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Rebuilding the Image of Sikhs in *Train to Pakistan*

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by

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Abstract

In the widely acclaimed novel, *Train to Pakistan*, Khushwant Singh has accentuated his Sikh characters as having been guided by the sense of humility and humanity. Though Sikhs have been conventionally charged for having themselves involved in genocide of Muslims, it is a wrong image of Sikhs created and sustained by convention. Here, by showing Sikh characters like Meet Singh and Banta Singh in general, and the protagonist Jugga Singh in particular as the strong supporters of Gandhian non- violence and saintly behaviour, the researcher claims that Khushwant Singh has pungently darted his criticism against the so called convention and its negative presentation regarding the image of Sikhs.

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I. General Introduction

Introduction

This research basically focuses on Khushwant Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan* (1956). It claims that the novel tries to accentuate Singh's interest to subvert the Sikh identities, which have been negatively presented in the history. Conventionally speaking, Sikhs are blamed as having been extremist, terrorist and deadly beings who can go to the highest extreme in the slightest provocation. In the novel, Khushwant Singh by presenting his protagonist, Juggut Singh or also called Jugga, as having guided by saintly behaviour and Gandhian non-violence, tries to rebuild the identities of Sikhs quite contrary to the conventional charge upon them.

Khushwant Singh is one of the most renowned novelists of the post second world war phase of Indian fiction writing in English. He was born in 1915, at Hadali in the Punjab. After achieving his earlier education in Lahore and Delhi, he went to England and studied at King's College in London and took his bar- at- law from Inner Temple. After returning from England, he practiced at the high court of Lahore and taught Hindu law and jurisprudence at Punjab University. The law profession extended his knowledge of human nature and made him to see man and life in the raw bereft of all its' external embellishment. Though he has written short stories before publishing the novel, his literary career came with the publication of this novel. This novel is one of the finest realistic novels in the later half of the twenties century of Indian fiction in English.

Although Singh's reputation as an author stands almost wholly on his novel *Train to Pakistan*, it is not the only book he wrote. He is also the author of the books like: *Mark of Vishnu* (1949), *Sacred Writings of the Sikhs* (1960), *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*(1961), *A History of Sikhs* (in 2 vols 1962,1966), *Ranjit Singh Maharaja*

of Punjab (1962), *The Fall of Sikh Kingdom* (1962), *Khushwant Singh's India* (1969) as well as a number of short stories. His literary career came into existence when he published his remarkable collection of stories *The Mark of Vishnu and Other Stories* in 1950. Almost all these stories were based upon real experiences. Some of his stories appeared in English, Canadian and American magazines during his years in London and Ottawa.

Khushwant Singh witnessed the partition of the country, a historical event of great importance because it brought tremendous changes in the people of the eastern and western parts of India. The harrowing events during those turbulent days disillusioned him. He remarks, "The beliefs that I had cherished all my life were shattered. I had believed in the innate goodness of the common man. But the division of India had been accompanied by the most savage massacres [...]. I decided to try my hand at writing (qtd. in Dhawan, 61).

He felt obligation to do something for the fellow people who had lost their own lives and the life of their dear ones. He became aware of partition and poured his feelings with irony and stark realism in the work of fiction depicting the sinister impact of partition among the people of Indian subcontinent. Once he had said about the novel *Train to Pakistan*, "The partition theme was born out of a sense of guilt that I had done nothing to save the lives of innocent people and behaved like a coward" (qtd. in Dhawan, 62).

Numbers of critics and readers of literature are familiar with the novel *Train to Pakistan* after its publication in 1956 and have interpreted it from a variety of perspectives. Despite the variations and controversies evoked by the interpretation of the novel, Singh's text has achieved a genuine success as an outstanding work of art and it has been accepted as a classic after Second World War in the history of Indian

English novel. Singh's writing in the novel is simple and heart rending. Its language, idea, style, themes and other features in the presentation have made it distinct from other novels especially belonging to the later twentieth century partition literature of India. The style of presenting the story is quite simple, straightforward and interesting. The narrative subplots are so strangely, powerfully and skillfully arranged that it has made the flow of the plot natural. The credit of the popularity of the novel goes to the simplicity of language and vitality of its presentations and symbolism, which makes the equivocal interpretation possible.

Train to Pakistan, a book at the center of this present research work, was originally titled as 'Mano Majra'. Mano Majra is a place situated on the boarder of India and Pakistan. The events of the novel occurs mainly in this remote village of Punjab It tells a romantic love story of the "budmash" and dacoit hero, Jugga Singh who is like other heroes a doomed creature. But his hero redeems himself by saving the trainload of Muslims from death. By making his hero engaged in the redeeming task, Singh, in this novel, not only portrays the tragic dimensions of partition but also preaches love and humanity.

Singh's another novel *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* (1959) presents both the violent and non- violent struggle for freedom during this period. It talks of baptism in blood and goddess Durga or Kali. Sher Singh talks of violence but is afraid of really taking up the cause of freedom. His impulsive, immature and pseudo patriotism finds himself in a jail on a suspected murder. Singh portrays in Sher Singh the weaker side of freedom struggle. Khushwant Singh's portrayal of characters and events is traditional and the characters remain only two-dimensional. It is the woman Sabhrai who ultimately takes the center- stage in the novel and makes an interesting reading of the novel.

Besides these novels, Khushwant Singh has a considerable body of writings both creative as well as critical, to his credit. At present he is, perhaps, India's most controversial and widely read journalist even when he has retired from active association with many particular papers or periodical, his columns continues to appear in several of them. His son Rahul Singh has edited some of his newspaper writings under a title, which perhaps offers a clue to the imagination of Khushwant Singh. He calls one such collection *Khushwant Singh's India*. As this suggests, Khushwant Singh has a specific point of view about the Indian culture. This is corroborated by his *History of Sikhs*, a massive work in that specific field.

Khushwant Singh was not only appreciated by critics but also equally criticized by them. In the early 1970s he was severely attacked by some critics for they believed that he possessed neither the degree of imagination which characterized works and sensibility of Raja Rao and G.V. Desani nor the emotive complexity which inform theirs. But yet to be reasonable, he achieved intensity in his work, which is rarely shared by his contemporaries.

With the passing of time, Khushwant Singh developed his caliber in terms of narrative technique and art of characterization. His another novel *Delhi*, published in 1990, records the history of Delhi in a fictional manner taking the other view of history. But some consider it a fictional history and others call it a historical. Singh's love and admiration for the city of Delhi is evident even in his latest novel, *A Company of Women*. Here, too, he lists the shopping places, the clubs, the restaurants, and the food items very realistically. But one finds that the details instead of adding depth to the novel, only shows Delhi as is seen through the outsider's point of view. It presents only the women

who come to Mohankumar from different parts of India as also from USA. They appear and disappear as fast as they can, leaving behind no three dimensional portrayal. Though Singh has provided backgrounds to them, it has little or no meaning, as it is what Mohankumar is told by these women about their life at home. The book demonstrates his sole purpose to write about the middle aged protagonist's craving for women and his urge for establishing his manhood. The novel actually has neither dramatic points nor introspection. He does not struggle to make his choice. Right or wrong, the protagonist does not strive to find a way. He simply decides to have women willing to share his bed and when he wants. Singh presents here a life without any struggle. It is a simple life without any inner voice.

A part from writing books on history, religion and Sikhism, Khushwant Singh has also translated several books into English from Hindu, Urdu and Punjabi language. While translating Urdu works into English, he has introduced the richness and bewildering variety of this beautiful language to English-speaking readers. He translated (along with M.A. Huseini) Mizra Mohammad Hadi Ruswa's nineteenth century novel *Umrao Jan Ada*. He also translated Mohammad Iqbal's *Shikwa* and *Jawals-i-shikwa*. The translation is marred by errors and does not compare in quality with the previous one, yet to him goes the credit for making these moving poems, written in 1909 and 1912 respectively, accessible to many readers. In his twilight of his long and distinguished career, some people may find fault with Khushwant Singh or decry him for this and that but they cannot deny that this man has enriched Indian cultural and intellectual life for all over the second half of the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, Khushwant Singh is considered to be a renowned south- Asian writer. He has occupied a most respectable place in south- Asian literature. In most of his writings, we find the gruesome picture of percolated violence during the partition

of British India. The partition of India in 1947 is regarded as an apocalyptic event ever happened in the history of Indian sub-continent. But this apocalyptic and fratricidal sundering of partition of India has hardly been highlighted by the so-called national historiography; it has normalized the pervasive violence of partition of India. But so many writers along with Khushwant Singh have deconstructed the official rhetoric of partition of India by externalizing the pervasive and percolated violence during 1947.

