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**Partition Violence in *Pinjar***

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**Approval Letter**

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## **Abstract**

*Pinjar* depicts violence done upon women at the time of the Partition of India in 1947. During the time of Partition, women were doubly victimized; they became victims of both the riots and the patriarchy. Though independence freed India, the partition that accosted it made women vulnerable. They were used for masculine power and were just turned into mere objects. The film *Pinjar* implicates the patriarchy to the gendered violence perpetrated through the life of its protagonist, Puro-turned-Hamida.

## Representation of Partition Violence: A Womanist View

The 1947 Partition of British India into two nation-states, India and Pakistan, provoked the single largest population movement in recent history, with Hindus moving into independent India and Muslims into newly formed nation of Pakistan. It resulted in the removal of British imperial forces in 1947 accompanied by violence. Partition of India in 1947 was negotiated by nationalist leaders ensuing violence of unimaginable proportions. Because of partition of Indian subcontinent, the larger segment of population underwent violent dislocations across what was to become the Indo-Pakistan border. The journey of Hindu to India and Muslim to Pakistan brought a series of violence suffered by people in cities, small towns and villages, in their homes and their bodies became markers on which painful scripts of nationalism were inscribed. Women got inhuman treatment by the people of their own community as well as others in the name of religion. If they were not involved in direct acts of violence, it affects them in one way or another. In response to mass rapes and abduction, people of both sides of border legislated a fair exchange of abducted women across borders, the government of India and Pakistan signed the Inter- Dominion Treaty in 1947.

Colonialism in India existed up to 1947 and it ended with an explosion of massive destruction and violence. The British colony of three centuries was transformed in which 1 million people died, 75 thousand women were raped and abducted, and 12 million people migrated to the new other side. Some of the worst instances of violence done to women this century occurred as a result of partition.

Colonialism in India ended with an explosion of violence and conflict in 1947. In the interval of a few months - after Britain decided that it is "divide and rule" policy in India should become one of the three centuries was transformed

literally overnight into mainly Hindu and predominantly Muslim Pakistan in which 1 million people died. 75000 women were raped and abducted, and 12 million people migrated to the new other side. It was the largest mass migration in history, the messiest national divorce n also one of quickest taking place in just a few months.

In the history of modern south Asia, the partition of the Indian subcontinent into Pakistan and India in 1947 is one of the greatest social upheals or disruption. The coming of partition has cast a powerful shadow on historical reconstructions of the decades before 1947, while the ramifications of partition have continued to leave their mark on sub continental politics fifty years after the event. Yet, neither scholars of British India nor scholars of Indian nationalism have been able to find a compelling place for partition within their historical narratives.

In the history of the displaced person, India's partition of 1947 still remains one of the greatest social upheals. The Mountbatten plan, by which the subcontinent was to be divided into Pakistan and India, was announced on June 3, 1947. West Pakistan was to consist Sind, Baluchistan, and the North West Frontier Province; n sixteen districts of Punjab were to be in India. Though the exact boundary line was not yet determined, migration started taking place even before August 15, 1947. Historians have mainly focused on the causes of the partition n have endlessly debated whether it was inevitable n who was responsible for it - the British, the Indian National Congress or the Muslim League. The loss of lives that accompanied the partition was well documented, less well known is the large scale abduction of women from all three communities: Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. No official record has been kept for such violence.

However, as the official partition of India in 1947 was negotiated by nationalist leaders, on all sides large segment of population underwent violent dislocations across what was to become the Indo Pakistan border. Their journey of Hindu to India n Muslim to Pakistan left in their wake a series of horrific mutilation suffered by people in cities, small towns and village in their homes n on their bodies. Women's bodies often become the target on which the painful scripts of contending nationalism (Hindu, Muslim or Sikh) were inscribed. Women were not only targeted by the people of 'other' community but were also killed by the members of their own family to save them from being polluted n to protect the mass rapes and abduction as both sides of the border in order to legislate a fair exchange of abducted women across borders, the government of India and Pakistan signed the Inter- Dominion in 1947. Historians have focused on the "high politics" of partition, the negotiation between the British, the Congress and the Muslim League that resulted in the creation of Pakistan. They focused on refuses entering India, the squatting colonies and pavement shanties, the inflation, black marketing and political agitation. But the exact scale and intensity of women's abduction, murder, and rape from all three communities Hindu, Sikh and Muslim accompanied by partition was less documented. The history of partition focused few events which are uninfluenced by the everyday politics of local life deciding the facets of voiceless millions. Indian partition is like a structure having no centre because it has no real representation, it is an absent center.

Partition of Indian subcontinent is based on official document as a history of government to government debate concentrating on the differences between the Congress and Muslim League and British policy of divide and rule. Indian history and literature mainly centers on the principle of non violence and unity in diversi-



ty of Indian culture. There are many works on separatist politics, negotiation between the Congress, Muslim League and colonial power studies on "partition tragedy". In this regard Gyanendra Pandey says:

"The agonies of partition" are in fact that moment of fissure and fracture, that point in history of India that is probably of greater consequence to the Indian imaginary than both the struggle for independence and its celebration. In other words, there is a real history of India, its soft underbelly, its barbaric underside that nationalist and revisionist Indian historians have consistently silenced."

(qtd. in Vijay Mishra 211)

Partition of Indian subcontinent in 1947 had adverse impact in every spheres of life having wide influence in the both countries -- India and Pakistan. It brought great changes in social, economic and political life of people of affected areas. However social and familial ideologies regarding women seemed completely indifferent from those changes. As per Karuna Chanana: Despite many changes, and despite the expanded social space, opportunities for education and employment for women, the ideological underpinnings of feminine roles were barely touched. "The family ideology ensures that radical departure and shifts do not take place in the perception of women.

The creation of Pakistan and its harrowing consequences affected all classes and castes on both sides of border but women were worst affected. Through rape and abduction, women became central to the whole act of violence. But official statistics and histories failed to present this distressing aspect of partition. It has left indelible marks on the body and soul an entire generation but these aspects were not well documented. In this regard, Gyanendra Pandey contends

that yet, neither scholars of British India nor scholars of Indian nationalism have been able to find a compelling place for Partition within their larger historical narratives.

India's partition of 1947 made women as disabled being. Their activities and behaviors made them disable and coward being. They preferred death rather than facing dishonor in society. With the fear of rape or abduction or falling into the enemies' hands, hundreds of women took their own lives by jumping into wells. Women were being helped by their kinsmen in committing suicides and death after being raped. According to Gyanendra Pandey,

Partition becomes a symbol that is so enormous, so vast and obscene, that forever eludes representation. In short, it becomes the sublime object that defies representation in history. Pandey's use of phrases like "suppression", "tragic loss" and "collective amnesia" are alternative ways of explaining why the Indian nation state refuses to theorize the partition itself. (qtd. in Vijay Mishra 211)

In patriarchal culture, there are double standards of morality for men and women. Moral system facilitates men's lives while it makes women physically and mentally cripple. So, if viewed with Hindu perspective, Indian texts often presents women as 'weak' and 'other' being. For instance, a widow is not allowed to marry whereas a widower is encouraged to marry. According to Gyandendra Pandey, 'history tends to produce a prose of otherness'. (qtd. in Sujala Singh 123) He contends that Indian historiography in that violence is always sidelined and relegated to the margins, the spaces of other. Pandey, thus, clarifies how female violence never got central position in Indian texts. The notion of developing Indian text with larger ideas always silenced the violence done upon women accompa-

nied by partition. Pandey further says "by setting itself up as the arbiter and manager of 'native' violence of its own strategic bureaucratic legalities and counter-insurgency maneuvers." (qtd. in Sujala Singh 123) The postcolonial historians failed to encompass the cases of rape and abduction following the partition of 1947. The most miserable fact about partition is not only its subsequent violence on both sides of pain, suffering, loss of self-respect and humiliation from history.

