

Losing Homes: The Refugees' Side of Displacement from Rawalpindi in 1947

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Abstract

Although the official accounts of Partition provide statistics on the rehabilitation of refugees and assign a pro-active role to the state while scripting the task of rehabilitation as a success story, they do not dwell on the plight of dislocated people in the emotional and psychological domains. Set in the spatial context of the Rawalpindi Division of Punjab in 1947 this paper is focused on the refugees' experience of migration which from their perspective is characterised as uprooting—deracinating them of their accustomed geographical, social, and cultural environment. The Sikhs and Hindus became refugees overnight as the calamity of Partition fell upon them forcing them to leave their homes behind and move on account of survival and security. Their displacement caused fissures in their settled way of life and their process of recovery became a journey of overcoming multiple hardships that came along. More importantly, they had to endure the sense of loss as a lasting reality when it became clearer that their movement was not temporary but permanent with the making of India and Pakistan as two independent countries. This developed a lingering feeling of nostalgia for their old homes which were now located in a country they couldn't visit freely. Some found

solace by naming their businesses after the cities they had lived in to keep their memories alive while others lived on with the ache of distance between them and their previous abodes as they made efforts to settle into their new surroundings. Even when the sufferings were over in a material sense, their experience of forced displacement remained an emotive issue with continued feelings of nostalgia for the places where they could not return.

Keywords:

Partition, Violence, Displacement, Rawalpindi, Refugees

1. Official Response to the Refugees' Crisis:

The Punjab became an epicentre of widespread violence and mass migration when Partition took place in August 1947. In the areas where the borderline had been drawn as a result of the Radcliffe Award the tragedy was in full force but its repercussions also reached the far quarters of the province. Rawalpindi witnessed bloodshed and ensuing migration of its Sikh and Hindu inhabitants who constituted 'vulnerable targets' in this Muslim majority administrative division. They had to leave their houses and belongings behind and migrate to new places as attacks on them increased in frequency and severity. When migration became necessary, the Governments of Pakistan and India realised that arrangements for the safety of refugees were important. On September 07, 1947, in the Emergency Committee Meeting between Pakistan and India, the primary objective was to securely relocate people.¹ In this regard, the two Governments established the Liaison Agency headed by two Chief Liaison Officers (CLOs) for the evacuation of Muslims and non-Muslims across Punjab. For safe relocation of non-Muslims from West Punjab the Liaison Agency was to work in collaboration with the Military Evacuation Organisation (MEO) which had headquarters at

Amritsar.² In each district, District Liaison Officers (DLOs) were assigned the task of evacuating refugees.³ Soon after Partition, the Government of India shifted more than 50,000 non-Muslims daily.⁴

The evacuation of refugees took place in three stages. First, transit camps were set up for their migration; second, they were transported on foot, by motor trucks and rail or by air; and on the third level, they were settled in refugee camps or shelters at their desired destination.⁵ For the movement of refugees from the Rawalpindi Division, the popular means of transport used were motor trucks and rail but that posed the risk of mob attacks. An alternative was air transportation which took only a few hours to travel and there was no attack risk. Air transport was, however, mainly available to privileged Sikhs and Hindus who could afford or had connections with the high-ups who could arrange a flight. As a result, the danger they faced was minimal. Motor transport was used for short-distance travel wherein the non-Muslims were transported from villages and towns to transit camps or railway stations from where they set their journeys towards East Punjab. In India, the Government of Punjab set up various refugee camps where millions of displaced Sikhs and Hindus were accommodated. There were more than 160 refugee camps across India with 85 of those in East Punjab by the end of December 1947.⁶

During the evacuation programme, an important undertaking for the Government of India was to provide rehabilitation to the exodus of refugees from West Punjab. In September 1947, the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation was established and Mr. K. C. Neogy was appointed its minister. On 14 September 1947, the East Punjab Evacuee (Administration of Property) Ordinance was issued which after being amended many times in the light of changing considerations was passed through the parliament as The Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950.⁷ According to the Act, the deadline for

proclaiming people and their property as 'evacuee' was established for 01 March 1947.⁸ Through these legal measures, the Government of India took possession of the properties abandoned by outgoing Muslims as evacuee properties to distribute among the incoming refugees from West Punjab.

