

Partition – Its after Effects On Women

Abstract

Partition of India led to communal riots between Hindus, sikhs and Muslims. There was mass exodus which led to butchery of innocent men, women and children. Torture, humiliation, abduction, molestation and rapes were the order of the day. Women on both sides suffered and their pain and agony has been highlighted by various writers like Khuswant Singh, BishamSahni ,BapsiSidhwa and many others have written heart moving stories and tales about partition where women are the suffers on both sides due to religious discrimination.

Keywords: Psyche, Tortue, Partition, Religious Discrimination.

Introduction

Partition – The word itself evokes a sense of fear and alienation. An entire generation of people lived through this dreaded crisis. The political ramification of Partition left India divided but it has left the psyche of millions affected by it. Several decades later, this horrific historical event still has the power to rouse strong feelings of alienation, creates the 'other' among neighbours and drive the communities apart.

Aim of the Study

Objective of the paper is to examine and study the following objectives in the selected novels on partition - the nature of the social relationships that existed among various communities during the pre and post-partition period. And the impact of Partition on social and economic conditions of the displaced people and the highlight, the present conditions and situations of displaced people at their place of rehabilitation and the differences there of from the place of origin.

The outcome of Partition led to stress and strain among infinite number of humans and butchery of these innocent men, women and children. The bulk migration confirms massive violence, awfulness, heinous crimes, murder, abduction and rapes. The Women were the ill sufferer who had to face the music of religious and cultural persecution. Torture, humiliation, abduction, molestation and rapes were the order of the day. Ironically, women became the victims of the violence with in their society while their neighbours became their enemy.

Many authors from the sub-continent have detailed the Pain and Pathos that the common man had to suffer during the tragedy of Partition and yet survived. The Pathos inspired many a writers for the fictional explorations. What came to be identified merely as 'Partition' was a major event in the history of the Indian Subcontinent. Though the life experiences and ordeal of the Partition sustained to be shrouded in oppression of silence for long, one can easily view a diverse turn that literature has taken over the years. It has become more nuanced and more conscientious to those considerations that it had formerly disregarded. There is a better understanding of the way in which women have been affected by the Partition and its violence.

The calamity of the Partition has given rise to imaginary explorations with an attempt to describe the internal turmoil and social complexes that weighed down the Subcontinent. The immense volume of the Partition fiction in English, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali and other languages of the Subcontinent realistically record the dreadful human disaster in the wake of Partition. The incredible suffering and confusion of the people of the Subcontinent has been a favourite theme with the Indian and Pakistani writers.

Many books are written to highlight the trauma of Partition. In addition to this, several people have movies to show the real pictures and the after-effects of Partition. The research scholar in this paper has taken up the theme of Partition as she has grown up hearing different tales from her grandmother who hails from Punjab. Hence she has been moved by the stories specially how these have affected the women folk. The Partition has affected inter-caste relationship with in their place of rehabilitation, displaced people were able to adjust within new socio-cultural setting of



Anupama Deshraj

Assistant Professor,
Dept. of English,
GVISH, Amravati,
Maharashtra, India

their rehabilitated places the rehabilitated people were able to secure the socio-economic standing which they had at their place of origin

1. How far they have been able to adjust/change their fabrics of social relations?
2. Does the impact of the Partition still affect their social relations with in the community and between communities?
3. Did the displaced communities face problems in the distribution of land?

The riots, inter-caste tensions, demand for separate state based on religion, ethnic origin, language and so on are still going on in various parts of the country posing a threat to the integrity of the country. The Partition of the country is a major event in history that has outstretched the antagonism of communities (Hindus and Muslims). Despite division on religious lines, the communal riots among diverse groups surface time and again along with the inter-caste rivalries and terrorist acts. So, present study may provide a frame work to understand the genesis of inter-community and inter-caste tensions, which is the major threat to the integrity of the country. Looking through the eyes of the sufferers provide an in-depth analysis which helps to understand the nature and remedy of the problem. So much has been written about this historical event, but sociological study on the theme are negligible. So the nature and the depth of the social relation that realign during riots among the religious groups would provide the knowledge about the communal problem and its impact on the displaced or the victims. The projects inducing development too, displaced a lot of people from their natural habitat; accordingly present study may provide knowledge about the nature of the problem faced by such displaced people.

Review of Literature

Shaikh, Firoz. A. 2006 "The Partition and its Versions in Indian English Novels: A Critical Study," thesis Ph.D, Saurashtra University.

Major Findings

The Train to Pakistan, Tamas Pinjar and Cracking India four novels attempts to grapple "inter alia" with this question of 'the tryst of others' i.e. 'the tryst of the common people' caught between the greed of self –seeking politicians, fanatic religious leaders and their cohorts, power wielding corrupt bureaucrats and anti-social elements always looking for opportunities to exploit any situation to their own advantage; and unseemly haste with which the Labour government in Britain decided to transfer power and to divide the country into two new nations.

