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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Exploring the Elements Dichotomy of Human Relations in Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*

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Abstract

The Indian partition experience has generally been seen as being extraordinarily complex and violent kind of appearance in literary works. There are manifestations of oppression and violence that are the most recognized themes in the context of postcolonialism. The “decolonization” of writing, which aims to transcend this colonial history, will bring about and illuminate a wide range of subjects through its interpretation. Numerous books have been published about post-colonialism in India, but writers like Khushwant Singh have seen this

magnificent historical period as a matter terrifying phenomenon. His novel, *Train to Pakistan* (1956) was written on the backdrop of Indian partition. The unavoidable reason of partition has been examined in this novel which was a sprout of radicalism and fundamentalism sparked by bolstering community attitudes. They effectively and precisely express the fear and exposure of human existence brought on by the pangs and enigmas of the consequences of the Partition. In addition to offering a wealth of information, *Train to Pakistan* is also unconventional in the matter of themes, style and narrativity. Khushwant Singh has provided human qualities that would interpret any sense of authenticity, dismay, and credibility rather than presenting the events in political terms. Thus, the story not only describes the existence of man and his struggle to survive, but it also demonstrates that despite social exclusion, people may still be a source of inspiration for others who are unhappy, upset disappointed and misinformed.

Keywords: Postcolonialism, Interpretation, Partition, Communal Riots, Disharmony, Indian Literature, Peace, Harmony

The past and present are thought to intermingled sense of harmonious attitude and incidents in literary works and expressions. An artistic author's integration of the heritage of Indian history as a focal point for the present, in addition to reinterpreting and reenacting historical experience, is both compelling and motivating. Even while reality is challenged by art, it does not allow for escape. The artiste's aesthetic perception is undoubtedly voiced or conveyed in this creative conflict between art and reality. The true connotation of historical literature ultimately and exactly rests on its aesthetic interpretation of key topics in the context of historical and sociopolitical dialogue. It is thought that *Train To Pakistan* is a sociopolitical documentary novel. It is remarkable to present a political-polluted society in which politicians and administrators manipulate it for their own personal gain while pretending to carrying out the policies and plans of the purported Government. The novel is regarded as a minor classic of Indian English literature. It discusses and evaluates India's postcolonial era. It strips away pretension and symbolizes the abhorrence and brutality of human life with its intrepid, aggressive, and unyielding pragmatism. The author was deeply shaken by the upsetting events which took place during the Partition in 1947. With the help of artistic expression, the novelist has tried to record the violent modes of expressions and plots infused by the political leaders for their personal benefits and interest. He found a simple outlet for his inert emotions through this norm.

In the sense that the novel portrays Khushwant Singh's optimistic and upbeat outlook on life, his steadfast confidence in the values of love and humanity, and the unbreakable spirit of man in the face of a disgusting environment of wickedness and cruelty, the story ends up being a replacement indulgence. The reader is presented with a variety of perspectives related to the Partition, both as a historical event and as a personal tragedy, through the well-crafted narrative of the novelist. The novel has a vivid and lively symbolic structure that is firmly instituted in characters and situations. The novelist combines pattern and detail in a writing

style that has a remarkable sense of control, drawing on his personal experiences of the Partition sensibilities and occurrences. As a result, his work exudes passion and impact. Although the author's fictional response to the Partition is literary, the human experience he has replicated and the literary devices he has used to filter it provide us a profound insight of what it is to be a man in history.

Train To Pakistan depicts the tragic incidents in the life of Mano Majra during the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan in particular and multiple tragedies in general. Mano Majra is central to the storyline of the narrative. Mano Majra, a small Punjabi village, is located on the Sutlej River's bank. Its social structure can be described as pluralistic because it is made up of various communities. As a result, it resembles India in miniature. There are two main neighbourhoods. The first is the Muslim group, whose members are practically all tenants. The second is the Sikh religion, whose adherents are landlords. Despite being followers of the Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim religions, the residents of these two groups have coexisted peacefully for a number of years. Their feeling of integrity and unity is exemplified by their belief in the local deity known as "deo". The author describes the concord among many communities as a result of their acceptance of the same deity as, "This is a three-foot slab of sandstone that stands upright under a keekar tree beside the pond. It is the local deity, the deo to which all villagers - Hindu, Sikh, Muslim or Pseudo-Christians - repair secretly whenever they are in special need of blessing" (Singh, 10).