The postcolonial historians like to follow the methods of colonial historians, attempted to record the progressive march of modernity and nationalism, and thus perpetuating (conditioning ) 'the violence involved in making national histories, nation appear natural.' Pandey comments as well as presents these disturbing complicities and patterns of coincidence; he; wonders about the impossibilities of representing violence. According to Pandey:

The historian seeking to represent violence in history faces problems of language (how, for example, does one describe pain and suffering?), of analytical stance (how can one be 'objective' and express suffering at same time?), and of evidence (for does not large-scale violence destroy much of its most direct evidence?). There is the associated question of how the moment of violence comes to be recorded by the state or by 'neutral' observers, how it becomes part of an archive, and how it is integrated into a larger history by the historian. (qtd. in Sujala Sigh 124) Pandey's intervention into Partition historiography has elements of postcolonial perspective. The postcolonial intervention from womanist viewpoint is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Postcolonial historians found difficulty in presenting the larger scale of rapes and abduction following partition into words. But Inter-Dominion Treaty that came in response to mass abduction and rape legislated a 'fair' exchange of abducted women across borders so as to rescue women. After the act of such legislation, the historiographer started focusing on rescue operations and women as subject in their works. According to Veena Das, "This interest in women was not premised upon their definition as citizens but as sexual and reproductive beings."(qtd. in Sujala Singh 123) Veena clarifies that after partition, women got central attention in government policies and in histories but those attention highlighted the anxieties of nations searching for secure self-representations rather than women problems.

Partition feminists and other literature claimed historians not being able to articulate the private world of victims and real agonies of women. Partition literature realized the difficulties and limitations of historians who are facing authoritative universal censorship in their history. These writers contend that literature can perceive and record the unspeakable, untold and silence voices of women. This concept opposes the binaries which valorize history as the realm of the real, and these scholars praise or hail the efforts of writers to document what history has failed to document. According to Pandey: "In part because of the way in which the historiographical agenda has been constructed, and in part because the historians craft has never been particularly comfortable with such matters, the horror of partition, the anguish and sorrow, pain and brutality of the 'riots' of 1947 has been left almost entirely to creative writers and film-makers."(qtd. in Sujala Singh 126)

Creative writers like Menon and Bhasin, Veena das blame history of not being able to present the trauma and anguish of victims. In this regard, Veena Das

writes: "Although ...we failed to produce a national discourse (or perhaps succeeded in representing one from emerging), those dealing with this trauma in the imaginative mode did not fail their society and their times." (qtd. in Sujala Singh 126)

The story of Chheleta (That Boy) written by Jyotirmoyee Devi sets against the backdrop of the partition of Punjab in 1947. The story presents the world of pain and suffering that women experience during times of war because of their gender. It raises two questions: "why did the mother not acknowledge her daughter?" and "why did the daughter not recognize the mother publicly and why did she refuse to accept the brother even privately, when she was just alone with herself?" (qtd. in Bharati Ray 56)

Devi by exploring such questions in her work gives us an insight into the ways in which gender is implicated in the creation of Indian state and into the price women have had to pay precisely because they are the upholders of the spiritual private life 'traditional' India. Devi focused on the impact of partition on private and family life.

This construction of partition scenario in literature results to the reflection of exact scale and intensity of the actual tragedy of plunder and rape, murder and abduction, migration and dislocation. As literature has the methodology, the freedom and the form, it presents the grief and traumatic moment of the partition. Literature provided space for representing continuum of violence including forcible suicide and rape, the experience of dislocation and relocation through forcible marriage, and experience of widows in contrast to the abducted women and social workers. Because film is a literature, it presents demonic specter of partition by centering round the agony of women violence. Among those, Pinjar is one of the

important films about the recovery of women, abducted during partition and real agony of women. The film gives an insight about the ways in which women get situated at the crossroads of an extended array of events, norms, rites and laws which lay claims on their bodies in intrusive and invasive ways. This film attempt to "cure" the trauma and mourning surrounding partition.

During partition months, violence against women rose to unprecedented levels, and this gendered violence has mostly been read as metonymic of the violation of the land. According to feminist scholars, nevertheless, national histories kept record of political interests that silenced gendered violence. Gendered analysis got central position in the last decade of twentieth century; feminist gave more contribution to this. Menon and Bhasin's and Butalia's feminist account of gendered violence gave space to women sufferings in their literature. Menon and Bhasin define their project as

Country, Community. Religion. Freedom itself: a closure examination of  
What meaning they have for women has led feminists to ask searching  
questions about women's asymmetrical relationship to nationality and  
citizenship; and to appreciate the role assigned to them in any  
renegotiation of identities, whether ethnic, communal or national. Such  
an analysis of the experience of abducted women, for of its perception  
of its role vis-à-vis Pakistan, Hindu and Muslim communities, and  
displaced Hindu families.(qtd.. in Rosemary Marangoly George138 )

Ritu Menon and Kamala Bhasin, have written about the incarnation of women during partition, they also call the period "as an event of shattering conse-

quences [that] retains its pre-eminence today"(208).According to Vijay Mishra "partition" is the modern demonic with which North Indians generally over code the Muslim Other. In Menon and Bhasin's argument, the recovery of Hindu women (women abducted during partition ) from Pakistan (sometimes against their wishes ) parallels "the current frenzy to recover sacred Hindu sites from the 'usurping' Muslims" (qtd.. in Vijay Mishra 210).Vijay Mishra in his "Bollywood Cinema Temples of Desire" writes that 'Chhalia' (*The Trickster,1960*) is an important film about the recovery of women abducted during partition as it is located in ideology of recovery. According to him, this film attempts to 'Cure' the trauma and mourning surrounding partition. Butalia further writes, "A resounding silence surrounds the question of women and Partition." (qtd. in Vijay Mishra 214)

Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin's *Borders and Boundaries* explore the women's experience of the partition of the Indian sub-continent through the feminist historiography, and ethnographic and historical research. This approach provides a undeniable reading that unpacks the complexities of a gendered experience of the partition. The partition of Indian subcontinent into India, East Pakistan and West Pakistan took place at the exclusion of British imperialism in 1947. Over 8 million people were dislocated in this process and one million died. Menon and Bhasin attempt to expose a significant gap in research on this topic by focusing on testimonies from the partition survivors, and from the first hand account of women's rehabilitation. Their research agenda include direct conversation to women in order to shape gendered social history that focuses on "non-actors in the political realm" (16). The authors offer a rich and sometimes surprising analysis of the partition's varying effects on the women's lives and sexuality. Similarly, Butalia, a feminist historiographer is interested in history particularly the history of those

who have been marginalized by society- a history that " allowed listening to the most unheard things, silence and to understand and recover hidden voices"(218). She gives importance to "human dimension of history in straightforward representation of experience. She uses oral history as a methodology looking at women's narratives and testimonies and placing them alongside or against the official discourse of history. She questions". How does history look when seen through the eyes of women? How does it evolve in narratives and testimonies when women talk to women?" (16).

