

## Representation of Women in Selected South Asian Migration Literature

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### Abstract

Migration Literature endeavours to recount the struggles and sufferings of the migrants in literary studies and has specifically become an area of growing interest since 1980s alike for researchers and chroniclers who focus on hostility, identity crisis, racism, violence, exploitation and cultural diversity witnessed by them or experienced by the migrants. The blood-spattered partition of 1947 was defining moment in the history of India and Pakistan and its repercussions are horrific to count be it massive migration or blind massacre, communal violence or religious fanaticism. However, the women bore the greatest brunt of the frenzy in wake of partition of 1947. This study brings forth the representation of women in the selected works of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Bepsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India*. These narratives have the tinge of personal loss and first-hand observations as the authors themselves were victim of the unjustified sorrows and trauma of Partition of 1947. The textual analysis of the selected works signifies the abduction, humiliation, and exploitation of women in the name of honour killing, manliness and reparation as well as the endurance, empowerment and audacity of women as they fought back in those adverse circumstances being marginalized and victims. The study emphasizes that women also deserve to be discussed as more than sufferers and victims of engendered ferocity.

**Keywords:** Migration Literature, Partition, Women's representation, Abduction and violence

### Introduction

The partition of 1947 was nothing less than a nightmare for the people of Subcontinent. It is still lingering heavily on the memories and haunting the minds of the inhabitants of both India and Pakistan even after 73 years. The unforgettable chaos of brutal partition reverberates as animosity, hatred and bigotry between the two states has prevailed. There were about 14 million people who had to evacuate their ancestral homes overnight and the worst mishaps happened when more than 2 million innocent people lost their lives (Doshi & Mehdi, 2017). The closest neighbours mercilessly slaughtered the ones with whom they had been living for generations. Likewise, childhood friends turned into sworn foes. Trains were coming across the borders carrying mutilated, burnt corpses littered with blood. They were named as 'Blood Trains' as blood could be seen seeping through the doors of carriages when they crossed the borders in deafening silence heralding death and dismay (Hajari, 2015). Vicious acts of retribution were the rule of the day in 1947 mocking the civility of the British monarchs who were bluffing about peaceful declaration of two independent states and celebrating that achievement considering it a feather in her cap. They snubbed the woes and cries of millions of the victims including innocent children, helpless women, and feeble old men.. The towns and villages were reduced to ashes and rubbles in no time. About 75 thousand women became the victim of unchecked madness as they were sexually assaulted, raped, abducted, and a many of them were mutilated or tore apart. A number of British journalists and a few soldiers who witnessed the Nazi concentration camps confirmed that it was no match to the viciousness that this Partition afflicted on men, women and children. Women faced the bulk of fury and wrath. Even the breasts of women were cut off and pregnant women's bellies were torn apart to hack out their babies and infants were grilled on spears (Dalrymple, 2015). The Subcontinent transformed irrevocably into an inferno of wretchedness within a few weeks. The biggest mass migration was witnessed in human history. There were millions of people who were forced to move, and they faced dilemma of identity crisis and became aliens in a strange land without their roots and ancestral abodes. They lost their lands, businesses, languages, life-style, properties, inheritances and relations. It changed the perspectives of their lives and shaped their

attitudes towards government and the very idea of home (Shashkevich, 2019). The horrific event of Partition was marked by massive migrations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which literally displaced about 20 million people at once (Chattha, 2011).

Since partition of 1947, literature and cinema originated ways of demonstrating the anecdotes of fears and sufferings experienced by the people of that profound rupture. Migration literature is an emerging category in literary studies that aims to recount the narratives and issues of the migrants. The largest migration of 1947 inspired many writers and poets from the Indian Subcontinent to represent those reminiscences in different genres of literature, i.e. Poetry, Drama, Fiction and Non-Fiction.

