen Singh :

Bishen Singh is the character of the short story, "Toba Tek Singh" written by Saadat Hasan Manto. Bishen Singh is a lunatic and he is from an asylum which speaks often by shouting in Urdu, Punjabi Hindi, and occasionally English. He has been an inmate of an asylum in Pakistan for the past fifteen years. During this time he has not slept or sat in 15 years. He would rest by propping himself against a wall. His feet and ankles had become swollen from standing all the time, but despite these physical problems he refused to lie down and rest. He would listen with great concentration whenever there was a discussion of India, Pakistan, and forthcoming lunatic exchange. Asked for his opinion, he would reply with great seriousness: Upari gur gur. Later he replaced 'of di Pakistan gornament with of di Toba Tek Singh gornment. He also started asking where Toba Tek Singh was. His hair was thin and his beard had matted together, giving him a frightening appearance. But he was a harmless fellow. He bathes only when his instinct tells him he is likely to have a visitor. He had never fought with anyone. He owned land in Toba Tek Singh district. He lost his mind, so his relatives bound him with heavy chains and sent him off the asylum. He had a fifteen-year-old daughter who grew by a finger's height every month. He didn't recognize her when she came to visit him. He wanted to remain in Toba Tek Singh but when he found out that he is being sent to India because of his Sikh identity, he finds it difficult to overcome the trauma and dies in the no man's land between India and Pakistan. The death of Bishen Singh arouses pity among readers and portrays a pathetic picture of humanity. He struggles to find that sense of belonging while his existence is torn between death and exile.

Madness :

Madness is used as a Metaphor in this story. The asylum is being used very suggestively and figuratively to mirror the world outside there is madness happening outside. The event of partition was insane and a senseless affair. The story also leaves us with the questions whether Bishen Singh insane or is he the same one in this story. To exchange the madness of this situation of the dividing of population along the lines of religion the writer repeatedly uses his term suggest a Muslim lunatic a Sikh lunatic again a Muslim lunatic. There are people in this asylum who are clueless about the location of India or Pakistan. The protagonist Bishen Singh opting for a more local identity of his village of Toba Tek Singh. The story also tells how everyone is clueless about what this happening neither the inmates nor the present guard nor what the newspapers are writing about. There is a man by the name Mohammad Ali Jinnah or the Quaid-e-Azam who had set up a separate country for Muslims called Pakistan. The story tells us about the things in a very mature way. There is one person among these lunatics to declare Toba Tek Singh wanted to live neither in India nor in Pakistan. There is a Muslim radio engineer. There is another Muslim lunatic from Chaniot. There is another Sikh inmate who declares himself master Tara Singh another one who declares himself Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Thus, the metaphor of madness has suggested not just the inmates but all the political leaders who are instigating the divisions. They are equally mad in the story. Through insanity, Manto has tried to portray the dilemma of hundreds of thousands of people who were a part of it. A Muslim inmate of the asylum gives voice to the same confusion when he climbs on the tree and delivers a speech on the Indo-Pakistan problem. The tree appears to his innocent mind a place away from this world and hence he attempts to seek refuge in that imaginary landscape. The politics of the outside world denounced by Manto through his insane characters.

Satire :

Toba Tek Singh is a powerful satire on politics. It is the story about partition and has become a metaphor for the mindlessness of politicians. The decision of the higher authorities of both India and Pakistan that Muslims should live in Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs, should go to India against their will. After partitioning the people who were displaced, experienced a sense of alienation. The story tells the suffering of the people because of the decision taken by the higher authorities to divide people in the name of religion. Manto exposes the real face of the politics and

politicians who are responsible for making the common people suffer. There were millions like Bishen Singh who either lost their land, their families their religion, just because of political independence and declaration.

The metaphor of communalism- India was a land where the Hindus, Muslims, and the Sikhs lived in unity, peace, harmony, and brotherhood. Because of the divide and rule policy of the British, seeds of communalism were thrown to the hearts of the people. The power hunger politics made many to leave their land and home and be refugees on the other side. Thousands were killed on both sides. Manto takes a detached stance and hardly criticizes Partition. He is neither in favour of India nor Pakistan. The lunatics in the asylum do not even know what is Pakistan and why they should leave. Heated discussions take place in the asylum. One man thinks Pakistan is a place in India where they manufacture razors. Another man shouts 'Pakistan Zindabad' and slips down the bathroom floor. One man declares himself to be God. A lawyer lost his sanity when Amritsar, where his beloved belonged, was made part of India. The real madness is not inside the asylum but with those fanatics who preach violence. A government following true secularism is the only reply to communalism.

2. Analyze Toba Tek Singh as a caustic satire

The Person Becomes the place:-Bishan Singh and Toba Tek Singh have almost become synonymous and interchangeable by the time we come to the last two paragraphs of the story. Bishan Singh refuses to believe that Toba Tek Singh will be moved where he wants it to be moved. He runs and stands firmly at a spot in the middle of the two countries. The narrator observes that since he was a harmless enough fellow, the officials let him remain where he was and carry on with the rest of the proceedings. It is just before dawn that everyone hears a piercing cry coming out of Bishan Singh. The man, who had stood on his legs day and night for all of fifteen years spent in the asylum, now lies face down on the ground. On one side of him lay Hindustan and on the other lay Pakistan: 'In the middle on a strip of no man's land lay Toba Tek Singh.' In his death, Bishan Singh succeeds in avoiding the exile that stares him in the face. In his death too he can determine where Toba Tek Singh lay for him. The person and the place merge into one. • The Unresolved Questions. The person ultimately becomes the place.

7 A.7 Check your progress

Q.No. 1) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

- 1) In which Pakistani city was the lunatic asylum situated?
a) Lahore b) Karachi c) Islamabad d) Rawalpindi
- 2) Roop Kaur is the _____ of Bishen Singh.
a) wife b) mother c) daughter d) daughter-in-law
- 3) _____ is the real name of Toba Tek Singh.
a) Kishan Singh b) Viswambar Singh
c) Bishen Singh d) Kishan Singh Aaron
- 4) _____ Zamindar in Toba Tek Singh.
a) A Newspaper b) A magazine c) A Journal d) A book
- 5) What is the setting for 'Toba Tek Singh'?
a) A farm in Toba Tek Singh, Pakistan.
b) An insane asylum in Bombay, India
c) An insane asylum in Lahore, Pakistan
d) A prison in New Delhi,

Q.No. 2) Answer the following questions in one word /phrase/ sentence each.

- 1) Who declared himself to be Qaid-e-Azam, Muhammed Ali Jinnah?
- 2) Why did Hindu Lawyer in Asylum go mad?
- 3) What was Bishen Singh's question to the man who believed that he was God?
- 4) How did the Muslim friend from Toba Tek Singh who came to visit Bishen Singh introduced himself?
- 5) What was the response of the Angle-Indian inmates of the asylum, when the real English had given Hindustan Freedom?
- 6) What is the significance of the asylum in the story?

7 A.8 Key to Check your progress :

Q.No.1)

- 1) Lahore
- 2) Daughter
- 3) Bishen Singh
- 4) A Newspaper
- 5) An insane asylum in Lahore, Pakistan

Q.No.2)

- 1) A Muslim from Chiniot whose name was Muhammed Ali declared himself to be Azam. He was an active member of the Muslim League.
- 2) He loved a girl and when Partition came; Amritsar, where his beloved was, in India and he was in Lahore, Pakistan.
- 3) Bishan Singh asked him where was Toba Tek Singh, in Pakistan or India.
- 4) He did not introduce himself. He started the conversation talking about Bishen Singh's family.
- 5) They were not elated by the news. They were worried it they won't get breakfasts and must be forced to eat Indian Chapati.
- 6) The writer wanted to show real madness is not within the lunatic but with the trouble the innocents in the name of communal riots.

7 A.9 Exercises :

- Q.1) What is the theme of the story, 'Toba Tek Singh'?
- Q.2) Write a detailed note on the character of Bishen Singh.
- Q.3) Write a detailed note on the theme of the story, "Toba Tek Singh".
- Q.4) Discuss the title of the story, Toba Tek Singh.
- Q.5) Write a note on the narrative technique of the story, Toba Tek Singh.
- Q.6) Write a note on Satire in the story, Toba Tek Singh.

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B) The Final Solution

Manik Bandopathyay

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7 B.1 Introduction :

Manik Bandopathyay : (1908-1956) Manik Bandopadhyay is a major prolific Bengali writer and novelist, widely regarded as one of the major figures of 20th century Bengali literature. He has produced 36 novels and 177 short stories. His notable works include Padma Nadir Majhi (The Boatman on The River Padma, 1936) and Putul Nacher Itikatha (The Puppet's Tale, 1936), Shahartali (Suburbia, 1941) and Chatushkone (The Quadrilateral, 1948). He died at the age of 48 in the year 1956. 'The Final Solution' is a story written by Manik Bandopadhyay. It is his first story which was published in the leading magazine, Bichitra. His stories are published in the various literary magazines of the Bengal. He has depicted the life of the trodden and exploited people especially rural Bengal in his stories.