The novel *Train to Pakistan* describes life in a small village, Mano Majra, which is situated on the border of India and Pakistan. The village is gradually transformed into a cauldron of conflicting loyalties, with its train at the center of these conflicts, as divisive force take the upper hand.

The novel picks up strands of life in Mano Majra village in August 1947 and presents the violent events in the village. The villagers carry on their life as usual in spite of the news about the widespread violence, looting and rapes from across the border trickling in Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who have always been living in mutual tolerance and respect since centuries. The author describes a typical morning in Mano Majra that is characterized by "mail train rush[ing] through on its way to Lahore. . . . It[s] approach[ing] two long blasts of the whistle" (12). The arrival of these trains regulates the lives of the people at Mano Majra irrespective of whether they are Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.

Even though Muslims in the village are tenants of land owning Sikhs, they enjoy equal status and due respect. The calm and peace of the village is disturbed by occasional crimes like the dacoit, and murder of Ram Lal, the Hindu money lender, on the night when the novel opens. Hukum Chand, deputy commissioner has been sent to the village to prevent the outbreak of communal violence in the village. One

day, there arrives a "ghost train" from Pakistan at the village's station carrying dead Sikhs and Hindus. The villagers are at first unaware of it but suspect foul activities going on near the station. A meeting is called to discuss it. Imam Baksh usually takes the lead, and his opinion is respected by all. The meeting is interrupted with the appearance of a policeman who instructs the villagers to get wood and oil. Later when "a faint acrid smell of searing flesh fills the air, their deepest fears are conformed" (134). And the village descends into "a death silence, with its villagers bewildered and not asking anyone else what the odor was exactly" (134). The event was so precarious and horrendous that it raises the psychological trauma among people. With the arrival of the second "ghost train" from Pakistan, the rupture between Sikhs and Muslims begins to widen. Another meeting is called this time with no Muslim participants. There is suppressed anger against what had been done and the Muslims suddenly become traitors, plunderers and a menace. The Sikhs suddenly discover an ambiguity and ambivalence in their feelings and relationships with Muslims.

Anger is replaced with hate. A particular community of Sikhs and Muslims immediately varified and this changed into an object. The young Sikhs who have come to Mano Majra bay for blood and call their fellow villagers pigs, especially Musalmaan - an act of desacralizing of their religious honor. But the Sikhs cannot muster hatred or anger against the Muslims in their village for they do not find anything offensive in them as individuals. They however ostensibly voice their concern that incoming refugees might wreck vengeance on Muslim tenants. In such a situation, Muslim villagers fall into each other's arm and wept like children. The Muslims left their homes, which their fathers and grandfathers had taken several years to make.

Once again, another train loaded with corpses arrives in Mano Majra. In the hour of grief and sorrow, the villagers are easily incited by a Sikh youth who are striving for retaliation. They decide to attack the train leaving for Pakistan the next day. The district commissioner released Jugga Singh hoping that he might try to prevent the attack on the train since presumably it would also carry his beloved, Nooran. In fact, Jugga does so. He cuts the rope stretched across over the bridge, which the train passes. Unfortunately he is shot and died, while the train passed over and across into the border of Pakistan without any incident.

The violent events and rampant killings of the travels set for their possible settlements on both sides of border through train lead to several or numerous interesting questions: why does Khushwant Singh focus on the train as the bearer of dual messages of peace and pains, of regularity of life and horror and terror, of progress and regress, of time and social tension, and of messenger of both life and death? What makes him focus on the killings of people within the bogies of trains; why does he valorize such killings in which all the communities irrespective of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are either actively involved or shown to be at the verge of involvement? These questions raise some of the principal problems. Besides that, Khushwant Singh has presented Jugga Singh as having been guided by non-violence of Gandhi and he has shown the saintly behaviour of Jugga in the length and breadth of the novel. Though, conventionally speaking, Sikhs are considered to be deadly and violence-oriented people who go to the greatest extreme in the slightest provocation, then, why the writer has shown the Sikhs positively? Here, the researcher is going to prove that the writer is trying to rebuild the identity of Sikhs unlike the conventional identity hypothesizing that by presenting his protagonist, Jugga Singh, as having been

guided by saintly behaviour and non-violence, Khushwant Singh dismantles the image of Sikhs as extremists or terrorists.

II. Critical Perspective on *Train to Pakistan*

Train to Pakistan, by Khushwant Singh, remains one of the most well known novels of partition written in English. It has achieved many critical responses since the early phase of its publication in 1956. The common readers and critics were inspired by its thematic, linguistic, psychological, social structures and liquidity. They took it as a pathetic tale of partition violence. Though many critics after the publication of the novel have criticized it differently. However, it is clear that they have found different incidents in the story, which are sufficient to support the interpretations of different perspectives. A. G. Khan in his essay "Contrastive Study of Characters in *Train to Pakistan*" talks about the three dimensionality of the characters:

Train to Pakistan is not only a brilliant, brutally realistic story, but is a case study of the characters who are three dimensional and are pulsating with life. Jugga, the coarse but irresistible dare devil, Bhai Meet Singh, the only sane in the insane village, Nooran the gazelle eyed temptress of the Budmash number ten are drawn with great artistic skill. (14)

Categorizing the skills of three main characters, he takes Jugga the protagonist of the novel and Hukum Chand - the Deputy Commissioner as positive characters and Iqbal as negative because of his 'depression', 'timidity' and 'inferiority complex'.

Khan not only talks about the characters but also talks about politics, philosophy, sport, population explosion, sun cult, phallic worship, sexuality of Indians and so on in the novel. He also compares the qualities of Hukum Chand and Iqbal with Shakespeare's Hamlet in terms of time and destiny. In his comment on characters, Jugga, a devotional lover and a real Sikh who can laugh at himself and

believes in nobleness of his mission, Iqbal is chicken- hearted, fond of glory, humiliating and frustrating in his mission, where as Hukum Chand is felt- headed beurocrat, shrewd and thoughtful commissioner.

Dr. S.P. Swain also interprets the novel in terms of characterization. As he writes:

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, with its realistic and tooting portrayal of characters chiefly round lays bare the grimly tragic situation of the human context in which his fictional people march towards the altar of self- immolation. The novel is a nightmare with an exciting finish, one choose the novel with a sense of relief. (qtd. in Alexander,50)

Another critic Kamal Mehta interprets the novel with its psychological aspects. He studies the impact of partition violence on different characters in the novel and opines that Khushwant Singh chooses to narrate the disturbing impact that the community deeply felt at the social and psychological level. He argues:

Khushwant Singh does not focus on the political realities and the predicament of the victims of the partition in the form of loot, arson, rape, abduction, mutations, murders and displacement. Rather, he chooses to narrate the disturbing and agonizing impact that this event has on those who have not been the direct victim of the partition and yet been affected deep at the psychological and social levels. (30)

By extending the same idea with deranged understanding of the moral rightness of the people, Aloka Bhala comments: "The partition had broken the convergent that men must make with men, castes with castes, religion with other

tolerant religions, without which our survival is always precarious and our enslavement by barbarian is certain"(qtd.in Mehta,21).

Khushwant Singh brings to the centre stage the fact of the partition of the Punjab and the question of the subsequent violence on both sides of the border in a very effective vivid and graphic manner. In the preface of the novel, Arthur Lall comments:

Its intrinsic qualities as a novel grips the reader. Throughout, the acting sweeps along. The characters are vivid and highly credible, and Khushwant Singh keeps them going magnificently on two levels: in their quotidian matrix compounded of their passions of love and revenge, their tremendous sense of belonging to a village community, and their insolence and heroism; and then again on the wide stage set by the tornado that breaks on their lives in the shape of the cataclysmic events of the partition of India in 1947. (28)

Lall in this way contrasts the two different forces of human behaviour i.e. love and revenge and focuses on the belongingness as well as the heroism of the village community.

Viewing *Train to Pakistan* as a novel capturing the heart-rending events caused by the communal frenzy and its pervasive violence, Saros Cowarjee opines," The novel tells how communal frenzy engulfed the remote village of Mano Majra where Sikhs and Muslims had lived in peace. The arrival of a "ghost train" from Pakistan filled with corpses of Sikhs and Hindus jolts the idyllic tranquility of Mano Majra (86-87).