The Government of India chalked out various schemes and enacted legislation for urban and rural resettlement of refugees. To rehabilitate refugees, the East Punjab Government disbursed Rs. 190 million by January 1950.⁹ The employment exchanges that were already in place were used to help refugees find work matching their skills. The Government also granted loans to refugees ranging from Rs. 500 to Rs. 5,000 to settle down in any trade they wished.¹⁰ To provide residence to refugees, the East Punjab Government developed twelve townships in Punjab with Rs. 2.5 *crores* provided by New Delhi.¹¹ The East Punjab Government created rural housing programmes to meet the needs of the Sikh and Hindu agriculturalists who had left behind the fertile irrigated lands in West Punjab. Rs. 40 million were spent on displaced cultivators between September 1947 and March 1951.¹² Both the central and provincial governments of India brought substantial resources in use to rehabilitate refugees in various districts of East Punjab.

For their losses incurred from Partition, Sikhs and Hindus of high social status did not rely entirely on state assistance. Instead, they reclaimed their losses through their skills and resources. Following their initial settlement, a sizeable segment of the Sikh and Hindu capitalist elite left Punjab and relocated to Delhi and Bombay in search of greater economic opportunities. The table below shows the districts of settlement of refugees in East Punjab who had migrated from the Rawalpindi Division.

**Origin and Distribution of Displaced Persons from the
 Rawalpindi Division: Refugee Census, October-November,
 1948**

District of Origin	Districts of Settlement							
Rawalpindi	Ambala 24,910	Ludhiana 7,549					Others 2,849	Total 35,308
Attock	Ambala 6,806	Ludhiana 6,779					Others 1,193	Total 14,778
Jhelum	Ambala 11,897						Others 1,045	Total 12,942
Gujrat	Ambala 40,893	Ludhiana 7,053	Hoshiarpur 8,162				Others 4,926	Total 61,034
Shahpur	Ambala 29,427	Ludhiana 18,685	Hoshiarpur 5,610	Amritsar 6,949	Karnal 5,730	Jullundur 7,370	Others 6,477	Total 80,248
Mianwali	Ambala 5,441	Gurgaon 13,146	Karnal 7,575				Others 2,297	Total 28,459

Source: Government of Punjab, *Statistical Abstract Punjab, 1947-50* (Public Relations Department, Research and Reference Division, Punjab), 15-16.

In reality, shelter and food for refugees were at least something that could be provided for but the emotional aspect of displacement gained little consideration from the state. As attention shifts from official response to refugee rehabilitation, the psychological effects of dislocation on refugees become recognisable. Refugees were uprooted from their familiar surroundings and bewildered by the calamity that had befallen them. They were distressed by the fact that they had survived the violence's ferocity but that their family members or other relatives had perished. It shaped survivors' guilt among several refugees who were numbed by the successful yet dreadful experience of migration. As one of the refugees said, 'We have gone through so much; what more can happen to us? No one can do anything to us that can be more terrible than has already occurred. Why should we be afraid?'¹³

The Hindus and Sikhs dislocated from the Rawalpindi Division had to endure the disbelief of up-rootedness and hardships for adjusting to the new realities of life. The victims

of violence whose properties had been damaged by the rioters, the sufferers or those who did not suffer any brutal attack directly but felt its tremors indirectly had become refugees overnight. They had to put up with a sense of alienation and the feeling of grief, longing and nostalgia towards their old homes in their efforts to develop an attachment to the new places of relocation. Migration was not simply a process of emigrating from one place to another but in all its pathos it encompassed disruption in the lives of refugees.