7 B.2 Summary :

'The Final Solution' is a story about a family that migrates to West Bengal after the partition. The story is about the values destructing in the refugee camp in Calcutta during the partition. The story has described the tale of a protagonist

Mallika and her family members became a refugee. The story begins with Mallika, her husband Bhushan, their two-and-half-year old son Khokan and her widowed Sister-in-law Asha shifted to the railway station. Mallika and her family have lost everything except the clothes on their back. Mallika sets out in search of food for her family. Malika sees that Pramatha has come there with his assistant, Ramlochan. They claim to be working for the 'Help and Welfare Society'. It is aiding agency for refugees. Mallika and her family become fatigued because of hunger. They have nothing to eat. Mallika, Pramatha promises her to give a suitable job and calls her to a particular place in a colony where he feeds her & gives her new clothes. Mallika is ready to do any job if he found her a room and milk for her child. Pramatha gives some money in advance. Malliak expresses her sense of gratitude towards Pramatha for his kind help. The two college students came to Mallika and asked her if Pramatha has offered her a job. They informed her that Pramatha is an evil man and is carrying on the flesh-trade. Mallika understands Pramatha's true intentions towards her. Ramlochan brought milk, she began to feed it to her child. She tells the students that they should complain about Pramatha to the police. But they are not ready to do it because police would not arrest him on their complaint. Perhaps the police might arrest him on her compliant. When the police officer came there and told her to be on guard, she asked him how she could be wary when her and family members' stomachs are empty. Mallika is ready to face the situation and thinking about not allowing Pramatha to entrap her. She is in utter need of a shelter for her family.

Pramatha is the villain of the story, helped Mallika in shifting into a building at the edge of the city, and gives her room on the ground floor. There are already four more families in other rooms in the building. Mallika is surprised to see a married woman going out in a car. Mallika understands the evil intentions of Pramatha. Even the college students have also informed her about Pramatha's evil intentions. He first appears as a good man, showing concern for the sick child of Mallika. He is offering help to get some work for her. But in reality, he is a wolf in sheep's clothing. Mallika is thinking about how openly Pramatha is carrying on the flesh –trade. Then she sees a man come out of a room and a girl approaching him. She asked him to get some medicine for Boudi. If he couldn't get it, then he could bring some poison.

Pramatha has a small, modern-looking, pleasant house all to himself, in the suburb near the city. Mallika goes with Ramlochan to Pramatha's house as he has promised her some work. Mainly because she wants to save her sick and hungry

child. Mallika is in grimy clothes with, filthy sandals and with unkempt hair. She never fully trusts Pramatha. But has to make a show of believing in what he promises. When Pramatha asks her to change her clothes for a few ones, as 'people' would not approve of her shabby dress. She refuses to change. Pramatha's real intentions are soon clear when he tries to rape Mallika. It is at this point that we see a different, changed Mallika who picks up a knife and boldly stabs Pramatha to escape from this grip

Pramatha's violation of her body is like a personal betrayal of her trust in him. This act of betrayal breaks the boundaries of her patience, and she strangles him to death. The money she picks from the dead man's pockets represents "the final solution" to her, as she says in the end, "We'll never be hungry again"., My son will have milk four times a day."

7 B.3 Glossary :

fever has remitted: fever has reduced

attire: clothes

demeanor: conduct, behaviour

solicitations: requests

at sea: in difficulty

humiliation: insult

platitudes: boring remarks

blow hot and cold: praise and blame alternately

deluge: floods

scoundrel: rascal, rogue

dupe: cheat

machinations: plotting, scheming

dejected: hopeless

incredible: unbelievable

aroma: fragrance

7 B.4 Characters:-

Mallika: She is the protagonist of the story. She kills Pramatha and takes away his money.

Bhushan: Mallika's sick husband.

Asha: Mallika's widowed sister-in-law.

Khokon: Mallika's two and half-year-old son,

Pramatha: A social worker from 'Help and Welfare Society'. He is an evil-minded person.

Ramlochan: Pramatha's assistant and a social worker from 'Help and Welfare Society.'

7 B.5 Theme :

The final solution is the story about the destruction of values and the policies of power and sexuality in the refugee spiralling problem in Calcutta, which was a direct aftermath of the 1947 partition. The Hindu families who left - their homes in East Pakistan now Bangladesh and came to West Bengal in India, could not find refuge in the camps. They were forced to settle in any place they could find shelter, even in public places like the Sealdaha Railway station. Mallika, the protagonist of the story resides on this railway platform. Mallika, her husband Bhushan, their two-and-half-year old son Khokon and her widowed sister-in-law Asha resided on the platform. The family has suffered because of displacement when the tout, Pramatha, comes to Mallika with the offer of some jobs, she understands the risk but she agrees because there is no other way out for us. It is because of maternal concern, she compromises her body and self- respect. She is ready to do anything for her child is life. She had accepted the fact that he had planned to enjoy her in prostitution, but she could not tolerate the thought that he had planned to enjoy her first, before introducing her to the profession. Whereas prostitution is like a humiliating yet depersonalized and necessary act the must engage in to in the hope of a better present for her son. But Pramatha's violation of her body is like a personal betrayal of her trust in him.

The story Final solution is a Partition Story that signifies the strength of women. The story has set examples for all women to raise their voice against bad things and fight for it. Mallika is an ordinary woman who has that hidden capability to fight against Pramath of despite all obstacles. The story revolves around Mallika, a

helpless woman who is abducted by Pramatha. she struggles to survive through the trauma of partition. She successfully escapes by killing Pramatha. The final solution is a story set in the partition period. It is about the miseries of women at the backdrop of partition.

The protagonist Mallika who struggles through the pain of abduction, gender violence, and displacement. The story is a saga of violence not only against the protagonist but for the womankind. The story is about the sufferings of partition. The story is an exact picture of the violence against women during the partition of India in 1947. The writer critically explores the ways in which the destiny of its protagonist Mallika eventually becomes the fate of thousands of women at the time of partition. In the present story, Pramatha is the agent, Pramatha who tempts and forces needy women into prostitution. Mallika has chosen prostitution to feed her little son shows her maternal instructs devoid of her constant humiliation by Pramatha. She has rejected to act according to Pramatha and stopped him by strangling him to death. On the other hand Bhushan, Mallika's husband is inactive in being unable to sustain his family. Mallika attains the role of a breadwinner during such disturbing times is a maker to the failure of her husband, Bhushan. Pramatha and Mallika's family belong to the same community, the same religion; even then Pramatha has no scruples about his exploitative immoral designs on needy women. He abducted Pramatha and other women. The final solution is about the subject of female abduction during partition.

Mallika's family have taken shelter at a railway platform in Calcutta. Mallika's family has placed their faith in Pramatha and Ramlochan of 'Help and Welfare Society'. The story has presented how the Mallika is at the mercy of those ready to take full advantage of the situation. The woman is ready to accept any offer to survive. But Mallika has resigned herself to the situation when she is called to Pramatha's house. She has found a way out the final solution. Thus, Mallika carries out the role of both homemaker and breadwinner by erasing the powerful constructs of gender image during partitions.

7 B.6 The Title :

The story 'The Final Solution is a heart touching story written by Manik Bandopadhyay. It is about the destruction of moral values and the suffering of the woman in the spiraling refugee camp in Calcutta.

The title of the story is appropriate as it depicts Mallika's experiences of the partition. The writer has shown Mallika and her family of four dispossessed of all their belongings, have taken shelter at a railway platform in Calcutta. For some reason, Mallika's family has placed their faith in Pramatha and Ramlochan of "Help and Welfare Society." She is a helpless woman. She has to accept whatever Pramatha is going to manage for her. There is no escape from it for her. She realizes that the government can not help them. There is no chance of getting any job or menial work for her husband. She is ready to do any kind of work he may offer her. She reads the hidden intentions of Pramatha but there is no other alternative for her. In such critical circumstances, the only solution for her and her family is the comfort Pramatha has offered her. Pramatha has been making false promises of help to the family. Mallika is aware of this game but needy as she is, she is willing to present a favorable approach to him. In the end, he is proved to be a bad man, when he tries to tempt her to satisfy his sexual hunger. Like a tigress, she attacks Pramatha with a bottle and hits him hard on the head. We see how the women are at mercy of those ready to take full advantage of the all-around collapse of norms. Exploited in every possible manner, even willingly so, they accept any offer to survive. Mallika has resigned herself to the situation when she is called to Pramatha's house. Something snaps inside her. She believes she has found a way out – the final solution.