However, it creates the impression that the freedom struggle was in vain because partition is seen as the nationalists' outpouring of acceptance of the "two nations doctrine" that colonial rule insisted was necessary. The novel makes an effort to track and analyse the negative impact of partition on people's lives in general and the people especially belonging to Mano Majra in particular.

Mano Majra was initially portrayed in the story as being an exception to the violence that broke out across the nation on the day of partition. Nationwide, there are instances of mutinies, violence, and tension, but Mano Majra is unconcerned by this and continues to act in a placid, unassuming manner. In the story, Calcutta is where the communal conflict that resulted from the split is first seen. On the very first page, it is made clear remark that something tragic is going to take place. The following lines are worth quoting to make it intense; "The summer before, communal riots, precipitated by reports of the proposed division of the country into a Hindu India and a Muslim Pakistan, had broken out in Calcutta, and within a few months the death roll had mounted to several thousand" (Singh, 9). The character of the power and emotion was not only erratic but also unmatched in scope and approach. This has led to an excessive amount of animosity, antagonism, and the most extreme type of chauvinism ever, which was fostered by formal historical discourse in Pakistan and India. On the other side, a great deal of nostalgia also engulfed the two nations (or other national groups), and was frequently expressed in the notion that this was a split between siblings who were unable to live together and chose to separate their house and possessions. This situation demonstrates not just the harmony between the many religious groups, but also how this hamlet is free from external communal imbalance. The people of this village's way of life are another example of

Mano Majra's serenity. They are located distant from the effects of the partition's political upheaval.

It makes two key suggestions that imply the agreement between the nationalists and the departing British is the source of the wrongdoing. First, it suggests that our nationalists had already embraced the idea of the two-nation doctrine. The measure also goes against the wishes of the nation's citizens. As a result, communal strife between Hindus and Muslims, who each lay the blame for the deaths of thousands of people, is a manifestation of the backlash against this choice. The situations were so critical that the humanity had shrunk to the level of hell. People from one community were accusing the other community in a way that no sense of human concern was left. The following lines create a great sense of communal gap which was par apart at that time; "Muslims said the Hindus had planned and started the killing. According to the Hindus, the Muslims were to blame. The fact is, both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped" (Singh, 9).

Even though it is fiction, Khushwant Singh's story is remarkably realistic in terms of the way the events developed. The plot of the novel is both heartbreaking and dismal. It captures readers' attention in a very sadistic. For those who want to get a glimpse of what happened as a result of one of the most tragic episodes in the past of not just India, but also in the history of human civilization, this book is regarded as a must-read document for the same. The tale of God was not proclaimed by his loud yell as it rose to the skies.

On the eve of independence, the author's belief in nonviolence and a spiritualistic approach as the means of the freedom movement is severely let down since it is the outcome of the acceptance of India's partition, which is then the cause of a cascading human tragedy. *Train To Pakistan* presents a narrative tale of the evil of division spreading throughout the country in an effort to highlight the weakness in our war for independence and its consequent disaster for intergroup harmony. After describing how riots spread elsewhere, the novel focuses on how Mano Majra was first protected from such disturbances and how it eventually fell victim to the pangs of non-violence brought on by division to show that the unrest extended throughout the entire nation.

The present study identifies two levels of discord caused by the split and consequent partition of India into two countries. First, there is widespread communal unrest in India's subcontinent, which is characterised by atrocities, rape, and bloodshed. This is portrayed as having started on the eve of the partition and continuing even after India was divided and given freedom. The majority of the country is affected by the communal violence, which initially appears in Calcutta. They consist of Noakhali, Punjab, Bihar, etc. In Pakistan, sectarian violence has occurred in towns like Shikharipura, Gujranwala, Multan, and Rawalpindi. On both sides, many people have been murdered, attacked, and sexually assaulted. During this stage, it appears like anarchy and confusion are the order of the day. This mutual murder appears to adhere to the "eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" maxim. While Muslims in India were being killed by Sikhs and Hindus and their corpses were being carried to Pakistan as a gift to Pakistan, a ghost train was transporting Sikh refugees from Pakistan to India.

