



“HAUNTED GEOGRAPHIES AND DISPLACED IDENTITIES IN SOUTH ASIAN PARTITION FICTION: A STUDY OF *PINJAR* AND *TOBA TEK SINGH*”

Nimra Aslam

MPhil English, Visiting Lecturer GCWUF

Email: nimraaslam@gcwuf.edu.pk

Myra Ikram

MPhil English, Visiting Lecturer GCWUF

Email: myraikram@gcwuf.edu.pk

Muhammad Haroon

BS English, University of the Punjab

Email: ranaharoon715bc@gmail.com

Active DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.16924410

Abstract

This scholarly inquiry investigates the conveyance of Reminiscence and spatial uprooting in the segregation literature of southern Asia through a critical analysis of Pinjar by Amrita Pritam and Toba Tek Singh by Saadat Hasan Manto. Its objective is to explore how literary narratives map trauma into geographical and emotional landscapes transforming space into a symbol of historical breakup and cultural loss. Anchored in the theory of trauma particularly the work of Cathy Caruth and that are based on concepts of memory nostalgia and displacement. The analysis uses qualitative textual methods to examine how Pinjar builds the female body as a confined and traumatized site within the fractured geography of the partition while Toba Tek Singh satirizes the absurdity of the statelessness and the psychological disintegration induced by forced migration. The study is guided by two central questions: (1) How do partition narratives organize spatially to reflect inter-generational memory and suffering? (2) How do literary spaces work as counterattacks that recover suppressed stories?. By placing trauma within the symbolic geography of literature this research contributes to partition studies and literary trauma theory by offering a nuanced reading of how personal and collective memory is part of and through space. It shows that literary texts not only narrate the loss but also build alternative memory cartographies that official stories resist and get involved with the emotional consequences of displacement.

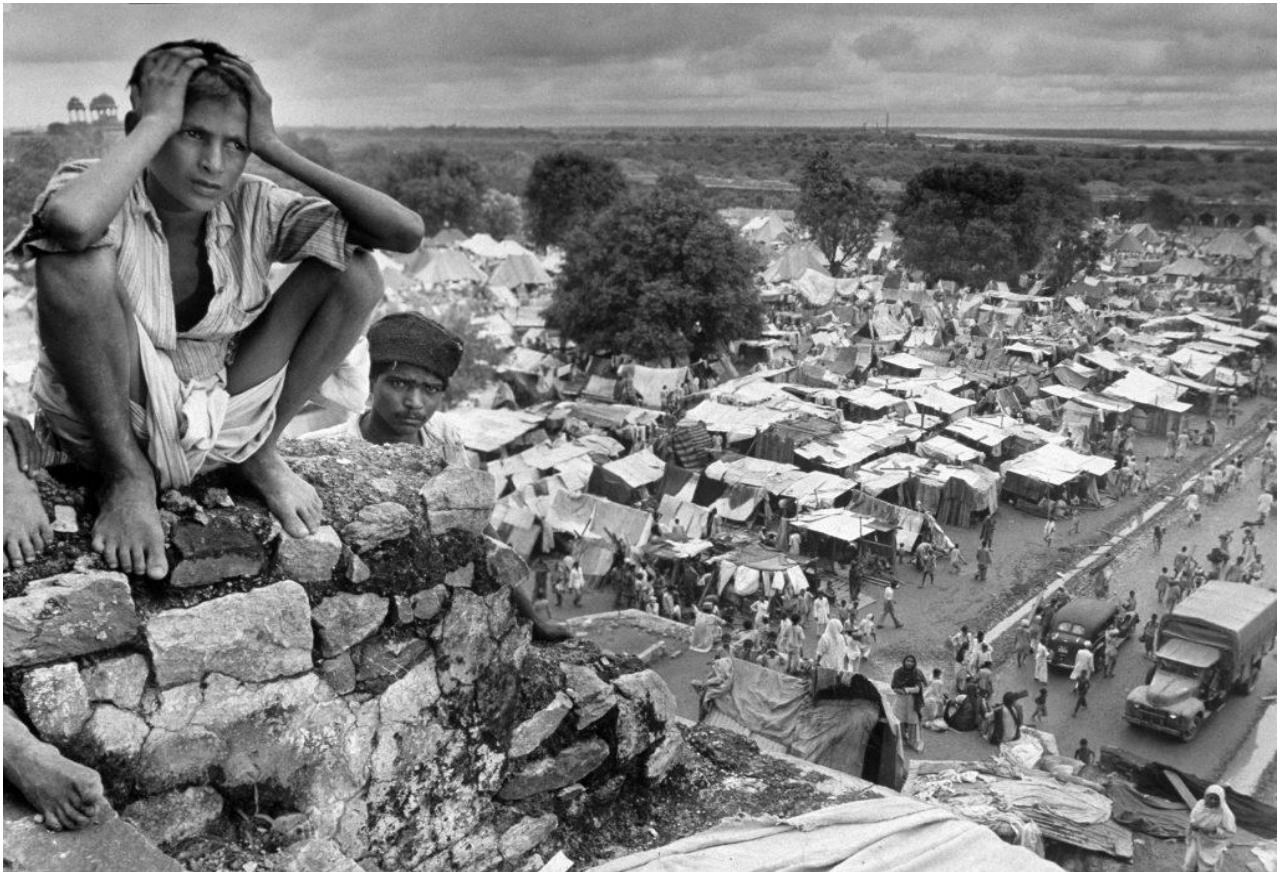
Keywords: Historical trauma, displacement, collective memory, cultural rupture, spatial representation, identity dislocation, affective geography, post-colonial history, literary testimony