The title of the story appears almost at the end of the story. Mallika declares to her sister-in-law, I have found a way out Thakurjhi,-- the final solution." She suggests that after all, might is right and self-defense at any cost is justifiable. he has killed Pramatha. She is ready to face such rascals as she has decided to carry a knife with her. The end of the story is about Mallika's declaration of the final solution for her life. Her sense of confidence is remarkable when she says, I've found an excellent way out. Mallika has become a new woman. She has empowered herself with defense mechanisms. The title of the story is very suggestive.

7 B.7 The Narrative Technique :

The Final Solution is one of the best stories by Manika Bandopadhyay. He has used the conventional narrative technique of 'the omniscient author', which is the third-person mode of narration. The writer of the story is an 'all-knowing' person who creates everything in his story. He stands out of the story and observes everything by analyzing the situations. The writer has narrated the plot in detail for the reader's understanding. The story ' Final Solution' subverts the conventions of linear

narrative. The story starts with the scene on the railway platform where Mallika's family has occupied the space for their temporary dwelling. The writer has introduced the pathetic condition of Mallika and then he introduced the villain of the story. The writer has described the cunning nature of social workers, Pramatha, and Ramlochan.

'The Final Solution', portrays what women went through during the partition through the character of Mallika. At the end of the story, we see Mallika strangling Pramatha and taking away his money. She has not surrendered herself to Pramatha. She ties the saree on his neck and killed him. Thus, the narrator is the controller of the story. Mallika is as an agent not the victim in the story.

The writer has used the conventional narrative mode of the technique of an omniscient narrator, who is visible but also acts as the off-center observer of all events, which is an important feature of the narration of Partition. It is a third-person mode of narration.

Mallika :

She is the Protagonist of the story, attains the role of a breadwinner. Her physical violation is symbolic of an overt way of scraping the dignity of the mother nation. Mallika in the story is shown in a different light as she steps out of the ingrained conception of women to be docile and submissive and men providing protection for the same. On the other hand, Mallika's husband Bhushan is an inactive role in the whole plot who fails to stick to the image of men as the provider and protector. The story revolves around a family that migrates to West Bengal after the partition of Bengal. They are homeless and searching a roof for themselves. The story mainly focuses on the central character of the story Mallika and her motherhood. Partition has ruptured the life of Mallika and her family.

The story revolves around Mallika, who struggles for her family. Mallika becomes fully aware of his intentions when Pramatha asks her to change her clothes for new ones, as "people" would not approve of her shabby dress. She refuses to change. Pramath's real intentions are soon clear when he tries to rape Mallika.

It is at this point that we see a different, changed Mallika who picks up a knife and boldly stabs Pramatha in her effort to escape from his grip. We never expect a trapped woman to react so violently. Our expectations are proved wrong, for Mallika is a self-respecting, confident, strong new woman who knows how to live in this

crooked world. It is this unexpected and almost through a transformation that makes her a "complex" character. It is a thorough transformation because she declares at the end that she has found the final solution for self-defense and will not from using it when needed. This is how the so-called "weak" at times prove to be strong! Thus, the evil times of the Partition life were real "poison" for countless men and women and they had no choice but to drink it. Mallika we meet the first time on the railway station is a meek, helpless woman. Finally, she has become a criminal. She kills Pramatha to save herself from his evil intentions, she is a changed woman. She becomes a self-respecting, confident and strong woman. She has found a solution to live a comfortable life. Mallika said, ' But this time I'll be carrying a sharp knife with me, you understand, Thakuraji. I'll hide it so that no one finds out...

Pramatha:- He is the villain of the story ' The Final Solution ' by Manik Bandopadhyay. He is one of the members of the 'Help and Welfare Society', aiding to the refugees from Pakistan. He visits the refugees and shows that he has come to help them. He is a middle-aged man paterfamilias to them. He has done nothing to the well-being of Manika's family. On his fourth visit, Manika tells him that though they have relied on him he has not done anything for them. He said he is unable to help her because it is not possible to help each one of them and advises her to help herself. But he promises to give her a suitable job and calls her to a particular place in a colony where he feeds her, gives new clothes, and tempts her to satisfy his sexual hunger. Pramatha's secret business is to find out needy women and force them into prostitution. At the end of the story, Mallika understands the intentions of Pramatha's and finally kills him. Pramatha's character is ' round' or "complex'. He changes with the circumstances. After the partition, he has created riots and made the Muslims in the area flee away for lives. He has also maintained good relations with the police. Thus, Pramatha's character is important for the development of the story.

7 B.8 Check your Progress :

Q.No. 1) Choose the correct alternative from below -

1. Pramatha accompanied by ---
 - a) Ramlochan
 - b) Brother
 - c) Writer
 - d) Suraj Singh

2. b) Husband of Mallika
3. c) Khokon
4. d) Asha
5. a) the length of a spread out mattress.
6. b) Rani Ray

Q.No. 2)

1. Manik Bandopadhyay
2. To fight against Pramath despite all obstacles.
3. Help and Welfare Society.
4. Pramatha
5. Pramatha

7 B.10 Exercises

- Q.1 Comment on the theme of Manik Bandopadhyay's short story Final Solution.
- Q.2 Discuss 'The Final Solution ' as a story about Mallika and her sufferings.
- Q.3 Write a critical note on The Final Solution.
- Q.4 Write a short note on narrative techniques of The Final Solution.
- Q.5 Write a short note on the title of the story The Final Solution.

7 B.11 References for further study :

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Module VIII
A) Defend Yourself Against Me

Bapsi Sidhwa

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8 A.0 Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- know briefly about the writer Bapsi Sidhwa .
- learn the plot, theme, characterization, setting and narrative technique in relation with the story.
- understand the socio-political contexts of Indian Partition and its impact upon common people.
- Be able to answer questions on these concepts and the contents of the story.

8 A.1 Introduction

This unit acquaints the students with the Pakistani writer Bapsi Sidhwa and her short story *Defend Yourself Against Me* set against the background of India-Pakistan Partition. The detailed reading of the story will introduce them to its different aspects like plot, themes, characterization, narration, setting etc. This short story is retold by Sidhwa in her novel *Ice-Candy-Man as Ranna's Story*. Ranna is a small boy who escapes from the communal riots after the Partition. When he comes to Lahore, he meets the narrator Lenny who becomes his companion. Rana is Sikander Khan and Lenny is Joy Jacobs of this story. The story tells how everyday realities compel the victim of communal hatred to forget the haunting memories and the traumatic experience; which helps him/her to survive. Both the narratives on the Partition by Sidhwa underline the extent of brutality and inhumanity reached during times of hatred, vengeance and violence.

8 A.2 Subject Matter

8 A.2.1 Life and Works of Bapsi Sidhwa

Bapsi Sidhwa is one of Pakistan's most prominent diasporic English fiction writers. She is an internationally acclaimed and award winning South Asian Fiction writer. Sidhwa is of Gujarati Parsi descent who strives to focus women's issues of the Indian subcontinent.

Sidhwa was born on August 11, 1938 to Peshotan and Tehmina Bhandara, a Gujarati Parsi (Zoroastrian) couple in Karachi and was brought up in Lahore. She contracted polio at the age of 2 years which affected her life and point of view. Because of her physical condition, she was educated at home until age 15. As a young child, she witnessed the bloody Partition of the Indian Subcontinent in 1947. (Those experiences shaped her child narrator Lenny of her novel *Ice Candy Man*) She completed her B.A. at Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore in 1957.

Bapsi Sidhwa married at the age of 19 and moved to Bombay. She divorced her first husband and remarried in Lahore with her present husband Noshir who is also Zoroastrian. She had three children in Pakistan before beginning her career as an author. She currently resides in Houston, US. She has previously taught at the University of Houston, Rice University, Columbia University, Mount Holyoke

College, and Brandeis University. She was a visiting Scholar at the Rockefeller Foundation Center, Bellagio, Italy in 1991.

She is best known for her collaborative work with Indo-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta. Sidhwa's 1991 novel *Ice Candy Man* is the basis for Mehta's 1998 film *Earth*. Mehta's 2005 film *Water* is based on Sidhwa's 2006 novel *Water: A Novel*. "Bapsi: Silences of My Life" is a documentary on Sidhwa being produced currently. It will be released in 2021.

Sidhwa's contribution to the literary world has been acclaimed with awards like Bunting Fellowship at Radcliffe/Harvard (1986), Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Writer's Award (1994) and Premio Mondello for Foreign Authors for *Water* (2007). She was honoured with Pakistan's highest national honor in the arts 'Sitara-i-Imtiaz' in 1991. Also, she has been inducted in the 'Zoroastrian Hall of Fame' (2000).