2. Up-rootedness and Refugees' Nostalgia for their Old Homes:

In 1965, the Ministry of Rehabilitation was closed by the Indian Government officially signalling that the refugees from West Punjab had been integrated into the Indian nation-state and that they no longer required state support. On the other hand, for the refugees coming to terms with the forced displacement due to violence and growing roots in the new soil never became a bygone conclusion. They continued to live with the pain and suffering of violence and dislocation at least on emotional and psychological levels in their everyday life after Partition. From Rawalpindi, the Sikhs and Hindus had to leave their homes and their lands behind much against their will. The realisation of losing homes was traumatic for them to forget their old homes in their journey from refugees to becoming citizens. They continued to reminisce about their belongings; their homes, their friends, their childhood memories, long after Partition as long as they lived. For them, *batwara*, a local expression for Partition, was not merely a territorial affair rather it was a forceful, emotional, and intimate affair that had disrupted their everyday life. For the same reason several of them 'had simply not considered it necessary or appropriate to talk about and pass on these memories to the second generation.'¹⁴

For many people feelings of homesickness continued to find a place in their new lives after Partition because they still considered the old homes, localities and places, from where they had been dislocated, to be their homes. Jaspreet's father who had settled in Delhi couldn't get over the sense of pain and loss as a consequence of being uprooted from his home in Rawalpindi. Nearly sixty years after 1947, he continued to yearn longingly 'Oh, my house!' to feel for his former house in Rawalpindi.¹⁵ In the lingering emotional ties to his old house, he continued his sense of belonging to Rawalpindi and considered his former house there to be his 'home' despite living in Delhi for many years of his life. The memories of their old homes and their surroundings became persistent feelings of attachment for several refugees who tried to adjust to their new national identities after the making of India and Pakistan. Kasturi Lal whose family had left behind the spice business in Rawalpindi opened an eatery in Delhi and named it 'Pindi'¹⁶ in memory of the home they had left behind.¹⁷ Lal's brother also preserved the memories of their former home in Rawalpindi by naming his cloth shop 'Pindi Cloth House'.¹⁸ For them, it was difficult to forget their former homes and recollections of their homes were kept alive by the names of their business projects. They held the memories of their former homes and belongings close to their heart to help them get through the present.

On the one hand, the nostalgia for their old homes was painful for refugees, while on the other it was an agonising reality that they ached for a 'home' that was situated in Pakistan—seen by many Indians as rather an enemy country. The homesick longing for the land that they had left behind was compounded by the fact that now international political boundaries marked the distinct national identities of the people, who were previously together and made their movement restricted within the subcontinent. For them, the real partition was an emotive affair which had not partitioned their hearts but

the bureaucratic procedures of visa and passport etc. required for visiting their old homes and places made their visit virtually impossible. Kasturi Lal 'wanted to go back [to Rawalpindi] and see everything again but he couldn't as he didn't have a passport or visa.'¹⁹ The pity was that he was never able to go back to his hometown, Rawalpindi, which gave his restaurant its name.

The marking of political borders and assigning national identities that became, in some lives, perpetual and rigid is an aspect of Partition-related violence to which Zamindar refers as 'bureaucratic violence'.²⁰ Krishna Baldev Vaid, who authored the famous Partition novel *The Broken Mirror*, felt distressed at the rupture of his life by Partition and the resultant displacement. Having been displaced from his hometown Dinga (Gujrat district of Rawalpindi Division) he 'never felt rooted here [Indian Punjab] mentally.'²¹ He wished that 'if they [the people on both sides of the border] can't be reunited, then at least they should have an open border like Canada and USA.'²²

While it was difficult for many people in bureaucratic/administrative terms to travel back and visit their old homes in the Rawalpindi Division to relive their old memories, others found it hard emotionally. The trauma and horror of violence they witnessed made their journeys to their previous homes an agony for which they couldn't gather enough courage to undertake despite having an opportunity. Satish Gujral,²³ an eminent painter, sculptor, and muralist of India, witnessed ghastly scenes of bloodshed during Partition while he worked for seven months with his father L. Avtar Narain Gujral for evacuation of non-Muslims from his hometown Jhelum (in Jhelum district of Rawalpindi Division). The anguish of what he had seen in those seven months disturbed him so much that despite his nostalgia for his old home and having prospects of visiting Jhelum he could not do

