

**VOICING THE SILENCED HISTORIES: A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF RAHIMASOOM REZA'S ADHAGAON AND
INTIZARHUSSAIN'SBASTI**

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Abstract

Literature has emerged as an alternative archive for partition history, which has great potential to bring in forefront the silenced local accounts of the marginalized people often elided in the fact-based statist History. India experienced one of the world's largest population displacements in 1947 at the time of partition of British India. The year 1947 signified not only the inscription of spatial borders but also erected a national-historical check-point across which old cultural and familial histories were erased only to be replaced by the new nationally imposed identities. Further segmentation of Pakistan in 1971 on the basis of language marked a big question mark on the partition of 1947. This paper represents a comparative analysis of RahiMasoom Reza's AdhaGaon (1966) and IntizarHussain'sBasti (1978) to retrieve the history of those who had to migrate, were caught in the sectarian violence, and lost their homes, hearth and their families. Both of the novels are the best examples in which serious attempts are made to capture the human side of the historic event: the sense of loss at being uprooted from one's home, the feeling of helplessness and dejection at the deterioration of the newly constructed nations. The novels strongly interrogate in retrospect the religion-based partition or rather partitions of the Indian subcontinent. The paper humbly shows that the selected novels can be read as potential sources of history.

Keywords: Literature, history, statist, marginalized, home, nation.

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Introduction:

We may not speak but deep in our hearts we know,
That you have lost, as we too have lost in this divide.
With this false freedom, towards destruction,
You ride, and so too do we ride. (...)
Fully awake, they robbed us till they had their fill
You kept sleeping, leaving care aside, we too left care aside.
The redness of the eyes tells the tale.
That you have cried, and so we, too, have cried.

(UstadDamman)

The year 1947 marked the birth of two nations: India and Pakistan on the basis of religion. But in reality it marked a division of the Indian Muslims, first in two states in 1947 and later in three nation states in 1971. It is one of the tragic ironies of partition that the birth of the Muslim state of Pakistan brought about a division of the Muslims of the subcontinent. Formation of Pakistan has been a very complex riddle which even after so many years is difficult to resolve in its entirety. It was assumed that the partition was a tragic blow to India but a celebratory moment and new beginning for Pakistan. But for Pakistan also it turned out to be a cause of great crises, which still are debatable and have remained unresolved. Moreover, the creation of Pakistan on the basis of religion created a new situation in the country for the nationalist Muslims who chose to stay in India. Nationalist Muslims who had opposed the creation of Pakistan were now being sidetracked and treated as outsiders or were suspected for their loyalties.

Thus the Partition of Indian sub-continent instead of settling clashes between Hindu- Muslims communities enhanced the rift between them. Historians like GyanendraPandey and others have traced the origin of the Muslim problem in India to the difficult historical legacy of Pakistan: the resultant stigmatization of the Muslims in India, and to persistent suspicion of their national loyalty which is seen as one of the gravest consequences of Partition. Nationalistic historiographies in both the countries have been elitist in their approaches "For it fails to acknowledge, far less interpret, the contribution made by the people on their own, that is independently of the elite to the making and development of this nationalism" (Guha 38-39).

By analyzing the narratives of two Muslim writers, IntizarHussian who migrated to Pakistan in the wake of partition and RahiMasoom Reza who stayed in India and was not swayed by the Pakistan Movement, the present paper humbly attempts to retrieve the real experiences of the marginalized people and establishes the fact that "Pakistan was not everybody's dream and Jinnah not everybody's Quaid" (Hasan 40).

The paper supports HamzaAlavi's views that, the ' Muslim movement' behind the call for a separate homeland was dominated above all by Muslim professionals and the salariat... of northern India, especially the U.P...Bihar and Punjab' (Alviqtd in Svensson 64);"The conception of a Muslim nation was articulated most vocally by the Muslim members of the salaries, challenging the slogan of Akhand Bharat"(indivisible India) (Alavi 26) and the views of Mohammad Mujeeb that 'It represented members of a class, not an entire community' (Mohammad Mujeeb, cited in Hasan 14)

The paper is divided into two parts. The first part will offer a close reading of the novel *AdhaGaon* and will analyze how intervention of nationalism and communal politics disrupted the domestic spaces of the common men and women in the wake of partition and exiled them from their own birthplaces, their villages. It is assumed that partition was a tragedy for India but a celebratory moment to Pakistan. The second segment of the paper will address the text *Bastito* see whether migration to the desired land fulfilled their dreams or not.