Her major works are as follows:

- *Their Language of Love* (2013)
- *Jungle Wala Sahib (Translation) (Urdu)* (2012)
- *City of Sin and Splendour : Writings on Lahore* (2006)
- *Water: A Novel* (2006)
- *Bapsi Sidhwa Omnibus* (2001)
- *An American Brat* (1993)
- *Cracking India* (1991), originally published as *Ice Candy Man* (1988)
- *The Bride* (1982) also published as *The Pakistani Bride* (1990)
- *The Crow Eaters* (1978)
- **Characters in the story:**

Mrs. Joy Jacobs – a Pakistani Christian teaching English at the university of Houston, Texas.

Kishen – a Hindu Brahmin settled in Texas, USA, Jacob's friend.

Suzanne – Kishen's American wife

Sikander Khan – Kishen's friend, an immigrant from Lahore, Pakistan

Ammijee – Sikander Khan’s mother

Khushwant and Pratap – the Sikh cousins of Kishen

Three sisters-in-laws and wife of Sikander Khan

8 A.2.2 Plot of the Story

The story begins in Kishen’s house in Houston, Texas. He has invited the narrator, Mrs. Joy Jacobs, for a dinner party. They are observing an old family photograph of Kishen’s grandparents. Joy reflects on the traditional Hindu brides. Kishen lives with his mother, two younger brothers and Suzanne, his American wife who is a computer programmer. The other guests arrive among whom are Sikander Khan, an emigrant from Pakistan, his wife and 3 sisters-in-laws and Kishen’s two cousins. Suzanne has assimilated herself in the Hindu Brahmin culture. She caters to the guests very attentively and dutifully.

The narrator recognises Sikander Khan as her childhood playmate Sikander, a refugee from partitioned India. Sikander also remembers the childhood Joy as a skinny, pimpled girl. While the guests mingle among each other, the long-forgotten past comes back to Joy Jacobs in flashes. As she tries to reconnect with Sikander, she remembers the exodus of refugees that emigrated to Lahore in the Autumn of 1948. Her Hindu neighbours are vanished and their houses are looted, and then occupied by the miserable, devastated hordes of refugees. The abducted and raped women’s rehabilitation camp near her house is filled with screams days and nights. Sikander and his mother have occupied the house of Joy’s disappeared friends. Joy observes this skinny, wounded boy and his sad, shadow-like mother from her compound wall. Later, Sikander narrates to her his horrendous experience of being attacked by the Sikhs. During the attack of thirty thousand Sikh rioters on his village, his father is killed, and he himself is wounded fatally. All these forgotten memories resurface when the now grown up friends meet again. Sikander Khan, now a handsome man, shows his faded wounds to Joy. He avoids going into details about the past again. To Joy’s surprise, he behaves in a friendly manner with the two Sikh cousins of Kishen. Sikander’s mother, Ammijee, is soon visiting them. Her past is a mystery to everyone present in the party.

These friends meet again for a Sunday picnic at the Galveston Beach. Sikander’s family and the Sikh friends eat together and enjoy without any shadows of their

common melancholy past. Joy tries to understand Sikander's reaction – "Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, we were all evil bastards!"

When Sikander's Ammijee arrives, the same group of friends is invited at his house. Joy is surprised to find a totally different Ammijee than the refugee woman she remembers from her childhood. She has learnt from Sikander's wife's abrupt comments that Ammijee was kidnapped, raped and sold during the riots. However, the lady Joy meets now is a happy and contented peasant woman without any trace of bitterness for her sufferings. The party is disturbed by the melodramatic entry of Kishen's cousins Pratap and Khushwant. They enter as dishevelled fakirs. They prostrate in front of Sikander and his mother and request for forgiveness for the sins of their forefathers during the Partition. Everyone is stunned by their behaviour. In the beginning, reminded of her unspoken experiences of abduction and rape, Ammijee becomes violent and curses her offenders. But soon she controls her emotions and forgives the two Sikhs; and ultimately their forefathers. She tells them that she has forgiven her abductors long ago so as to continue her life.

The story ends with the poem 'Defend yourself against me' by a Bolivian poet which summarizes the fate of women who are 'the spoils of war'.

8 A.2.3 Themes in the story

In 'Defend yourself against me', Bapsi Sidhwa has made a comment on the brutalities of communal hatred. It is a story of revisiting a past long buried in the consciousness of the victims of communal crimes. The story deals with various themes like silence about the women's fate, violence against women during social disturbances, human compassion and cultural assimilation.

1. Violence against women during the partition:

Mrs. Jacobs describes the vulnerability of women as, "The vulnerability of mothers, daughters, granddaughters, and their metamorphosis into possessions; living objects on whose soft bodies victors and losers alike vent their wrath, enact fantastic vendettas, celebrate victory."

In 'Nation' ideology, a nation is given the metaphor of 'a mother' giving birth to its children (citizens). So, the women who bear children become an asset of a community. Their bodies become carriers of reproductivity, sexuality and ultimately, the symbols of the community's pride. When a community is under attack, its weak

point i.e. its women are targeted by the offenders. During wars, riots and communal unrest, women of the opposite party are kidnapped, raped, mutilated and murdered brutally. This is done in order to destroy the honour, sanctity and integrity of the entire community and to take revenge. That's why 'women become the spoils of war' as Mrs. Khan in the story puts it.

During the Partition of India, women became soft targets of public violence. The mutual hatred and distrust among the Hindus and the Muslims resulted into mass murder, and destruction of properties. Women (of all ages) were targeted as the prime object of persecution. They suffered the loss of their home, native land and dear ones. But most prominently they were subjected to abduction, defilement (rape) and mutilation of bodies before death. Horrendous crimes were wrought on the bodies of women of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities by the 'other' community. Children, being minors, also suffered brutality during such times of insanity and barbarity.

Bapsi Sidhwa tells the story of Sikander's family's bizarre predicament. His village is attacked by thirty thousand Sikhs. All men and children are killed brutally. Sikander escapes miraculously except for a fatal wound at the back of his head. What happens to his Ammijee is narrated in mysterious snippets by other characters of the story. All the village women plan to burn themselves to avoid being caught. A 16 years old girl screams, " Do anything you wish with me, but don't hurt me." Sikander later hints at his mother being kidnapped, raped and sold like vegetables. "Zenana for sale.... They were selling women for 50, 20, 10 rupees...as if vegetables and fish." Pregnant women are paraded naked, their stomachs are slashed, their babies are killed in front of them. Hindus and Sikhs kidnapped Muslim women and the Muslims kidnapped Hindu and Sikh women. Thus, the women (and children) are victimized during the Partition.

2. Silence and forgetfulness about the women's plight:

A woman's body functioning as the symbol of the community's purity becomes the main cause of her victimization during the holocaust. During the times of holocaust, women are even murdered by their own men in order to escape violation at the hands of the enemy, or they themselves commit suicide. The abducted and recovered women are branded as impure and are mostly rejected by their families because of the issue of their chastity and purity. Therefore, the survivors of sexual

brutality refuse to talk about the violence committed against them in the communal riots. They try to forget the incidents and their forgetfulness proves what cannot be said about the violence. This silence and unspoken horrors of their buried past become a part of their life.

Ammijee has experienced very horrible sexual crimes, but she never speaks about them. The selling of women in public, the mental torture, the physical torments and the psychological burden of the wounds of the Partition are all still fresh in her mind. However, she has chosen to bury the past in the recesses of the mind. She tries to forget everything connected with Partition and to suppress the realities of her victimization - kidnapped, raped and sold. Even Sikander avoids to go into details when inquired by Joy as she tries to penetrate the mystery surrounding Ammijee. He tries to cover the past memories in the name of tolerance. He even covers the scar on his head by wearing a wig. This inexpressiveness of the experiences maintains the silence about violence.

3. Forgiveness and human compassion:

The Partition or communal riots in general is a time when human beings are stripped of their basic moral values. They are either killers or are killed. The hatred and vengeance bring them down to the level of beasts. The evil past and atrocities are difficult to forget and the wounds, grudges are long nurtured. In *Defend Yourself Against Me*, Bapsi Sidhwa brings in the aspect of human compassion, the will to survive and the human ability to forgive.

Sikander's family is very cordial with the two Sikh cousins of Kishen. These young Sikhs might be the successors of the rioters who offended and violated Sikander's mother. When they face each other, it could be an explosive situation. However, Sikander Khan and his family reciprocate the friendly approach of Pratap and Khushwant with warmth and acceptance. They tease and flirt with each other. On the neutral and foreign land of America, the age-old communal enmity, tension and hatred between the Sikhs and the Muslims is dissolved into cordiality. Mrs. Jacobs intrigued by their behaviour, asks Sikander how he could be close friends with the two Sikhs. "In his place I would not even want to meet their eye. Isn't he furious with the Sikhs for what they did?" Sikander responds her, "Why quarrel with (them)...they weren't even born...we Muslims were no better...we did the same..."