that after settling in India. Longingly, he expressed that ‘Never again did I go back to Jhelum. My heart wanted to. I went to Lahore twice. Not Jhelum. It’s strange, every time I went to Lahore, I fell ill and couldn’t go further.’²⁴ Satish Gujral himself narrowly escaped a direct incident of violence when during evacuation a mob surrounded his house and it was only after intervention by Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, a Muslim League leader from Jhelum who was a good friend of Satish Gujral’s father, that the mob was forced to leave.²⁵ The pain and sufferings Satish Gujral witnessed impacted his thoughts so deeply that ‘when [he] started to paint, it never crossed [his] mind that [he] was painting Partition, but what came out was Partition.’²⁶

When Satish Gujral’s brother Mr I. K. Gujral, former Prime Minister of India (April 1997-March 1998) and an active member of the India-Pakistan People’s Forum for Friendship and Democracy, was asked, ‘at what point did you realise personally that it would mean uprooting of you typically from one place to another, from west to east?’ he replied, ‘Never did we think we would come.’²⁷ When most Congress functionaries were preparing to move to India, L. Avtar Narain Gujral was willing to stay in Pakistan because he seriously considered the possibility of a safe and secure environment for minorities that had been promised by Raja Ghazanfar Ali.²⁸ As Partition took place Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan asked Lala Avtar Narain to convince Hindus to stay back but with the increase of violence which made the stay of non-Muslims almost inconceivable L. Avtar took on the role of liaison officer, helping evacuate the Sikhs and Hindus. Hence, L. Avtar’s desire to stay in Pakistan eventually changed into a decision to go to India where the Gujral family tried to build their life anew. L. Avtar became a judge, I. K. Gujral joined politics and Satish Gujral returned to his art.

The nostalgia of the old home was a question of memory not only for those who had experienced violence but also for those who had escaped violence and safely made it to the other side of the border. One such instance was that of Kiranji who travelled safely from Rawalpindi to Lahore and then took a flight to Delhi. In her post-Partition life in India, she reminisced about her school, Chelsea Convent, in Rawalpindi, and recalled its streets with great fondness. In conversation with Devika Chawla about her life in 'Pindi' she said, 'You see it's been very heartrending. You've left your birthplace. We are Indian citizens, no doubt about it, but it is the birthplace that you always think about. So that is something that has happened and you feel very, very unhappy and emotional and sentimental that you can no longer freely visit it. You know anytime you see it as a flash in the news; Pindi, it's nostalgia.'²⁹ Kiranji remained proud of her home in Pindi because 'nothing c[ould] compare with it, or perhaps nothing must be allowed to compare with it—an act of guarding memories, of keeping them alive.'³⁰

For refugees obtaining a house from the government was about getting what they were entitled to, but the sense of belonging seemed to have been left behind. For them, their previous homes represented various aspects of their lives such as security, comfort, and well-being. Similarly, in Baldwin's *What the Body Remembers*, there is an emotional attachment to 'home' after up-rootedness for Sardarji whose experience of migration from Rawalpindi to Delhi in the wake of Partition was that of forced migration but elite in character. In the same way as other of the privileged Sikhs of Rawalpindi, the experience of migration for Sardarji, a rich landowner, British educated and an engineer in the irrigation department, was safe. He didn't find it hard to re-establish his life in Delhi on account of his social class. As he lived in India his emotional connection to his ancestral property in Rawalpindi, 'every

village his family had handed down seven generations’, and especially his *Pindihaveli*, ‘where his father and mother died and the memory of which sustained him all the lonely days in England’,³¹ was something that stayed with him all time.