This study aims to investigate the representation of women in Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Bepsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy Man/ Cracking India*. These writers witnessed the partition of 1947 and Singh was forced to leave his ancestral abode after creation of Pakistan and independence of India. Khushwant Singh is a prize winning Indian writer who got worldwide recognition because of his debut novel *Train to Pakistan* in which he recounted the havocs of brutal partition and resultant migration in 1947. His personal experience of sadistic partition and migration inspired him to write *Train to Pakistan*. He was a practicing lawyer at the time of partition in Lahore and he had to run to his life in a train evading mobs of rioters. The fictional world of novel depicts how serenity and peace of Mano Majra was ruptured by the communal violence and how seeds of vengeance and hatred shattered the dreams of naive people turning them into beasts. Bapsi Sidhwa, a Pakistani American writer portrayed the aftermaths of 1947 partition in her critically acclaimed novel *Cracking India* originally came out with the title of *Ice-Candy Man* in 1988 and was also adapted to a film *Earth* in 1999. Sidhwa belongs to Parsee community. She was born in Karachi in 1938, later on moved to Lahore and was an eyewitness of the blood-spattered partition of 1947. The ground-breaking novel is narrated by a precocious and curious child Lenny of Parsee community who pronounces the vicious transition with frightening veracity. Sidhwa recalls how the ominous roars of rioters were constantly alerting her even when she was only seven years old about a palpable premonition of the evil that transformed Lahore to a puddle of blood and mire of smoke. Sidhwa witnessed the madness and evils including that incident where she saw the corpse of a man in a gunnysack beside the road. She reflects about the event saying, "I felt more of sadness than horror" (Montenegro & Sidhwa, 1992).

The representative literary works of Migration Literature are explored to showcase the representation of women in Migration Literature, the challenges they met, brutalities inflicted on them, discrimination they underwent, and how politics was played over their bodies. They were abducted, maltreated, raped, forcefully married, forcefully converted, drooled over, objectified and slaughtered alike on both sides of the border. The height of frenzy was that they were mutilated, their breasts chopped off, babies hewed out of their pregnant women's bellies, exposed naked and rambled into the streets. Even their bodies were carved out with religious symbols and codes of the opponent community to invoke wrath or to mock them. Khosla (1989) in his renowned book *Stern Reckoning* recounts the tragic true story of a young maiden whose relatives were forced to watch standing them in a circle whereas she was repeatedly being raped by numerous men (Khosla, 1989). Incidents of such nastiness advocate how the existence of women were abridged only to their bodies, carrying on their shoulders the liability of the honour of their community, to be ruled, claimed or subjected to attack that honour. Their existence and identity were sabotaged in the pretext of nationalism, religion and honour. Despite all maltreatment, they fought relentlessly in their humble capacity against undue and unfair treatment and discrimination (Bhat, 2018).

### **Literature Review**

Migration has always been a subject of interest and part of academic studies from social, economic, historical, political and ethnographic point of view in a variety of disciplines (Brettell & Hollifield, 2014). Migration according to Oxford Learner's Dictionary is "the movement of people to a new country or area in order to find work or better living conditions" (Turnbull et al., 2010). So, Migration is a process to change one's abode to live permanently or temporarily from one region or country to another. Migration leaves impacts on both the places left by migrants and the places they settle. There are many factors that make move from one specific place to another. These factors can be political, cultural, social, economic, social or ecological. Sjaastad (1962) believes that migration is principally strongly driven by monetarist incentives. As social scientists and researchers are of the view that migration takes place because of economic reasons and Economic Opportunity Model is proposed on the basis of this assumption that economic opportunities motivate people for migration (Sjaastad, 1962). There are certain factors to originate migration usually pull factors and push factors (Parkins, 2010). The people who choose migration by choice of their own come into the category of voluntary migration and they often find their better prospects and are happy with that kind of migration. Nevertheless, there are a great number of people who are left with zero choice and are forced to evacuate or leave their abodes and homes they never want to. This category is of involuntary migration and migrants. There are multiple factors that force them to abandon as their lives and homes are in danger because of

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insurgence, terrorism, war or a natural calamity (Weinstein & Pillai, 2015). Such migrants of involuntary migrations are also named as refugees. The other suggested name for involuntary migration is forced migration that does not involve the willingness of the migrants and is imposed on them by others (Eastmond, 2007). They are neither channelized by push or pull factors nor by rational decisions as Smyser (2009) in his article "Kennedy and the Berlin Wall: a hell of a lot better than a war" differentiate between a migrant and a refugee concluding that a migrant seeks opportunities and a refugee is in search of a safe place or haven (Smyser, 2009).