Another Indian critic Harish Raizada in his essay, "*Train to Pakistan: A Study in Crisis of Values*" criticizes the novel as Indian classical fiction and interprets it in terms of humanitarian point of view. He considers:

Train to Pakistan is a classic in the post-independence Indian English fiction not only because of the bold, brutal and unrelenting realism with which it tears asunder the mark of hypocrisy and exposes the sordidness and savagery of human life, but also because of the author's optimistic and affirmative world view that emerges from it his enduring faith in the values of love, loyalties and humanity and the unconquerable spirit of man in the face of the mighty forces of wickedness and savage cruelties. (162)

He further views that the novel not only captures the human values but also it links with the historical event of partition's terrible and horrible tale of the Indian sub-continent. He considers, "*Train to Pakistan* is both a grim and pathetic tale of individuals and community caught in the swirl of partition" (164).

In contrast to Harish Raizada, Hayden Moore William reads the novel as, "a kind of derivative work of the Western Classical tradition, complete with archetype of romantic doomed hero" (97).

K.C. Belliappa, another critic views the novel as a recreation of the partition event. He argues, "*Train to Pakistan* is at best a successful recreation of the event of partition in terms of the evocation of atmosphere, the historical details and the authenticity of locale (66).

Nilak Datta moves a little far from the other critics in his essay "History and 'His story' in *Train to Pakistan*". He focuses on history of partition and personal

stories of the characters. He also views the novel within the bounds of Journey. He writes:

The movement in the novel occurs essentially on two planes the micro and macro level. The former plane would include the presentation and praxis of individual history and the latter, enactment of large impersonal historical forces. This generates the narrative tension between 'history' and 'his-story'.[...] This tension between history and his-story where one tries to merge with the other albeit unsuccessfully is highlighted by the detailed use of everyday objects that impinges on the readers consciousness. (39)

By extending his own view, he further argues:

The tension in the narrative between the private worlds of Mano Majra, the lives of its poor inhabitants and the larger world of the bureaucracy and the state between 'history and 'his-story' is thus achieved through a sharp focus on objects familiar and of everyday. (42)

Disagreeing with Datta, Suza Alexander in her essay "Personal Concerns Go Public in Singh's- *Train to Pakistan*" examines how public events affect the personal lives of the small village of Mano Majra, how it lays bare the grimly tragic situation leading to nightmarish experiences. She argues:

Khushwant Singh gives vent to all the venom and indignation felt by him at the horrifying tragedy of brutally and savagery in his novel *Train to Pakistan*. He pours out the agonizing tale of human tragedy and sinister impact of the partition on the peace loving Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Mano Majra. (44)

Amrita Patel interprets the novel form structural point of view by taking help from the critic Northrope Fyre. By bringing out the U shape of the novel, she tries to prove how the novelist establishes his vision of order over the disorder caused by hate and ill will. As Northrope Fyre describes the meaning of U shape:

Comedy has a U shaped plot, with the action sinking into deep and often potentially tragic complications and then suddenly turning upward into a happy ending. Tragedy has an inverted U with the action raising in crisis to a peripety and then plunging downward to catastrophe through a series of recognitions, usually of the inevitable consequences of previous acts. (354)

By capturing this U shape model, Patel views the pattern of the novel as: "The pattern of this novel has a U shape, but at the same time, it cannot be called a comedy. This idyllic status of life is disturbed by the violent actions of the partitions, but again, by the sacrifice of Jugga, the victory of love and good will is depicted" (55). Though she interprets the novel in this model, she is still in 'inbetweenness' because neither it totally follows the model of comedy nor the model of tragedy.

Another Indian critic Bhatari A Parikh in her essay "*Train to Pakistan: Humanity at Stake*" focuses on the humanitarian view of the situation. She evokes the peaceful frightening phase before and after the partition of India and Pakistan in the novel. She writes, "*Train to Pakistan*" is the story everyone wants to forget, yet one cannot overlook this stark reality of our past. When the nation was on the threshold of new dawn, it also faced unprecedented destruction, bloodshed and trauma" (580).

Prof. William Walsh views the novel as, "a tense, economical novel thoroughly true to events and the people. It goes forward in a trim athletic way and its unempathetic voice makes a genuinely human comment"(qtd in Parikh,100).

It is obviously known that Khushwant Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan* has been repeatedly examined for the theme of the partition. Many critics tell that the novel is a record of the partition of India and its aftermath. A new dimension of the novel may be discerned in a study of the exodus in the novel. Of course, the tragic migration of millions of people from both sides has also been reviewed time and again, but Rupali Burke attempts to investigate the differences between the Biblical *Exodus* and the exodus in the *Train to Pakistan*.

His paper is divided into three sections in which the first section is devoted to the background of Biblical *Exodus*. The second section talks about the exodus in the novel, while the third section points out the differences. According to Burke, the word exodus means:

A mass departure of people, especially emigrants. Human history has witnessed innumerable large-scale migrations of men, be it from famine, drought, religious, political or social persecution. An exodus involves an abandoning of one's home, one's habitat, to go to a new destination. Thus it is a movement from the familiar to unfamiliar, from known to unknown, from comfortable to the uncomfortable and from the secure to the insecure. It involves a great deal of hardships and inconvenience. (32)

Here, he compares the exodus in *Train to Pakistan* and exodus in Bible in this way:

If Mano Majra is the Promised Land for the Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan, the counterparts of the Israelites in flight, ' Imam Baksh, the mullah of the mosque and Meet Singh, the Bhai of the gurudwara resemble Moses and Aaron in a very different way. However, it is the

differences that indicate the uniqueness of the two mass migrations, separated in time and place. (36)

He also shows the differences between these two exoduses. The exodus in the novel has two way migrations, loss of nationality, the movement goes from independence to bondage i.e. life to death divides the people into fractions, there is lamentation and sorrow i.e. no consolation so it has destructive purpose. Thus it is taken as a course event, a sign of *Kalyuga*. On the other hand, the exodus in the Bible has one way migration, gain of nationality, the movement from captivity to emancipation i.e. death to life, it unites the people in brotherhood. So it has constructive purpose, thus it is a blessed event, a sign of golden age.

So, many different critics and reviewers observed the novel from several angles but the image of Sikhs identity is completely the virgin territory to explore the newness in the novel. Within this territory I proposed my title rebuilding the image of Sikhs to prove my hypothesis: these Sikhs have been conventionally charged as terrorists, extremists, violent people who were involved in genocide of the Muslims. But I take these Sikhs not as extremists or terrorists who involved in violence rather taking the central character of Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*; Jugga as a Sikh who is guided by saintly behaviour and non- violence. On the other hand Singh wrote this novel to prove that Sikhs are not extremists rather they are harmonious people who believe in the ideology of peace rather than war. So I want to prove that Sikh protagonist, Jugga of *Train to Pakistan*, is guided by saintly behaviour and non-violence; and dismantles the image of Sikhs as extremists or terrorists blamed so far by others.

III. Theoretical Modality

A. Gandhi and his concept of non-violence

Gandhi, a shy and mediocre as a student later happened to be the "greatest" freedom fighter, the innovator of non-violence, was born on 2 October 1969, at Porabander in the western coast of India. He was taking hardly any interest in outer activities. Grew up in an eclectic religious environment of family, he imbibed the values of righteous conduct from the air he breathed.

Gandhi left for England to train as a lawyer in 1888. But before his departure, he assured his mother of good conducts by taking three solemn promises that he would avoid wine, women, and meat. His early days were full of western influences in England; buying himself in morning suit, a top hat, taking lessons in dancing like an English gentleman. Yet, this phase passed soon when he returned into the serious aspects of English life. Then he started to read widely about British and European law and method of political resistance that did not involve any kind of violence.

From the time Gandhi started his public life, he showed great concern for Hindu-Muslim unity and harmony. He had the conception that everything would be meaningless until there was a religious harmony among different religious groups like Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Religion was a core agency for Gandhi who believed that it could only bring the people together. As the politics of Gandhi was saturated with religion and religious beliefs, most of the Indian masses appreciated Gandhi as an *avatar*. The aura of Gandhi was not only the outcome of his political sagacity but also the product of his saintly persona. For Gandhi, the notion of *ahimsa* represented not merely a political tactic but a moral way of life. Reading Indian traditions of non-violence through a lens colored by his western education, Gandhi considered ahimsa a mode of being and action consistent with a deeper ontological truth that points to the

unity of all being. Adding a Christian - Tolstoyian notion of active love to his understanding of non-violence, Gandhi departed significantly from orthodox Hindu interpretations: "belief in non-violence is based on the assumption that human nature in its essence is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advance of love" (qtd. in Mukherjee, 2).

