



**PARTITION LITERATURE : MAJOR CONTRIBUTION OF
BAPSI SIDHWA AND INTIZAR HUSSAIN**



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ABSTRACT

Partition of British India is unfortunate event for people of India and Pakistan. In pre- Partition and post partition period terrible religious riots erupted. Therefore, mass migration of people into another country, looting of property, forced conversions, physical and mental atrocities to children and women, mass slaughter of human beings created huge chaos in Indian subcontinent. It was forceful stroke on the sensitive mind and heart of people who have been living harmonious with each other from thousands of years. All these depictions

of mass slaughtering and religious riots recorded in literature. So Partition Literature was created as a separate section in literature. Partition literature in India has been richly written in plays, poems and novels. But in compared to India, there is less writings on the partition of India in Pakistan. Therefore, in this research paper, it is humble attempt to take review the contribution of Bapsi Sidhwa and Intizar Hussain to the Partition literature.

KEY WORDS

mass migration, plight, displacement ,physical and mental atrocities, humiliation.

RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction:

Bapsi Sidhwa is a prominent novelist in Pakistan. She has written five novels-*The Crow Eater* (1978), *Cracking India* (1981), *The Bride* (1983), *An American Brat* (1994) and *Water* (2006). *Cracking India* is valuable response to the partition of India. It portrays the untold abuse of women of all religions during the partition. Bapsi Sidhwa points out that British India was partitioned on the basis of religion. As a result, Hindus and Sikhs became staunch enemies of Muslims, but women suffered the most from the partition. During communal riots, men of every religion took their revenge by kidnapping women of other religion, forcibly converting them, gang rape, forcing women into prostitution, violent beating, physical and mental torture to women.

Bapsi Sidhwa mentioned that the dreadful consequences of the partition of India were suffered by all but women suffered a lot more than men. Sidhwa attracts our attention that the partition of India has geographical and political background but men brutally abused women of other religion. A women became victim of gang rape, such women were rejected by their own family because these women polluted by men of other religion. Society gives a name of this group of women as 'Fallen women'. No one was ready to give them work in that condition these women accepted alternative of prostitution to satisfy the hunger of stomach. Some women committed suicide to save their family's prestige. Physical violence during the partition made a profound effect on the mental state of women.

Bapsi Sidhwa is a feminist writer. The narrator of the novel *Cracking India* is Nanny, an eight year old girl. Through the character of Ayah and Hamida, Bapsi Sidhwa pointed out that men celebrated happiness of the partition by converting millions of women, raping them and brutally killing them. Bapsi Sidhwa presents the bitter truth that the war of partition of Indian subcontinent was fought by men of all religion on the women's bodies. Partition of Indian subcontinent is mystery. Many factors are responsible for this. Partition had an economic, social, religious, political and geographical impact on the people of India and Pakistan but the effect of the partition on women was ignored. Through the novel *Cracking India*, Sidhwa has vividly depicted plight of children and women in the jungle fire of communal riots. Therefore, Bapsi Sidhwa has made a valuable contribution to the Partition literature.

Intizar Hussain's novel *Basti* is a classic novel on the partition of India. This novel is based on Intizar Hussain's personal experience. In 1946, Hussain migrated with his entire family from Vyaspur to Lahore. In the partition literature, there is narration about communal violence, forced conversions, the role of Muslim League and Indian National Congress, the role of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Mountbatten. After the partition of Indian subcontinent, India and Pakistan became two independent countries. The political parties who did the partition, gained the political power but the aspect of what happened to the refugees who migrated to other country were ignored. In *Basti*, Intizar Hussain focused pathetic condition of refugees.

Intizar Hussain highlights that during the partition of India, terrible communal riots erupted, people embarked on journey to unknown lands with as much luggage as they could carry on their heads. So they had given up their lands and property, the partition made these people begger in an instant. At the time of journey elderly people died on the road. After entering the new land, the citizens did not accept them. Then a feeling of alienation and rootlessnees arose in the minds of the Muslims who went to Pakistan from India. At the time of adapting to a new culture in a new region, the refugees faced many difficulties. Intizar Hussain says that hopes of Indian Muslims who migrated to Pakistan for their dream of holy land could not be fulfilled. Hussain mentioned that the mental pain caused by migration is more painful than the physical pain.

Conclusion:

Writers from India and Pakistan have commented on the partition of Indian subcontinent from different angles. From West Pakistan, Bapsi Sidhwa has presented the effects of partition on women and children. From East Pakistan, Intizar Hussain has presented the effect of the partition on the lives of refugees. Therefore, the writings of Bapsi Sidhwa and Intizar Hussain enriched the partition literature.

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