Eastmond (2007) in his article "Stories as lived experience: Narratives in forced migration research" reflects that forced migration other than stimulated by natural disasters has strong political connotation that is a way to come over a certain kind of persecution or fear. Political conflict has been a major factor in determining the flow of migrants. There are many developing countries around the globe where forced migrations happened mainly because of political strife and conflict. Refugees, migrants, exiles and the internally displaced (IDPs) are significant features of the societal setting of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Middle East and North Africa (Chatty, 2010). Colonization and decolonization in many parts of Asia and Africa caused migration of various ethnic groups and such resettlement became a major cause of political upheaval, distrust and disharmony because of no integration between past and present scenario of migrants especially in context of social, geographical and cultural contexts (Bloemraad, 2006). The process of decolonization and creation of new independent states led to the new political boundaries that gave birth to hatred and hostility among the ethnic groups that earlier were having amicable relationships and strong bonding. This practice generated new-fangled racial and ethnic conflicts and revitalized earlier ones eventually enhancing refugee crisis. The hallmark of such crisis is violation of human rights (Eastmond, 2007). History has much evidence to showcase the negative impacts of forced migration. Amid Arab-Israeli Wars fought in 1948 and 1967, the Palestinian's were banished from their homes and ancestral roots or forced to escape the maltreatment of Israel. In both of the wars, Israel occupied outsized areas of those territories where Palestinians had been living since long, displacing them and inflicting violence on them violating human rights (Vraneski, 2003). The report shared by The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) figures out that there are about 5 million Palestinian refugees who are living either in integrated society of Jordan, Middle East or in refugee camps (Custer Jr, 2010). In 2016, more than half population of Syria was displaced due to civil war and those crises led to the 4.5 million of refugees flee the country (Carpenter, 2013).

Now, forced migrations are no longer merely the toil of 'great' states having armed and political power to triumph and colonize. They are also exercised by 'minor' states having restricted influence (Şeker, 2013). Therefore, the phenomenon of migration is investigated from diverse viewpoints as postcolonial, gender critical and Post-colonial Feminist perspectives and a new growing area in category of literature emerged in 1980 with the name of Migration Literature provided researchers and critics great opportunity of exploration from that perspective (Gatt, Hazibar, Sauermann, Preglau, & Ralsler, 2016). Specifically, Postcolonial Theory's relevance to migration is the most sought out area. Postcolonial is explored or related in the light of migration as its main domain is dislocation. Simultaneously, the incursion of migrants from the developed and less prosperous countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to the Europe and west has been a hot issue at national and international platforms (Koh, 2017). The movement from Postcolonial nations brings forth the issues of racial bigotry, class discrimination, religious fanaticism and ethnicity involving us vs. them or concept of other in discourse. Likewise, it is imperative to consider that postcolonial theory in context of dislocation depict the struggles of millions of immigrants who cross another country's border and experience alienation and live a poor life as such issues involve power mechanics, discrimination, violence, subjugation and exploitation. At the heart of this enduring practice is the foundation and ideology of capitalism (Nair, 2013). Postcolonialism involves a thorough study of the experiences of colonialism and its past and present impacts on ex-colonial societies and then aftereffects on decolonized societies in larger social and global contexts. Postcolonialism most often addresses the issues of suppression, migration, violence, subjugation and resistance. A developing concern amongst postcolonial critics and connoisseurs has also been with ethnic minorities in the west, involving Native and African Americans in the United States, British Asians and African Caribbean's in the United Kingdom and Aborigines in Australia and Canada, amongst others. Edward Said's seminal book *Orientalism* (1978) is deemed as pivotal in defining postcolonial studies (Quayson, 2020).

Welsh's (2016) assertion is that the World War II sparked the first wave of phenomenal global migration. This first wave happened as colonized countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa got political liberation from European colonizers (British, French, Spanish, Dutch, German) succeeding the World War II (Welsh, 2016). A postcolonial period originated in 1947, when Indian Subcontinent got independence from the British. Most of the colonized countries got their political freedom till the end of 1960s (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2006). Nonetheless, that political independence was another start of their endless miseries and struggles towards recognition and stability. Most of the ex-colonial countries confronted impediments of inner conflict and political instability, and riots succeeding their independence. Although the colonial rule had finished, colonial inequalities exist; the colonial

legacy is persistent to haunt their present and scaring their future. This postcolonial situation cannot be understood completely without bearing in mind the influence of momentous colonial violence (Kim-Cragg).