Mourning the nation:

The Miyans, who for centuries had made Gangauli their home and had lived and died there, realized that they no longer had any links with the village they had called and believed to be their own. Whether to create Pakistan or not had been no meaning to them, but the abolition of Zamindari shook the very foundations of their souls. They left their homes, and when their homes were lost, what difference was there between Ghazipur and Karachi. (VD 276)

Partition was the decision taken by the selected leaders, including Nehru, Jinnah, Gandhi, Patel etc. Their visions were negotiated in large urban spaces/ cities like Delhi, Lahore etc. While many urban areas were centres of various political parties, most of the rural areas initially were far away from urban politics. However, gradually the consequences of the power struggles and the decisions taken by leaders began to spread at a quick speed to remote villages also.

The novel *AdhaGaon* was written in the aftermath of the China-Indian border-war and while the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965 shook the subcontinent. This was a time when Muslims were facing difficult historical legacy of Pakistan. Contrary to the popular notion that majority of Muslim masses were in favour of the two-nation theory; *AdhaGaon* offers a different perspective by exposing the unflinching love of Shia Muslims for their village.

Let us see how the rustic people in *AdhaGaon* who were far-far away from the politics of the urban elites record their resistance against the process of nation-making by establishing their strong love for their village Gangauli and resisting and rejecting the idea of partition on the basis of the religion. Such feelings and emotions of Indian Muslims were neither heard at the time of partition nor are recorded in the pages of official histories. It is only through these literary narratives we become aware of such nationalistic feelings which if might have heard in time, calamity of partition might have been avoided.

The idea of Pakistan is absurd and in no way acceptable to the people of Gangauli and this is conveyed through different characters. Tannu becomes the mouthpiece of those innumerable innocent people who were not least interested in the formulation of a separate homeland for Muslims. He wonders:

(.....) So why they are going to vote for Muslim League? Why did they feel a need for a homeland? Why were Muslims who had kissed the sandals of Lord Rama, accepting them as footprints of the Prophet, making Pakistan? Did they really want to create Pakistan? Did all of them, who were going to vote for Muslim League, know what Pakistan would be, and what it would be like? [VD 235- 236]

When did I say that it wasn't? But Lahore is not the Ka'aba, is it?" asked Tannu. 'Look, Chacha you have not seen all that I have, so you cannot see what I can. Anything constructed on a foundation of hate and fear cannot be auspicious. Even after the creation of Pakistan, Gangauli will remain in India and Gangauli is after all Gangauli [VD 235]

No forces of this world can challenge this claim of Tannu where he assimilates himself with the land. He is insistent that his very identity is the village itself He argues: " I am a Muslim.

But I love this village because I myself am this village. I love the Indigo Godown, this tank and these mud lanes because they are different forms of myself.” (VD 234)

The most significant character is PhunnanMiyan through whose actions and thoughts Reza has affirmed his idea of nationhood, which stands unparallel in the whole realm of partition literature. When Haji Gafoor asks about Jinnah, PhunnanMiyan blows the very idea in the air. His statement not only undermines the importance of Jinnah, but also affirms his belief in the space of Gangauli:

(...) ‘If Pakistan’s made, it will be a long way from Gangauli. You go and look after your spinning wheel, and keep your warp straight. Pakistan-Akistan is just a game for filling stomachs. (VD 241)

Another character Mighdad being asked by Tannu whether he intends to go to Pakistan replies: “I’m a farmer, Tannubhai! Wherever my crops are, my land is-that’s where I am! [VD 202]. Rather he proposes to send his father because he has become a religious follower, wearing *sherwani* coats, and speaking Persian. Mighdad’s example intervenes the notion that it was the younger generation who was interested in migration for brighter future possibilities in Pakistan because mostly it was older generation who remained rooted to their ancestral homes and young generation migrated.

Hakim Sahib’s ardent love for his village is so much that it encompasses all his dreams:

Not once did the Hakim Sahib ever dream of leaving Gangauli. It never occurred to him that he should build another ChattarManzil opposite that famous mansion in Lucknow. The Great Gate of Uttar Patti was large enough to contain all his dreams and still have room left over (VD 57).