Preface/ Preliminary Discussion

The partition of British India in 1947 is one of the most devastating occasions in South Asian history forcibly transferring more than fifteen million people and resulting in about two million deaths. This moment was not only a geopolitical isolation between India and Pakistan it was a deep fracture which broke family relations to different shared communities and transforms the scenario into scary and loss sites everyday. Once the land filled with absence and memory of the house was formed. Displacement was equally a cultural and emotional disastrous which breaks family relations to separate centuries old communities and break the perceptions of the concerned. The silence of the partition is given a voice. Fantasy texts do not reappear only historical facts. They embodiment the affectionate weight of memory and the fragmented



geographical of home and identity. Amrita Pritam's Pinjar and Sadat Hasan Manto's Toba Tek Singh provide a rich emotional landscape that leads personal suffering on political ideology. These literary illustrations offer alternative archives of history that Kabir (2005) calls memory's counter archives which brightens the internal world of people disorganized by partition.



Figure,1

Despite a growing body of scholarship on partition literature critical gaps persist particularly at the intersection of space memory and trauma. Although existing research has explored community violence gender trauma and national identity issues there is still a limited commitment to how space and emotional landscapes work as sites of cultural restlessness. This study introduces the concept of haunted geography spaces that are emotionally and symbolically saturated with historical pain dislocation and non resolved spectral memory. These landscapes whether physical (such as borders, homes and nurses) or symbolic (such as silence, memory or displacement) are not passive configurations Rather they serve as active trauma repositories and transmitters. By focusing literary geography as a mode of representation of trauma this research addresses a overlooking partition literature. This research investigates how partition literature in South Asia uses geography and spatial displacement as literary strategies to articulate trauma memory and loss of identity. Focusing on Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh the study analyzes how fictional landscapes are transformed into areas of cultural restlessness with the psychological and emotional residue of the partition. By integrating trauma theory with spatial literary



criticism research manifested literature as a vital historiography tool that documents and resists the erased of official history.

Unexplored Area/Research Gap

Although the 1947 partition has been explored widely in literary and historical scholarship much of this work remains concentrated in issues such as community violence gender trauma and national identity. Fundamental studies have richly documented immediate brutality and the long term psychological effects of the partition particularly through the lens of memory migration and identity formation. However there is still a notable lack of sustained attention to the spatial dimension of trauma specifically how the place geography and emotional landscapes function as dynamic agents in the literary representation of displacement. The studies are involved with the way in which the fictional narratives of fiction the terms of study 'Embraceable Geographies' the spaces imbued with the loss silence and the historical holy. These are not neutral environments but emotionally charged sites that have the imprint of the cultural break the forced migration and the fragmentation of identity. Such geographies which extend from borderlands and extend from border Refugee fields to mental institutions and abandoned homes are often where the deepest traumas of the partition are developed. History, that history is obsessed with history. This to fill that gap by integrating trauma studies with spatial literary theory highlighting how texts like Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh render space not as static backdrop but as a living archive of Grief Belonging And Broken continuity. A spatially grounded affective interpretation of Partition literature emotional foregrounding geographies as essential to understanding the human toll of displacement and cultural deleted. It is placed in the literary space as a vital medium through which the trauma in generations is transmitted and challenged.