Menon and Bhasin's *Boarders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition* and Batalia's *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India* focus on the intimate relationship of war, gender and violence. Each volume engages the absence of women from the stories of the 1947 partition, mainly the experience in Punjab and shows how feminist analysis disrupts both normative understanding of bureaucratic practice. Both of these texts are at the forefront of efforts to removal of women as individuals. Each shows how women's bodies as signifiers of community lead to the erasure of women as individuals. Each shows how women's bodies provide a template for kin and collective honor and for disgrace as well. Violations are justified by inscribing them in a demoralization of a past nation past and the construction of a religion-nationalist future that holds women as central to tradition spiritually and the meaning of community. Elitist history of the partition either erases women to be among the masses of victims whose experience can be homogenized as an effect of the costs of war. In challenging this view, these extraordinary contributions transform the debate about war, and nationalist struggles by showing how women as well as their erasure are constitutive of historical discourse.



These books highlight the silences of oral testimonies in exploring the everyday worlds of those who lived through the partition of Punjab, and are attentive to the difficulty of asking about as having people remembered, the personal and collective violence of the period. In this attention to listening and then revealing the silence attendant to the partition, the authors make transparent the fetishization of war as the work of men who protect the soil as well as national, communal, and familial honor. By inviting women to "speak for themselves", each book challenges the communal contexts (180). In a crucially important and strongly argued introduction. Menon and Bhasin describe this methodological approach for providing the women a space for themselves. They acknowledge the contribution of historical documents, fictions, memoranda, reports, official's statement and government documents.

These books situate the partition in the context of religious and nationalist struggle. They organized ethnic difference spatially, through the creation of the separate States of India and a divided Pakistan. Menon and Bhasin's contribution is organized into six thematic chapters: violence, abduction and recovery, widowhood, women's rehabilitation and an integrated concluding section, which explore the process of rebuilding and belonging. In each chapter, the authors show how women's bodies are considered by men of rival communities as a territory to be conquered and by kin as the mark of family honor. The authors are paying special attention to how the women may indeed come to view death as preferable to humiliation. They bring to mind painful memories of men killing kinwomen to protect their own honor.

The usefulness of the both books lies not simply in their retrieval of the historical experience of subaltern people who have been marginalized by main-

stream history. They also bring into the public archive memories, which have been actively suppressed by the community itself, the so-called honor killing of the women, children and old people in the name of protecting them from rape or coerce conversion. The double dislocation of many women who were forcibly recovered from their inter-religious marriages to their one time abductor, and restored against their wishes to their own communities for rehabilitation. Their own communities raped the large numbers of women at a time when popular rhetoric drew upon monolithic of us versus them. Each book is based on extensive interviews with the survivors of the violence and gains an assimilation of oral history interview to other historical documents, which helps flesh out the social context of the voices retrieved. The author's major concern, thus, is to bring to light repressed voices.

To sum up, both books deal with the partition of Punjab and while they consist of some narratives from across the border, the focal point in each is for the most part on the Indian side of the story. Both books are significant because they re-inscribe women into a history that has dealt the partition violence as mainly a Hindu-Muslim conflict.

Menon and Bhasin began their project with conversation with in their own families and moved in snowball fashion, from one recommended person to the throughout Punjab often visiting the same women on multiple occasion and becoming friends with many of them. For the women, "remembering was important but the important was remembering to others" (18), because it seemed to validate otherwise socially neglected experiences. The text studies violence against the women, including forcible suicide, rape, the experience of dislocation and relocation through forcible marriage and what becomes, in numerous cases, forcible re-

covery, the experience of widows in contrast to the abducted women, and the vigilance of women social workers. Beginning with a study of the violence against women, the text illustrates the role men often played in convincing mothers, daughters and sisters to commit suicide in fear of spoiling the family honor through abduction and rape by the rival men. In a manner, that recalls Spivak's observation in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Menon and Bhasin conclude that years after the partition, men were unable to "reflect on their own implication in the women's death: what else would they do?" they asked, or simply "they wanted to die"(57). Thereby, men exonerate themselves from the responsibilities in the women's death at the same time the women's voices were effectively silenced. This position reflects a "that included death enforced by the family or rape by the men of the other community (57). In contrast, women often experienced a form of "willed amnesia" surrounding the violence and the roles their own family in that it must be measured against the weight of the "shame-fear-dishonor syndrome," which makes any choices is presented complicatedly (59).

Menon and Bhasin's introduction includes records with their own careful debates about the ethics of research and writing. They are concerned with the exploitation on women and their silence, the place where "memory refuses to enter speech" (18). They are not sure about whether to reproduce the personal narratives intact with commentary. But, "we (feel) that without context or commentary such a presentation (may) leave their testimonies as defenseless as the women themselves, open to skepticism, dismissal, disbelief to charge of exaggeration and nostalgia.(and) not to be trusted" (17). Finally, they decide "to use a combination of commentary and (analytical) narratives and testimony to enable ...the women's voices to be hear," sometimes challenging and sometimes agreeing and probing

historical facts, insinuating themselves into the text and, thereby compelling a different reading of it (17).

The personal narratives expose "permissible" masculinity sexual violence against the women during the exchange of population. For the authors, the violence was premised on the masculinity alignment of scales: female bodies were equated with the notion of home, their respective religious communities, nations, and national territories. The depoliticized women were dualistically positioned as either ours or their and accordingly encoded as sites for the masculinities protection or desecration.

During riots, othered women were subjected to "stripping; parading naked: mutilating and disfiguring; tattooing or branding and genitallia with triumphant slogans; amputating breasts; knifing open the womb: raping" (42). Menon and Bhasin note that each act treats "women's bodies as territory to be conquered, claimed or marked by the assailant"(42). Further. "Some acts are simultaneous or continuous (they may begin with stripped and culminate in raping, branding, or tattooing)" (43). Women were violated not only in public places but also in sacred spaces like temples or gurudwara and also in their own home.

Commenting on the animalistic act towards the women during partition. Paola Bacchetta in "Reinterrgating Partition Violence: Voices of Women/ Children/ Dalits in India's Partition" writes:

The symbolic meaning of these brutalities rely upon the gendering and sexualizing of intermale relations of domination and subordination. In this logic, stripping and parading women naked ultimately signals the feminization of the women's male counterparts who prove incapable of pro-

protecting 'their' women\ "community" nation. Killing fetuses, knifing and opening the unpregnant womb, constitute offenses against the father husband, but these acts also signify genocide. Breast amputation at once desexualize a woman and negates her as a wife and mother (44) .

Here, recording her as inappropriately feminine inadvertently presents her male counterparts as inappropriately masculine. Rape symbolically marks the women as polluted and appropriated as other.