Consequently, he identified two expressions of non-violence to our understanding of it:

In its negative form, it means not injuring any living being, whether by body or mind. I may not therefore hurt the person of any wrong-doer, or bear any ill will to hi and so cause him mental suffering. This statement does not cover suffering caused to the wrong-doer by natural acts of mine which do not proceed from ill will. It, therefore, does not prevent me from withdrawing from his presence a child whom he, we shall imagine, is about to strike. Indeed the proper practice of ahimsa required me to withdraw the intended victim from the wrong-doer.

(Mukherjee, 95)

It was therefore most proper for the passive resisters of South Africa to have resisted the evil that the union government sought to do to them. They bore no ill will to it. They showed this by helping the government whenever it needed their help. Their resistance consisted of disobedience of the orders of the government, even to the extent of suffering death at their hands. Ahimsa requires deliberate self-suffering, not a deliberate injuring of the supposed wrong-doer.

Emphasizing that non-violence contained the universal ethico - political imperative to treat human beings in all respects as ends in themselves - and that non-violence action was therefore morally right in general. Gandhi proceeded on the

fundamental premise that his political opponents, too, were worthy of the same love and good will as his allies

In its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa, I must love my enemy. I must apply the same rule to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father and son. This active ahimsa necessarily includes truth and fearlessness. A man the loved ones; he does not fear or frighten him or her. The gift of life is the greatest of all gifts. A man who gives it in reality disarms all hostility. He has paved the way for an honorable understanding. And none who is himself subject of fear can bestow that gift. He must therefore be himself fearless. A man cannot then practice ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of ahimsa calls forth the greatest courage. It is the most soldierly of a soldier's virtues (qtd. in Mukherjee, 96)

This citation encapsulates not only Gandhi's lifelong conviction that love and ahimsa are interchangeable concepts, but also captures his willingness to extend the scope of non-violence beyond the physical dimension. In this view, the phenomenon of violence was too limited to the cause of force to cause bodily injury or death, it also referred to more subtle psychological forms of harm embedded in words, images, and thoughts that usually underpin oppressive and exclusionary political practices, "Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is not its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought by undue haste, by living, by hatred, by wishing ill of anybody. (qtd in Steger, 2). In fact, Gandhi went so far as to suggest that physical violence represents merely a reflection of a deeper layer conceptual

violence: "Our violence in word and deed is but a feeble echo of the surging violence of thought in us" (qtd. in Steger, 2).

Although he sometimes recognized limitations on the human capacity to live up to the ideal of perfect ahimsa, he nonetheless emphasized time and again that, "there was no remedy for the many ills of life save that of non-violence" (qtd. in Steger, 2). As Joan Bondurant observes with great charity, his writings and speeches are pervaded by an almost dogmatic elevation of non-violence as the supreme value and the only cognizable standard by which truthful action can be determined: "And that meaning of ahimsa took him into a realm much higher than simply non-killing (qtd. in Steger, 2)

Further more, Gandhi's broad understanding of non-violence had important ramifications for his ambitious nationalist project in that national liberation of India had to be pursued in words and deeds that were unencumbered by both physical and conceptual forms of violence. This does not mean that he should have been expected to remain politically passive and abstain from challenging the unjust structures of colonial dominations. Yet, in order to live up to his own high standards of non-violence, Gandhi's nationalism would have to employ both a language and a method of political resistance that did not involve the infliction of physical and psychological violence on friends and enemies alike: "Ahimsa really mean that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbor and uncharitable though even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy" (qtd. in Steger, 2-3).

Most importantly, it is this very emphasis on universal love as both the means and the end of all political activity that gives Gandhi's theory of non-violence its moral authority. At the same time however, it also limits the range of his political

weapons to those "benign" methods involving discussion, persuasion, appeals, and various other forms of non-violent resistance. As Ronald Terchek puts it:

Gandhi wants to make it (love) universal not only in the sense that anyone is capable of loving and worthy of love but in the sense that any one can love everyone, including those who cause harm and suffering. With this move, Gandhi seeks to make love political as well as spiritual and moral. He believes that if love can be transported to the political terrain, new possibilities present themselves for openness and mutuality, form moving beyond particularities, and for non-violently discovering what the participants shared. (qtd. in Steger, 3)

Hence, the followers of his *ahimsic* tradition would be expected to eschew physical and psychological forms of violence even if it appears likely that such methods will result in the attainment of the desired political end. In their unwavering devotion to principle, rather than abandon their ethical ideas demanding the convertibility of means and ends, non-violent activists might have to settle for the dire prospect that their efforts will never result in the seizure of political power.

In this sense, Gandhi entered into the deep realm of non-violence in his pursuit of political goal. His main aim was not only to bring national freedom but to bring spiritual freedom as well. Therefore Gandhi took non-violence as a supreme means and cognizable standard by which truthful action can be determined.

B. Critique of Partition Historiography

Revisionist historiography of post- modern bent criticizes the traditional idealist Hegelian historiography. In the notion of revisionist historians, traditional history represents a society in a quite normalized and homogenized way, with all its social texture smoothed, its local specificity subordinated and its documentary evidence submerged by paraphrase for the sake of a coherent narratable plot. In the name of nationality and progress, national histories of Hegelian model always try to neglect heterogeneity of a society and the lived experiences of its general public. 'Historian's history' of the partition of India and Pakistan, influenced by colonialist historiography, never falls in an exceptional category that can represent violent events in their fullness and the pains and sufferings of Indian people during partition.

The nationalist historiographies of India and Pakistan, before or after the Partition, tend to become variations of master narrative that could be called the history of Europe. Colonial historiography is, no doubt, a 'mimetic' history where we can always see a split in Indian people, " a modernizing elite and yet- to- be modernized peasantry" (Chakrabarty, 384). And such a split subject of India "speaks from within a metanarrative that celebrates the nation states; and of this metanarrative the theoretical subject can only be a hyperreal Europe, a 'Europe' constructed through the discourses of both nationalism and imperialism. Hence, Indian history, "even in the most dedicated hands, remains a mimicry of certain ' modern' subject of European history and is bound to represent a sad figure of lack and failure (384). Even after the independence of India, Indian historiography is filled with a double bind where historians' repudiate the colonizer's construction of Indian people and India and yet follow the colonialist model of history. Gyanendra Pandey contends:

If Indian historians have long since moved away from this rather convoluted celebration of the benefits of British rule, they seem nevertheless to have remained tethered to certain fundamental tenets of the colonialist narrative on history, violence and civilization.

(Remembering, 58)

Therefore, official or academic histories of before and after the independence remain a mimicry of European historiography which always discourages representation of violence, heterogeneity of a society and the painful stories of individuals in the name of rationality, regress and objectivity.

National histories of both India and Pakistan hide the religiously motivated upheavals of 1947 as irretrievably "other" in relation to the organs of political rationality and progress. Since no community or individual would like to present itself as violent and hence uncivilized, no official history of a nation gives enough space to the discussion of the "history of rape, abduction and killing, and the state sponsored drive that followed to evict aliens and recover nationals, (especially abducted women and children), irrespective of their wishes", which "disturbingly capture the meaning of partition" (Pandey, "Voices", 234). The main reason behind keeping partition violence in the shadow is - for the maintenance of social harmony and to show certain section of elite nationalist leaders as rational and progressive. For the full representation of violence in the history historian's fear of its reincarnation in India as the violence during partition is still in the memory of Indian people. Representation of violence during Partition and its analysis has never been as easy as the violence during European holocaust. People now talk and analyze European holocaust for it happened in a distant past and in a distant place. There is no danger of social unrest because of the discussion of European holocaust. However, the partition history has

never been so easy to be discussed as a cold war between religiously divided societies, cultures and nations in the Indian sub-continent still persists. To inflict violence in a relatively peaceful society points towards a social irresponsibility of historians. In the similar way, historian's history plays a politics to assign violence to the "other" of a society- uneducated, marginal, subalterns. By doing so nationalist historiography gives almost a worshipful attention to the representation of elites who are always praised for their role in the independence of India. Their activities are always presented as progressive and rational whereas irrational, emotional and violent activities are assigned to the marginalized, yet- to- be civilized population of India. Another reason for keeping violence in the shadow of nationhood and progress is the influence of Hegelian model of history. For Hegel state, the main controlling agent of violent people assures civilization. At the same time state equates 'history' (Pandey, 'Remembering', 54). And again history is a process of freedom; freedom is possible only in the state. Life of peoples as individuals and even communities before the state belongs to prehistory. For Hegel, "the story of individuals alone, and of individuals in the still emotional, irrational community of the family, is not yet history," (qtd. in Pandey, " Remembering", 54). Therefore, as partition historiography is influenced by Hegelian history it treats the "irrational", " fanatical" violence of partition as ' other' to idealize and glorify independence. It is this model of history that treats state sponsored violence as unfortunate but historical and legitimate, whereas the violence by people as a historical or aberration. Equating history with civilization, peace, progress and modernity, historian's history treats violence as civilization's ' Other' because " the civilization is taken as a state of non- violence, where mature, adult human beings negotiate with one another and determine their rights and duties

through rational argument" not through murder, abduction and rape (Pandey, " Remembering", 54).