Home was a place difficult to leave and that is the reason when most non-Muslims from West Punjab moved to the opposite side of the border it was not with the expectation of lasting relocation. When the family of Amritji, whose father owned a furniture factory and led a comfortable life, decided to leave Rawalpindi for Delhi they thought their stay would be temporary. Amritji recalled the decision that ‘My father was convinced that he would return, so we took nothing, we had the furniture factory and two houses, we could have sold them, but we just left them there. We didn’t bring money, we didn’t bring anything.’³² The belief that a sudden spate of violence was a short-lived madness was held not by Amritji’s family only. Migration not really with the possibility of lasting settlement was an important element of mass migration in the wake of Partition. Many refugees when they left their homes, while their ‘familiar *way-of-being* in the world’³³ was upset by the bloodshed, dread or vulnerability of Partition, it was motivated by a belief that they would return.

Mr and Mrs Malhotra, who came from Rawalpindi to Bombay in September 1947 because the violence had escalated, thought at the time that they would return in ten or fifteen days when everything had quieted down.³⁴ The Malhotra’s like Amritji’s family and many other Punjabi refugees thought of returning to their old homes once normalcy was restored but their migration turned out to be permanent. As depicted, in Manto’s *The Assignment*, there was optimism about the communal violence as ‘two weeks or so of unrest and then business as usual’³⁵ and so people began to move but only temporarily. However, this temporary dislocation changed into a lasting feature since the birth of Pakistan and India as two

sovereign countries placed the refugees within new geographical borders. The refugees were instantly regarded as citizens of their new countries once they were granted citizenship. Ironically, this awarding of citizenship in both Pakistan and India meant that one was now an outsider in their original home, situated in a country where they had been displaced from.³⁶

3. Restoration of Loss and Refugees' Efforts towards Ultimate Resettlement:

Due to violence in the Rawalpindi Division in 1947 and the resultant migration, the Sikhs and Hindus experienced multiple levels of loss; the loss of homes, the lives of their relatives, and as well as the loss of a familiar lifestyle. The sense of loss dominated their experience of migration and required from them concerted efforts during their journeys of resettlement. For the wealthy and 'savvy' refugees it was the highly emotional issue of belonging and deprivation that characterised their process of rehabilitation. Whereas for many middle-class non-Muslims, it necessitated several relocations and plenty of efforts extending over years before they felt they were 'resettled'. The misery of the victims of violence in Rawalpindi district earlier in March 1947 was appalling because they had to undergo multiple dislocations within western Punjab before they were forced to ultimately migrate to East Punjab after August. Their experience of multiple migrations was marked by physical hardships and deprivations, which Kartar Singh Duggal captures very well in his novel *Twice Born, Twice Dead*. In this novel, the main character Sohne Shah, the Sikh village headman, and his adopted Muslim daughter Satbharai wander from Rawalpindi to Lahore to escape violence and thereafter to Lyallpur where they are once again driven out due to the partition of the Punjab.³⁷

Once the Sikhs and Hindus having dislocated from their homes were safely on the other side of the border, the full impact of Partition's upheaval started to become apparent. Several of the refugees who had not anticipated migration and were forced to leave their possessions were reduced to destitution in their lives. It took them many years of struggle and difficulties to rebuild their lives afresh. But one thing common in the rehabilitation experience of all Hindu and Sikh refugees from the Rawalpindi Division, ranging from commercial castes of Khattris, Aroras, and Banias to agriculturalists like Jats and Labanas, is that it is marked by the rupture in their lives. Finding appropriate housing and occupation was one aspect of the resettlement of refugees; they also had to make efforts to rehabilitate their minds and bodies in new environments and circumstances.

Amritji's journey to recovery from loss due to dislocation from Rawalpindi was shaped by constant shifts in places and employment. He recollected:

We went to Ambala because my sister was there with her husband, then from there I went to Udaipur with my father. My uncle was an engineer and he asked us to come there because he used to do some work for the Maharaja of Udaipur. We started supplying rations [groceries] to the Maharja's army. We were there until 1950, then we moved to Delhi. We moved to Delhi because my brother had started a furniture shop in Connaught Place because we had got some money in exchange for our property in Pakistan. It was called a claim.³⁸

Amritji's life was dictated by forces beyond his control. He had to finish his school via distance learning because he said that 'We were not encouraged to go to school, my parents did not insist, the reason being, there was no food in the house, what could Mother tell us?'³⁹ He recounted that the early years in India were of extreme hardships:

Life was hard. When we ate in the evening, we got dal [lentil] for 4 annas—250 grams—for ten people. We used to pour water in it or there used to be some *sabzi* [vegetable]. Or we had meat, we could only afford to buy 250 grams of it, it was for 5 annas. My mother used to put cauliflower or potatoes in it. She would give us a piece each. There was always *aam ka achaar* [pickled mango] in the home, so if we got hungry we used to eat our *rotis* [wholemeal flatbreads] with the *achaar*. Then things got better, and we had more. But at that time even food was a problem, there was always a shortage. I also remember how we got our first ceiling fan, we had it put in room. We could sleep inside in the summer, we would all sleep in the same room. Before the fan we would just sleep on the terrace at night, during the summers. The whole terrace used to be full of people. My father used to feel very hot, he used to put water on the sheet on his *charpoy* [bed] and sleep.⁴⁰

For several refugees, there was a sudden and dramatic reversal in their living conditions and overall family status. Balraj Malhotra was 21 when Partition took place. He had acquired pre-university education and came from a fairly well-off middle-class family who lived in Malakwal (Gujrat district of the Rawalpindi Division). When violence broke out in the Punjab the whole family migrated to Delhi where they came to live in Kingsway Camp and were together with their relatives (around 35 people) allotted a small army barrack unit measuring approximately 50 square meters. Making a living was very difficult for him in those days, he stated:

I wanted to help my family financially but there were no jobs to be found. And I was young, strong and enthusiastic. It was difficult for me to sit in the camp and do nothing. So finally I, along with my cousins, who were in the same age group and same conditions tried many difficult things. We went to the extent of going to the railway platform in the main station everyday and spotting a long-distance train that was scheduled to depart in the next half hour or so. We could occupy a sleeper berth or two in the reserved

compartment and wait for the rightful passengers to arrive. People were eager to leave for whatever they had to in those days and were not in the mood to argue over this irregularity. We would refuse to vacate the seat till they paid us Rs 10-15 per berth. The passengers who were already afraid and just wanting to get away feared us even more when 7-8 young strong men sat together and blocked that seat. In this, we could earn a bit so as not to become burdens on our families. We did this for a very long time for months at end. But the circumstances were such that we could have tried anything in those days. Soon I found a job in Connaught Place as a shop assistant and later I got a shop in Khan Market [Delhi].⁴¹

While some refugees struggled on their own, others took up issues related to their situation with the state. They wrote letters to political leaders and refugee organisations for help. The letter below is one example wherein a refugee sought help from the state after having suffered material loss and irreplaceable loss of his family members as a result of violence in 1947. The letter states:

41, Arambagh Lane, New Delhi,
28th October 1947.

Shri AcharayJee,

Sadar Namaskar. I am quite a stranger to you but before encroaching on your busy time [I] will try to introduce myself. I am an unfortunate resident of Campbellpur [Attock] district (Punjab) and was living in Quetta. Formerly a follower of BapooJee [Gandhi] but now have lost my way. The Independence in Pakistan came to me as follows:-

On 22-08-1947, my son 30 years old with his wife and daughter were killed at Bostan station when undauntedly defying mob attack and their all belongings looted. I was made to move out of Quetta after loading all my belongings under pressure into a wagon. I with five dependent members succeeded in getting into Delhi and the wagon is still in Pakistan. My inherited as well as own collections in all kinds and shapes in Punjab has changed hands against my

will. My strength is failing in reducing the personal and family needs to MINIMUM because no means exist. The hunger and winter are not co-operating. How to fit youngsters in the society remains a problem. Now, I with my dependents, am a complete destitute but not CALM. I do not know what is coming next.