She further adds that many women were subjected to interfamilial violence; "forced to die at the hands of men in their own families" because death was deemed preferable to dishonor (45). The honor in question is male honor, which according to specific historical and contextual construction of masculinity, required male control over the sexuality of female kin. Men deemed to murder their own kinds women as a heroic alternative to antireligious marriage and conversion. In the narrative by Charanjit Singh Bhatia, a Sikh, a Muslim neighbor had offered to have his son's marry to Bhatia's uncle's six daughters to ensure their safety. The uncle "seemed to agree" (46). However, that night he gathered all thirteen members of his family together, decapitated them, and at the end killed himself too. Clarifying the incident Bachetta writes:

Here, the father \husband retain his own honor (and by extension that of his religions "community" and nation) by refusing to renounce control over his daughter' sexuality by handing them over to the Other. He also resists his own feminization, through dependency on his daughter's marital situation for his own protection (thereby positioning him as- a woman in relation to the Muslim male). (572)

Menon and Bhasin directly address women's alleged suicides, an issue at the center of highly contentious debates about women's agency, which arose earlier especially around the practice of *Sati*. During the enemy attacks, women collectively took poison, jumped into fires or drowned themselves in wells. Men (some women) framed these acts as "a willing sacrifice" (52). However, for Menon and Bhasin, "to submit is not necessarily to agree" (52). There is no free "will" where masculinities "notion of honor and shame" have been so deeply internalized in the context of gendered relations of power (46). Menon and Bhasin's position is clear: the death is forced: "The circumstances in which many women took their lives hardly be said to have offered them much choice in the matter" (47). Male family members provided them with poison and swords, built fires for them pointing to jump into the wells. They should drown themselves while "fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, mothers and aunts" urged them to end their lives "courageously" (45-46). Intra kin and self-inflicted anti women violence" during the partition war is ultimately a part of a "continuum of violence" where women are subjected to the non-turbulent times. In both the situations, women are called to sacrifice for male honor and their sexuality is controlled.

Women enacted multiple modes of confrontation to death, male family members' account of women's deaths. For example, while Iqbal, a refugee man, tells Menon and Bhasin about women who took poison and jumped off a bridge to drown insisting repeatedly that it was voluntary. His wife interjects: "They must have encouraged them, after all what could the ladies do in this situation? They must have persuaded them, what could the women do?" (51). Later, Menon and Bhasin interviewed three women survivors of the same incident: they had packets of poison were ready of them" (54).

One reason for Hindu women's resistance against being "returned" was the stigma of pollution (defined as sexually violated) and its consequences. Politicians, aware of this problem, debated publicly about it. Finally, the Indian Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation circulated a pamphlet claiming: "just as a flashing stream purifies itself and is washed clean of all pollutions, so menstruation women is purified after her periods" (100). The use of menstruation as a purifier in such a crisis is quite ironic in light of upper caste Hindu notions. In ordinary times, the menstruation blood is impure. Such a reconfiguration born out of the patriarchal State's disruption to reappropriate 'its' women's bodies is possible through dependence on previously silenced elements within the Hinduism itself. This incident undoes the impressive fashion of the fixity of the meanings attached to gendered identities, while foregrounding the masculinity attachment to retaining the criteria of purity at all cost. Elsewhere, Hindu social worker Kammobhen Patel reveals that "Muslim women were accepted into their original families more easily for they were not thus stigmatized" (77)--a point that inadvertently counters colonials and Hindu nationalist construction of Muslim men as hyper oppressive to Muslim women.

Partition gendered many different outcomes for women. Some would be permanently disturbed while others would gain independence through their unexpected entry into the workforce and the "breakdown of traditional constraints on their mobility" (205). Many women survivors cut their daughters for highly remunerative work and in fact, there was a rise in girl- education immediately following partition. This latter subverts the dominant socio-economic power, thereby echoing into the next generation.

Menon and Bhasin's text also adds to the rich discussions of citizenships in the post-colonial State: "Does women have a country" (251). It asks readers to consider the roles that women's bodies play in shaping national identity both at the moments of the partition and in aftermaths. Moreover, it asks readers to consider how it saved women from the violence calls to mind the partition and gendered cultural memory of its violent dislocation.

Voices from *The Other Side of Silence* covers sixty years of the partition with what happened during the period that is distinct from the historical records. So profound was the traumatic effect of the partition of India on survivors that the only way of them could go on living was to forget. And it took ten years for Urvarshi Butalia to break through the silence and published her findings. Butalia approached the partition of Indian subcontinent as a politico-economic division whereas for many survivors it was "a division of hearts". Butalia, the confounder of India's first feminist press spent years gathering oral histories "ordinary people women, children, schedule castes" (11), whose voices were often obscured by politics. She particularly focuses on the double dislocation endured by the women, whose fate was often decided by the men of their religious communities.

It begins with the author's visit to her uncle in Lahore. During the Partition, when all of Ranamama's siblings went to India, he stayed in Pakistan. His displaced family disapproved of him and there had been no contact for forty years. When Butalia crossed the border to meet him for the first time, Butalia describes the emotional tones of how he immediately treated as a family member and how willingly he was to speak her about certain intimate issues of his life. However, she also notes his silences. After several visits, butalia becomes a liaison between him and their family in India until finally her mother and aunt made their first trip



back to Pakistan to meet him. Although Ranamama cherishes the opportunity of narrate his life to his niece and gives her permission to publish it, Butalia examines the ethics and politics capturing his uncle's "sense of betrayal" (29). Does he (Ranamama) really understand the implication of the telling? If she were to tell his story, how should she begin? What should she leave in and out? This problematic, based in respect for the speaking subjects, guide each of the personal narratives produces in the book and Butalia evokes by evaluating them in all their complexity at various points through out her work.

The sense of dislocation, disruption of home, difficulties of feelings in place divided kinship and being caught in the gendered political economy of property rights are common to many women's experiences recounted throughout the book. They traverse, for example, the story of Zainab, a young Muslim women and Buta Singh, her Sikh husband that has reverberations memorialized as it was in newspaper accounts.

This story demonstrates some of the gendered complexities of the partition. Zainab was posited as a Muslim. In that incarnation she was first appropriated by the collective male enemies, who used, bought, sold, and then married to Buta Singh. Then Zainab is posited in familial and political-economic terms: her natal family needed her for financial reasons. They reappointed her and married her to a cousin to retain her property. Butalia, too, details and analyzes inter-familial violence against women perpetrated for the preservation of honor. Men shot, stabbed, burned and beheaded their "women family members to ensure they would not be appropriated by Muslim males while women took poison and collectively drowned themselves in wells" (113). Butalia is stuck by the fact that "nowhere in the different discourses on the partition do such incidents count as vio-

lent incidents" (113). "Instead, they are constructed" as valorous acts, shorn of the violence, and indeed coercion that must have sent to many women to their deaths" (114).

Butalia finds irony in the declaration of Martyrdom to those women who committed mass suicide in many places of India by the State. The State deployed the trope of Martyrdom to enslave women and their sexuality. Death is the reality either by the hands of outsider or family members. It indeed, is violent event ever experienced in India history. Instead of looking such an event through the lens of violence, the State ironically bestowed the act with 'martyrdom'.

In such a fearful situation, apparently the greatest danger that families and indeed entire communities perceived was of conversation to the 'other' religion. Mass and forcible conversation took place on both sides of the border. As Butalia mentions:

In Sikh community, men were almost sure of their protection  
But they were of the knowledge that their women be unable to  
do so. Their logic was that men could fight, die if necessary,  
escape by using their wits and their strength but the women  
were deprived of such tactics. They were therefore particularly  
vulnerable to conversation. More women could be raped  
impregnated the seed of the other religion and in this way not  
only would they be rendered impure individually but through them  
entire community would be polluted and the purity of the race be  
diluted. While the men could save themselves, it was imperative

that the women be 'saved' by them (155).

During partition period, the event of mass suicide or of women killing was pervasive. Sisters, daughters and others were martyr died in order to save their honor. In this regards, Butalia writes:

Through such a supreme sacrifice the women merely lost their Lives- or exchanged them for an eternal life of martyrdom- while the community managed to retain its honor. Implied in these accounts was the assumption that honor of the community by in not allowing its women to be violated. In normal times, men can be the women's sexuality. But at abnormal times men need to fight to retaliate in attack and the best way of guarding their honor is to not allow women to be violated. (166)

For Butalia the issue of the women's "suicides, their coercion, or intentionality must remain unresolved, for their voices are unrecoverable" (212). She explains that, affected through the inscription of their acts within the patriarchal logic of familial, "community", and national honor, where they are used "to instigate further violence" (214). Butalia also explains cross religion sexual violation during partition, pointing out that they were often classed: "the majority of women who were raped were poor women, because the wealthy had means to travel by air, car, under escort, seldom by foot" (328).