Investigation Goals/purpose

This study analyzes how loss trauma and relocation are portrayed in the partition literature of southern Asia in an effort to better understand the human aspects of the 1947 partition. The study aims to shed light on the experiences that are frequently overlooked in conventional historical narratives concentrating on the psychological and spatial consequences of the partition. The objectives direct a literary investigation of the ways in which identity memory and space interact to illustrate the lasting effects of displacement in people and societies.

1. To examine how the experiences of trauma loss and identity crisis characters are portrayed in partition literature to better understand the psychological and emotional effects of displacement.
2. Analyze how space in literary works is portrayed, not simply as a scenario but as a 'haunted geography' that has the weight of violence rupture and memory.
3. Examine how partition narratives treat the long term struggle for survival and relocation as well as the material displacement of migrants including loss of home land and property.
4. Evaluate how literature works as a substitute historical archive providing a complex understanding of the human consequences of the partition that are frequently left out of official historical documents.
5. Critically examine how the narrative structure and development of the character of some chosen texts transmit the slow violence of the partition their lasting impacts on identity belonging and collective memory.
6. Advance the academic knowledge of the post colonial past of southern Asia linking literary criticism the theory of trauma and geographical history in interdisciplinary partition studies.



Justification of this Research

Emphasizing the psychological geographies of loss displacement and survival after partition in partition literature studies. Although the political administrative and demographic facets of the 1947 partition have been given more weight in conventional historical stories this study focuses on personal and affective spheres those fractured areas of memory trauma and identity that are still presented to people and communities decades after the event. This study advances our understanding of how it can serve as a archive of lived experience by analyzing a few South Asian literary works especially novels and short tales that depict the human effects of violence displacement and migration. In doing so it draws attention to the ghostly geographies and mental landscapes that the partition shaped paying special attention to the experiences of common people including women children and refugees whose narratives often overlook in popular history.

In addition the interdisciplinary nature of this research makes it remarkable. It provides a paradigm to see literature as a place of historical resistance cure and memory in addition to being a cultural product. It is based on trauma studies memory studies and post colonial theory. Finally by relating historical displacements to current concerns about migration exile and border politics in southern Asia and in other places work has current relevance. It encourages the contemplation of how in the 21st century the legacy of the partition continues to influence the identity belonging and regional policy. Therefore the study is not only vital from a literary point of view but also of an ethical and political.

Literature Review

The 1947 partition literary archive of British India is vast diverse and deeply affective reflecting the durable psychological cultural and spatial consequences of one of the most traumatic historical ruptures in southern Asia. Academics in all disciplines have analyzed partition fiction through the lenses of trauma studies memory theory feminist critic post colonial theory and migration studies offering critical ideas on how literature reconstructs the silenced experiences of violence exile and loss of identity. While fundamental works have mapped how partition narratives document collective suffering and psychological scars, emotional geographies and spatial dimensions of this trauma remain little overwhelmed. This review therefore, organizes the relevant literature thematically to put in the foreground five main threads of academic debate (1) trauma and memory (2) gender violence (3) displacement and identity (4) embroiled geographies and (5) gaps in spatial-literary criticism. Together these areas inform the conceptual basis of the current study which seeks to rethink partition literature through the affective lens of the haunted geography where the physical and symbolic spaces serve as files of silenced pain.

(1) Trauma and Memory in Partition Literature

The literary erudition in the partition has increasingly put the role of trauma and memory as a central to understand the psychic and emotional impact of the 1947 catastrophe. Instead of presenting trauma as an isolated psychological wound, recent studies conceptualize it as a collective cultural phenomenon that resurfaces through generations. Rehan Muhammad et al. (2025). Argue that partition fiction functions as a narrative counteractive recovering silenced stories and exposing ruptures in personal and national identity caused by forced migration. His study emphasizes how literary texts do not simply remember violence they revive it through the form, voice and spatial fragmentation. Similarly Marino (2022), focusing on the Bengal partition highlights how displaced characters sail through trauma through fragmented memories and recurring images of loss and longing. She points out that partition narratives act as memory



maps where physical dislocation and emotional pain are inseparably linked. In this sense literary memory is not static. It is formed by exile nostalgia and inherited pain.

Mehrotra (2025) takes this beyond examining inter generational trauma in *the shadow lines* and *stasiland* pointing out that fictional narratives often reflect how the psychological limits of the partition persist even after policies dissolve. This trans generational concern argues demonstrates that trauma is not only a moment of rupture but a repeated wound.