In studying the leading papers, the trend and tone of articles and general treatment being met adds everyday to my fretting and chaffing – thus I am compelled to write to you. Acharya Ji, request you to kindly excuse me for addressing you and mistakes in my language. No disrespect to any personality is meant.⁴²

The Sikh and Hindu refugees who were forced to migrate to escape violence were unable to shift their assets with them unlike those who had undertaken anticipatory migration. The letter lays out the plight of the writer and the compelling circumstances in which he was involuntarily made to move out of Quetta against his will; his possessions were left behind in the Punjab and he reached a destitute state.

Many families had no idea that they would have to leave their land and home to go to a new city and place with which they had no ties, where they knew no one, and where the culture and customs would all be different. While it was difficult for some refugees to restart their lives anew after migration, others utilised their previous connections to re-establish themselves after migration to East Punjab. Several refugees from the colony districts returned to their ancestral homes and quarters from where they or their parents had earlier departed westward during canal colonisation. The refugees, who still kept links with their ancestral villages and used to visit periodically, utilised the pre-existing business or family links which assisted them in their rehabilitation. They also had a sense of attachment to multiple places at the same time because they or their ancestors were connected to their place of origin in East Punjab while living in West Punjab. For them, migration in 1947 was more of a return journey to their

ancestral place making their resettlement relatively easier. Their relocation was just one of the latest movements they had experienced.

At large, for Sikhs and Hindus from Rawalpindi migration was an experience of forcible dislocation. Despite the differing experiences of the refugees on account of their social class and caste, they all shared the misfortune of displacement from their homes and belongings. While some were forced to move because of growing fear and uncertainty, others tried to escape violence by departing early. Yet many non-Muslims stayed on for some time even after Partition but 'to stay meant living in a new social structure where one's religion now formed the mainstream on whose margins now existed the 'new' minority.'⁴³ In this way, it was a conflict-induced migration for them wherein there was a thin dividing line between choice and coercion. They were now the non-Muslim minorities. They had a choice to stay but staying on was virtually impossible on practical grounds. Those who had escaped violence and lacked economic prospects in East Punjab did not want to move to the other side of the border but they were caught in a quandary after Partition because the inflow of violence-stricken Muslims from East Punjab increased their apprehensions of being killed in reprisal. Migration to their community's majority part i.e. East Punjab became a route to escape death and the fear of subjugation to the way of living defined by the Muslim majority in West Punjab. They bravely made a crucial decision to forsake everything they had known in the past when faced with difficult conditions to survive yet losing homes caused fissures in the day-to-day existence of refugees after Partition.

¹ Rajendra Singh, *The Military Evacuation Organisation, 1947-48* (New Delhi: Government of India, 1962), 11-12.

² Government of India, *Millions on the Move: The Aftermath of Partition* (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1948), 8.

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- ³ Satya M. Rai, *Partition of the Punjab: A Study of Its Effects on the Politics and Administration of the Punjab, 1947-56* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1965), 78.
- ⁴ Government of India, *After Partition* (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1948), 52.
- ⁵ Ravinder Kaur, "The Last Journey: Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration," *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 22 (June 3, 2006): 2223.
- ⁶ Rai, *Partition of the Punjab*, 108.
- ⁷ Ravinder Kaur, *Since 1947: Partition Narratives among Punjabi Migrants of Delhi* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 96-97.
- ⁸ Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950, cited in Kaur, *Since 1947*, 97.
- ⁹ Ian Talbot, "Punjabi Refugees' Rehabilitation and the Indian State: Discourses, Denials and Dissonances," *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no. 1 (January 2011): 118.
- ¹⁰ Government of India, *After Partition*, 64-65.
- ¹¹ The twelve townships were located at Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Ludhiana, Khanna, Jagadhri, Karnal, Panipat, Rohtak, Sonapat, Gurgaon, Palwal and Rewari. Notes from P. N. Thapar, Rehabilitation Department, to The Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, New Delhi, Ministry of Rehabilitation, 21 February 1950. *Housing Scheme in East Punjab*, RHB/1(1)/1950, NAI, cited in Pippa Virdee, *From the Ashes of 1947: Reimagining Punjab* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 135.
- ¹² M. S. Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes: An Account of the Rehabilitation of Refugees from West Punjab in Rural Areas of East Punjab* (Chandigarh: Public Relations Department, Punjab, 1954), 162.
- ¹³ Stephen Keller, *Uprooting and Social Change: The Role of Refugees in Development* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1975), 116.
- ¹⁴ Vanita Sharma, "Inherited Memories: Second-Generation Partition Narratives from Punjabi Families in Delhi and Lahore," *Cultural and Social History* 6, no. 4 (2009): 417.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 415.
- ¹⁶ Pindi is a colloquial term for Rawalpindi.
- ¹⁷ The small eatery Lal Kasturi opened grew from a little roadside stand to a flourished restaurant and is today ranked in the top 120 out of more than 12,000 restaurants in Delhi. Kasturi Lal Wadhwa, "A Delhi Staple," in *Divided by Partition United by Resilience: 21 Inspirational Stories from 1947*, ed. Mallika Ahluwalia (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2018), 81-82.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 82.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 83.
- ²⁰ Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 2.