Even Ammijee is without bitterness and melancholy. She has transformed herself into an open, hospitable and content woman. When Pratap and Khushwant fall at her feet asking for her forgiveness, her first reaction is of horror, hate and bitterness. They remind her of the sadism and bestiality of her abductors. The young Sikhs apologise on behalf of their forefathers, but she refuses. "I will never forgive...shaitans...never." However, after the initial shock and her struggle with the untold emotional torments and the demons of her past memories, she controls herself. "My sons, I forgave your fathers long ago...how else could I live?" The natural instinct of survival has forced Sikander and Ammijee to bury the past and continue living a normal life. This demands forgiveness and human compassion.

The theme of compassion is also revealed in the relation between Sikander and his mother. Sikander accepts his mother's violation and does not disown her as it would have been in the situation. He tries to cover up her tormented past and avoids to go into details so as to save her from suffering.

4. Cultural adaptation and assimilation:

The story has a multi-cultural background. We are introduced to the characters belonging to communities like Hindu Brahmin, Sikh, Muslim, Christian and Kashmiri Brahmin. Almost all of these people are emigrants to the United State. They have been brought to this new land due to various reasons. They have adapted the ways of the new world and maintained their original ways of life at the same time.

Sidhwa tries to present a happy picture of communal harmony in the story. The characters belonging to different religions come together in unprejudiced feelings of friendliness. Each of them has a past which they have buried under the everyday courtesies and humane existence. The narrator Mrs. Jacobs is a middle aged, Pakistani Christian and has witnessed the communal riots between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs during the Partition. She is treated warmly by Kishen and his family. The Sikh cousins speak in Urdu and Punjabi with the Khan family. Sikander speaks English with a broad Pakistani accent. All eat and enjoy together.

However, the theme of Cultural adaptation and assimilation is most prominently seen in Suzanne, the native of America. She is the white American wife of Kishen who is married into a typical Hindu Brahmin family. She wears elegant saris and a vermilion caste mark and moves around comfortably as if she is a born Indian. She

prepares typical Indian food like potato samosas and plays her role of an attentive hostess very dutifully. She feels content and secure in her extended Indian family. This gives her a feeling of being firmly embedded in life and gives a purpose to live.

8 A.2.4 Characters :

- **Mrs. Jacobs/ the narrator of the story**

Mrs. Jacobs, the narrator, is a middle-aged English-speaking Pakistani Christian from Lahore. She has emigrated to America two years ago. She teaches English at the university of Houston. She is not US citizen, but will get the green card soon. She is a friend of Kishen and is invited to the familial gatherings often. She is writing a novel about the Partition of India.

Mrs. Jacobs' childhood name is Joy Joshwa. In Lahore, she used to stay at Race Course Road. As a young girl, she was agonised and self-conscious of her boil-ridden, stingy appearance. Sikander remembers her as a skinny girl with pimples. When she meets Sikander, she immediately remembers her childhood playmate. She is reminded of his wounds and wants to see them. She remembers how being left alone during the post-riots time, she has tried to attract his attention and become friends with him. Her pity for his physical sufferings has attached her heart to him. She is interested to know about his mother's mysterious past. She would like to use Sikander's family's experience during the Partition in her novel.

Joy Jacobs is a silent witness of all the past and present happenings in the story. She does not express her feelings, is shy and only observes the people and their reactions. As a child, Joy never understood the complete significance and magnitude of things happening in the communal riots. She grew up overhearing fragments of whispered conversations about women's suffering during this time. She feels that Sikander might help her with the missing information and understand the unspoken truths. Joy is shaken by the encounter between Ammijee and the Sikh cousins. Her mind is full of chaos of words and images. Then, she remembers the Bolivian poem that comments on the predicament of women in this world.

- **Sikander Khan**

Sikander Khan is one of the guests at Kishen's party. He visits with his wife, children and 3 sisters-in-law. He has emigrated to America 11 years ago from Pakistan. He owns a Pakistani and Indian spice shop and has US citizenship. He is at

ease with the American culture and speaks English with a broad Pakistani accent. He is a confident, elegant man with trim moustache and military bearing.

When Sikander is introduced to the narrator Joy Jacobs, both of them immediately recognise each other as the childhood playmates from Lahore, Pakistan. Sikander stayed in Joy's neighbouring house as a homeless refugee for a short period; and then shifted to a farm allotted to his family in Sahiwal. Joy remembers him as 9 years old, small, extremely thin 'skeletal' boy. He would play marbles alone in the courtyard. His tiny body is covered with scabs and wounds; a large wound dug at the back of his head. Sikander looks pitiful in his shabby clothes. Later, while playing, he narrates about the attack of the Sikhs on his village. His family is murdered in front of his eyes; but he escapes miraculously, fatally wounded. However, he never mentions about his mother's Ammijee's ordeal.

The grown up Sikander is a handsome, strongly built man. His scars are fainter, diminished and he wears a wig to hide the ugly scar at the back of his head. His mother is soon visiting him in US. When Joy asks him about her mysterious past, he avoids to answer. He just hints at her being kidnapped and sold like vegetables. It seems like Sikander has buried his past. His silence regarding his mother's sufferings is typical of those who reject the violent, violated past of a woman.

Sikander behaves in a friendly manner with Kishen's Sikh cousins. Joy asks him if he feels furious with the Sikhs for what they did during the riots. His explanation for that is, "They weren't even born...we Muslims were no better...we did the same... Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, we were all evil bastards." He shows this human compassion even when the cousins fall at his feet and ask forgiveness for the crimes of their forefathers.

Though Sikander Khan is a victim of the communal riots during the Partition, he manages to reconstruct his life in a new land. Away from the space and time of his atrocities, he emerges as a successful, content family man.

- **Suzanne**

Suzanne, Kishen's American wife, is an elegant woman. She is a computer programmer in an oil company. She comes from a small town in New England and belongs to a gentle family. Her father is a history professor at a university. The narrator has been friends with her for many years.

Suzanne moves around swiftly and comfortably in a sari as if she were born to it. She has straight brown hair, large and limpid brown eyes and behaves in a calm, docile manner. With a vermilion caste mark, she appears to be the very image of dutiful Brahman wifedom. She feels content and secure in her extended Indian family. As an only child, she never experienced being anchored in life. This, she feels now, being embedded in life with a purpose for living.

- **Ammijee**

Ammijee is a victim of brutality and sadism inflicted upon women by fanatics during the communal riots of Partition period. However, she metamorphoses her life and lives on. The narrator first sees Ammijee, Sikander's mother, when these two shattered refugees occupy the neighbouring house. Joy dimly remembers her as a thin, bent over woman covered in a ragged cotton chador. She is always working – washing clothes and utensils, peeling vegetables, cooking. Joy doesn't recall her face or colour or what she wore. She just remembers a squatting figure.

There is a mystery about what happened with her during the riots. Sikander's wife tells Joy that Ammijee never talks about her terrible experiences. When the village was attacked, the Muslim women had planned to burn themselves to escape being violated at the hands of the Sikhs. However, they couldn't. Ammijee witnessed her family murdered; small girls being raped and tortured, babies being tossed into boiling oil. She herself was abducted, raped and then sold.

When Ammijee arrives in US, Joy doesn't recognise her. She is tremendously transformed into a plump, buttery-fleshed, kind-faced old woman. There is no trace of bitterness or melancholy in her face. She has become an open, hospitable, contented peasant woman; happy to visit her son. However, this mask is torn when the Sikhs arrive begging for forgiveness. They remind her of the brutality of her Sikh abductors. Her countenance and voice change. They are filled with bitterness, horror and hate. All her past fears are resurrected which were so far left buried in the recesses of her mind. Ammijee screams at the two Sikhs, "Badmashes, goondas...sons and grandsons of shaitans....get out.... I will never forgive your father...grandfathers...never, never, never." After the initial shock, she controls her emotions and tenderly forgives them. "My sons, I forgave your fathers long ago...how else could I live?" in doing so, she shows great maturity, forgiveness, sympathy and love. She grows as a human being by transforming herself from a

feeble woman into a courageous mother. She proves that the will to continue living is stronger than the forces of evil, hatred and death.

Ammijee is a representative of those thousands of women who had to forget their heart-wrenching ordeals during the holocaust and continue living a normal life.

8 A.2.5 Narrative technique:

Sidhwa uses different narrative techniques to make the story effective. Firstly, she employs the **first-person point of view** where the narrator ‘I’ i.e. Mrs. Jacobs is also a character in the story. She observes her surrounding and people, mingles in their lives, interprets their behaviour in different situations and remembers things from the past.