India's Partition personifies the failures of colonial rule. Partition of 1947 was a colonial act of violent violence. Britain's centuries of economic exploitation, imperialism and colonial rule last to effect the politics of Pakistan and India even into the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Chawla, 2014). Although the British officially left Indian Subcontinent in 1947, yet they left behind several institutional and conventional practices that have produced conflict in India and Pakistan over the preceding 71 years (Bhat, 2018). Partition of 1947 and resultant massive migration has been the most sought out area in Postcolonial studies and among Postcolonial writers. This phenomenon changed the course of history and shaped the loyalties and perspectives of even laymen towards life altogether. The postcolonial writers have captured the reminiscence of that defining and crucial moment in their writings in one way or the other (Awan & Sultan, 2017). More than seventy years have been passed but the ones who passed through the terrible days are still haunted by the unforgettable havocs of that crucial phase and their wounds are still fresh. The horrific event finds prominent representation in different categories of literature: South Asian Literature, Partition Literature, Postcolonial Literature and Migration Literature. The concern of all the categories of Literature is an attempt to portray the indispensable, indelible and incredible viciousness of the massive migration and erupted violence that imprinted lasting impacts on the psychological realms of victims transforming them to new men once and forever. This horrible human tragedy became the source of vast fictional explorations and creations (Ahmed, 2017). Baishya (2010) reflects about that disaster saying that Partition of 1947 was in fact an imposed idea that cost innumerable loss of precious human lives as millions were massacred besides displacement of millions that confronted them with the dilemma of identity crisis and their blind trust in nationalism (Baishya, 2010). The British decolonized Indian Subcontinent in 1947 and two nations emerged on the globe with the name of India and Pakistan drawing religious lines among Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs (Judith, 2004). The significant feature of this violent partition was the maltreatment of women. Especially, almost 120,000 women were kidnapped by the men of the opponent communities (Daiya, 2006). For a long time, the emphasis of researchers and critics have been on figuring out the role of political personas and activists and the events that paved the way for "The Great Divide" and its aftermaths while investigating partition of 1947. Mainly, after the anti-Sikh riots of 1984, scholars and women activists initiated probing into the human pangs in the course of the partition, and the distressing experiences of the women got attention (Nagpal, 2017). The abduction of women in the name of honour was a heartrending spectacle. The actual number of women's casualties is still unavailable. At certain places, the policemen officers deputed to protect women were involved in committing the vilest crime. They were endangered to supreme humiliation and agony. The men of their own community abducted them and they were not safe anywhere (Debnath, 2016). Their torment could be mediated by the fact that an many of women committed suicide by jumping into wells or poisoned themselves to save their honour and family's name (Dupthozam, 2017). The ripple of violence afflicted on women amid tragic Partition are realistically manifested and convincingly conveyed through the literary creations and heartfelt narratives of sensitive and sagacious writers and artists in comparison of any critical or scholarly analysis (Bose & Jalal, 2017). The untold narratives of the about 80,000 abducted women who either were kidnapped by force or left behind by their own families amid migration or rejected got due consideration under the theoretical framework of Postcolonialism and women gradually entered into the realms of migration literature (Busta, 2019). This study is an effort to uplift the narratives on women in migration literature as they have been mostly excluded from the partition discussion or have been discussed as victims of sexual assault.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Postcolonialism is a research method that addresses the issues of racism and repression and became the part of academia specifically after the publication of Edward Said's seminal book *Orientalism* in 1978. Postcolonialism as a theory aims to investigate the issues of identity crisis, dislocation, violence, abuse of power and imperialism mainly focusing the literature produced by the newly decolonized nations. That's why, migration literature and postcolonial literary texts share almost interrelated themes and scenarios as forced migration is the key concern postcolonialism. The Partition of Indo-Pak Subcontinent in 1947 is phenomenal event that caused catastrophic violence and biggest mass exodus.

### **Methodology**

This study is an attempt to highlight the representation of women in migration literature. The selected texts of representative writers are explored through textual analysis. Khushwint Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Bepsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India* are sample for the study. The selected texts are written in the context of partition of 1947. The textual analysis is close to critical and literary analysis where words phrases and sentences in a text are studied

in connotative meanings to relate with the larger socio-political, religious and cultural contexts to reinforce the objectives of the study.

### Analysis

#### Representation of Women in Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*

This study aims to investigate the image of women in migration literature in the milieu of partition of 1947. The tragic tales of Partition other than communal violence mainly focus the victimization of women. However, there are no two opinions on this argument that women were the real unsung heroes who faced the major bulk of undue wrath during partition of dogmatic societal norms as well as struggled to come up with the worst situation despite being degraded, abducted and marginalized in both sides of the border. As Urvashi Butalia identifies this point of view in her essay "Community, State and Gender: Some Reflections on the Partition of India" that Fierceness is virtually each time prompted by men, but its paramount bearing is fondled by women. In vicious skirmish, woman are abused and assaulted and they are widowed in the name of nationalism and patriotism (Butalia, 1994).