To keep violence under the shadow of independence and nationhood, Indian official histories make certain strategic moves. First, though they take partition of India a historical event, they give emphasis to the causes of partition not the violence that accompanied it. Focusing on the causes of partition, its origin, and attributing it to the outsiders, criminals, political reactionaries, fanatics and so on, rather than the specific events of violence in detail leads to the elision of violence itself. Indian nationalist historian blames Muslim leaguers and the British to be responsible for the bloody deeds of 1947. However, Ian Talbot, a British historian ascribes the cause of violence and partition to the so called primitive, barbaric natives (Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims). In the similar way, Aysa Jalal, a Cambridge trained Pakistani historian, accuses Hindus, Sikhs and congress leaders for partition. And the Marxist historians give its credit to the socio- economic forces of India- the developing antagonism between rich and the poor. (Pandey, Prose, 210). Whatever the cause and whatever the culprits accused or censured most of the historians have done their best to silence violence by focusing the causes in their histories. The actual acts of abduction, uprooting, train raids, trauma, madness, suicide, murder and other acts of destruction are kept in the shadow. However, as Pandey believes, the causes of partition and its political consequences do not make the history of partition, rather it is the representation of violence and the pain and trauma of people that makes or constitutes it.

Further, one may also make the violence non- narratable in another way- by localizing it: in time, as a freak occurrence, like a natural calamity, which require no historical explanation (Remembering , 46). Violence is othered by localizing it in

space also, "as a characteristic happening in some unassimilated part of the society or the world" (46). Therefore, by localizing violence in time and space, it is always done away with; no effort is made to understand the moment itself.

Another strategic way to avoid violence in the history of India is to cut it short. The high point of the nationalist history according to Gyanendra Pandey, becomes the companion for the independence from the British rule in 1947. Such history ends in the attainment of Indian independence, as if that is the end point of history. This point of history achieves idealized and glorified representation but the consequently accompanied violence gets a superficial representation as "involving a temporary suspension of reason and normal behavior (Pandey, "Prose", 192). Such account normalizes violence and reduces history to a more or less generalized account of the triumphant march of modernity and progress (Pandey, " Prose", 193)

These strategic moves made by the historians ' history, the influence of teleological historicism, emphasizing the "origin" and " telos", do not do any justice to the partition history. It valorizes and idealizes independence of India as a move to achieve ideal state leaving behind all the monkish servitude imposed by the colonizers. This model of history depicts violence as a lack of culture, a lumpis chaos, a sudden frenzy and madness of people. Keeping violence in the othered position, historian's history scarily touches the abduction, migration, resettlement, genocidal murders and the tales of rape. Partitions violence remains unexplored in the text book histories of India and Pakistan.

But, independence was partition and as Gyanendra Pandey suggests, " partition was violence, a cataclysm, a world torn apart" (Pandey, " Remembering," 5). Glorification of independence in the history, therefore, has to be accompanied by a detailed description of massive violence, inhuman cruelty and brutality. As "any tale

of civilization is equally a tale of barbarism,"(Niranjana,...) , a balance should be maintained in the representation of independence, partition and violence. During partition about half a million refugees were seen on the roads of Punjab on 21st September 1947. As Mushirul Hasan observes, "the partition of sub- continent led to one of the largest migration in human history. With an estimated 12.5 million people (as out 3 percent of the independent India) being displaced and uprooted "

(Human Cost, 50). As Devi Gautam writes:

In the Punjab alone 12 million of Hindus, Muslim and Sikhs were involved in murder, 9 million of people started migration over night and until 1950s, 4000 Muslims a day boarded the train to Pakistan. Many died on the roads, several got lost and perhaps more went mad. Altogether 75,000 women were raped and abducted. Human misery was pervasive; millions were left bereaved, destitute, homeless, hungry and thirsty. Worst of all, millions of the survivor victims were disparately anxious and almost hopeless about their future. There were still many who embarrassed their Hindu, Sikh or Muslim brethren and wept after 18 months of separation and hellish life of loneliness, anxiety, fear and displacement. (5)

However such acts of violence are conveniently repressed in the official histories of India and Pakistan as if these events were not history at all. These histories refrain from noticing that independence of India went together with partition of it, which was "Surrounded, accompanied and constituted: by a massive violence (Pandey, " Remembering ", 189). Therefore, if national history of India has to become the history of Indian people, it must represent their tales of suffering and the "many sided struggle to liberate India" (Pandey, "Prose", 204). The history of communalism,

sectarianism, strife and bloodshed must be represented in its fullness not as an "in consequential motif in the larger drama of India's struggle for independence (206).

Valorization of unity of Indians suppresses the painful experiences of subaltern's and marginals. Hence Gyanendra Pandey is right to assert that " history of civilization is at the same time history of violence" and such violence must be articulated in its fullness in the histories, discussed and analyzed so that mankind can think better to eradicate it and march forward towards perfection yet, Gyanendra Pandey recognizes certain problems concerning the representation of violence in the history. He contends:

The historian seeking to represent violence in the history faces problem language (how, for example, does one describe pain and suffering) of analytical stance (how can one be objective and describe sufferings at the same time), and of evidence (for does not large scale violence destroy much of its more direct violence?). (Pandey, "Prose", 198)

Actually, these are more the problems of cultural politics, dissuasive and ideological motives of the language of representation rather than the actual problems. In Gramsci's notion, education, theology, historiography, philosophy and others inform the hegemonic apparatuses that belong to the ideological structure of any society.

Ideology which for Gramsci is inscribed in practices brakes away from Marx's " false consciousness", produces subjects and interpellants us, legitimizing or authorizing certain versions of the subjects, versions that come to acquire the status of "truths".

Through all these moves partition historiography, acquires. Its status as the representation of truth in the valorization of independence and suppression of violence, trauma and pain of the individuals. Therefore, partition historiography informed by teleology historicism plays a dangerous politics of othering the violence and suppressing all other perspectives of marginal about partition and portraying itself

as the only truthful account of India's struggle for a free nation. And such discourse of history must be doubted and questioned rather than giving it on status of truth.

Post- structuralist notions about language, power, and representation actually help us to criticize the traditional histories and the assumption behind them. Derridian notion of language, his critique of origin and telos, demonstrate that history can be nothing more than a fiction. In the notion of De Man also traditional histories developing from Hegelian history cannot be the history in its real sense. In Derrida's notion origin is always already heterogeneous which is impossible to represent remaining within the discourse of "metaphysics of presence". Because of its belief in language as a truthful and transparent medium, idealist history cannot be other than the coding of a cultural politics and ideology. Hence, post structuralist critique of teleological historicism is of great of help for the reconceptualizing the notion of history itself.

However, the extreme emphasis on textuality rather than the politics in the representation, involves danger for the post colonialist's historiography. And the same applies to partition historiography. Extreme focus on textuality disregards the pains and sufferings of people. Such suffering, as it was actually experienced by people, has some reality, and the people of Indian continued cannot take it as a fictitious thing. The use of post- structuralist notions may be of help to them to criticize the teleological history that does not tell the tales of their suffering. However, total use of it may be devastating. Sufferers of partition and independence need a history, and the use of post structuralism may deny them the history it self. Therefore, revisionist historiography has to be strategic that may criticize traditional history with the help of post structuralist notions and at the same time keep olive the post -colonial desire for history. Hence Nietzsche's notion that "we need history but not in the way a spoiled

loafer in the garden of knowledge needs it" becomes relevant for us. In Nietzschean notion also the idealist history that is regarded as truthful picture of actual event and is taught in the academia as an embodiment of "knowledge" has no relevance for us. Neither is it a truthful account nor it does justice to the general public's experiences yet Nietzsche shows the possibility of history that can be our own.

IV Rebuilding the Image of Sikhs:

The partition of India has been one of the most traumatic experiences of Indian history. This political partition of India disturbed the Indian psyche and also its social fabric. It brought to an abrupt end a long and communally shared history. It caused one of the great human convulsions of history. It made the social sense of Indian nation coarse, generated a sense of vengeance and distorted the political judgments. Worst of all, it deranged the understanding of the moral roughhouses of the people. It is an apocalyptic event ever happened in human civilization. From rape, abduction, property destruction, mass murder to other wolfish activities was rampant at that time. Khushwant Singh's "*Train to Pakistan*" captures the violence during the partition of India and its material effects. Singh has shown all the negative activities of Muslims and Sikhs. In doing so, he is also defending the Sikhs from being charged as extremists and fundamentalists. For the communal riots, Muslims charged Hindus and Hindus blamed Muslims for the violence. But the fact is that "both sides killed both shot and stabbed [...] both tortured, both raped" (9).