Beerendra Pandey's comparative study between "Family Ties" and "A Leaf in the Storm" by Shauna Singh Baldwin and Lalithambika Antharajanam respectively draws on Menon and Buatalia to posit a theory of subaltern irony. Accord-

ing to him Shauna Singh Baldwin, "reflects a truly subaltern kind of feminist writing that picks holes in the bourgeoisie nationalist patriarchy as it narrates the gendered partition violence" (111). The main purpose behind using political irony is to enable the marginalized to quote in Linda Hutcheon's words, "be heard by the center, and yet keep[...] critical distance and thus unbalance and undermine" the patriarchal discourse (qtd.. in Beerendra Pandey 108).

Both the stories present the female protagonist who effort to challenge the traditional roles given by society. These stories center round subverting patriarchal norms and values that always guide them in shaping their identity. Hence, the idea of subverting the pre-established culture of the masculinity society - a deconstruction, which advocates the need of reshaping the role, space and responsibility of male and female. The tone of the writers is subversive and ironic.

The writers of the partition era like Amrita Pritam, Lalithambika Antharajanam and others, condemn about the violence done on women and advocates that such "irrationality" and yet their victims chooses to live with their abductors because of the demand of motherhood "a demand that remains within the realm of patriarchy"(106). For instance, Shauna Singh Baldwin does not fall into the ditch of 'motherhood': which is male constructed, rather they interrogates patriarchal boundaries. Hence, "marks[ing] a paradigm shift in the representation of the gendered violence in partition..." (106).

According to Paola Bacchetta, Menon and Bhasin's and Butalia's book can be understood as a new genre, which she names "critical-intersubjective feminist historiography" (570). The books are written personal styles that refuse to negate the emotional nature of the narrations. They reside at the intersection of previously unheard and feminist insights from a range of disciplines, and ultimately consti-

tute, although inadvertently partition historiography in existence. Partition of Indian subcontinent and the creation of Pakistan created a symbolic peace posited against external and internal violence. The womanist representation of Partition violence of 1947 has also found the attention of Bollywood.

The representation of Partition violence in Bollywood cinematic culture emerges from India itself. It memorializes the 1947 experience and situate it in relationship to the current urban politics of Hindu nationalism and geopolitical conflict and as generative in South Asia. Contemporary Bollywood films explore questions about national belongings by presenting partition as gendered violence and as generative of Indo-Pakistan war and peace. Kavita Daiya in "Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India" writes:

I have focused instead on how particular Bollywood films in the postcolonial public sphere both produce and contest hegemonic discourse about partition, and mediate the "Utopian imaginings" of peace and non-violent belongings. Insofar as the 1947 Partition recently appears in this cinema in historical period films, on one hand, and in the of its legacy of conflict-ridden India-Pakistan relations on the other hand, a close look at its contemporary inscription as event and discourse reveals the Partition's continuing impact on the cultural politics of citizenship in South Asia. (152)

Recent Bollywood films constitute stories of India, Pakistan and national belongings so as to unfold the traumatic experience of Partition. It explores how the ethnic mass of 1947 led to erasure as well as silencing of Partition refugees in India. *Afsana* (1951) was directed by B.R. Chopra (a partition refugee from Lahore) is about identical twin brothers separated in childhood whereas Yash Chopra's *Waqt*(1965) is about three brothers separated from their parents and each

other. Similarly *Nastik* (1954) by I.S. Johar is a social film that deals with the experiences of a refugee family displaced by partition. Likewise, Yash Chopra's *Dharamputra* (1961) centers around the story of an illegitimate Muslim boy who is raised in post-Partition India by Hindu parents. Thus, there are many Bollywood cinemas that present the story line of Partition refugees' experience that dominated the cinematic public sphere in the early national years. Hindi film industry has become extremely diverse in subject matter since its prime concern is to acquire as well as present the tragedy of 1947 Partition. Recent films like Farah Khan's *Main Hoon Na*, Yash Chopra's *Veer Zaara*, Farhan Akhtar's *Lakshy*, J. P. Dutta's *Refugee* and Chandraprakash Dwivedi's *Pinjar* demonstrate how Partition circulates consumption and citizenship, international war and gendered violence. Kavita Daiya further adds that "these films take up the ongoing ethnic conflict, war and violence in the Indian subcontinent in two ways: through the historical representation of Partition, on the one hand, and its inscription as generative of presenting international conflict between India and Pakistan on the other." (156)

The intense attraction of the emergence of Partition in Bollywood cinema is strong because the story content encompasses voiceless, subaltern, exchanged citizens, gendered violence and patriotism. Many Bollywood cinema centers around the story of how to uncover Partition impacts. For instance, *Main Hoon Na* presents a utopian desire for geo-political peace between the two nations created by Partition. Similarly, *Veer Zaara* articulates an inter-ethnic as well as international romance between a Hindu Indian man and a Pakistani Muslim woman. Partition films, no doubt, present the demonic aspect of 1947 Partition of India but these films do not present female characters in leading roles. In this regard Kavita Daiya writes, "Of course, it is important to note that this narrative is deeply gen-

dered and heteronormative: None of the female characters plays an important role in this national story about two kinds of Hindu, Indian masculinities and patriotism.” (160)

But there are some films that present the real demonic aspect of partition like *Pinjar*. About *Pinjar*, Kavita Daiya writes, “In the process, except for *Pinjar*, these films represent heterosexual, Hindu masculinity as normative Indian citizenship that engenders geopolitical peace and invents a fantasy of the humane postcolonial state.” (156) *Pinjar* is a period film that recreates life in Punjab, India, between 1946 and 1948 by presenting the experience of a young woman, Puro during Partition.

## **Partition Violence in *Pinjar***

1947 Partition of Indian subcontinent into India and Pakistan leads to the violence which is apparent in form of rape, abduction, kidnapping, displacement, murder, riot and moral degradation. The literature/art - visual products here are also not far from this fact leads to the depiction of gendered experience of Partition and displacement, and ethnic conflict of Hindu and Muslim. It focuses on how partition impacted upon the lives of ordinary women, and in this process it explores relationship between women, their families, religious communities and the nation.

The movie *Pinjar* sets in Amritsar in August 1946 before Partition of India and depicts the real situation of women during pre-Partition, Partition and post Partition era. The movie revolves round the experience of its protagonist, Puro who is the daughter of wealthy Mohanlal and his wife (Tara) and is engaged with Ramchand.

When Puro is abducted by a Muslim farmer Rashida, her life is transformed forever. Rashida falls in love with Puro and decides to marry her though Puro does not agree with this decision. Then desperate Puro anyhow manages to escape to her family. Normally women does have special role in society and it works as eternal truth in their lives. Her father denies accepting her saying that she has been dishonored by her abduction and they cannot take her back. Puro tries to commit suicide but Rashida rescues her and marries her.