(2) Gendered Violence and the Female Body

Feminist academics in the 21st century have placed a growing emphasis on gender dimensions of partition trauma highlighting how woman's bodies became symbolic battlefields for religious honor and national identity. Kabir (2022) explores the fiction of women by Krishna Sobi and Bapsi Sidhwa to argue that partition narratives often encode trauma through silence repetition and embodied pain instead of explicit acts of violence. She states that woman's stories resist nationalist master narratives by focusing domestic spaces and private suffering. Lordo (2024) focuses similarly on Indian English novels that represent the trauma of women as emotional and psychological fragmentation which shows how characters sail for memory loss and identity under patriarchal and communal pressures. His work complements Marino's ideas (2022) on female displacement in Bengal which illustrate how women were not only physically dislocated but also psychologically without comedies.

Ali (2025) joins this conversation arguing that female characters in partition literature function as narrative duel sites offering alternative perspectives about history through fragmented memories and affective testimonies. However many of these works still emphasize body violence often leaving aside the spatial consequences of gender trauma: how houses kitchens or rooms are transformed into haunted areas of suffering. This study is based on the theory of feminist trauma when again focusing the space on the discussion of gender violence which shows how literature encodes trauma not only in bodies but on the spaces that inhabit and exile.

(3) Displacement, Identity, and Belonging

Displacement is a fundamental issue in partition fiction but 21st century academics have deepened this discourse by examining how forced migration leads to long-term identity crisis and psychological marginalization. Usman et al. (2022), analyzing the Basti of Hussain argue that the partition not only uprooted the people of the earth he discovered their sense of himself eroding family community and national belonging. Their findings apply to the broader partition context where migrants particularly Mohajirs often remain without integrating into the nation-states they helped create.

Sharma (2021), focused on the Dard-Shin community in Kashmir explores how long term geographical and cultural isolation affects identity. These studies collectively suggest that displacement is not a single historical moment but a generational condition marked by fractured memory broken continuity and disputed belonging. However much of this scholarship focuses on ethnic or community identity at the macro level. This research changes the lens to explore how individual literary characters experience the collapse of identity through physical environments (asylums homes villages) turning family geographies into unknown prisons of memory.

(4) Haunted Geographies and Spatial Memory

The idea of space as a trauma bearer is still subject to partition studies despite the emerging scholarship that recognizes the role of geography in emotional memory. Marino (2022) and Bharti (2025) recognize that memory is spatially encoded especially when the characters return



repeatedly in thought or narration of places of rupture such as lost houses or desecrated edges. Rehan Muhammad et al. (2025) note that although a lot of work on trauma and identity has been done the emotional load of the place is often as a narrative backdrop instead of a theoretical approach. They ask for a more rigorous exploration of how the establishment itself traumatizes becoming what this study calls 'Haunted geography' imbued sites of loss memory and silence. This emerging interest in space trauma develops in the discussion of Mehrotra (2025) in *the shadow lines* where the psychological experience of space transcends national limits. He points out how the characters inhabit spaces of space more vivid than the present revealing the lasting presence of emotional geographies.

Based on these ideas the present study proposes a focused reading of Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh through the affective geography lens analyzing how spaces in fiction act as emotional archives sites where trauma is stored triggered and experienced.

(5) Gaps and the Need for Interdisciplinary Approaches

Although trauma theory memory studies and feminist criticism have advanced the understanding of partition literature few academics have integrated these approaches with space literary analysis. Such as Lourdasamy (2024) and Rehan et al. (2025) point out that literary trauma is often discussed in terms of language character and plot with less attention to how to establish functions as an active participant in trauma transmission. Even in the studies that address the diaspora or border trauma (Redclift, 2016; Sharma, 2021) the spatial element tends to focus on the political dimensions of territory instead of their political dimensions instead of their emotions and literature. The concept of haunted geography saturated spaces of historical absence pain and dislocation offers a necessary expansion of the theoretical conversation. This study responds to these gaps by adopting an interdisciplinary approach that combines trauma theory with spatial criticism. It rethinks the literary configuration not as liabilities locations but as active emotional landscapes that embody the psychological and cultural aftermath of the partition. In doing so literature places as a vital historiography tool an archive of haunted geographies where the tacit pain of history continues to echo.