Saddan even after his emigration to Pakistan remains rooted in Gangauli. The following broodings of Saddan not only reflect his attachment with the village Gagauli but also give a glimpse of the dilemmas the migrants were passing through in the new land:

He had become the citizen of Pakistani city, but he was still the same Syed SaadatulHasnainZaidi of Gangauli. That was why he was called a refugee in his own country, Pakistan. In so many years he had never once asked himself who or what he had taken refuge from.” ...These memories were of no particular importance, they were extremely foolish memories, but still Saddan embraced each one of them again and again and wept. He yearned for Gagauli (VD 301-302).

However, when mediation through aesthetic agencies does not satiate Reza’s unmappable love for the land of his birth, he outbursts directly and even by breaking the

conventional mode of narration through authorial intervention confronts the readers and places the introduction almost towards the end of the novel. He re-affirms his claim on India, and especially his village Gangauli, as his homeland, not as a novelist or as a citizen, but as a human being and citizen of this nation:

The Jan Sangh says that Muslims are outsiders. How can I presume to they're lying? But I must say that I belong to Ghazipur. My bonds with Gangauli are unbreakable. It's not just a village, it's my home. Home. (...)And I give no one the right to say to me, 'Rahi! You don't belong to Gangauli, and so get out and go, say, to Rae Bareli.' Why should I go, Sahib? I will not go (VD 273).

This excerpt not only captures ordinary Muslims' disinterest in the Pakistan movement but also acknowledges the differences between the ideologies of the members of the elite class Muslims and Indian nationalist Muslims. For these rustic people their village is their home; their nation. This forceful proclamation of the author punctures the very idea of the Pakistan movement and ascertains the fact that it was just an imposition of handful elites or educated class on a larger group of Muslims. The ideology of common people and elites was entirely different very much rooted in the land of their birth.

The process of nation formation and shifting the space of their home is beyond the understanding of the rustics of Gangauli. Their hearts are imbued with great attachment for their birthplace Gangauli. They are not able to accept any reality other than Gangauli. However, when the reality of partition comes into force, these innocent rustics are helpless. Their resistance feeble down. They don't have any other option than to reconcile with the reality. Mourning on Moharram becomes an occasion to mourn all the losses: personal, cultural and national. After the turmoil of the partition, Moharram acquires a new and entirely changed historical meaning for the people of Gangauli. The women, who assemble every year to sing nauhas, weep, not only for the sacrifice of Imam Hussain, but also for the ordinary men, women and children exiled and killed during the partition.

In the last celebration of Moharram as represented in the chapter *Lonliness* when Shias of Gangauli start mourning for the martyrdom of Mohammad Hussain, the mourning also epitomizes the lament for other losses: the loss of their home village Gangauli, loss of their near and dear ones, loss of their age-old identity and the loss of their lands and social status. Thus, Moharram becomes a symbol of mourning not only of the national loss but also of the personal losses.

Reza advocates the *Ganga Jamuni* culture of Indian society. There are various examples in the novel, which highlight the fact that despite the various discriminations and hierarchies' village people were living in a great harmony. This harmony was the result of

mutual respect shown by both the Hindus and the Muslims for the beliefs, rituals, ceremonies, gods and goddesses of other religion.

Another statist and popular belief which Reza dismantles in the novel is the popular perception of the division of language on the basis of religion. It is written purposefully in Devanagari script so as to reject the suggestion that Urdu and Hindi are two separate languages and are somehow implicated in the religious politics of the nation. The people speak Bhojpuri mixture of Urdu and Hindi. The dialect, spoken by both: the Muslims and the Hindus, enables Reza to argue that the claims of loyalty to the village, which have subsumed generations are stronger than all the other claims.

Thus Reza articulates the agony, dilemma of Indian Muslims living in distant rural areas away from the state politics and by showcasing the views, arguments within the Muslim Community successfully and strongly projects that all Muslims were not favour of partition. It was the decision of only handful elites. In fact Gangauli village is the microcosm of the whole India. What these proponents of Muslim League said was propagated all over India. The dialogues of Gangaulians are very illuminating to understand the communally charged atmosphere of that period. What these common men and women discuss, refute and convey to the elite people reveals their strong faith in their homeland as well as their power of resistance against the decisions taken by a few politicians and elite people. If these voices might be heard in time, partition might not have occurred. Such type of marginalized cries and claims are not the part of the official history.