Singh's treatment towards women in his seminal novel is secondary. He has not given women the reflection they deserve in return for the cruelties and malice targeted toward them. The insignificant characters of Nooran: Juggut's love interest, Beby: Juggut's mother and Haseena: young Muslim prostitute and Hukam Chand's darling cannot be titled heroic or influential characters. They are referred as sexual objects for sensual pleasures, devoid of brain, made for domestic chores and denied of identity and individuality. Such thoughts were shared ages ago by the legendary Greek philosopher Aristotle in his book *Poetics* wrote about women as 'sexual doll' in a patriarch society (Aristotle, 2012). They are talked primarily in the terms of abuse as Juggat Malli encounter is ceaseless exhibition of verbal abuse: "This to rape your mother. This to your sister. This your daughter"(101). Or they are discussed in terms of lechery and obscenity as Juggut says to Iqbal: "The memsahibs are like houris from paradise -----white and soft, like silk. All we have here are black buffaloes". (p.94) This is how Singh unconsciously but adamantly has demeaned the existence of women in his critically acclaimed novel *Train to Pakistan*. This further confirms that bestowing women with no identity and individuality unveil a patriarchal slant to women.

The atrocities inflicted on women during partition are related throughout the novel in terms of honour killing, to take revenge or to invoke manliness of the men of either community. The tragic tale of newly wed Sundari by Hukam Chand, the Magistrate was terribly heart wrenching. The romantic journey of Sundari on the fifth day of her marriage was cut short by the Muslim rioters who attacked the bus. Her charm of dreamy marriage met disenchantment in an unimaginably horrific way. Since, she had not had a good like on her husband and was entrapped in romantic allures. Her husband, Mansa Ram was dragged, his penis was cut off, given in the hands of Sundari and he was presented to her completely naked. She was repeatedly raped before her helpless husband: "She did not have to take off any of her bangles. They were all smashed as she lay in the road, being taken by one man and another and another. That should have brought her a lot of good luck!" (p.108) The tragic tale of Sundari personifies the trauma and pangs of countless innocent unsullied maidens in the rupture.

The corpses of women floating on the water of the river Sutlaj expose the nastiest kind of violence wreaked on their bodies. They were not only killed with a sudden burst of fire or stabbed with knife or spear. Conversely, they were mutilated into pieces and tore apart. Pregnant women's babies were hewed out of their bellies: "some were without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, many women's breasts were slashed.....bobbing up and down" (p.125). This reiterative refutation of empathy to women is one of the hallmarks of violent ferocity Singh pronounces that overtook India in 1947.

Likewise, there are several incidents reported by Inspector and District Magistrate in their discussion where the Muslim rioter abused women. They became the victim of sexual violence. New kind of torture was devised to hurt womenfolk. Their breasts were cut off to deprive them of motherhood and fertility. They were forced to parade naked in the streets and gang raped: "They had heard of gentlewomen having their veils taken off, being stripped and marched down crowded streets to be raped in marketplace"(p.106). This all was done to prove the vulnerability of the men of their clan and to quench the thirst of angst.

So, the bodies of women were politicized for multiple interests of the organs of states, society and religion. They were used to invoke the fury of men to intensify vengeance: "Do the Mussalmans in Pakistan apply for permission when they rape your sisters?" (p.129). The Sikhs of Mano Majra were taught the lesson of manliness and impotency by giving the examples of sexual assault and abduction committed on the Hindu and Sikh women by the Muslim rioters: ""What sort of Sikhs are you?..... Potent or impotent?" (p.129) They were convinced that the only way to stop Muslims from their wrong doings is to answer back with multiplied ferocity: "For each woman they abduct, abduct two" (p.130). Further, young men of Mano Majra swore to rape the women of Muslim if they dared to agitate the situation: "..... we will rape his mother. Mother, sister, daughter", add others." (111)

It is sheer exploitation and acute violence to misuse the weaker. Even such madness could not deprive women of courageous decisions. They mocked the cowardly act of men of assaulting or abducting them by taking the chivalric

decision of jumping into wells and even killing their own children so they might not become the prey of unchecked lust. It was preferable for them to die in peace instead of becoming a victim of men's bestiality and hostility: "Women killed their own children and jumped into wells that filled to the brim with corpses." (p.20) Self-abnegation of women is not less than any great sacrifice.