Summary of the chapter

A fundamental and painful moment in the history of southern Asia the 1947 partition of India had a deep effect on national states communities and identities. Literature examines partition as a moment of generalized uprooting duel and the intricate restructuring of personal and social identities. Many academics highlight severe cultural and psychological trauma suffered by refugees who were displaced from their homes sent into exile and faced with insecure futures (Marino, 2022; Singh). The stories of partition victims often highlight a sense of persistent loss yearning for a country that existed before partition and difficulties in forming an identity and a sense of belonging. In addition to moderating changing socio political circumstances memory and nostalgia emerge as key motifs that maintain cultural continuity. Certain communities such as tribal border inhabitants such as *Dard-Shins* in Kashmir Conflicting nationalism, these groups represent existence characterized by marginalization socio-economic challenges and identity dilemmas.

The horrors of the riots bloodshed and exhausting migrations in places like Uttar Pradesh are portrayed powerfully in Urdu literature especially in books written by authors such as Hussain Khadija Mastur and Qurratulain Hyder. These literary works emphasize the loss of identity and human suffering during and after partition based on migration and trauma theories (Sanjarani et



al. 2021; USMAN et al. 2022). For example *Basti* by Hussain represents the physical and psychological uprooting of migrants, illustrating the post-colonial identity dilemma through nuanced characters. Students on Pakistani immigrants groups, such "Mohajirs" in Daustala, at the local level show persistent problems with identity crisis and social integration. The concepts of citizenship and belonging in a multi ethnic community are complicated by the feelings of inferiority that these migrants are from the native populations (Zaheer et al., 2022). When they are taken as a whole, these pieces highlight the lasting legacy of the partition as a location of suffering memories and identity disputes. They challenge simplified patriotic stories too much and require a more exhaustive understanding of reality after partition by illuminating the ways in which displacement continues to influence individual and social narratives.

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative interpretative research design rooted in literary analysis, trauma theory and spatial criticism. It focuses on two seminal partition texts *Pinjar* by Amrita Pritam and *Toba Tek Singh* by Saadat Hasan Manto selected by their different narrative approaches for partition trauma and its central positioning within the canon of the South Asia's partition literature. Both texts offer contrasting but complementary perspectives *Pinjar* explores gender trauma and forced assimilation through the inner world of a female protagonist while *Toba Tek Singh* is involved with the absurd policy and identity crisis through the fragmented consciousness of a male partner. Its inclusion allows a thematic and balanced comparison of gender that highlights the diversity of traumatic experiences during the partition. The study is based on the theory of trauma particularly the works of Cathy Caruth (1996), Judith Herman (1992) and the contemporary of the Scholars (eg, Bharti, 2025; Rehan et al., 2025) to Analzes how partition trauma encoded through narrative structure character psychology and space images. The concept of 'late' caruth and the idea that trauma resurfaces through fragmented memory is applied to interpret the pure silences and the linguistic confusion of Bishan Singh.

Trauma theory is also used to understand how the unutterable of pain is represented through metaphor repetition and interrupted deadlines. The study also incorporates spatial literary criticism framing the space not only as a scenario but as an emotional and symbolic construction. The concept of haunted geography center of this research is used to explore how spaces such as homes asylums and border lands are saturated with historical memory emotional waste and unresolved pain.

Methodologically research uses a nearby textual reading and a thematic analysis to identify and interpret recurring motifs related to trauma dislocation of identity memory and survival. Literary elements such as images dialogue narrative fragmentation and symbolism are studied to understand how trauma is integrated into the fictitious geography and the character's experience. The data is completely extracted from the digitally archived literary texts and the academic magazines reviewed by peers ensuring a rigorous and updated critical framework. Although the study is limited to two translated texts and does not incorporate oral stories or ethnographic sources its literary scope focused allows a deep and theoretically rich analysis of how fiction reinvents the trauma of the division beyond the nationalist and historiographic frameworks.

Results / Analysis

This section offers a thematic analysis of *Pinjar* by Amrita Pritam and *Toba Tek Singh* by Saadat Hasan Manto which addresses the research gaps identified in existing partition studies. Although the previous scholarship has focused on violence national identity and gender trauma this study emphasizes the role often overlooked by space geography and memory in trauma



codification. Using the concept of haunted geography places with an emotionally marked loads by the absence silence and pain not resolved this analysis explores how literary spaces serve as sites of psychological collapse and cultural resistance. The analysis is based on the theory of trauma especially the works of Caruth (1996) as well as spatial criticisms to show how displacement is not only physical but deeply emotional embedded in domestic environments symbolic institutions and landscapes. Each topic below connects literature with the theory to reveal how Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh retain silenced stories through emotional geographies.