The story begins abruptly with the dialogue - “They are my grandparents,” says Kishen. There is no description of the space and time in order to create a mood for the story. These details are made clear eventually as the narration progresses. The cultural milieu is created through description of the characters, their clothes, food and interpersonal relations. The author uses Hindi vocabulary (dupatta, zenana, dhurries, paratha, shalwars and kameezes etc) to add to this cultural atmosphere.

The most effective narrative technique used by Sidhwa is that of **flashback method** of telling story. Mrs. Jacobs meets Sikander Khan and suddenly becomes ‘entangled in a web of nostalgia so intense ...’ The past floods into the present. She has to struggle hard not to lose the awareness of the present. She says, “...the grip of sensations from the past hauls me back through the years to Lahore...” Her childhood, the Lahore during Partition, the skinny Sikander and his shadow-like mother, the hordes of refugees and their plight - all rushes back to her in flashes. All the time, Joy tries to stay connected with the present time and people around her. The story develops through these forward and backward oscillations of the narrator’s consciousness.

The time is treated in three-dimension. There is the present time in Houston, Joy’s childhood time and the historical time of the Partition. This narrative technique provides a vast canvas and large scope for the plot to develop.

8 A.2.6 Setting :

Setting implies the time and space where the events take place in a story. The present story develops at two time-lines. The major events related to present time

take place in the houses of Kishen and Sikander Khan in Houston, Texas. Through flashbacks, the past is revealed, that has happened in Lahore, Pakistan of the Autumn of 1948.

The houses of these emigrants in America witness their cultural adaptations. In a materially developed country, they still try to carry forward the essence of their communities through traditional clothing, caste-marks, foods, furniture and accessories. The characters belonging to four different religious communities spend time together in parties and picnics. Their speeches are mingled with typical expressions from their mother tongues. Thus, they try to enliven a common cultural inheritance in their land of adoption.

This atmosphere is disturbed by the scattered description of the past. Mrs. Jacobs and Sikander Khan, as children, share a short period of time in Lahore during the Partition. Joy remembers the streets of Lahore flooded with poor, emaciated, homeless refugees. The refugee camps, rehabilitation camps for recovered women, the neighbouring houses which are abandoned by their Hindu owners, the looting of these houses, the marginal status of the refugees and then their eventual assimilation in the society of Lahore. All this description brings alive a long-lost way of life to the other corner of the world in America.

We are also told about the village people's beliefs regarding their women and their purity. In the wake of communal violence, the women of Sikander's village have prepared to burn themselves in order to escape violation at the hands of the enemy. The narrator also remembers the untold brutalities and atrocities forced on women and children during the riots. The description of these horrendous crimes recreates an era of insane hatred and violence. Sidhwa's story is set against these different spaces and times. So, it becomes engaging because of the above mentioned aspects.

8 A.3 Glossary and notes :

1. **incongruous** : strange, inappropriate
2. **querulous**: complaining, irritable
3. **perfunctorily**: hastily, indifferently, superficially
4. **to surmise**: to guess
5. **to hazard**: to venture, to risk

6. **natty**: elegant, dashing
7. **to bellow**: to utter in a loud deep voice, to roar
8. **Sharkskin suit** : a suit made from wool or acetate or rayon. It's a smooth fabric with a two-toned woven appearance, a soft texture, very light and wrinkle free.
9. **discomfiture** : state of embarrassment or confusion, uneasiness
10. **diminutive**: tiny
11. **slouch** : sit or stand in an awkward, drooping posture
12. **statuesque**: graceful, majestic
13. **to flit**: to move lightly, swiftly, quickly
14. **limpid** : clear, calm
15. **docility** : orderliness
16. **rambunctious**: turbulently active and noisy
17. **scion** : descendent
18. **tart and shifty** : sharp and shrewd
19. **redolent**: smelling of, reminiscent of
20. **bristling**: stiff
21. **desultory**: inconsistent
22. **acclimatized** : accommodated, adjusted
23. **demeanour** : way of looking and behaving
24. **hopscotch**: a children's game in which each child by turn hops into and over squares marked on the ground to retrieve a marker thrown into one of these squares.
25. **opulence** : abundance
26. **bric-a-brac**: a miscellaneous collection of small articles commonly of ornamental or sentimental value
27. **convoluted** : hard to understand
28. **gouged out**: removed, cut
29. **presumptuous** : pushy

30. **clamour**: shout loudly
31. **exhume**: dig out from the ground
32. **arson**: the criminal act of deliberately setting fire to property.
33. **gargantuan**: enormous
34. **bedraggled**: untidy
35. **to saunter**: walk slowly
36. **moorings**: place to tie up a ship
37. **spooky tangle**: ghastly untidy mass
38. **pallid gleam**: pale, reflected light
39. **furtive** : sneaky, sly, secretive
40. **scruffy**: shabby, dirty
41. **canny**: sharp
42. **sashed**: a long piece of ribbon, silk , etc, worn around the waist like a belt
43. **phantasmal** : illusory , spectral
44. **wiles**: tricks, schemes
45. **callously**: insensitive, cruel disregard for others, unfeelingly
46. **indulgent complicity**: broad-minded conspiracy
47. **innocuous**: harmless, safe
48. **welts**: swollen, pale, reddish bumps of skin
49. **deft** :skillful
50. **to ply**: to work steadily
51. **reticence**: shyness, reserve
52. **fusillades** : bombardment
53. **smote**: past tense of to smite (to strike with a firm blow)
54. **incongruous solemnity** : inappropriate seriousness
55. **sultry**: humid
56. **dhurries**: a heavy cotton rug of Indian origin.

57. **Haleem:** *a dish* made of wheat, barley, meat, lentils and spices and sometimes rice; slowly cooked for seven to eight hours, which results in a *paste*-like consistency.
58. **to balk:** hesitate, unwilling, refuse
59. **tooting:** short, sharp sound
60. **languorous :** pleasantly idle
61. **condescend :** patronizing or superior attitude
62. **dapper:** neat and tidy
63. **hirsute:** long-haired
64. **vendettas:** a blood feud for revenge
65. **coalesce:** gather
66. **alchemise:** transform
67. **intransigence:** uncompromising state
68. **quintessence of indictment:** a typical example of accusation

8 A.4 Check Your Progress:

Q. 1 : Complete the following sentences.

1. The story 'Defend yourself against me' ends with a poem by a poet Pedro Shimose.
2. Suzanne works as ain an oil corporation.
3. Mrs. Jacobs used to live in a bungalow onin Lahore.
4. The narrator's childhood name was
5. Sikander Khan moved to the farm land allotted to them in
6. Joy used to have pimples the size of
7. Joy met Sikander for the first time in theof 1948.
8. Two refugee camps were set up in Lahore, at Walton and
9. Thewere a young Christian couple living near Joy's house on Race Course Road.
10. A is converted into a Recovered Women's Camp.
11.anticipated arrival has caused a stir.

12. Sikander Khan's village was attacked bySikhs.
13. According to Mrs. Khan, women were the
14. Women were subjected toandduring the Partition.

8 A.5 Answers to check your progress

1. Bolivian
2. a computer programmer
3. Race Course Road
4. Joy Joshwa
5. Sahiwal
6. boils
7. Autumn
8. Badami Bagh
9. Mangat Rais
10. nursery school
11. Ammijee's
12. the Sikhs
13. spoils of war
14. sadism, bestiality

8 A.6 Exercises

1. Comment on the contrast between the Western and the Punjabi culture and lifestyle as described in the story.
2. What reminds Joy Jacobs of her past in Pakistan?
3. What changes took place in the world around Joy during and after the Partition?
4. Describe the marginal status of the refugees in the society of Lahore.
5. What did actually happen in Sikander's village during the communal attack?
6. "Women are the spoils of war": explain with reference to the description of women's fate in the story.
7. Discuss the different theme of the story.

8. Write short notes on:

- Mrs. Jacobs
- Sikander Khan
- Suzanne
- Ammijee
- The encounter between Joy and Sikander in the childhood
- Joy's memories regarding Ammijee
- The contrast between Sikander's present personality and his childhood appearance
- Assimilation of the Punjabi and the Western worlds in Kishen's life.

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B) A Leaf in the Storm

- Lalithambika Antharjanam

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8 B.0 Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- know briefly about the writer Lalithambika Antharjanam.
- learn the plot, theme, characterization and setting in relation with the story.
- understand the socio-political contexts of Indian Partition and its impact upon common people.
- Be able to answer questions on these concepts and the contents of the story.