Even the insignificant character like Nooran challenges the set norms of stereotypical society. She resisted at her best and opposed the idea of leaving village. She was brave and knew how to struggle for due rights. She argued with her father: "I will not go to Pakistan, definitely" (p.113) Though, she was silenced and thrown out of village like other Muslims and the traumatic experience of migration she went through is relatable in context of any other sufferer.

#### **Representation of women in *Cracking India* by Bepsi Sidhwa**

Bepsi Sidhwa was the first Pakistani Parse female writer who unveiled the horrific injuries gifted by the Great Divide in her influential and widely acclaimed novel *Cracking India*. She gave voice to the silenced women and introduced a many notable female characters in the novel who were very much awakened and expressive besides portraying the subjugation, abduction and exploitation of women amid the butchery and violence of partition riots. The novel mainly highlights the partition of 1947 and its aftermaths rendered through a Child narrator Lenny, a Parsi girl of eight years with a crippled leg. So, by denoting this responsibility to a female child, Sidhwa breaks the set patterns where in a patriarch culture, everything is observed by the lens of men. Her novel portrays many other female characters in poignant and meaty roles in the backdrop of mess and chaos when over 75000 women were abducted and killed in the pretext of honour, religion, ethnicity and nationalism (Virdee, 2013). The most striking feature of her fictional novel is that her female characters that endured the traumatic experiences of partition and migration remained resilient and resonant till end to challenge the imposed overpowering on them.

A significant part of the novel focuses on Shanta, often mentioned with the name of Ayah. She was a young and assertive Hindu girl of eighteen who was earning by working in Lenny's house. She was surrounded alike by the admirers of Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian community that were allured towards her because of her sensual appeal and coquettish nature: "Things love to crawl beneath Ayah's sari. Ladybirds, glow-worms, Ice-candy-man's toes. She dusts them off with impartial nonchalance" (p.28). However, she fell for Masseur rejecting Ice-Candy Man who claimed to be the most ardent suitor of Shanta. Ayah's character is multi-layer. At first, she symbolizes the victimization of women during partition. As the riots began, the mob of Muslim insurgents started slaying people of Hindu and Sikh community staying anywhere at Lahore. Thus, Ayah was found in Lenny's house by the Muslim mob led by Ice-candy Man. As he vowed to take revenge from all the Hindus: "I want to kill someone for each of the breasts they cut off the Muslim women ... (p.126). They dragged Ayah out by her arms while she was bare feet. She resisted relentlessly to free her from the clutches of rioters and her sari tore into pieces in that hassle: "The last thing I noticed was Ayah, her mouth slack and piteously gaping, her dishevelled hair flying into her kidnappers' faces, staring at us as if she wanted to leave behind her wide-open and terrified eyes". (p.184) Ayah was abducted and raped. Ice-Candy Man deputed in Hira Mandi as a prostitute to run his family business. Later on, he put her into forced marriage and gave her name of Mumtaz.

The single character of Ayah uncovers the chain of horrific violence that was inflicted specifically on the bodies of women. Ayah was abducted because she was a Hindu. Her abduction and maltreatment personify the religious and ethnic frenzy of the time of partition. Her defamation and annihilation were a childish attempt to sabotage the honour and religion of other community. Her forced marriage and conversion signify vicious kind of trauma the womenfolk faced. They were simultaneously deprived of their chastity, identity, creed, roots, family, choice and life. Ayah's multifaceted portrayal embodies all shades of gruesome violence from abduction to rape and conversion to denouncement. Sidhwa reflects how women stayed strong amid such nasty practices and persecution. Ayah remained adamant in that entire course. Though she was silent, but her silence was a kind of protest showcasing her unwillingness and aggression to accept the adverse. It was not any kind of submissiveness and subjection to either set patterns of cruel society or designed fate as when Godmother tries to make her accept whatever happened to her and forgive Ice-Candy Man she bluntly outbursts: "I will not live with him..... please get me away from him." (p.204)

Similarly, Hamida the new Ayah of Lenny is a fallen woman. She was abducted and raped during partition riots and reached battered by circumstances in refugee camp. She was mother of four children. She lost her home, her husband, her children, her clan and above all her chastity: "Hamida was kidnapped by the Sikh \_\_\_\_\_ She was taken away to Amritsar. Once that happens, sometimes, the husband—or his family—won't take her back." (p.168) Hamida's wet eyes were enough to reflect her grief-stricken soul of her as she said to Lenny "Poor fate-smitten woman," says Hamida, sighing. "What can a sorrowing woman do but wail?" 167 However, she reconciles with the circumstances to compete the adversities by not moaning about the days that are gone. She discards the idea to see her children or to beg for her husband to accept her.