Thus by retrieving the experiences, beliefs of the rustic people Reza debunks the theory of two nations on the basis of religion and strongly claims his right over the territory of his birth.

Migration: A Failed Hijrat:

The text *Basti* offers deep insight into the psychological and emotional aspects of the partition event and its' impact on human lives through the mental journey of its protagonist Jakir migrated to Pakistan from India in 1947. The novel looks beyond the interpretation of Partition as just a political decision, and succeeds in capturing the human side of the historic event—the sense of loss at being uprooted from one's home, the hope of a new beginning that accompanies the creation of Pakistan, the feeling of helplessness and dejection at the deterioration of the newly constructed nation as an ideal homeland, and the frustration at the fall of Dhaka.

The national-communal conflict of 1971 serves as a trigger for the recollection of memories dislocated by Partition. The central protagonist, Zakir, develops an obsessive

linkage with his past, reminded against the upheavals in Lahore during the war for Bangladeshi independence in 1971. The novel revolves around the life of Zakir feeling estranged and nostalgic about his village lost during the partition. Alok Bhalla opines that, "Nostalgic remembrance is for him a form of retrieving knowledge about those modes of living from the past which could be used for the redemption of 'future-time'" (Bhalla 22).

In *Basti*, at initial stage the protagonist Jakir welcomes the act of Migration. Though there are no direct acts of celebrations, it is implied when he compares and contrasts the first day in Pakistan with that of his experience in Rupnagar, the place of his birth, his home: ".... my first day in this land, should always shine in my memory.....When Pakistan was still all new, when the sky of Pakistan was fresh like the sky of Rupnagar, and the earth was not yet soiled" (*Basti*69).

But soon this freshness and feeling was darkened by the agonized memory of Jakir when in the darkness of night he remembers his homeland left behind:

As he lay in the large, well-lit room, he poignantly remembered the shabby room he had left behind. The sleep that had come into his eyes vanished.....The image of his room was fixed in his brain. Then he covered his face with the sheet and wept (*Basti* 68).

And at later stage, (...) and for the room in which I spread out my bedding I felt no affection at all. I found myself constantly remembering the room I'd left behind (*Basti*73).

Jakir remembers the initial days with hope and aspiration when "There was lots of space in the houses. There was even more space in the houses" (70) and recalls those days as "Those were good days, good and sincere." (*Basti*71) However, those untarnished days got changed:

...., how the goodness and sincerity gradually died out from those days, how the days came to be filled with misfortune and the nights with ill omen. How before our eyes the houses of Shamnagar went from being spacious to being narrow, and the space in people's hearts kept dimishing (*Basti*71).

The hijrat, which for Muslims had a religious sanctity, becomes a different type of journey. The hijrat turns into a journey of a decline from a remembered utopia to an imminent doom; from the creative goal of hijrat to the aimless and self-deceptive wandering of the present; from the people deeply rooted in spaces and tradition to homeless refugees; from the friendly people sharing each others' tradition to those who are afraid of speaking or who have nothing to say; and from the harmony and community of the village of his childhood to the anomie, the disenchantment and the horror of the

modern city torn by war and civil turmoil.

The partition had created a spiritual and social vacuum in the lives of the dislocated personages. After migrating to a new place, Zakir is unable to accommodate himself morally, physically, or imaginatively to the needs of new political and religious identity. He like other migrants does not feel attachment with the new place or people. He has failed to develop any connection in Pakistan even after a long period of his stay.. The whole atmosphere around him is filled with a sense of bewilderment. Having left Rupnagar, he knows he can never return to it and remains in a permanent state of exile. The exilic state of Jakir is evoked by the image of the forest which itself is symbol of exile. As opposed to the title *Basti*(settlement), Jakir takes refuge in the forest of his memories. Memories surged along like waves, and I swam among them (*Basti* 73).

Due to political upheavals Jakir and his friends are in the state of disillusionment and find it difficult to commit to a particular cause. All the friends Jakir, Afzal, Irfan, Salamat and Ajmal meet at the Shiraz, a tea-house. They are regular visitors in the Shiraz calling themselves mice. The waiter Abdul treats them as his masters. All the turmoil, tumult and turbulence of the war are seen in this background. People's lives in all the places, Lahore, Delhi and even Dhaka are presented and the turbulence is vividly portrayed.