The entire novel is set in Mano Majra, a village on the border having a predominantly Sikhs and Muslims population. The time is August 1947, but partition seems far away to the inhabitants of the village. What initially disturbs this peace is the murder of Lala Ram Lal, the Hindu Money-Lender, by Mali and his gang. Here Khushwant Singh shows the Sikhs as murderer. He does not one-sidedly rectify that all Sikhs are oriented to non-violence, some Sikhs are shown as being murderous. But Singh's main purpose in the novel is to defend the fact that Sikhs are not violent-oriented or terrorists. In every society there exists violence. But it is not reasonable to generalize all Sikhs as being extremists and violent oriented. Amidst such a horrendous period of partition of India, he has shown the romantic love story between

"Jugga, a Sikh and Nooran, a Muslim girl" (65). This love story between Sikh boy and Muslim girl in the novel shows a kind of positive image of Sikhs. Though many people in the village think that Jugga is terrorist, extremist and violent oriented, the protagonist in the novel is shown as having soft heart. He is a well wisher of the entire village. He is presented as a guard of the whole village.

Once Mali comes to Mano Majra to loot and rob the people. At that time Jugga furiously says, "that incestuous lover of his sister! I've told him a thousand times this was no time for acuties. And now he has brought his gang to my village! I'll settle with him"(25). These lines characterize the nature of Jugga that he always thinks about the welfare of his village. He does not let any misfortune happen in his village.

Once Jugga's beloved Nooran becomes quite furious as well as frightened with the rumors of her meeting with Jugga. He consoles her "no one can harm while I live. No one in Mano Majra can raise his eyebrows at you and get away from Jugga. I am not a badmash for nothing" (25-26). Although many people consider Jugga as a bad character, but it is not so. It is only a false charge upon him. If he had been a bad mash, he would not have thought about the betterment of his village.

When everywhere violence is rampant during the partition period, in Mano Majra nothing happens. Deputy district commissioner, Hukum Chand surprises that Mano Majra is quite peaceful. In this connection the police sub- inspector says that the Sikhs in Mano Majra think that "Muslims are their brothers (30). This also shows that the image of Sikh as something positive without any violent bent of mind.

But while talking about the Muslim, we find something negative image about them. In course of conversation between Hukum Chand and police sub- inspector, we see how Muslims mercilessly killed innumerable Hindus and Sikhs.

Did you honor hear what the Muslim mambos did to Hindu and Sikh refugees in the market place of Sheikhpura and Gujranwala?

Pakistan police and army took part in the killings. Not a soul was left alive. Women killed their own children and jumped into the wells that filled to brim with corpses. (31)

This shows how despite being assigned for public security Pakistani Muslim soldiers themselves involve in killings. Here, Singh is showing negative image of Muslims with the reference that Hindus and Sikhs never raise their hands to "strike" women but Muslims have no respect for "the weaker sex" (32). This also shows the violent nature of Muslims.

Religious harmony and tolerance is shown since the beginning of the novel among Sikhs of Mano Majra. The village has only three brick buildings, one of which is the home of Lala Ram Lal (only Hindu) and other two are the Sikh temple and a mosque, which enclose a triangular shape. This reinforces the religious harmony in the village where people of different religions are living together in a very harmonious manner. They have also a local deity, "deo", to which all the villagers worship irrespective of their religion, that is the evidence of their co-existence.

Mano Majrans are ardent followers of Gandhi an ideology of non violence and saintly behaviour, which is quite evident in the following lines when Imam Baksh says:

The entire world respects a religious man. Look at Gandhi! I hear he reads the Koran Sharif and the Unjeel along his Vedas and Shastras. People sing his praise in the four corners of the earth. I have seen a picture in a newspaper of Gandhi's prayer meeting. It showed a lot of

white men and women sitting cross legged [...] even the English respect a man of religion. (63)

Further, once a stranger comes to Gurdwara of Mano Majra and asks for shelter for three days. Meet Singh, a Sikh priest, responses him very positively as a true Sikh:

This is a Gurdwara, the guru's house-anyone may stay here. But you must have your head covered and you must not bring any cigarettes or tobaccos, nor smoke [...] you take your shoes off and cover your head. (47)

Apart from the religious tolerance of Sikhs, we find in the novel that Jugga Singh has been blamed by his fellow meet Singh as he says, " robbing fellow villagers is like stealing from one's mother. This is Kalyug- the dark age. Have you ever heard of dacoits looting their neighbor's houses? Now all morality has left the world"(53)

Meet Singh further falsely blames as:

Ask me what has not happened! The police sent for Jugga -Jugga is a budmash number ten. But Jugga has run away, absconded. Also, some of the loot a bag of bangles- were found in his courtyard. So we know who did it. This is not the first murder he has committed - he has it in his blood. His father and grandfather were also dacoits and were hanged for murder. But they never robbed their own village folk. As a matter of fact, when they were at home no dacoit dared come to Mano Majra. Jugga Singh has disgraced his family. (54)

In the above mentioned lines, what we find is that Jugga has been blamed as having inherited crime in his blood. But Iqbal opposing this view tries to wash up the stain image of Jugga as saying." There is no crime in any one's blood any more than there

is goodness in the blood of others [...] criminals are not born they are made by hunger, want and injustice (55).

When the policemen come into Jugga's house to arrest Jugga, his mother weeps and wails before them saying that Jugga is not a criminal. At the same time, the innocent Jugga says to his mother, "I had nothing to do with dacoity" (71). But the head constable forced to arrest Jugga, "he is a badmash under order not to go out of the village after sunset" (71). When the spear is found in the yard, policemen took it as evidence "wrap the blade in a piece of cloth, it may have blood stains on it" (71) she tries to defend her son by showing evidences that "the dacoits threw the bangles in the courtyard after the murder. They wanted to insult Jugga for not coming with them" (72). Then cold war starts between the head constable and Jugga he angrily says, "I don't know who the dacoits were. All I know is that I was not with them" (72).

Though policemen arrested Iqbal and Jugga, they felt uneasy because "Jugga had undoubtedly broken the law in leaving the village at night, but he was not likely to have joined in a dacoity in his own village." (74). It is so stupid thing that Jugga is in connection with the murder of Lala Ram Lal. It was not the first time he had been arrested. Before it he has been arrested several times "he had spent quite as much time in Jail as at home. His association with police was an inheritance. Register number ten at police station [...] and he was officially declared a man of bad character" (75).

Though he is a peasant, he is little bit aware of national politics and seems to be blind supporter of Gandhi, "I hear we have our own rule now. It is Mahatma Gandhi's government in Delhi" (75). Here the reference of Gandhi through the month of July shows that he is an aspirer and striver of non-violence and peaceful atmosphere. Similarly, in course of conversation between Iqbal and Jugga, Jugga tells

very pathetically about how he is victimized by the government whenever he wants to do something good for the society. He even externalizes the fact that without underrating the underlying issue he is put in jail by the government, which is very unfair as he says:

I am a badmash. All governments put me in jail. [...] it is our fate. It is written in our foreheads and on the lines of our hands. I am always anteing to do something. When there is plugging to be done or the harvest to be gathered, then I am busy. When there is no work, my hands still itch to do something. So I do something, and it is always wrong. (76)

Although, Sikhs were blamed and charged unnecessarily it is known through the novel that Muslims were always there as an impediment whenever Sikhs wanted to do something better in the society. During the partition violence, Muslims were vermin extremists and violent oriented. Their "intentions" were always "evil" nobody could trust these and they did sots of "Zulums" to Sikhs and Hindus (82-83).