Because Puro is not happy with marriage she refuses to eat and becomes *Pinjar* (skeleton). In this way, it embodies the film's title and signifies her social and psychic loss of identity and belongings, as she is cast out of her family and



community. Puro cannot forget Ramchand and her family, and she fantasizes of being re-united with them; she wanders the area in search of them. Coincidentally, when Partition is announced, Puro and Ramchand meet in a refugee camp, as he and his family are fleeing to India. Before having met with Ramchand, Puro does not know that Ramchand's sister is married to her brother 'Trilok' but now she is abducted by Muslims in the riots. Ramchand begs Puro to help find Lajjo and in order to redeem himself. Puro finally finds kidnapped Lajjo.

The movie opens with Puro (Urmila), a young girl who is going to get married. Puro along with her parents come to Chattoani and this time parents are determined to find a groom for her in Chattoani. This shows the system of marriage in contemporary society where parents specially father searches a groom for daughter. Mother feels grieved that she is going to be separated with daughter after her marriage. She expresses her feelings of sorrow and separation through song:

Like weaving thread into cloth...

The mother always dreams of uniting her family.

It is beyond me to explain why a daughter has to leave her mother's home.

All the comforts and luxuries for the son...and...a stranger's hand for the daughter.

Like weaving thread into cloth...

The mother always dreams of uniting her family.

On the eve of separation...one wonders why daughter are born at all.

(Scene 1)

Social injustice and motherly love are expressed in this song. A mother is always faithful and devotee to family matters and accepts all her conventional roles; always concerned of uniting her family. Despite all her efforts daughter has to leave mother's home and has to live in stranger's home throughout her life. The great irony is shown here; mother always cries and weeps for daughter but she cannot oppose directly nor does have words to explain this eve of separation.

Society cannot deal with women's problems in general neither can it advocate the emancipation, as a result mother finds herself an excessive control which society exercises upon her in form of social norms. As a result, all the comforts, luxuries and property are given to son and a stranger's hand is kept in daughter's fate. Being helpless creature, a mother cannot oppose the custom and questions herself Why a daughter is born at all?

The pre-Partition Indian society gave much importance to the need and wants of male. Women's desires and feelings were ignored and were left in the hands of fate. Girls were married at very young age and if misfortune fell upon them, if they were kidnapped before marriage, then they are not accepted in their homes and they never get another chance to live a normal life. Daughter's marriage is related to father's prestige and once this ceremony is fixed, it has to be held at any cost as the characters speak:

Trilok: Police station. I will talk to the concerned officer. May be we will get some clue.

Father: Have you gone crazy? In a day or two, guests will start arriving in our house for the wedding. How will I face them?

Trilok: And You mean?

Mother: Son, once the wedding rituals begin the wedding cannot be stalled. This is the custom.

Trilok: Mother! Whose wedding are you talking about?

Mother: Now even if we have to marry our younger daughter, we will do that. (Scene 4)

Whatever may be the reason the history of Partition was a history of deep violation; physical and mental for women. After abduction, many women were forced to parade naked in the streets, forced to have sex with men of other religion and their bodies were tattooed with marks of other religion,

Rashid: Puro, extend your hand? He will tattoo your name on your hand. (Scene 6)

The movie not only presents suffering and violence done upon women rather national history of India is presented through different dates. Date signifies the history of the exclusion of women towards movement of independence. India got freedom from British rule in 1947. Similarly, India's Partition of 1947 provided a type of freedom to both Hindus as well as Muslims. They got freedom from each other and established their own free nation. The Partition of 1947 divided the Indian subcontinent into Hindu and Muslim communities but it was the women that suffered most. During riots, women were looted and kidnapped like ornaments, houses and lands that become obvious in the talk of villagers:

Villager: It is not laughing matter Father of the nation has ordered to release all Hindu girl. Police are searching each and every village. In exchange of one Hindu girl to India, one Muslim girl will be sent here.

Villager: Haven't the boys of Rathoval hidden girls in their houses? Please tell the elders of the village to trace the girls and inform the government in the interest of the village. (Scene 9)

The movie presents the idea of the Patriarchy thinking women as an entity who are considered as ornaments to be used for decoration and thereby enhancing male's prestige and position in society. They made the women's body a ladder to climb for the better social position and satisfy their needs:

Rashid: Why are you torturing yourself? Come inside and eat something. You have not eaten anything in the last two days.

Puro: Pity on me. Please leave me at my house.

Rashid: Who will quench my threats then?

Puro: Rashid...Rashid...I beg of you. I touch your feet, take me to my house. For the sake of your God! Even you must be having sisters and mothers. (Scene 6)

The communal holocaust of 1947 uprooted and forced thousand of people from all three communities to migrate alien land. But women became center of the whole act of violation. Death became the only means to express the angst for women in communal riots. It is men who are responsible for the conflict but its affects fall on women. It is women who are raped, made widow and hegemonies to death:

Lajo: Take me away. All my life, I will be your slave.

Puro: Where will I take you...where?

Lajo: If you don't take me I will die of agony. (Scene 18)

The movie tries to represent social and cultural norms that control everyday lives of contemporary society though it sets in pre-partition Punjab. Puro along with her parents and her siblings live happily. They perform all the cultural norms in their daily lives but they do not dare challenge those norms that snatched their daughter 'Puro' from them rather they regard their fate as responsible in taking 'Puro' away from them.

Mother: Puro...My child...Puro.

Father: People will come to know. My daughter your luck...We have nothing to offer. In a short while, Sheikh's men will reach here and kill all of us.

Puro: Father, take me to Amritsar. Take me to Amritsar. Take me.

Father: Where will I keep you? Who will marry you? Your religion is gone. It is desecrated. At this time whatever we say they will squeeze out every drops of our blood.

Puro: In that case you kill me with your own hands. Kill me. Mother, kill me with your own hands.

Mother: I wish you were dead at birth. Just go away from here. Go away now...go.

Puro: Father...

Mother: The Sheikhs must be coming. Your father and your brother will be annihilated. They will kill all of us. My daughter go! We gave birth to you. Now do us this favor. (Scene 10)

They talk about religion, cultural norms and their helpless condition of parents to accept Puro as 'daughter' as the social norms is hovering over them every moment. Despite being a virgin, they refuse to accept her because of dishonor they fear from the community. Then she returns to her abductor Rashid who marries her and renames her Hamida.

The story proceeds ahead and reaches to a point where Puro (the female protagonist) is married to Rashida, her abductor though she is not willing to marry him. This is the depiction of contemporary family practices. Despite being married to Rashida, Puro/Hamida retains a phantasmic desire for inclusion through the Hindu rituals by which she could get her status as daughter/ daughter-in-law. She is lost in a world of imagination and song goes like this:

Parting apart hands cannot break relations.

With the laps of time those moments cannot be forgotten.

Parting apart hands cannot break relations.

With the laps of time those moments cannot be forgotten.

Friends have fallen apart, I pray that friendship remain intact.

Who has not left his foot print behinds, don't asks for

whereabouts of faithless one.

Parting apart hands cannot break relations.

My footprints keep sweeping towards you.

I am tired of running, chasing rivers of Time. (Scene 12)

The movie presents the significance of the role of rituals, habits and icons in demarcating boundaries and space between communities and religious identi-

ties. Women's bodies are often imprinted with the visual markers which serve as declarations of their identities in relation to the communities to which they belong. The etching of 'Hamida' on Puro's arm dramatically change her identity as Muslim from Hindu.

Aunt: That another one in the cage. She is a nice girl, Rashid. The other day when I visited your house, I saw her sitting like a lost soul. Rahim's wife told me that she has become very friendly with her. But you stupid. You mend your ways. The whole day you are singing Puro...Puro... Tell me, you must have given her some name at the time of marriage.