The Shiraz is the centre where Jakir and his friends meet and talk. The discussions of the friends reveal war scenes as they see, understand and suffer. They talk about processions, slogans and destruction. They all are perplexed young persons. Even they interrogate the formation of Pakistan:

For a long time they sat in silence, lost in their own thoughts. Then he looked at Irfan. He kept looking, as though he wanted to say something, but hesitated.

Irfan

Irfan looked at him, but he was silent.

What is it?

'Yar!' He paused, then said somewhat hesitantly, 'Yar' was it good that Pakistan was created?'-----

I know one thing, 'Irfan said at last, ' In the hands of the wrong people, even right becomes wrong (*Basti*100).

The state of liberalism and rejection of state decisions is noticeable in some of the decisions of these characters. Salamat instead of settling in Pakistan or Bagladesh prefers to migrate to another country. There are references of other characters also migrating to different countries other than the decided by the state.

Zakir's wartime diary captures the horrors of the war suffered by the people along with Zakir's mental journey through his dreams, visions, and his remembrances of the epics, history, folktales. The roads, the vehicles, the railway platforms, the Shiraz all portray shock and pain. Zakir wonders where people are going. He has his own thoughts of the Jataka tales and Buddha's subtle teachings. Zakir feels thus:

The primary point of writing this diary is that during the long wartime nights it will help me discipline my distracted mind ...I see another advantage of it as well I'll be writing my wartime autobiography. .. I ought to preserve the record of my lies and my cowardice (*Basti* 125).

Jakir broods: "The war threw the life of the city into confusion. Inside me, times and places are topsy-turvy. Sometimes I have absolutely no idea where I am, in what place" (*Basti* 130).

The exilic state of Jakir is evoked by the image of the forest which itself is symbol of exile. As opposed to the title *Basti* (settlement), Jakir takes refuge in the forest of his memories.

After their migration to the desired land people were not able to associate with the new land. They remained nostalgic of their homes. Zakir, his mother, and his friends wonder why the Landscape and seasons of the country to which they have migrated fail to capture their moral and creative imagination and fail to appeal their senses even though the trees, birds and rain are similar to that they have left behind.

Zakir's father is constantly worried about his death and burial. For him the burial ground and the shroud, (brought from Holy Karbala) left behind in Rupnagar, is a loss that can never be retrieved. His faith and identity in Rupnagar is well established through the reminiscences of his past life and his craving for the ancestral grave. He had even made all arrangements for his burial there, a shroud and a place for the grave. He is worried that in Pakistan all arrangements will have to be made as they neither have a place nor any property.

Afzal's grandmother is shown constantly craving for her home in India, the land of her birth. She is assured that when the flood water goes down, she will be taken back to India. She has hope that, "The floods must surely have gone down so take me back" (*Basti* 203). The hope of returning is a source of strength that sustains her in the new land. But when Afzal tries to explain the impossibility of ever returning by saying that even if "the flood has gone down over there, it's risen on this side" (*Basti* 233), When she hears, her hope is broken and she immediately dies. .

A white haired man sits alone at a table in the Shiraz and comes to ask them news of the turmoils in the country. His explanation of the whiteness of his hair is symbolic of the change that has accompanied his migration to Pakistan. He grieves,

When I reached Pakistan and washed myself and looked in the mirror, my hair had turned entirely white. That was my first day in Pakistan. I left my house with black hair and my family, when I reached Pakistan my hair was white and I was alone (*Basti* 82).

The greying of hair becomes the symbol of the loss of home and family during migration: once lost, are irretrievable.

By reading *Basti* it becomes clear that declarations of the state at the time of partition that "Mussalmans are a nation...and they must have their homeland, their territory and their state" (Jinnah 1940 Lahore) proved irrelevant in 1971.

The novel *Basti* by foregrounding the sufferings and disillusionment of common people like Jakir, his Abba, his friends in the wake of partition of Pakistan in 1971 interrogates the very idea of the formation of Pakistan and declares it as a failed narrative, a failed *Hijrat*.