8 B.1 Introduction

This unit acquaints the students with the Malayalam writer Lalithambika Antharjanam and her short story *A Leaf in the Stormset* against the background of India-Pakistan Partition. The detailed reading of the story will introduce them to its different aspects like plot, themes, characterization, narration, setting etc. This story was originally written in Malayalam as *Kodumkaattilpetta Orila* and translated into English by Narayan Chandran. It is a typical Partition narrative focusing on the torments and atrocities inflicted on women during the communal riots. However, it goes beyond the time and space to comment on the human instinct of survival and motherly love. The protagonist Jyoti becomes a representative of the female species whose violated purity is considered as a social stigma. The story highlights human being's lust for life above all social, moral and practical dilemma. Lalithambika Antharjanam tries to comment on the predicament of women irrespective of communal identities, national borders or time.

8 B.2 Subject Matter

8 B.2.1 Life and Works of Lalithambika Antharjanam

Lalithambika Antharjanam (1909–1987) was a Malayalam writer and social reformer. She was born on 30th March 1909 at Kottavattom in Kollam district, Kerala, in a conservative family of Kottavattathullathu Damodaran Namboothiri and Changarappilli Manaykkal Aryadevi Antharjanam. It was a literary family and both her parents were poets. As per the tradition of Namboodiri community, she was not allowed to study in school. However, she had little formal education. Her progressive father appointed a private tutor for her. She received primary education along with her brothers. They were exposed to literature, religion, nationalism at an early age. Lalithambika would know about the current affairs of the world outside through her male relatives. She longed to take part in the ongoing Indian freedom movement.

In 1927, she had an arranged marriage with Narayanan Nambudiri, a farmer and then, mothered seven children. As a wife, she lost all contact with the outside world. However, her supportive husband encouraged her intellectual activities like writing and social activism for women and the marginalised. Lalithambika wrote to expose and destroy the hypocrisy, violence and injustice with which women were treated in

Nambudiri society. Her writing throws light on the women's role in society, in the family and as an individual. Her published literary work consists of nine volumes of short stories, six collections of poems, two books for children, and a novel, *Agnisakshi* (1976) which won the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award and Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1977. Her novel, *Agnisakshi* tells the story of a Nambudiri woman, struggling for social and political emancipation. It highlights the women's role in society and critiques the social institutions that limit women and curtail their freedom. She wrote her autobiography *Aathmakadhakkoru Aamukham (An Introduction to Autobiography)*. Her stories, such as *Kodumkaattilpetta Orila (A Leaf in the Storm)*, *Dhirendu Majumdarinde Amma (The Mother of Dhirendu Majumdar)* explore the effects of the partition of Punjab and Bengal, which ensued untold evils and disasters on Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, particularly women. Lalithambika's craftsmanship encompassed the suppressed destiny of Indian womanhood irrespective of the borders and time.

Lalithambika was also a political activist and a social reformer; and she participated in the Indian National Congress and later became a member of the Kerala Communist Party of India (CPI-M). Her social work was influenced by the reforms of Mahatma Gandhi and V. T. Bhattathiripad, a leader of the Nambudiri caste. She died on 6th February 1987 of old age.

8 B.2.2 Plot of the story:

The protagonist of the story *A Leaf in the Storm* is a young, good looking girl 'Jyotirmoyi Devpal'. She is among the many women rescued after the Partition. Jyoti has been kidnapped and raped and then 'reclaimed' from a remote village in the West Punjab. At the border, abducted women are exchanged or handed over to their respective countries. Jyoti is not ready to go to this exchange camp. 'From one prison to another'. She wants her freedom and revenge. She is so angry at her condition that she hasn't eaten anything for four days and wants to end her life. Thus, destroying the baby in her womb which she thinks to be 'a seed of damnation....consequence of inhuman rape and ignorance.' The volunteers in the camp are shocked at her demand for poison or gun. Even the doctor asking her to drink milk is silenced by her request to kill the foetus. However, at last her will to live succeeds her obstinacy and she start eating regularly.

The camp is flooded with refugees of different culture and their sad stories. We are told about an old woman, a mother of nine children and fifty grandchildren. She is left alone; all her relatives being killed or abducted. There is a wife of a Sindhi officer who is raped and her husband and children are killed. The camp is filled with cries of mothers who lost their children and children who lost their parents. People die and new babies are born every day in the camp. The refugees share their traumatic stories with each other – of being hauled out like dogs from their ancestral homes, of losing a happy and contented life-style. They curse the national leaders for their plight and wonder if the refugees in the camps across the border also feel the same.

Jyoti is desperate to end the sinful life thriving within her. In the camp, the dead bodies of unwanted babies are found in toilets and no one claims them. She wonders if she could have the courage to abort her unwanted foetus like this; and get rid of the shameful past to live a new life of hope. When the time of birth comes, through the breath-taking labour pains, Jyoti remembers her past life. She has had a happy, carefree childhood. She has studied till college, refused purdah and an early marriage. She loved freedom - of her and of others. So, she took part in the freedom struggle and even suffered in the prison. She had dedicated herself to the upliftment of women and also had faith in her fellow men. However, all her faith is shattered during the communal riots. With the help of her Muslim friend, Jyoti tries to flee across the border; but is raped brutally in imprisonment. That hate and shame of being pregnant with the child of rape results into her disdain for the baby.

Jyoti delivers the baby away from the camp, in darkness, under a tree. Her first instinct is to smother the baby to death. But, the baby's cry feels her up with a motherly instinct. 'It is so compelling...like the assertion of ...an appeal to nature....' She even tries to run away abandoning the baby. The mother inside her is confused. She understands that even if she abandons the baby, her future life will be shadowed by the sense of guilt. Finally, the storm and struggle in her mind subsides. She lifts up the baby to warmth and returns to the camp.

8 B.2.3 Theme of the story

1. Predicament of women in communal riots

Women are victimised during the Partition because they have always been considered less than human - a commodity, a possession or an object of lust. The

chastity of women marks the superiority of the culture. Their bodies symbolize the community's purity. So, during the communal riots at the time of the Partition, women became the soft targets. They were mass murdered, raped and kidnapped. Later, many of them were rescued and exchanged to their own lands across the border. However, due to the stigma of being violated and impure, in many cases, these recovered women were not accepted back in their family. This rejection resulted in their social deaths. Also, these women had no choice or say in the way they wished to live out the rest of their lives. They were not treated as humans, but as property to be returned to their respective owners. If rejected, they were put into rehabilitation camps. Those who got pregnant from rapes were forced to undergo abortion or were persuaded to abandon such children as they would be unacceptable to their families.

Many women refused to return to their families because of the perceived stigma attached to them. Jyoti also hesitates to go to the refugee camp and be exchanged across the border. She has to be forced into the vehicle bound for the camp. All the time, she tries to hide the fact that she is unmarried and pregnant. She hates the seed of rape, plans to kill it in her womb and cleanse the stigma of impurity. To live a new, normal life, she must be courageous enough to abort her child. She suffers terrible physical and mental agony due to her 'fallen' state.

The story narrates how in a futile struggle, an educated promising girl like Jyoti, with the potential and desire to serve her country, gets destructed. The Partition narrative is about women, who are 'mothers' of human life, yet, are ruined in masses.

2. Lust of life :

The other prominent theme is that of triumph of life over death. The refugee camp is full of people who live on despite the loss of their beloveds and a happy past. One old woman has lost 9 children and 50 grandchildren – all killed or kidnapped. Her house is burned down and she alone survived. Yet, she lives on, eats, sleeps and talks. She has hope and passion for life. Another woman, wife of a Sindhi officer with 3 children, is reclaimed from the railway tracks. Her family is killed in front of her, she is brutally raped and left to die. Yet, she lives on with her swollen cheeks and breasts; chewing hard at dirty bits of chapati for her breakfast. The camp is full of people who ran for life for several miles and several days. They are wounded, afraid of diseases and yet, are used to the life in camps.

Jyoti is bent upon ending her miserable life of a 'fallen' woman. She doesn't eat for 4 days, refuses the help of others and demands for poison or gun or dagger. She wants to either kill herself or the foetus growing in her womb of her rape. However, her 'zest for life' eventually wins over her obstinacy and she starts eating.

The growing foetus reminds her of the throbbing life inside her. It reminds her of the cosmic energy. She knows that it draws on her life-blood and life-breath. Naturally, it will be borne whether she likes it or not. This awareness holds her back every time she plans to kill the baby. In the end, the life-giving 'mother' in her wins and 'her life-blood flows like fresh milk.' Jyoti realises that it is not easy to cut life's bonds. This lust for living on despite all the odds and building a new world of hope saves Jyoti from ending her own as well as the baby's life.