Aunt's son: Mother

Aunt: You keep quite.

Aunt: Listen, you tattoo her name on her arm. Then you will get used to calling her by that name. No will inquire or investigate.

Rashida: Are you listening?

Puro: Did you call me?

Rashid: Extend your hand? He will tattoo her name on your hand.

Man: Madam your name?

RAshid: Hamida. (Scene 12)

In the similar way, because of the rumored visual mark 'om' tattoo on the body of mad woman, Hindu community claim on her son after her death though they cruelly out casted and disowned the mad woman who used to wander the streets of village.

Rashid: Hello, Salaam. In the whole activities, women become center of suffering as Puro has to lose her son.

Village Chief: So, what do you intend, Rashid? Are you giving back the baby or aren't you?

Rashid: I dare...? Its God gift who am I to give it away?

Villager: That's evading the subject. Come to the point.

Rashid: I picked up the baby in God's name. Had I not got there in time, some dog might have carried it away. Allah willed it to live.

Villager: All right. If he is indeed tied to God, no one breaks the band. What you should know is that his mother was a Hindu woman. We can't tolerate you taking away a Hindu baby.

Rashid: No, I didn't know whether she was a Hindu or Muslim ones.

Villager: She was mad. But you are not, are you?

Rashid: You ought to have found the baby and brought it up right in the beginning. Why did I stop anyone?

(Scene 14)

The cinema presents suffering of women not only through the demonic impact of partition but also in the name of hostilities of the two communities. Throughout the story, Puro is abducted by a Muslim boy, Rashida because of the chain of their hostilities for generations. Puro does have no involvement in this hostilities but she has to bear because of being a daughter. She is unaware of this fact; when she asks for the reason behind kidnapping her, Rahida tells her the truth, Puro: Swear by your God and tell me the truth, why you did this to me?



Rashida: Puro our relationship has bearings of past among our families.

But what will you gain by knowing?

Puro: If you are so concerned about me, why don't you tell me?

Rashida: Puro our family and your Shah family have been on inimical terms from the time of our forefathers. Your grandfather for the sake of Rs. 500, mortgaged our house, levied interest and interest upon interest and ultimately acquired the house by a court order and displaced the Sheikh clan. Not only that, their juniors insulted our womenfolk. And your grandfather's elder son kept my grandfather's daughter for three nights in his house by force.

Now in next generation, when the arrangement of your marriage started, they made me promise them to kidnap the girls of Shah's before she got married.

Puro: My uncle kidnapped your aunt Rashid, what is my fault in that? You have left me nowhere.

Rashida: That is what I said. But my uncle was pressurizing me.

Puro: On their initiating you, you kidnapped me.

The story moves ahead where parents are very much concerned for the marriage of their daughter 'Puro'. They are going to have a family photo before going to Chattoani, their ancestor's home to find a groom. Trilok, their son has not arrived yet as he is most of the time engaged in patriotic and political works. Father scolds son and the conversation goes like this:

Father: Here comes your price. Ask Lord Mountbatten if he has the time to attend his sister's wedding.

Mother: Is Lord Mountbatten's sister getting married too?

Father: Idiot! I am talking about your son.

Mother: Once things are settled he will surely come.

Puro: Know what, brother? Mother's taking scolding for you since this morning. (Scene 6)

The dialogue and the situation cited above show the realistic condition which has the gap between father and son. The mother performs the role of bridge between father and son; always tries to protect her son. The father in patriarchal system holds the central role and works as the provider in the family. The role of women in the family is of minor and they work just what the family demands.

The movie as it proceeds goes on to present the fact of women situation during partition period where social norms, barriers and restriction play important role in family. For one, there is very low value attached to freedom for girls. Consequently, parents have great responsibility as well as burden of daughter's marriage. As the parents and shopkeeper talks about the marriage,

Shopkeeper: what is the occasion today sir? On a big shopping spree.

Father: After years I am going to my village. I have a big family. My daughter is of marriageable age. I have responsibility to shoulder. Major shopping is complete. As for sweets and oil, buy it in Chattoani.

Mother: Don't worry about that. Just go to Chattoani to see the boy. And if you approve of him, give him sweets and money to seal the alliance.

Father: This time I will finalize Puro's marriage and come. Rest as God wills. (Scene 3)

During partition period, daughter's marriage is regarded as the biggest responsibility of parents. Once daughter is got married, parents feel relieved of big burden. But the cruel fact is that parent do not think their daughter's decision necessary in marriage even though they know more things or are educated. They can't even imagine taking suggestion of daughter. Parents themselves search groom with help relatives and finalize the matter.

Aunt: Tell Puro's father that the boy name is Ramchand. They belong to Rathovaal and are my relations. Very nice people and he is the only son. They have vast tracts of land and own a big house and you know, they have electricity in their house.

Mother: Go along with some relations to see the boy. Rathovaal is so near from here. If you like the boy, confirm the alliance.

Puro's father with his cousin goes to Rathovaal to see Ramchand. He inquires everything there and asks about Ramchand. He likes the boy and finalizes the matter without considering Puro or her mother's likes or dislikes,

Puro's father: So, what are you doing these days?

Ram: Translating Valmiki's Ramayan in Urdu.

Ram's father: Having already translated Kalidas's Shakuntala in Urdu, he is now bent on translating Galib's poems in Sanskrit.

Ram's Uncle: Mohanlalji, enough of Maneklalji's tidbits. Now what do you have to say?

Puro's father: I like the boy.

Ram's father: You must know, in our custom there is a system of exchanging. Your daughter comes to our house and our daughter goes to your house. I believe you have a son of marriagable age.

Puro's father: He is studying law.

Ram's father: If you approve the marriage of my younger daughter with your son then my son will be yours. Don't worry we are not in a hurry for your reply.

Puro's father: Nothing like that. I am happy with both the alliance.

(Scene 4)

The above citation shows the realistic condition of contemporary society where daughter and mother's role in family is nothing whether the decision is going to take about their lives or others. Their role starts from their thought and end to the kitchen. Daughter before marriage has got the freedom of thinking, talking and can make fun with siblings but after marriage their thinking is governed by male members of family that becomes clear with Puro's aunt comment on Puro's fun making behavior,

Puro: Tell me brother, should i spend all the money in free kitchen?

Trilok: No, no.

Aunt: Fly around as you like. In your in-laws house, you won't be able to do that. (Scene 1)

The movie is governed by gender violence where the ideals, norms, aspirations, rites, rituals play vital role in shaping the presentation of fact. It presents the exact scale and intensity of actual tragedy of plunder, rape, murder and abduction.

The movie has its own ideology of some divine power or spiritual power or supernatural power; how these types of beliefs work even during partition period. Puro's mother has strong belief in divine power as she utters the dialogue,

Mother: women in the village insist on holding prayers for the Goddess of fertility. It is believed if she is appeased, this time I will be blessed with a son. (Scene 2)

Belief in supernatural power is also seen in stone hearted old lady who behaves so cruelly Lajjo. Lajjo is being abducted when there are riots in Rathovaal and thereafter old lady and his son become owner of Ramchand mansion and his son make Lajjo his keep. Despite the old lady's cruelty, she is much concerned of how Lajjo can become normal as her conversation goes with Puro like this,

Puro: Amma, if you don't like don't buy. What's wrong in having a look?

Thank God! Can I have a glass of water? I am thirsty since morning.

Old lady: Forget water you can have Buttermilk. But why don't you go and sell your good in town? There people don't make cloth. In villages everyone does. Good soul get a glass of buttermilk.