Sukhbir Singh Ph.D. thesis "The Partition of united India in 1947 into domains " The decision of dividing the country had been taken by few Politicians without considering the ground realities at local level or in the ground realities at local level or in words without consulting the people for whom a separate nation was sought. In this regard, a study is directly focused on the victims of the Partition. The study deals with the impact of the Partition through the point of view of common man who really suffered or bears the scars of that period. It tries to study the ground realities on which the division of the country occurred

i.e. the conflictive relation of the various relations of the different religious communities. The study focused on the kind of relationships existed among the various religious communities and caste before Partition of the country on social, psychological and economic condition of the victims. How these displaced people has been rehabilitated themselves in new social settings and the change in their present social and economic condition. Also an attempt has been made to look into their attachment with the native place. The kind of problems faced by them and their family members at the time of division of the country and thereafter also being looked.

Ellen Elizabeth Sweeney, Dec.2013 "Partition and its Legacies: A Cross – Cultural Comparison of Irish, British and South Asian Cinemas," thesis Ph.D, University of Iowa.

Findings of this thesis

1. The novels are a correcting historical records raising public awareness and pushing the powers that to be acknowledged the wrong done.
2. It shows a connection between good female sexuality, religion and nationalism which has a violent effect on individual Women, their families and Society as a whole.
3. The research Scholar will relate the above findings to his research as it concerns the Violence related Women based on religion, sexuality, nationalism etc.

Gundur, NS, 31 Dec. 2004 "The theme of Partition in Indian Literature in English with Special reference to Fiction," thesis Ph.D., Karnatak University, Department of English.

Findings of this thesis

1. These novels based on Partition are Women – Oriented.
2. Play an important role in the discourse of Partition as they prove complementary to the historical accounts.
3. These novels deals with communal politics, British Chicanery the role of Political Parties and different leaders simply stating the 'Divide and Rule' policy.
4. Their main thematic concern is the impact of tragedy on human life at various levels. They are characterized by humanism and an affirmative vision.

Pallavi Raghavan. September, 2012 "The Finality of Partition : Bilateral Relations Between India and Pakistan. 1947-1957," thesis Ph.D., University of Cambridge, Faculty of History.

Findings of this thesis

1. The bilateral relationship occupies a strange place at the heart of both nation states – even when events are at their most conflicted its importance increases.
2. Though there is a strange relationship between the parent nation and the new nation the conflict still stands as each other holds grudge against one another.
3. As there are complications and these can be resolved amicably but dealing with various issues one has to keep in mind the past histories of both the nations.

4. The Government of both the nations has seen the structure after Partition remained permanent.
5. The possibility of compromise and agreement has always been insight in the India –Pakistan relationship despite the grudges existing among the People.
6. All the heart of the relationship lies not at corrosive hatred, but a recognition of the basis of agreement among both the nation and its people.

Pinjar (1950), Train to Pakistan. (1956), Tamas (Darkness, Ignorance 1974).Cracking India (1991 U.S -1992,India) .Originally Published as Ice-Candy Man – 1988-England) studies the Pain and Pathos of women in “Pinjar” ,“Train to Pakistan” ,“Tamas” and “Cracking India”. Partition has etched unhealed wounds physically and mentally on women. Pooro the eldest daughter of the family and heroine of “Pinjar” who has been abducted by a Muslim man named Rashid. The abduction to settle the scores of ancestral bitterness that has been carried from generations. The communal violence, victimization of women and the love-hate theme engulfs the whole story revolving round the **Pooro** and the bitter problem’s which she faced throughout her entire life. At the end when **Pooro** found her sister-in-law and handover to her family who was readily accepted rather **Pooro** was once rejected and she consoles her parents by saying that they don’t need to worry about her anymore because she belongs to someone with his child in her arms.

Lenny and Ayah in “Cracking India” is intimidated by her suitor’s. The suitor who finally possesses Ayah and Ice-candy Man’s own moral erosion through the Partition, reflects the situation of all people involved in the ill-planned Partition, which resulted in migration, deaths and incidents of rape and torture of women, all on a massive scale. Jasveer’s suicide along with fellow Sikh women and children who drowned themselves in a well in order to save their honor from being abused and mutilated by other men folk. Banto, Kamo, all are receptors and perceivers of the raging fire and confusion due to Partition . Nooran is made pregnant by Juggut Singh and left behind because the inter-religious love was strictly forbidden in those days. The typical characters in focused novels are depicted in such a way that under the shadows of cultural prosecution, torture, humiliation and abduction, anyone who goes through these writings can feel sympathetic towards them.