As in the novel, when Baulch soldiers were going form Amristar to Lahore, how they perpetrated violence against the innocent and meek non Muslims is visible in the below mentioned lines:

When they were getting near the Pakistan border, the soldiers began to stick bayonets into Sikhs going along the road. The driver would slow down near a cyclist or a pedestrian, the soldiers on the footboard would stab him in the back and then the driver would accelerate away fast. They killed many people like this and were feeling happier and happier as they got nearer Pakistan. They were within a mile of the border and went traveling at great speed. (83)

Here, Khushwant Singh is trying to defend Sikhs by showing Muslims responsible for great havoc in the society. In during so, he is showing Sikh character very positively as having mercy and benevolence. When the protagonist, Jugga is being taken to jail in 'Tonga', he is noticing the Tonga- driver whipping the horse. Jugga says, " Bholu, have you no fear of god that you beat your animal so mercilessly?" This shows the sense of humanity of Jugga, who is easily touched by any sort of inhuman activities. In the novel, Jugga has stood as a representative of all Sikh, and hence, Singh shows that Sikhs are not like as they have been charged. A true Sikh character, Jugga's innocence is also visible in the following lines where he mentions about the good deeds and good results; and bad deeds and bad results:

There was an awkward pause. No one knew what to say to this sour tempered babu. Jugga asked naively: Babuji, don't you believe that bad acts yield a bitter harvest? It is the law of karma. So the bhai is always saying. The Guru has also said the same in the Book. (85).

Even in the jail, sub inspector forced Jugga to accept the crime by giving physical and mental torture; then Jugga discloses the fact about the murder. Actually Mali and his gang were responsible for the crime.

The situation at Mano Majra takes a turn for the worse. The arrival of "ghost" train from Pakistan filled with corpses of Sikhs and Hindus jolts the idyllic tranquility of Mano Majra. But it is not till murdered bodies are discovered floating in the river that the Muslims are evacuated from the village and put on a train bound for Pakistan. This instantly inflames the communal frenzy of Mano Majrans. As the night falls darker, madness takes over them, there follows the senseless killings, lootings, raping, burning either in provocation or in retaliation.

In such situation in the society, Sikhs were regarded as responsible argentinians for violence. Due to that negative identity of Sikhs, even in jail Jugga is behaved as if he were not human being, "Jugga was not given furniture in his cell. His food was literally flung at him and he ate his chapattis out of his hand. A constable poured water on to his cupped palm through the iron bars. Jugga's bed was the hard cement floor" (87).

Suddenly, when Hukum Chand was busy dealing with two prisoners, Jugga and Iqbal, "a unit of Sikh soldiers arrived and put-up tents near the relieve station [...] armed sentries began to patrol the platform and no villages were allowed near the railings"(93).

That year early in the month of "September the time schedule in Mano Majra started going wrong. Trains became less punctual than ever before and many more started to run at night"(92). No one dared to inquire why the soldiers asked the villagers for kerosene oil and wood. Within short span of time, they came to know the purpose for oil and wood as the "soft breeze began to blow towards the village. It brought the smell of burning kerosene, then of wood. And then a faint acrid smell of searing flesh" (100). In some gruesome situation, every one could see, "a big heap of ashes and bones " and "many skulls" lying on the ground. These corpses of innocents Sikhs and Hindus were loaded on the ghost train from Pakistan. The poignant details of massacre of innocent Sikhs can be observed when sub-inspector reports to Hukum Chand as:

The Sikh officer said there were more than thousand. I think he just calculated how many people could get into a bogie and multiplied it by the number of bogies. He said that another four or five hundred must

have been killed on the roofs, on footboards and between buffers [...].

The roof was certainly conversed with dried up blood. (115)

Amidst such a situation of trial, treble and tribulation, Sikhs have been always blamed for terrorist activities, but this sort of negative images of Sikhs is disregarded by Khushwant Singh and he seems to be striving and aspiring to rebuild these so called negative images.

One morning a party of five men was brought to the station in handcuffs, as soon as Jugga saw them, he lost his temper and abuses them. At that moment Jugga says that by nature, he is not badmash but it is the government and police who have made him a badmash which is not based on ground reality. He also says, " they always arrest me when anything goes wrong in Mano Majra"(125).

While giving the answer of the question asked by Iqbal regarding the murder of Lala Ram Lal, Jugga, a falsely charged Sikh, says:

Toba, toba! Kill my own village banian? Babuji, who kills a hen that lays eggs? Besides, Lala Ram Lal gave me money to pay lawyers when my father was in jail. I would not act like a bastard [...]. The police are the kings of the country. They will let me off when they feel like it. If they want to keep me in, they will trump up a case of keeping a spear without a licence or gang out of the village without permission- or just anything. (125-26)

Again answering the question of whereabouts of Jugga during the murder of Lala Ram Lal, Jugga says, " I was out of the village, but I was not murdering anyone. I was being murdered" (126). This really evokes the great sympathy from the part of readers upon the protagonist of the novel Jugga Singh.

Slowly and gradually, the village Mano Majra where harmony among Sikhs, Hindus and Muslim prevailed before the terrible rumors of atrocities committed by Muslims on Sikhs in Pakistan reached the Sikhs, and then the air became poisonous. For the first time, "the name Pakistan came to mean something to them a heaven of refuse where there were no Sikhs, in turn, the sullen and angry Sikhs said, " never trust a Musalmaan because they had no loyalties and benevolence" (141).

Besides, the people of Mano Majra knew that " a train load of Sikhs massacred by Muslims had been cremated in Mano Majra. Hindus and Sikhs were fleeing from their homes in Pakistan and having to find shelter in Mano Majra" (142). When it came to the villagers, they were all of the same opinion about the Muslim of their village, " they could not refuse shelter to refugees: hospitality was not a pastime but a sacred duty when those who sought it were homeless. Could they ask their Muslims to go? Quite emphatically not" (145). Thus humanity in the face of such dire situation was still alive in the hearts of these villagers. To these Sikhs "loyalty to fellow villagers was above all other considerations [...] no one had the nerve the hearts of these villagers. To these Sikhs" loyalty to fellow villagers was above all other considerations [...] no one had the nerve to suggest throwing them out, even in a purely Sikh gathering..."(145-146)

When Imam Baksh with other Muslims arrive with the news about the neighboring villages that were evacuated, thy wanted the consensus of the villagers evacuated; they wanted the consensus of the villager about their future. Again the bright ray of hope is seen when the conversation ensues between the villagers and Imam Baksh, "It is like this, uncle Imam Baksh. As long as we are here nobody will dare to touch you. We die first and then you can look yourselves [...] we first, then you. If anyone raises his eyebrows at you, we will leave no one" (147).

This above mentioned lines clearly show the true attitudes of Sikhs who hardly take revenge to violence and other deadly activities. This also shows the sense of sacrifice for any sort of social ills. The concept of brotherhood inherent in Sikhs can also be visible when Lambardar says to Imam Baksh, "yes, you are our brothers. As far as we are concerned, you and your children can live here as long as you like. If anyone speaks rudely to you, your wives and your children, it will be us first and our wives and children before a single hair of your heads is touched"(147).

But the situation was not so easy for Sikhs. The imminent danger of refugee coming in throngs makes the situation of the village quite uncertain. Hence the precaution to ask the Muslims to go to the refugee camps until safety returns. On the other hand Nooran who was deeply shocked by her father's commanded to pack everything and leave Mano Majra is beside herself. She wants to linger behind but thinks it impractical, still hoping against hopes, that she can visit Jugga and inform him about the new life taking shape in her being. This desire to inform propels her to face Jugga's mother. She undergoes insults hurled at by his mother.

Finally, Mano Majra Muslims precede their journey towards refugee camps to Chundunugger. On the departure of these Muslims from the village, the soft-hearted Sikhs and their pains and lamentation expose the fact that the Sikhs are quite sympathetic in nature. Their love, compassion and empathy are clearly noticed on their faces, "the Sikhs watched them (Muslims) till they were out of sight. They wipe the tears of their faces and turned back to their homes with heavy hearts"(159).

