
STORIES UNTOLD PARTITION EXPERIENCE PERSPECTIVE FROM EAST PUNJAB

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Abstract

The partition stories have timely been discussed in Indian homes especially those who underwent trauma of partition. These stories have try to build up images and constructs which have been shared on social occasions confirming through kinship networks which are well versed during the growing age of first generation and second generation settlers whether they confined themselves within community spaces in India or abroad. This paper try to weave different stories which have been confined to the realm of public spaces portrayed through visual representation at various points of time through national media and cinema spaces. The portrays of characters are intense bringing out the concerns in subtle and vocal manner

Key words : Household, Migration, Kinship, Partition

Introduction

The portrayal has been drawn from drama which have been aired across Television channel. The story has been drawn from novel by Kashmiri Lal Zakir work Karamwali. Mera Ranjha Mera Jogi The story depicts the story of well-being of young Muslim couple living in rural Punjab varying out farming as an occupation living in happy family comprising wife Karmawali her son Khushiya and husband Faizuddin.

The first frame of story depicts morning rising sun, agricultural fields and chirping of animals serenity of village life in which young man is busy with his bullocks to ready his field for



agricultural operations. The farmer is visited by her wife who brings food for him and they talk to each other and thanks Allah for Rehmat and blessings.

The next scene depicts a rural household portraying the housing structure with vivid symbolically representing a muslim household with insignia and picture of mecca in the background poster. The family sits in deorhi and are visited by khala (aunt) and try to talk about simmering discontent which they are to hear from around.

In chaste Punjabi karmawali the key character states that

Main Suniya Mulk Da Batwara ho Reha hai

Got to know that country is going to be divided in two halves

Hazaara saal diyan sanjhiyaan Rifaataan khatam ho jaan gayian

Centuries old values and traditions would slowly wean away

Ohna da vajood khataam ho jayegha

Their existence would literally die out

Eventually that dialogue becomes more intense in nature when their family friend Ram Shran ji come over and conveys to them that in the neighbouring villages things are not fine out of fear and lack of trust people from Muslim families have started leaving for safer places. And advices the young couple to be more cautious of the social and political developments. During their discussion Cahchi hamida come over and states that :

Mai apni maa nahi chaad sakdi ,

He dharthi sadi apni hai asi is toh bagiaar kithe jawagaye

We cannot leave this motherland we cannot think beyond it our lives are transversed around it.



Our kinship network our family traditions and community is here we can't imagine about land which is Pakistan, we don't have any relatives out there, we would be all alone and it would be difficult to survive.

Faizuddin is being probed by Cahchi hamida

faizu tooh ki sochiya edhe baare.

Mian ki sochna raab jandah hai

During this conversation loud chanting of hindu religious salutations raised in background har har mahdev which sends a chill and they started feeling perplexed and confused over these developments.

Stories started being shared that train full of dead bodies of Sikhs and Hindus have arrived from west Punjab at Jalandhar station and there is growing fear that the consequences could be borne by innocent muslims this side as bands of young boys both Sikhs and Hindus trying to seek revenge.

The scenario becomes quite gloomy as phrases such as *deshat da raaj ho gaya hai* (fear is overriding everywhere)

Khoon chitthe hogaye ne,

dana panni mukh gaya

apni hifazzat karke pind chad jao

The village in which faizuddin and karmawali were staying around five six muslim families resided so they were advised by Ram Shran to move out as early as possible he would take care of their land animals and house during their absence. At that time kinship relations played an important role eventually they moved out of the village escorted by their hindu neighbour to other village and travelled to siswan a village which was predominantly muslim dominated village so as to seek protection from raiding bands. Karwamali and faizuddin



stays in the house of Karwamali brother karim khan and his hamshera who does not have any child.

During their stay karmawali bhabhi is jealous of karmawali motherhood status often confronts her that soon she would be blessed by boy as she has been to dargah of sufi saint whose blessings would make a difference in coming months. Karmawali feels happy for her brother and sister in law. However in the background sister in law cooks up plans to harm khushiya and karma wali. Thus seeking refuge from others make them unsafe within their own community and family members.

Khuda hazir nazir hai sarriya diyan jhandha hai

During their stay with immediate kins women interaction is of subdued nature whereas men do feel safe being together however at times remorse and fear surround them working on different possibilities as if Sikhs from nearby villages might attack them inspite of being in a Muslim dominated village. In one of the frames Muslims visit the local gurdwara and assure them that as co-villagers they would be protected by them. The things were turning from bad to worse as their neighbor from their native village basanda arrives to convey them the list of things he has and insist them to sell of their livestock so that they need money to travel to far distant place suffering undue tensions. Faizuddin initially was reluctant however on constant persuasion accepted the offer. These alarming situations make it clear how suddenly one become disadvantageous for others. After the insight of an outsider hindu in the village the Muslim become fearful that he might have come to spy upon them to get pulse of their protection seeking mechanisms. At last they force upon karim khan to convey his close relatives to leave out so as others can be safe.