²¹ Krishna Baldev Vaid, interview by Andrew Whitehead, in Delhi, on January 12, 1997, interview tape 29, side B, *India: A People Partitioned*, SOAS Special Collections, 1998.

²² Ibid.

²³ Satish Gujral was brother of I. K. Gujral who was a politician and served as Prime Minister of India between April 1997 and March 1998.

²⁴ Satish Gujral, "There was no Compassion on Anyone's Face," in Mallika Ahluwalia, ed., *Divided by Partition*, 163.

²⁵ Ibid., 161.

²⁶ Ibid., 163.

²⁷ Interview with Mr. I. K. Gujral, 25 July, 2003, in Nair, *The Changing Homelands*, 221.

²⁸ Nair, *The Changing Homelands*, 223-4.

²⁹ Devika Chawla, *Home, Uprooted: Oral Histories of India's Partition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 78.

³⁰ Ibid., 85.

³¹ Shauna Singh Baldwin, *What the Body Remembers* (London: Anchor, 2000), 434-435.

³² Chawla, *Home, Uprooted*, 130-31.

³³ E. Valentine Daniel and John Chr. Knudsen, eds., *Mistrusting Refugees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 1.

³⁴ Names of the refugees changed to protect privacy. Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Malhotra, Pune, 25 July 1998, in Daiya, *Violent Belongings*, 133.

³⁵ Saadat Hasan Manto and Introduction by Daniyal Mueenuddin, *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, trans., Khalid Hasan (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2011), 11.

³⁶ Daiya, *Violent Belongings*, 133.

³⁷ The story is set in a spatial context of village Themial in Rawalpindi district from where due to attacks on Sikh minorities of the village, Sohne Shah, the principal character in the novel, loses his daughter, Rajkarni, kidnapped by rioters. Sohne Shah wanders from one place to another with Satbharai, the dear daughter of his bosom friend Allahdita who laid down his life to his Hindu and Sikh brethren of his village during the riots, until Sohne Shah crosses the border and reaches India. When at the end riots subside and order restores, the government of Indian and Pakistan decide to exchange the riot-stricken refugees to their respective homelands, and then naturally Satbharai has to part from Sohne Shah and return to Pakistan. See, Kartar Singh Duggal, *Twice Born, Twice Dead*, trans. Jamal Ara (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979).

³⁸ Chawla, *Home, Uprooted*, 132.

³⁹ Ibid., 133.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 134.

⁴¹ Interview with Balraj Malhotra, Delhi, in Kaur, *Since 1947*, 187. Balraj Malhotra was able to own a successful bookselling business in Khan Market in Delhi. The market, named after Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was established in 1950 for allotment to partition refugees.

⁴² AICC II Instalment File no. G/24/1947-48, in Kaur, *Since 1947*, 186. The letter-writer did not identify himself but a handwritten clerical note on the margin says ‘A letter from an old Congressman, Mangal Sain who has lost much in Pakistan and complains of Muslims (last few words unreadable)’. The clerk recommended the letter to be sent to the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation for further action.

⁴³ Kaur, “The Last Journey,” 2222.