Many helpless women who became the weapon in the name of religion and caste. The act of rape was the cruelest act which took shape during Partition and lead to the consequences that women were raped and were either left homeless as they were not admitted back home, some were sold to brothels and others used as slaves.Amrita Pritam ,Khuswant Singh ,Bapsisidhwa and BhimsamSahni has portrayed the Psyche of women characters. Women specially has been the most affected by the Partition and hence their psyche is different from normal women. Psyche of Pooro in “Pinjar” , Ayah and Lenny in “Cracking India” , Jasveerand Liza in “Tamas” , NooranBaksh in “Train to Pakistan” have undergone the turmoil of sexual harassment,

domestic violence forced upon them during Partition by males who they have married after Partition and separation from their loved ones and families. These women are relocated, deep psychological pain inflicted upon them by Partition and suffering with which they have been living will be foretold and portrayed in this Novels. Ayah is presented as a sexually empowered women and her physical presence is described as irresistible to men. Ayah and other abducted women have had to go through, but we are given hope and more importantly that these women characters are willing to challenge the patriarchal oppression and help one another. Ayah is left with a fleeting of sadness, frustration and impotence and we feel that, these women characters psyche has been affected due to Partition.Pooro in “Pinjar” who is abducted by Rashid is not accepted by her family on her escape, unfortunately she returns back to Rashid’s home and is forced to live against her wishes as her family thinks she is untouchable now.JasveerKaur and other women folk in “Tamas” who have been trained and brought up with Psyche that the virtues and ones chastity is important. They commit suicide with the fear that men from other communities will rape and abduct them.

The communal hatred due to Partition, Communities exodus and its impact is spoken here at large through the novels. In “Tamas” ,JasveerKaur along with other Sikh women has to jump into a well to save their honor from the Muslims. In “Train to Pakistan” ,Nooran leaves Manu Majra for Pakistan, Liza leaves for England due to communal hatred. In “Pinjar” ,Pooro is abducted by Rashid from her loved ones and thrown into dungeon. In “Cracking India” and “Pinjar” the authors have defined the agonies of women which is the most hit section of society by Partition.

In “Cracking India”, the protagonist Lenny an eight year old’ Parsi girl from Lahore described the communal violence and turmoil during the Partition. The child narrator (Lenny) observes the world around her and is troubled by the Psychological eruption of brutality of events by recalling the chilling screams of women. Many young expecting mothers gave birth to their new born babies in refugee camps, many died due to starvation, unattended by family members as most of them died or were killed on their way, lack of medical help and protection from harsh weather and from human savages. The event of Partition riots mirror’s the crisis, oppression and suppression of women. The life of women existed in odds, feelings of struggle, mass massacre and bloodshed. It was the women who suffered alone.Thus the women mostly suffered due to the communal hatred due to Partition among both the Hindu and Muslim community.

Thus to conclude this paper in the light of the on-going disturbance, political upheaval in Kashmir valley. The topsy-turvy situation of the people will be discussed at length. The communal hatred drifted the healthy relations of the people due to the traitorous game of divide and rule played by the people of Great Britain before quit India. The Partition accompanied by a flood of violent, pain filled separation of the mother-land and its people that occurred in such an

inhuman uprooting of countless millions as have not ever been experienced across undrawn lines.

India is a democratic and secular country but minorities are still suffering in every sphere whether economic, social and political. So, the point is whether antagonism of communities has mitigated or relations have permanently strained? The present attack on minorities in India e.g. incident like Babri Masjid or Godhra riots, Caste tensions and tensions between Shia and Sunni in Pakistan make one to think, whether partition was solution to communal problem in India and Pakistan. Division of the country in spite of solving the problem has increased the gap between various communities. So as to understand inter-community relations, the threads have been drawn from the situation existing in pre and post partition period. The demand of Khalistan (Separate country for Sikhs), 1984 riots against the Sikhs, Kashmir problem, demand of separate Bodoland in Assam, demand of separate Tamil state in Sri Lanka and many others, all seem to be manifestation of the partition of 1947. Through this study, an attempt is being made to look at the consequences and impact of Partition through the eyes of those peoples who directly became the victims of such events.

Conclusion

The research scholar here has tried to highlight the pain and pathos of women characters in the novels of KhuswantSingh, Amrita Pritam, Bisham Sahni and Bapsi Sidhwa's novels. And has focused here the if and but condition of the people due to Partition in present day scenario due to Partition, violence, abduction, sexual exploitation, detachment and displacement of specially women.

An attempt has been made to look at the consequences and impact of Partition through the

eyes of those peoples who directly became the victims of such events. To conclude one can say that the horrors, agony and misery of partition has impacted women the most.

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