Shaq and kauf logon de dimagh vicg bhai gaya hai

Maan vi andro dare hoye neh

Insaan goonga athe bhaira hogaya hai

Faizuddin states that jodon pidan chadtha tah mulk vi chadiya gaya



This context convey deeper meanings which words may not be able to fully address the underlying issues as this involves perspective of both actors who were conversing with each other.

Asar di namaaz de vele dove jeeh karmawali athe faizuddin tur paindhe ne

keo khi karim khan di gharwali jhor laundhi hai baacha uskol chad javvo

oh aunde hoye leawan gaye tusi aap pehla pooncho

They reach safely at camp in Lahore where all the Mohajirs are housed and they have to share tent number 12 with a family from Jalandhar who were nice enough to accommodate faizuddin and karmawali who is on family way. She is nursed by elderly lady and her husband supports faizuddin to seek food from the city and government officials. Karmawali gives birth to daughter sahida and eventually they moved to house sometime later. During their stay at refuge camp they confront karim khan and his wife as were is khushiya to which they state they lost on the way. To which karmawali says she always had the inkling of bad intentions of her bhabhi but faizuddin didn't agree.

As time passed faizuddin became old and cries for his beloved son kushiya who was groomed by Sikh family by raising him as true Muslim and making him learn Quran Sharif by heart. The story unfolds into a tragedy after marriage of sahida faizuddin passed away. Meanwhile khusiya is married of by her foster parents as per Muslim rituals to Muslim girl from nearby village and is blessed with a boy after sometime. The story took a peculiar turn as karmawali visit Sikh religious places whenever jatha (religious group) arrives of across the border to figure about khushiya. With the help of her namesake brother she meets somebody from her ancestral village in India who recalls about a five year old Muslim boy raised by Sikh family. One day letter arrives at Karmawali doorstep confirming the existence of kushiya. She eventually applies for passport and other travels documents for three months visa to travel to India.



Karmawali arrives meets her son daughter-in-law and others in the her ancestral village visit Sikh family who housed his son and Hindu neighbours Ram sahran ji who is weak and sick at this passage of time. The boy lives in same house in which his parents once lived. This house was redesigned with the help of his Hindu neighbors as old structure was in bad condition. Karmawali visits the shrine (dargah of sufi saint) in her village as thanks giving to allah for reuniting her with his son and his family members .After her visa expiry she leaves with remorse the ties are broken but reinforced when she says she would again come back one day by pestering her grandson , when she returns visit her husband grave back home and tells him about khushiya and family. The last scene displays light around the graveyard as news of khushiya wellness is perceived by faizuddin in surreal sense

The story being rendered is showing the functionality of family System and community. The work tries to figure out and pursues the queries related to human to human interaction within a given social set up that portrays sense of insecurity which is perceived by a couple in rural setup somewhere in east Punjab during turmoil of partition when large families were fearing for their lives as they were displaced from their homes and have to travel far and wide in search of greener pstures which were promised by so called political leaders without understanding the enormosity of the emerging crisis. The work explores the relationship of community ties and kinship ties how these negotiated spaces were balanced by conjugal couple who infact lost their son because of grievances of aunt whose mischevious acts led to breaking away of the family and sense of longing of both parents one who passed away untimely waiting for his son to embrace him and other being mother who establishes contact eventually meeting his son but forced to move away because of political legal concerns.

The work highlights how community try to foster peace related initiatives which exemplifies Sense of continuity and connectivity creating prevalence of social cultural wellbeing and fostering caring and respecting on another with different scenes depicting in media text of neighbor helping others or community interaction at religious space promising to safeguard each other interests. The communities were mindful of each other religious orientation well versed with humanistic traditions advocated by religious text or as ordained



by their faith. The communities were well connected to also living environment as in text mother nature and environment and water of well of their village were sweet on other side of the border which they left thus portraying sense of connectedness to both social built spaces and one given by nature. Hope and human centric issues have been well placed in the discourse on partition as how members of different communities try to embrace sense of becoming more human by helping each other as whether it is the case of khushiya who is made to learn ways of life by a foster family from different religious background at the same initiating within him values sacred to his own religion, as matter of fact how fictive kins help karamawali to trace out his son in east Punjab by visiting various religious spaces of minority and interacting with religious pilgrims to know whereabouts of were lost son.

Conclusion

The paper vividly transcends different themes and perspectives in the media text by highlighting rural way of life criss-crossed by serenity, interactive spaces within the household and community visualization of communities as separate entities within the larger domain of being defined as minority or majority in as social space. Figuring out language and experiences through verbal discourse about life and shadows of separation by weaving of personal, social, and community relations in background of unfolding of multiple events in the text by portray of partition in the background.

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