

Partition of india portrayed in the novels



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India suffered the stigma of slavery under British for about three centuries. When it got freedom, it was also not without paying the high cost in the form of partition. This historical event is significant in the world history not only as a political occurrence which gave birth to two nations, but as the most treacherous occasion for thousand of the men who lost their lives, hundreds of women who were raped & treated most ruthlessly and for countless number of children who found themselves orphaned & coerced to live the life of beggars.

This most lethal incident in the history of India left an indelible mark on the psyche of every Indian & particularly on those Indians who have been the victim of this most dreadful will of God. Indian writers could not remain untouched from this shocking affair and used the medium of creative writing especially novels to lay bare the brutality, inhumanity & genocide of worst type. The foremost attempt in this direction is taken by Khushwant Singh in his novel Train to Pakistan in which he depicted the trauma of the victims of partition.

As he himself belongs to the community who remained the victim of this cruel fate, he could easily understand the pain of the people who fell prey to this plot. Not only he participated as a villager in the events of Mano Majra, an imaginative peaceful abode of communal harmony, but he narrated the whole tragedy as a detached observer also. He neither blamed Hindu, Muslims & even the evil Britishers; but emphasized that in this tragic incident not only a country was divided, but even the heart & the soul of the people got alienated. It is an agonizing tale of the people who got caught in the tempest of partition.

The Rape by Raj Gill holds political leadership responsible for the overall drama of partition & its devastating effects. He does not limit himself only up to the political consequences, but also demoralizing & inhumane impacts of this most lethal occasion. Here, rape of Leila, a muslim girl by the father of the lover (Dalipjit) of the girl is an example of most monstrous & unethical consequence of displacement, and bitterness caused by partition. However, a ray of hope is shown by the depiction of humanity of Dalipjit which ultimately prevails in the novel.

Manohar Malgaonkar in A Bend in the Ganges portrays an altogether different version of the story from a new perspective. He brings in the limelight the conspiracy of the Britishers in inciting the religious hostilities between Hindus & Muslims. His stress is on the core policy of the English of Divide & Rule in fostering the colonial design & leading India to the bloodshed of partition. He goes on probing the political, diplomatic & circumstantial causes which made the partition a reality that ultimately proved to be a huge hurdle in the development of sovereign India.

The Ashes and Petals by H. S. Gill throws light on the aftermaths of partition which shook not only India, but the whole world. It vividly draws a picture of communal riots, the brutal murders, rapes & mad dance of violence around Punjab & Meerut in the land of Gandhi. It acquires a political form in displaying the inefficiency and mismanagement in controlling and suppressing the riots which very few historical novelists hinted at. It delineates very clearly the massacre of passengers of train coming & going to Pakistan, their pain, agony and trauma.

It tells the same tale of petty politicians who exploited the tragic occurrence for their own profit without caring about the harm which they were causing to their country by their shameful acts. Ultimately it doesn't end on the note of pessimism rather have a lesson of didacticism & hope for the new generations in any situation of the life of the nation. The Shadow Lines by Amitav Ghosh focuses more on the repercussion of this fateful destiny of India, its victims, its ugliness & its brutality more than anything else.

It doesn't give more space to the causes of the conspiracy, hatched by the Britishers which brought about this horrible happening that changed the course of the future events of India. There is apolitical remembrance which are quite coloured with imagination with a post-modern style of narration. The Azadi by Chaman Nahal has been eulogized for its realistic as well as comprehensive portrayal of the tragedy of the partition. Chaman reminds that the Indian struggle for Independence was based on the hypothesis of one nation theory which had taken the ethnic, cultural and religious oneness of the masses as granted.

The novel illustrates the fact that those who opposed the idea of the partition were relegated to isolation and desolation. It presents the remarks of common people on the nature of the political situation and the role of politics in their lives which coerced them to accept the inevitable. The novel also conveys the message of the urgency of reconciliation and the expectations with the younger generation to move ahead, while erasing the disasters of the partition from their mind.

The Sunlight on a Broken Column by Attia Hussain, (a Muslim writer) covers a period of twenty years starting from the early thirties when both the Hindus and the Muslims took active part in the struggle for independence as great patriots. In the novel the turbulent drama of partition and its aftermath is observed and narrated by young Laila who was nourished at a time when the Hindus and the Muslims lived in harmony and used to share each other's pain. The novel is surely an artistic display of the emotional drama which the Muslims had to suffer.

The novel Twice Born Twice Dead by K. S. Duggal discovers that there used to be perfect harmony & peace among the two major communities Muslims and the Hindus of Dharmyal, but the anti-social elements entered into the village from outside and instigated the people to avenge the killings of their community in Bihar. Though the novelist tried to make one particular community responsible for the communal uneasiness, yet it succeeds in covering the sudden dislocation of life and loss of harmonious atmosphere in Dharmyal due to the partition.

Waiting for the Mahatma by R. K. Narayan dealt with a unique aspect of the fall-out of the partition, wherein it is stressed that making of a country is not as important as that of the making of humanity. While on 15th of August, 1947 the country was celebrating its tryst with destiny; but on the other side, a pall of gloom prevailed in the riot hit areas. In these areas, the children were orphaned and needed immediate attention. The theme of partition occupies a momentous place in Indian English Novels.

These novels have served more than the history books in deciphering the plight of the people who became victims of this ghastly incident of Indian history. The novelists feel that politics was responsible for human carnage from all sides and any particular side could not be held responsible. Their approach in the novels has remained objective in the sense that all have tried to expose human nature and its capability of carrying out cruelty and barbarism on its own creed.