



Displacement and Migration in Khushwant Singh's Train To Pakistan

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Abstract:

Khushwant Singh's Novel Train to Pakistan's all characters Juggat Singh, Nooran, Iqbal, Hukumchand, Sunder Singh, Banta Singh, Lambadar, Haseena and hundreds of others shows their pains through their conversation. Khuswant Singh has expressed disjuncture and displacement of the characters of the novel. He uses a third person narrative technique. It helps to him hit the shallow dive in mind of characters. Singh has masterly composed love of Nooran and Juggat, violence and horror of partition.

Keywords: *migration, displacement, conflict, ghostly train, violence.*

Introduction:

Khushwant Singh, well-known Indian writer, journalist and columnist who was also a member of parliament from 1980 to 1986. He published novels such as *Train to Pakistan*, *I Shall Not hear to Nightingale* and *Delhi*. He wrote autobiography, non-fiction and a number of translations. At age of ninety-nine, he wrote last novel *The Sunset Club*. His experiences of partition reinforce him to write *Train to Pakistan*.

Diaspora:

Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory mention that this very board term encompasses literature that deals with experience of migration and exile and cultural or geographical displacement most often in the context of

post-colonialism but also arising from dispersals caused by traumatic historical events such by war and forced transportation. Transportation which may be forced or optional from motherland in search of identity or to escape from cultural conflict or ill treatment with masses. Diasporas' main features are alienation, rootlessness, displacement, nostalgia, and identity crisis, sense of loss, existential crisis and assimilation. Indian English literature mainly focuses on different social conflict and many aspects of displacement, quest for identity, uprooting and rerooting, insider and outsider syndrome guilt, etc. There are two types diaspora: forced or optional. Forced diaspora happened from traumatic events such as partition because available circumstance creates forcefully to leave

their ancestral place. *'Partition and Independence did not really mean much to any of them until a train from Lahore comes over the bridge with full of dead bodies of Sikhs. After a few days another such train follows and Mano Majra becomes a battle fields with the help of new refugees. Friends become foes and the Sikhs are ready to kill Muslim neighbors'*. Gaikwad, Vikas, Rabindra Bharati Journal Of Philosophy. Such type of trauma creates masses transfer to other land because of fear of death, rape or violence .Chawala(2014) speculates this is because trains were the last physical connection many people had to their homelands (p 196). Khushwant Singh effectively gave the novel name *Train to Pakistan*. Train is a medium of transportation. The scattering of people during and even after the partition from homeland to unknown land.

Summary of the novel *Train to Pakistan*:

This novel by Khushwant Singh in 1956 deals with black chapter of Indian history. This novel starts from summer of 1947. This summer was not like other summer. Whenever happens bad or unbearable event in life, that time nature or universe give sign. Mano Majra, utopian tiny village all religious people lived peacefully. Only one Hindu family of the moneylender Lala Ram Lal in August five dacoit enters his house. They beat him and killed by gang of dacoit. Unfortunately novel's protagonist Juggat Singh arrested for murder Lala Ram Lal. On the morning of dacoit, Hukum Chand the Magistrate and Deputy Commissioner arrived.

Another one Iqbal Singh was twenty-seven year old unmarried communist social worker from the city. Iqbal was arrested by police on the bases of connection with the murder. The sub inspector declares him a Muslim League's member. At the times of critical situation Iqbal didn't take any sacrifice. He knows about all laws or remedies for situation but lacks to courage to take actions. But in opposite Juggat sacrifice his life for beloved Nooran and Muslim villagers.

One mooring, a train from Pakistan halted at Mano Majra railway station. At first glances, it had the look of trains in the day of peace. No one clung between the bogies. No one was balanced on the footboards. But somehow it was different. There was something uneasy about it. It had a ghostly quality.(82)

In ghost train, Sikh peoples were killed, dry blood on roof of train and evil smelling. Train is a medium for travelling one place to another place in Mano Majra. Mano Majra divided into two parts after ghost train.

The village was stilled in a deathly silence. No one asked anyone else what the odour was. They all knew. They had known it all the time.(88)

They had all known that train came from Pakistan. Pakistani Muslims killed Sikh in train. In the partition one statement aroused that Pakistan for Muslim community and India for Hindu community. Lambadar reported to sub inspector that forty to fifty refugees who had crossed river came to Mano Majra. They stayed in Gurdwara or in mosque.

There were a lot of rumors about Muslims disloyalty. Mano Majra's Lambadar and Banta Singh tried to settle down but nothing fruitful.

He believed that an individual's conscious effort should be directed to immediate ends like saving life when endangered, preserving the social structure and honoring its conventions. His immediate problem was to save muslim lives.(105)

Hukumchand was worried about Muslim communities. Hukumchand gave order to inspector that released Malli and his men. Sikh refugees were angry so they committed that never trust musliman.

Sikh refugees had told of women jumping into wells and burning themselves rather than fall into the hands of muslims. Those who didn't commit suicide were paraded naked in the streets, raped in public and then murdered.(128)

Sikh refugees sow a seed of poison in Mano Majra's Sikh community and firstly devil nature Dacoit leader supported the refugees to join for violence. In Mano Majra circumstances forced Muslims to leave village and joined camp for went to Pakistan. Juggat Singh's beloved Nooran also left the village. Imam Baksh sentenced in meeting of the villagers that *what have we do with Pakistan? We were born here. So were our ancestors. We have lived amongst you as brothers.(133)* After meeting with villagers Muslim community leaved Mano Majra. Extremes religious Sikh gathered near Gurdwara plan to hiss off the train which carries Muslim refugees to Pakistan. Banta Singh told

plan to the police that time Hukum Chand released Jugga. Jugga came to Mano Majra that time he reveals that everything changed. Juggut Singh knew that all incidents happen in Mano Majra that night he went to Gurdwara to listened Granth Sahib words.

"It is just the Guru's word. If you are going to do something good, the Guru will help you; if you are going to do something bad, the Guru will stand in your way. If you persist in doing it, he will punish you till you repent, and then forgive you'.(183)

Juggut Singh sacrifice his life. Juggut Singh cut off the rope finally by teeth which tied across the steel span. Religious Sikhs shoot him.

'The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the center as he fell. The train went on to Pakistan.'(190)

Juggut Singh heroic sacrifice reveals the best of human values. He is the star of the novel.

Critical Reception:

Khushwant Singh is one of the most caliber writer who was depicts willingly experience of migration, exile, cultural displacement and pain of disjuncture of partition. Displacement is the main key element of diaspora. Novelist skillfully captures migration and displacement of people in Mano majra. Love is an antivirus of violence and this antivirus save the muslims. The horror of ghost train attracts readers. Writer Khushwant Singh skillfully take the reader at the end of suspense.

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