Puro: My God! Your daughter... Is she all right?

Lady: Well.

Puro: Get me some salt. Come. I will feel you pulse. You look so pale.

Lady: Get her some magician's band to make her normal. She doesn't even talk to my son.

Puro: I have swatch a magician's band, wearing which she will bloom like flower.

Lady: Whatever you demand, I will give you, but get me that band.

(Scene 18)

Customs play great role in the movie. The movie tries to depict how custom dominates people's lives and most important of it, women become scapegoat of it. They sacrifice parental feelings, willing, and all their aspirations for the sake of custom. As people are less educated they do not dare to challenge those traditional customs, values and norms that shape their practical lives and thinking. Even educated people cannot eliminate those customs from daily activities because of the majority of the societal system. These customs work in such a way that it is applied to satisfy them as well as it increases their social prestige. When Trilok tries to investigate about Puro, his father is afraid of social prestige and prevents Trilok from doing investigation.

Mother: Once the wedding rituals begin, the wedding cannot be stalled.

This is the custom.

Trilok: Mother! whose wedding are you talking about?

Mother: Now even if we have to marry our younger daughter, we will do that.

Trilok: Mother. Father what is the matter with you people?

Father: Puro is not traceable and you. Puro is dead for us. Even if found, who will marry her? How I shoulder her responsibility all my life. I am father of three daughters. Fate took away one from me and what about the other two? The one whose daughter is kidnapped, losses all dignity and self-respect. If she does not get married today, the entire society will ostracize us.

Trilok: The world is not as bad as you presume.

Father: Don't you dare lecture me! Am I my daughter's enemy? Instead of being supportive, you are arguing with me. If we suppress this now, it will remain suppressed.

Trilok: Are people fools that they won't question you about Puro?

Father: I will tell them that she contracted the plague and has been sent to Lahore for treatment.

Trilok: I don't agree with you. I will not rest until I find Puro.

Father: You dare not step out of this house. Otherwise I will kill myself. After that you do what you like. (Scene 7)

The above mentioned setting, situation and dialogue present the pathetic condition of a brother. Though a brother is ready to sacrifice his life to find sister, the so called social dignity overpowers all the feeling. There is a belief that female should always be taken care by the male members of the family and should never cross the four walls of house so as to maintain parents prestige. Once a daughter is kidnapped, abducted or eloped, father's self respect is lost. Father, however, cannot accept the new way of thinking and even cannot refuse take back daughter in his house. His refusal to change leads to the loss of a daughter.

The movie as it proceeds goes on to propose the fact of women condition during partition where women are victim of both partition violence along with patriarchal thought. Men, no doubt, became victim of partition but women's lives became only sexual object. Both Hindu and Muslim men abducted and raped women. Neither men are abducted nor raped. On the other hand, patriarchal norms

limited women's role and objectify their lives. As Puro and RAMchand talk about the marriage of their sisters and families.

Puro: Listen! who are u? What happened to you? Come with me!

Hindu Girl: In a nearby village there was a camp of Hindus awaiting the arrival of military to take them across the border of India. The camp was under the supervision of army. But in the night some Muslims would come to camp, forcibly take away girls and would dump them back early morning. For nine consecutive nights, I was forced to go with different people. However, last night, I dogged one of my captors and ran towards the village. In the morning I did not know what to do and where to go. That is why; I hid myself in sugarcane field and spent the whole day hiding and moving from one spot to another.

Puro: It is a sin to be born as a girl in this age. (Scene 16)

These dialogues show the pathetic and helpless condition of women in contemporary social framework. Despite her unwillingness, she is forced to live with stranger male for nights. The more she tried to save her life, the more complex it became for her. For a moment, she became uncomfortable where to go now.

The world is developing every moment because of existence of men and women but ironically, women feel their existence as sin in this technologically advanced era also. Men created the world from their own point of view which becomes truth to be described and followed. From male eyes, woman is only sex object and nothing more valuable than that. Objective reality corresponds to the



world and be verified because world itself is controlled by male's perspective.

Women have to live in same world by adopting same norms as final reality.

Puro: The caravan will leave early morning. We must leave her there during the night. If she reaches there the caravan safely, I will be relieved.

Rashid: Should I come?

Puro: It's good that people still trust women. If you go along with her, people will comment. Even otherwise, she is a victim of men. (Scene 16)

They talk about the safety of Hindu girl. They want her reach caravan safely in time so that she would reach her home country. At the same time, Puro is conscious of patriarchal norms where women are left with no space to feel a sigh of relief. She knows patriarchal norms have been constructed in such a way that women are being commented and scolded in every step of their lives. That's why; she decides to take her to caravan by her own. If Rashid takes her to caravan, people would comment her.

Trilok: Look Puro. Listen to me. All Hindus girls are returning to their homes. If you wish, Ramchand is still willing to marry you. He realizes your misfortunes and you can start like afresh. No one will come to know.

Puro: Brother, Lajjo is coming home. You think in her Puro has also come.

Rashida...Rashida...

Rashida: Puro, you go back to your country among your own people.

Puro: Rashid, now only you are my truth. For me, this is my home Rashida. This is my abode.

Ramchand: Let her go. Let's not separate her from her house all over again.

Puro: Whether a girl is Hindu or Muslim, if she is rehabilitated in life that is rehabilitation of Puro and her soul. (Scene 19)

The movie Pinjar is regarded as epitome of presenting real violence done upon during partition on the one side and the reformation taking place in society on the other; it depicts the necessity for change and the nostalgia for the tradition. In other words, it can be said, its setting is the setting of social transformation. Deeply rooted belief in the concept that women should not be accepted once she is raped, abducted or kidnapped during pre-partition and partition era seems to be changing in post partition era i.e. 1948. The movie shows the phasing out of those cruel traditional beliefs that snatched daughter from mother/father, sister from brother, wife from husband and overall happiness from life. Towards the end of the movie, when Hindus come to take back their abducted daughters and in-laws, Puro becomes very happy as if her life is redeemed and emancipation.

## Conclusion

1947 Partition violence created darkness, havoc and inconsistency all over the country that led to the confusion and chaos in the lives of people. The question of 'Partition violence' in the lives of women rose to the unprecedented levels and this gendered violence has mostly been regarded as metonymic of the violation of the land. Women became center to the whole act of violation during the Partition.

The movie *Pinjar* chronicles violence done upon the lives of women during Partition. Setting is pre-partition and post partition. It unpacks violence through the lives of two women character; Puro, a young girl who is engaged with Ramchand but has been abducted by a Muslim boy, Rashida before her wedding. She tries to break traditional norms that women feel weak and Partition provided a platform for that. She becomes able to escape from her abductor's home and tries to regain her identity in Hindu community. Unfortunately she cannot bring changes in patriarchal thoughts but able to free herself and other women from patriarchal bounds and partition violence. Another character is Lajjo whose life also became hell because of partition violence as she has to remain keep in her abductor's home.

The movie can be taken as presentation of real events concerning family relations and social history; custom, tradition and rural Punjab. It has also been able to refute the long established belief that only male members can protect and rescue women from danger as Puro rescues Lajjo. Women's roles were limited by tradition that has been legitimated by religion and they cannot oppose it when lightning of partition felt upon them. Patriarchy was overwhelming in effect

when India and Pakistan was divided into two free nations in 1947. Women have always become the object to be violated, disturbed and destroyed. Though independence freed India, the partition that accosted it made women vulnerable. They were used for masculine power and were just turned into mere objects.

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