So, women were abused to take revenge, to emanate indignation, to show manliness, to provoke communal frenzy, to eradicate heredity, to flare up religious animosity, to settle personal scores and vice versa. The acme of cruelty was that they were denied membership of family or community. They became unwanted and illicit despite their victimization. Ranna's sister Khatija was tattered by Sikh rioter "..... run stark naked into their courtyard, her long hair dishevelled, her boyish body bruised, her lips cut and swollen and a bloody scab where her front teeth were missing" (p. 202). They were converted and pulled into forced marriages as Ranna came to know: "Don't you know? Your mother married me yesterday," said a fat-faced, fat-bellied Hindu..... "And your chachi married Makhan Singh," (p.163) Moreover, they were paraded naked around the village, gang raped in the centre of the villages and mosques and height of brutality was that they were not allowed to cry or complain: "Stop whimpering, you bitch, or I'll bugger you again!" (p.160). The babies were snatched from pleading mothers, smashed furiously against walls and their helpless mothers callously raped and butchered. The infliction of violence on women seemed the worst and unique of its kind: ".....a naked woman, her light Kashmiri skin bruised with purple splotches and cuts, hanging head down from a ceiling fan as jeering men set her long hair on fire" (p. 162). Raana was haunted by the pleas and moans of grieved women in his dreams months after those terrible incidents he witnessed and he spent countless sleepless nights due to reverberating cries: "Do anything you want with me, but don't torment me ... For God's sake, don't torture me!" (p.158)

Besides the victimized women's resilience, Sidhwa embodies how women were empowering and consoling fallen women at that tragic time untroubled by the consequences. As Datta (2006) affirms that violent partition pressed women into creating novel subsistence approaches and initiated new possibilities in living, earning and educating themselves (Datta, 2006). Lenny's mother and Electric Aunt were supplying petrol secretly at nights or evenings to carry kidnapped women to their native homes from refugee camps or rehabilitation centres of women: "Mummy and your aunt rescue kidnapped women. When they find them, they send them back to their families or to the Recovered Women's Camps." (p.185) The mythical and angelic of all was Godmother who was healing and lessening the wounds and miseries of the destitute. She donated her blood at that elderly age many times: "... her blood will save many wounded lives". (p.155) She was firm in freeing Ayah out of the dungeon of red Light area and from the penitentiary of Ice-Candy Man using her personal resources in involving authorities and police. She reprimanded him the way he deserved: "You are a shameless badmash! Nimakharam! Faithless ... You're not a man; you're a low-born, two-bit evil little mouse! I can have you hung upside down in the old Fort until you rot....Get out of my sight....." (p.193).

Sidhwa's *Cracking India* showcases how women were doubly colonized during partition and politics was played over their bodies in the stretches socio-political context. The abduction, sexual victimization, honour killing, sexual discrimination, marginalization and other all nuisance were not new but those practices got entirely a new avatar for the catharsis of frustrations, grudges, suppression, indignation and bigotry (Chaudary, 2013).

### Conclusion

This study was an effort to manifest the representation of women in migration literature in the backdrop of partition of 1947 and its aftermaths. The study explored the representative texts of both Indian and Pakistani male and female writers who not only were witnessed of the havocs of partition but they also made the theme of partition their main subject to recount the pangs and struggles of the sufferers of the terrific outbursts that is still fresh in the chronicles and minds of the people of India and Pakistan. The women were the actual target during that historical tragedy and new wave of violence took them by storm in the name of national integrity and familial honour. Singh and Sidhwa showed how sexual violence, sexual discrimination and maltreatment became the ultimate verdict and fate for wretched souls in chaos of communal violence and racial bigotry and how their people besides other community men mistreated them. Sidhwa, in particular, made an utmost effort to depict the valiant side of women to prove to the world that despite all the pangs of abduction to rejection and physical to psychological torments, they became iron rampart against all the adversities all alone to slap the so called national leaders, social reformers or irate chauvinists to find the new ways of living and survival. This study gives a new insight to explore literary texts of migration literature from Postcolonial-feminist perspective.

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