1. Haunted Homes and Displaced Spaces

Partition studies are in insufficient attention to space as a trauma transmission site. Both in Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh space is not a passive backdrop but a haunted geography a saturated site of memory absence and unresolved loss. In Pinjar the transformation of a stranger daughter kidnapped a deep spatial break. His childhood house becomes an emotional exile site after his kidnapping of Rashid. When he returns looking for refuge his father says **"you are dead for us. A girl who has lived with a Muslim cannot be part of our family."** (*Pinjar, Cap. 10, p. 58*). This domestic space once a symbol of belonging is now ghost by religious and cultural limits. Later Pure looks at his town from afar describing him as **"the home where I was born and the people I loved were now like shadows behind a glass wall."** (*Pinjar, Chap. 12, p. 71*). His memory pursues space but he is no longer allowed to inhabit it. The home becomes a traumatized landscape which reflects the concept of 'latency' of Cathy Caruth (1996) spaces that have trauma that cannot be talked directly but that materialize continuously. In Toba Tek Singh the space itself becomes absurd and inaccessible. The endless question of Bishan Singh 'Where is Toba Tek Singh'? Captures the displacement of spatial identity. **He asks obsessively "Where is Toba Tek Singh? In India or Pakistan?"** (*Toba Tek Singh, p. 215*)

"When they said he was in Pakistan, he would shout: "No, it's not! " (*P. 216*)

The people once set in memory becomes an unstable entity. In the end Bishan Singh collapses and dies in the strip of earth between India and Pakistan a literal and symbolic of anyone **"There behind the wire between two borders, Toba Tek Singh lying."** (*p. 217*). Asylum is also a haunted institutional space is inmates are trapped in a limbo reflecting the psychic condition of the displaced confused not claimed and invisible. It serves as what Rob Nixon (2011) could call a space of 'slow violence' where pain accumulates invisibly through bureaucratic elimination and forced oblivion. The trauma of displacement is not only psychological but geographical embedded in the loss of place home and roots.

2. Silence and Spatial Memory

Another undiscovered dimension in partition literature is the relationship between silence memory and space. Silence in these texts is not simply the absence of speech it is a form of incarnate trauma often triggered by the emotional weight of the place. Both Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh portray the characters whose interaction with the space is mediated by repetition silence and nonverbal memory echoing the statement of Cathy Caruth (1996) that the trauma returns in the form of restlessness especially when it remains instant. After establishing myself at the House of Rashid his memory becomes space **"I have no place in this house and no place in the house I left."** (*Pinjar, Cap. 9, p. 51*)

His body moves physically through space, but emotionally is in limbo. Later she sits next to the well a symbol of past memory and violence, and reflects **"this knows everything, but cannot speak."** (*Pinjar, Cap. 14, p. 80*)



The well becomes a silent witness linking memory with a fixed location while showing how trauma is stored in objects and places. His gibberish spoken while walking in asylum is tied to the space of memory: his hometown. Every time you are asked about relocation it is silent or repeated nonsense demonstrating that the language itself is broken in the face of spatial loss. When the officials tell him that Toba Tek Singh is now in Pakistan, his silence becomes agitation, **"he shouted ... and then remained silent, completely still"** (p. 216). His final death in the land of No-Man is a final act of silent resistance choice of silence on submission to political redefinition. The texts show that memory is not always verbal he lives in spaces gestures and silences turning the partition not only into a political break but also a disturbing and quiet disturbing. As such trauma becomes cartographic embedded in the geography of lost houses broken borders and silent voices.

3 Gendered Geographies of Violence

The partition violence was not only political but it was deeply gender but many studies overlooked how that violence was also spatial. Both in Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh, geography becomes gender houses villages and institutions are not neutral places but sands of control trauma and identity violation. Judith Herman (1992) emphasizes that trauma against women often occurs within intimate and family spaces making 'home' a security and horror site. In Pinjar, the kidnapping of pure transforms not only its identity but the space that inhabits. Rashid's house was intended to be his new 'home' he becomes a symbolic prison. She reflects **"the walls closed around me. There was no escape, not this house, not my name"** (Pinjar, Cap. 11, p. 65) The change of name of pure as Hamida further reinforces the spatial colonization of its identity. His gender body becomes the borderline between the Hindu and Muslim communities. When he walks through the veiled people, he feels the deletion of himself in space **"the streets were known, but I walked like a stranger."** (Pinjar, Cap. 12, p. 68)