By the evening Mano Majra had forgotten about its Muslims and Mali's misdeeds, and their subject of discussion became the Sutlej River which was full of dead bodies. They could also hear the human voices calling for help from over the water. The terrible and poignant sight of the Hindus and Sikhs massacres in Sutlej

River from the side of Pakistani Muslims during the horrendous and precarious events of partition can be observed in the following lines:

The river had risen further. Its turbid water carried carts with the floated carcasses of bulls still yoked to them. Horses rolled from side to side as if they were scratching their backs. There were also men and women with their clothes clinging to their bodies; little children sleeping on their bellies with their arms clutching the water and their tiny buttocks dipping in and out. The sky was soon full of kites and vultures. They flew down and landed on the floating carcasses. (164)

Beside the above-mentioned gruesome picture of partition violence, the extreme form of cruelty and violence perpetrated upon innocent and humble Sikhs and Hindus by Muslims can be observed in the narrative of the novel:

Some were without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, and many women's breasts were slashed. They floated down the Sutlej River, bobbing up and down. Overhead hung the kites and vultures [...] nobody wanted to know who the dead people were, nor wanted to go near the river to find out. (165-66)

By seeing the utter violence imposed up on Sikhs by Muslims, some heart-core Sikhs instigate the other Sikhs of Mano Majra to avenge and retaliate Muslims and their atrocities. They also excite by saying that so as to maintain their identity quite high, they must take revenge against all sorts of injustice of Muslims:

You expect the government to do anything? A government consisting of cowardly banian money lenders! Do the Musalmaan in Pakistan apply for permission from their government when they rape your sisters? Do they apply for permission when they stop trains and kill

everyone, old, young women and children? You want the government to do something? That is great! Sabash! Bravo! (171)

Unlike the fanatic Sikhs, Meet Singh does not support the revenge on Muslims. He thinks that revenge is not the solution of the problem. This game of revenge may invite further violence. In this regard, he says, " what have the Muslims here done to us for us to kill them in revenge for what Muslims in Pakistan doing? Only people who have committed crimes should be punished" (171). The saintly behaviour and non-violent attitude of Meet Singh can further be found in the following lines:

I am an old bhai; I could not lift my hands against anyone- fight in the battle or kill the killer. What bravery is there in killing unarmed innocent people? As for women, you know the last Guru, Govinda Singh, made it a part of a baptismal oath that no Sikh was to touch the person of a Muslim woman. And God alone knows how he suffered at the hands of the Musalmaan! They killed all his four sons. (172)

Some of the fanatics Sikhs having been guided by revenge motive plan to fire at the train carrying refugees to Pakistan due to leave Chaundunnugger after midnight they decide to stretch a rope across the first span of the bridge. It will be a foot above the height of the funnel of the engine. When the train passes under it, it will sweep off the people sitting on the roof of the train. People with swords and spears will be right at the bridge to deal with those that fall off the roof of the train. That will account for at least four to five hundred persons.

On the other hand terror- stricken Hukum Chand perturbs on the turn of the events:

What am I to do? The whole world has gone mad let it go mad! What does it matter if another thousand get killed? We will get a bulldozer

and bury them as we did the others. We may not even need the bulldozer if this time it is going to be on the river. Just throw the corpses in the water. What is a few hundred out of four hundred million anyway? An epidemic takes ten times the number and no one even bothers. (178)

Realizing that the situation is setting out of control, Hukum Chand orders the release of Jugga and Iqbal who had been wrongly implicated and arrested. He thinks they (Jugga and Iqbal) might exert some influence on the misguided youth and save hundreds of Muslims being butchered.

After securing his freedom, Jugga finds Mano Majra totally changed. He finds that all Muslims have quit the village for the refugee camp. As the sub inspector informs him, "there are lots of outspiders going about with guns killing Muslims; Mali and his men have joined them. If the Muslims had not left Mano Majra, Mali would have finished them off by now" (186). On hearing Mali's name, Jugga's temper shoots up and in his characteristic manner he hurls upon his rival some filthy abuses; "that penis of a pig who sleeps with his mother, pimps for his sister and daughter, if he puts his foot in Mano Mjra, I will stick my bamboo pole up his behind" (186). He also knew the conspiracy to kill the trainload of Muslim going from Chundunnugger and Mano Majra to Pakistan. He realized that Nooran, his sweet-heart, too was leaving along with her father on the same train in the dead of the night, he resolves to do something to avert the catastrophe. Thus, the plan of a handful of fanatic young Sikhs from outside Mano Mahra in order to retaliate, to blow up the bridge and the train scheduled to carry Muslim refugees to Pakistan failed. The seed of humanity, compassion, sympathy, love and thoughts of his beloved in the heart of Jugga blooms.

To fulfill his mission, before midnight Jugga goes to gurdwara to take the blessing of guru's words from Meet Singh so that he could get success in his mission to save the Muslim refugees at any rate. So, Jugga- a self confessed local ruffian realizing that the revenge might mean danger to his Muslim beloved Nooran manages to slash at the rope with his kirpan. As all others wait for the train, Jugga climbs the steel span of the bridge. He is noticed by others only when he has got to the top where the rope is tied; they think, " he was testing the knot. He was tugging at it. It was well tied; even if the engine funnel hit it, the rope might snap but the knot would not give" (206). Jugga however whips out a small Kirpan from his waist and starts slashing the rope. Other Sikhs who have been awaiting the cutting of many people in two like a knife slicing cucumbers, sport him in the darkness and fire shorts at him. Jugga heroically clings to the rope with his hands and cuts it to pieces. The engine is almost on him. He falls down dead and the train " went over him, and went on to Pakistan"(207).

Thus, the simple uncalculating love of a man for woman asserts itself in the words of Linger and averts the catastrophe. Jugga Singh is truly an uncouth Indian rustic, who, caught in the quicksands of evil, successfully struggles out of it and reaches the shores of spiritual reclamation. In this way, Jugga, " number 10 Budmash" redeems himself by saving the precious lives of thousands of Muslims in a heart-throbbing and suspenseful climax. The tragic love story of a Sikh boy and a Muslim girl seeks to bridge the wide gulf of communal hatred.

Thus, Khushwant Singh, in his novel, *Train to Pakistan* presenting the Sikh character who sacrifices himself for the sake of love and remains stuck with the human values, tries to reverse the stereotypical representation of Sikhs as terrorists and extremists. A simple but recorded *Badmash* of Mano Majra, Jugga Singh's

readiness to face adversities in order to save Muslims conventionally thought to the arch enemies of Sikhs, becomes a big hammer that forcefully strikes the image of Sikhs as terrorist and crushes it into pieces. The depiction of sensitive Sikhs to the wellbeing of every human being irrespective of communal and religious difference is not merely to shatter a long- term terrorist image of Sikhs, but by shattering this notion, Khushwant Singh explicitly tries to forge another image of Sikhs that is defined along humanitarian ethos and is conditioned by love and benevolence.

V. Conclusion

It is almost impossible to arrive at a conclusion in any literary work in general and such a widely acclaimed work like *Train to Pakistan* in particular. The power of Khushwant Singh lies in the fact that it has drawn the attention of number of readers and critics from the very outset of its publication. Though there are several readings of this text, the present study has drawn a distinct conclusion through applications of Gandhian non-violence and revisionist historiography of the partition of India. Partition of India really unravels the violent, fratricidal sundering of the country. But the history of violence has been treated in historiography of modern India as aberration and as absence of aberration in the sense that violence is seen as something remove from the general run of Indian history. Official history most of the time distorts the events and puts in its favor dismantling the reality. The nationalist historiography of partition of India has only highlighted the national rejoicing of Independent movement at the expense of great human tragedy brought out by partition and its pervasive violence. Khushwant Singh here is critiquing the so-called official rhetoric of the partition of India by showing percolated rapes, killings, destructions, vandalisms and so many others anti-social activities in the novel.

Beside that, Khushwant Singh has presented his Sikh characters having been guided by Gandhian non-violence, and *ahimsa*. Generally, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If some one is a follower of ahimsa he/she must love even his/her enemy. He/she must apply the same rule to the wrong does who is his/her every. Similarly, non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evildoer, but it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of a unjust empire to save

his honor, his religion, his should, and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration. Gandhi always took recourse to non-violence in his life for he believed that non-violence is a strong moral force that can control the enemy.

In this novel, Singh's Sikh characters are advocates of Gandhian non-violence. Though Sikhs have been conventionally charged as having been involved in genocide of Muslims. But, in fact, it is a wrong image of Sikhs laid down *by* the convention. All the Sikhs characters like Jugga Singh, Meet Singh and Banta Singh are strong-supporters of Gandhian non-violence and saintly behavior. They are always hankering after making harmonious relationship among Hindu, Sikhs and Muslim community.

The novel's protagonist Jugga Singh though blamed by the government, as *badmas* is in fact not a bad man or a hooligan Whenever there comes any problem in the village, he remains there to settle it. He himself says that without understanding the underlying reality Muslims in general and the government in particular impose unnecessary blame on him. As far as the individual character of Jugga is concerned, he is in favor of peace and harmony of Mano Majra village where, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are living. When Muslims are going to the refugee camp leaving the Mano Majra all the softhearted Sikhs weeps thinking that the friends are departed from them.

Even, at last the heroic self-sacrifice of Jugga Singh is clearly visible in the novel. When the so-called extremist Sikhs try to destroy the train full of Muslims at that tend also risking his life Jugga Singh save the precious life of Muslims, unfortunately in doing so he loses his life. This, Jugga Singh, a person of saintly behavior sacrifices his life for the sake of others. In this way Khuswant Singh, by presenting his Sikh Protagonist along with other Sikhs having been guided by saintly behavior and non-violence, dismantles the image of Sikhs as an extremist or terrorist.

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