Thus, the worldview of the two sovereign countries, Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India, which are divided along religious lines, emerges as revenge. In some ways, separation and destruction go hand in hand. Additionally, it portrays the idea of freedom struggle as well, but as a complete failure. This is the case since current events run counter to the nationalists' ideal of the subcontinent as a free land. While our leaders anticipated seeing integrity at the dawn of a free India, disintegrity is bred everywhere in actuality. By depicting the widespread riots on and after the eve of partition, the author succeeds in demonstrating the hopelessness of the liberation movement. In his portrayal of it, he has adopted an impartial attitude. The author blames Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus for the uncalled-for occurrences or riots. He also engages the participation of Pakistani and Indian government leaders in the nonviolence. He believes that there is a fallacy in national leaders' decisions beyond anything else.

Second, the social unrest in Mano Majra is brought on by the social fabric that has been a part of the community for many generations. Khushwant Singh's *Mano Majra* represents Gandhian ideals such as non-violence, peace, honesty, and harmony in his vision of India. It is a village where peaceful coexistence is practised between many religious and socioeconomic groups. They are not affected by the politics of the freedom struggle, nor are they overcome by the widespread racial tensions that existed before and after the declaration of independence or the partition of the country. *Mano Majra* is undisturbed by the widespread rioting that the entire country is experiencing between Muslims and Hindus. The societal cohesion is still present when the ghost train carrying the bodies of Sikhs from Pakistan arrives there. The inhabitants of *Mano Majra* show a lot of forbearance as a youth incites them to take revenge for the massacre of Hindus elsewhere. It is clear from the fact that no one has been reported dead in *Mano Majra* in response to the intercommunal violence brought on by the partition. Lala Ram Lai's murder is the only case of dacoity, but it does exist. *Mano Majra's* social structure, on the other hand, continues to be strong and secular. *Mano Majra*, however, escapes the effects of the divide. Although it has long since managed to avoid a national communal crisis, it eventually succumbs to it.

In *Train To Pakistan*, the author makes a double-kill. He reveals the communal unrest that has been occurring nationwide since the nation's partition on the one side, and the breakdown of social harmony in *Mano Majra* on the other. Both show a betrayal of the values of honesty and non-violence that our nationalists sowed. The notability of the novel lies in its proposal of a notion that subtly portrays the freedom struggle as a disappointment. There are multiple factors that contribute to a decision. The dialogue that came before has made it quite evident that the story reveals the Partition Holocaust. The freedom movement must, however, be considered in conjunction with and understood in light of the partition because the two were created simultaneously. There are numerous reasons to consider partition to be an ally in the freedom struggle. The beginning of the novel can be found in the summer of 1947, during the pre-independent period. Although this time period coincides with the end of the liberation war, its effects are tied to the subsequent split. The undivided continent is experiencing rioting as a result of public outrage over nationalists' approval of the division.

With his compelling nonviolent ideal, ahimsa, Mahatma Gandhi transformed the freedom struggle of a few leaders into a peoples' mass, or national movement. But even before gaining independence, the country was characterized as practicing nonviolence, and that was in front of Mahatma Gandhi, who popularized the concept of ahimsa (non-violence) throughout the world. Massacres, riots, mass rapes, and other atrocities committed by Indians themselves, who were brought together by Mahatma Gandhi's motto of ahimsa (non-violence), are only the latest blow to the independence movement that Mahatma Gandhi himself spearheaded for over three decades. The following sentences provide an appropriate understanding to the of peace and harmony before the partition. It has been discreetly and ironically manifested in the works which represent partition sensibility.

Many individuals have referred to the crisis that resulted from the split of the Indian subcontinent into two countries based on religion as a "national catastrophe" or in some way an international catastrophe. The partition has still been influencing the relations of the two neighboring countries. It is a setback for the national movement in particular because its guiding ideas are at a crossroads and have been compromised the defense of linking the tragedy of the partition to the failure of the independence struggle.

As a result, this holocaust in the form of partition was the result of our liberation fighters' mistaken judgement. The English literary tradition and the colonial experience appear to have had a major impact on the growth of writers like Khushwant Singh. This novel is an eye-opener with its novel language, admiration for each and every aspect, amazing climax, and unusual characters. The novel is educational in spirit and leaves readers with lasting impressions long after the final page has been turned. Khushwant Singh, a postcolonial author who discusses the instant response of the colonised nation to post colonialism, takes his responsibility seriously and sets the bar high for other Indian postcolonial authors.

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