The village, once theirs, is now alien: the generated violence has done it uselessly echoing the idea of HomiBhabha (1994) of the 'subject not eaten' Toba Tek Singh offers a male perspective but criticizes how men are also female for partition. Bishan Singh loses not only the place but power its mental instability symbolizes the emasculation of the citizen subject in the geopolitics after the partition. Asylum is a failed masculinity space where men are caged, irrational and voiceless. When Fazal Din's character says **"Your people have gone to India. We will also send you there"** (p. 215)

Singh does not respond with authority but of confused resistance: his role as protector owner of the property or patriarch has collapsed. His madness becomes a criticism of how male identity dissolves when the earth and control are removed. These texts expose how the partition destabilized gender roles through spatial displacement. For women the home becomes a place of forced assimilation and silencing For men asylum becomes an emasculation space and political absurd. Both texts reimagine space as a land of gender violence marked by broken roles collapsed identities and buried agency.

4. Post-Migration Survival and Slow Violence

While many scholarships focus on the immediate brutality of the partition, few studies explore the long and silent suffering that follows forced migration. Rob Nixon (2011) calls this 'slow violence' a form of gradual invisible and cumulative damage. In Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh both pure and Bishan Singh support not only displacement but also the continuous violence of abandonment social erase and existential confusion after sequelae. In Pinjar pure survives but its life becomes an extended negotiation between memory and loss. Its acceptance of the home of



rashid is not a healing process but an adaptation to irreversible dispossession. Even after she recovers an agency, helping Lajo to escape she admits that **"there is no turn for me. I am the ghost that walks between two lost houses."**(*Pinjar, Chap. 18, p. 111*). His survival is persecuted by unresolved trauma and liminal existence he does not belong to his biological family or completely to the world of rashid. The violence that supports does not end with kidnapping Slowly persists in his daily life routines and internal silence. Economic disinheritance to another layer pure loses its right to ancestral land, a recurring anxiety in partition literature. In a moment, remember how her brothers will inherit everything while she has **"only silence for the company"**(*Pinjar, Cap. 13, p. 75*). This reflects what feminist criticisms call gender marginalization after displacement.

In Toba Tek Singh, the reality after the Bishan Singh partition is defined not by physical injuries but by psychological stagnation. He spends years wandering through asylum, repeating meaningless phrases **"would walk all night, muttering words that mean nothing to others but everything for him"**(*p. 214*).

His trauma is not explosive but in corrosive silence. Asylum offers food and refuge but without identity or future. He is never told the truth about his homeland which reflects the bureaucratic violence of the State. The slow violence here is institutional oblivion Singh becomes a number a load an unresolved case. His final death in anyone's land symbolizes a survival that was never really lived **"died in the place that belonged to any of the others"** (*p. 217*). These representations show that survival after partition is not recovery: it is a trauma in progress formed by negligence liminality and erased. Both pure and Bishan Singh represent those who last but not without being haunted figures living in intact spaces for healing.

5. Border Madness and National Absurdity

This section addresses a critical but sub explore gap in partition literature the absurdity of national borders and how they generate a psychological collapse not clarity. Both *Pinjar* and *Toba Tek Singh* criticize the artificial logic of the partition exposing how the borders redise does not lead to ordering but to confusion madness and loss of personal and collective coherence. In *Toba Tek Singh* the most open criticism of the absurd border occurs through institutional madness. Manto establishes the whole history within an asylum a powerful metaphor for the irrationality of the State. The authorities announce the exchange of inmates between India and Pakistan including those considered crazy highlighting the mechanical cruelty of the bureaucracy. The repeated question of Bishan Singh **"Where is Toba Tek Singh? In India or Pakistan?"**(*page. 215*)

It meets evasive and contradictory answers. The more officials try to classify their identity the more resists the reduction to a nationalist label. His madness intensifies not because it is illogical but because the system around it is. The story ends with a symbolic gesture **"there, between the two spikes, Lay Toba Tek Singh"** (*page. 217*)

This closing image encapsulates the madness of the edge, a condition in which the geography of belonging becomes unattainable. The newly created line between India and Pakistan does not become a solution but a psychological wound.