3. Mother's love

Jyoti's story can be also read as the story of a mother's universal love for her baby. A life-giver cannot destroy a life. For the whole length of the story, Jyoti plans to kill the unwanted seed of rape. She hates the child growing on her blood and breath. As it is conceived of hate, if the child lives, it will grow into a revengeful and destructive citizen. And yet, when it is born, Jyoti hesitates to choke it to death with her hands. The helpless cry of the baby appeals to the mother in her. She feels that she should not stifle that tender, compelling voice of 'the whole world'. So, she tries to abandon it to die. However, 'it is difficult to sever life's bonds so easily'. The sense of guilt would haunt her whole life. In the end, she is only a 'mother' who embraces her flesh with love and compassion. 'Her life-blood flowed like fresh milk'. All her fears of being an outcast in the society vanish. She realises that she must protect this 'cosmic shape'.

8 B.2.4 Characters

- **Jyotirmoyi Devpal:**

The story *A Leaf in the Storm* by Lalithambika Antharjanam contains only one major character or protagonist i.e. Jyotirmoyi Devpal. She is one of the many women rescued from a remote village in West Punjab during the Partition. Jyoti is a small, very weak, good-looking, noble young woman and appears to be born in a well-to-do family. In her childhood, she is a darling of her parents. From the beginning, she possesses very uncommon nature. She is very courageous and ambitious. She

succeeds in persuading her parents for letting her study in the University. She refuses to get married for the love of freedom; which is very shocking for her relatives. She wants to sacrifice her life for freedom of other people and her own country. This ends her up in prison where she is tortured by police. Yet, she keeps working for the upliftment of women, has faith in the humanity and goodness of her fellow ‘men’.

However, she becomes a victim of the hatred and brutality of fanatic men. Jyoti is kidnapped by Muslim hooligans, kept into captivity for several days and is raped brutally by numerous savage men. She is rescued and brought to a refugee camp. There, she keeps herself aloof as she does not want others to know that she is pregnant from the rape. She tries to starve herself to death, but soon her strong will to live on wins. However, Jyoti wants to wash the stigma of an impure, violated woman. For that, she is ready to kill the baby, ‘the seed of damnation’. When the baby is born, its warm touch fills her up with motherly love. She cannot smother or abandon her own flesh; and with a hope of new life she accepts the child.

Jyotirmoyi is an exceptionally courageous girl. She has always lived her life on her own terms. However, her promising future, her dreams and faith in humanity are murdered by the communal hatred. For a time being, she is devastated. Yet, her will to continue life wins over all atrocities and she lives on. Through Jyotirmoyi’s character, the author voices the fragile, helpless status of women in society; where her chastity is the only criteria of her existence and acceptance.

8 B.2.5 Title

A Leaf in the Storm is a story of a young woman whose whole existence is strewn in conflict. All her life, she has struggled to live a life of her own choice. At the end, she struggles to make the right choice for a better, hopeful life. The struggle is due to her social status and emotional dilemma. So, the title of the story *A Leaf in the Storm* can be interpreted at two levels.

1. The doctor in the camp says, “We will overcome this storm that rages over the east and west of our land.” So, the ‘storm’ can be interpreted as the atrocities during the communal riots which destroy Jyoti’s happy life. Jyoti, a representative of helpless, tortured women, is the ‘leaf’ drifting waywardly in this storm; being detached from its tree (her home). Jyoti suffers due to the sexual status of women in society. Women must be protected for purity. Raped women are branded and tainted as impure. They are not accepted by their own people and community. They are

targeted for staining the pride of community which depend on their sexual purity. So, after being raped and not 'reclaimed' by her family, Jyoti has to live an unsheltered, homeless, aimless life. This is like a leaf broken from its branch during a storm. Both of them, the leaf and the women, have no future, no life.

2. The 'storm' can also be explained as Jyoti's mental confusion regarding the baby. She thinks of it as 'a seed of damnation'. It is a symbol of everything despised by womanhood and humanity. It is born of inhuman rape and is a stigma, shame for her. So, Jyoti wants to kill the baby and cleanse the dirty feeling of being violated. She must rinse the stain on her purity and live a new life of hope. But as soon as the baby is born, her motherly instincts are awakened and an universal bond between the mother and infant is established. Now, she feels that if she abandons the baby, the guilt will haunt her for life-time. So, she returns to save and accept her baby. The storm in her mind subsides, the struggle ends and a decision is taken. The 'leaf' is obviously the baby here. Its lips are compared with 'tender leaves'. Its future is insecure, uncertain in the world outside. Its life could be ended brutally and prematurely in that night of its birth. The baby is just like a leaf torn from its branch in a windy storm. However, it is fortunate that the storm ends and its mother wraps it up in her love.

Thus, the title of this story is very suggestive.

8 B.2.6 Setting

The story *A Leaf in the Storm* is narrated against the time and space of the Partition. The events take place in a huge refugee camp somewhere near the border in India. The kidnapped protagonist Jyotirmoyi is rescued from a remote village in West Punjab. Along with many other victim women, she is exchanged at the border. She is then brought to this refugee camp. The reclaimed women are looked after well by the social service volunteers. Most of them keep crying, searching for their lost children and family, remembering their hardships during the riots. Orphaned children wail loudly for their parents. The crowd in the camp keeps increasing everyday. People from different cultures, languages and with different stories of suffering keep coming. Everyday many babies are born in the camp; and lot more people die of wounds and sadness. The refugees gather every evening under a tree to share their stories. They remember their once contented lives in villages. They talk about their

being driven away from their ancestral houses like dogs. The camp is a stage for the drama of human life.

Against this backdrop, Jyoti keeps moving around – silent, aloof, invisible, facing her own mental trauma and physical burden of pregnancy. She gives birth to her child at night under a tree away from the camp; and after the birth returns to it with her baby.

8 B.3 Glossary and notes

- **emaciated** : thin, underfed, bony, skeletal
- **outraged** : angry, revolting
- **sepulchre** : a small room or monument cut in rock or built in stone in which a dead person is laid or buried.
- **consolation**: comfort after a loss
- **aghast**: shocked, speechless
- **baneful**: hurtful, hostile
- **gutted**: destroyed (often by fire)
- **damnation**: eternal punishment, curse, doom
- **supreme master of ahimsa , the toothless grandsire** : Mahatma Gandhi
- **zest** : eagerness, love, spirit
- **clamour** : a loud noise of people shouting, commotion, uproar, tumult
- **hound out**: to chase or force someone out of some place
- **gnash** : grind or grate (teeth) in anger
- **despicable** : hateful, detestable, disgusting, shameful, offensive
- **cosmic shape**: shape or essence of the universe
- **willy-nilly**: whether one likes it or not, one way or other.
- **excruciating**: intense, severe, stabbing, agonizing, terrible, unbearable
- **aberrations**: eccentricity
- **holler**: shout, yell
- **run amok**: behave in out-of-control, dangerous or wild manner

- **suppurate** : infect, contaminate
- **afflict**: bother, harass, torment
- **waylaid** :attack

8 B.4 Check your progress

Q.: Fill in the blanks.

1. The story *A Leaf in the Storm* is originally written inlanguage.
2. The story *A Leaf in the Storm* is translated into English by
3. LaithambikaAnatharjanam’s novelwon the Sahitya Academy Award.
4. bonded girls were to be given for the fifty ‘reclaimed’.
5. Jyoti doesn’t want crumbs of bread, but a or a.....
6. The woman with swollen cheeks and breasts was married to a big officer in
7. The doctor in the camp coaxed Jyoti to
8. The baby in Jyoti's womb was conceived in consequence of inhuman and
9. Jyoti had rejected a marriage proposal from a
10. The refugee camp was like an ocean of mass movement and Jyoti was like
11. The refugees blamed even the of Indian politics for their miserable condition.
12. The foetus in Jyoti’s womb symbolized everything and humanity found despicable in nature.
13. Jyotirmoyi shocked her people when she decided to give up her
14. Jyoti’s friend Ayesha’s father..... tried to take fifteen women across the border in his cart.
15. Jyoti compared the lips of the new-born baby with the
16. It was difficult for Jyoti toso easily.

8 B.5 Exercises

1. How was Jyotirmoyi a different woman since her childhood?
2. Describe the atmosphere in the refugee camp.
3. Why did Jyoti want to end her life?
4. Comment on the plight of women during the Partition with reference to Jyotirmoyi's story.
5. Explain the emotional storm that Jyoti has to face.
6. Explain the significance of the title 'A Leaf in the Storm'.
7. Short notes:
 - a. Jyotirmoyi Devpal
 - b. The refugee camp
 - c. The theme of motherly love in the story
 - d. Jyoti's lust for life
 - e. Jyoti's ordeal of attempting to cross the border

8 B.6 Answers to check your progress

1. Malyalam
2. Narayan Chandran
3. Agnisakshi
4. Fifty
5. gun, dagger
6. Sindh
7. drink milk
8. rape, ignorance
9. zamindar
10. a wave
11. toothless grandsire

12. womanhood
13. purdah
14. Qasim Sahib
15. tender leaves
16. severe life's bonds

8 B.7 References

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