In *Pinjar* the absurd borders is more subtle but equally traumatic. Puro now Hamida tries to help a young Hindu woman kidnapped to return to India. It must negotiate with military civil and social workers all acting under the new partition laws. The conversation with the officials exposes the bureaucratic rigidity of the borders **"is Hindu or Muslim? The State does not take place for intermediates"**(*Pinjar, Chap. 17, p. 108*)



Pure organizes the return of Lajo but chooses to stay a decision that underlines the failure of political solutions to address emotional realities. The border can offer a legal step but cannot restore memory love or belonging. The final decision of Pure is a rejection of nationalist logic and recognition that no nation can claim what partition has broken.

Discussion

Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh of Amrita Pritam and Saadat Hasan Manto Differently in the genre tone and structure but converge in the central idea that the partition was not only a political disaster but a deeply personal and spatial trauma. Through very different narrative strategies both texts articulate what this study calls 'haunted geographies' spaces where memory identity and silence are intertwined in the emotional fabric of the landscape. The trauma of pure is slow internalized and gender Its transformation into Hamide is not simply a religious conversion but a spatial exile of its birth right and of being past. The novel criticizes both patriarchy and national politics which suggests that none offers a true sanctuary for women trapped in the crossfire of community violence.

In contrast Toba Tek Singh adopts satire and absurdity to criticize the bureaucratic and nationalist violence that arises when nations try to re -draw identities with lines on a map. The 'madness' of Bishan Singh becomes a metaphor for the confusion and pain of those who cannot be located within the new political order. Unlike puro which finds a partial agency Bisman Singh is denied any resolution his body becomes a corpse trapped among nations symbolizing the final human cost of the cartographic logic of the partition. The texts that challenge the clean binaries of Hindu/Muslim India/Pakistan health/madness home/exile. They suggest that the true horror of the partition is in its consequences in the persistent dislocation of the survivors the emotional sterility of the political categories and the inability of the borders to contain memory or belonging.

In addition this study shows how both work spatializing trauma. They transform the configuration (houses, towns, institutions) into active sites of pain memory and resistance. Trauma is not just psychological or narrative it is integrated into geography. When applying trauma theory this analysis not only illuminates new dimensions of Pinjar and Toba Tek Singh, but also contributes to a growing academic effort to read the partition through space silence and memory a perspective even without being important in traditional historiography.

Conclusion

This study set out to explore how the construction of Toba Tek Singh by Amrita Pritam and Saadat Hasan Manto, the construction of haunted geographies emotional and symbolic spaces where trauma memory and identity are integrated. Through a spatially literary analysis based on trauma research has shown that these texts portray the partition not simply as a historical breakup but as a psychic and spatial crisis that remains far beyond the event itself.

Five key thematic concerns emerged

1. The transformation of households and institutions into haunted dislocation spaces.
2. The power of silence and spatial memory in the transmission of tacit trauma.
3. The mapping of gender violence in national and public geographies.
4. The representation of slow violence and survival in realities after migration.
5. The criticism of border madness and the absurdity of national identity imposed through cartographic violence.

In Pinjar Pritam uses interiority and gender space to represent the gradual breakdown and partial reconstitution of Self. In Toba Tek Singh Manto uses satire and madness to reveal the



irrationality and violence of identity imposed by the State. Despite its different tones and styles both texts illustrate that the partition is not over it continues to live in memory space and silence. By changing the lens of violence manifest to emotional geography this study contributes to partition literature by making visible what is often left invisible the persistent impact of trauma on space identity and being. It also addresses the academic gap by proposing haunted geography as a critical tool to understand how fiction remembers what the story forgets.

Future directions

This study establishes the bases for future research on how trauma, space and memory cross in the partition literature of southern Asia. Future consultations could expand the current analysis by exploring the fiction author of women in regional languages particularly of surrender areas such as rural Punjab Bengala or Sindh. These works can offer localized understandings of haunted geographies and gender displacement that differ from canonical texts. In addition, oral stories and personal testimonies often excluded from formal archives can enrich literary analysis by providing alternative trauma allocations linked to real spaces and experiences. Comparative studies of partition literature through the borders which examine the Indian Pakistani and Bangladesh narratives in relation to each other could even more illuminate how national frameworks shape the representations of memory and survival. Finally future academics can focus more directly on physical landscapes ruins architecture and objects within fiction as mnemonic devices that preserve cultural memory. These lines of research would continue to challenge the dominant historical narratives by emphasizing the affective and spatial legacies of the partition.

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