Conclusion:

Thus we see that both of the texts interrogate the notion of exclusive nationalism that relates religion with nation. Although the selected narratives attempt to claim the experiences and standpoints of those who have been marginalized in the state-based grand narratives, their specific focuses are quite distinct. If Reza as an Indian Muslim affirms his claim over his birthplace and vehemently rejects, Hussain as a migrant in the desired Islamic land feels exiled from his own culture and mourns over the loss and rejects the complete burial of his past. Both the texts problematize and interrogate the issues of identity and home based on exclusive parameters.

The narrative of *Basti* functions as a curtain raiser from the popular notion that Pakistan nation was carved as the homeland for Muslims where they can feel at home. The text suggests that despite the promise of leaders to provide the assumed power to Muslims in the newly created state of Pakistan, claims were never fully fulfilled and the event of partition disrupted rather than facilitated the lives of the migrants. As we observe in the novel Muslims who migrated didn't attain their desired homeland either. Rather they remained nostalgic of their idyllic past because people like Ammi, Abba or Jakir neither could disconnect themselves from their roots nor could find solace and anchorage in the new homeland.

The novel *AdhaGaon* initiates a direct challenge to the claims of nationalism and national historiography and interrogates the very process of nation formation on the basis of religion. It seems to suggest that cultural amity, tolerance and harmony will prevail in

the nation only when both the communities undergo a restructuring based on the principle of humanity. Both the Hindus and the Muslims have to shed off the weight of exclusionary politics that has continued to grow in their respective faiths.

The selected novels are only a few examples from the sea of literary narratives that by focusing on personal experiences and not on statistics and facts offer a critique of the official histories. These narratives allow us to understand the real pain, bafflement, agony and struggle of the marginalized people who faced the partition atrocities on their own levels in a lawless era and are real sufferers and actors but are sidetracked in the macro narratives of the partition history.

The literary responses like these novels can be treated as significant archives for the study of the partition of the Indian subcontinent. These narratives highlight the reality of everyday experiences and record the graphic details of individual memories that do not correspond to the received versions of history. What is peripheral to recorded history---the actual impact of the partition and its ramifications on the everyday life of the people---is central to the literary representations. The literary texts articulate the little narratives against the grand; unofficial histories against the official; resonate the voice of the marginalized and subalterns and depict the unrecorded and fragmented folk experiences.

The readings of these texts crystallize the fact that partition was not a wise decision. It was a decision taken at high level by a few politicians or elites without considering the opinion of the masses. It was so sudden nobody could comprehend its complexity as well its consequences. It not only separated Hindus and Muslims, it separated Muslims from Muslims also. So partition on the basis of religion or language was a failed narrative. As these texts showcase partition of India was the result of the British policy, which transmitted religious distinctions gradually as a part of their "divide and rule" policy. Religion, which had hardly been an identity marker in pre-partition life, suddenly began to play an essential role in Indian politics. This is in contrast to the daily reality of inhabitants in many villages, where people of different faiths were living with amity and cooperation.

These narratives by zooming in on partition event in the local arenas capture the real experiences of ordinary men and women and critique the ways the local is subsumed in the national at this rapturous moment which historians have been unable to encompass. Pandey also asserts that by localizing events and entities and stripping them of their history, complexity and contested character, historians confiscate from people an entire sense of history (Pandey 120). "The memory of war, however, like all memory, is mostly local" (Sontag 35).

Pakistan was formulated to provide a solution of a Homeland to the Muslims who had minority status in India. However, despite the Majority status they didn't get the protection and promised Homeland as per the claims. *Basti's* narrative structure contains various page breaks, shifts in present and past which designate the disruption partition created in the lives of people. People though separated geographically couldn't separate themselves from the memories of their homes, relationships and shared history.

An important fact regarding these novels is that the approach of these writers is grounded in secularism or liberal humanism. Despite the depiction of communal clashes, instigating acts of communal fundamentalists, these writers have advocated communal harmony, religious tolerance and a deep humane spirit along with human values and are critical of exclusionary politics of the state. They univocally condemn the dehumanizing impact of religious zealotry upon innocent people, which caused unimaginable loss of life and property.

Indeed, in this age of global community, we need to pause and look back at the violent and savage chapters of past history if not as sermons but at least with a motive to envision a way out of the entrapment of categorical singularity and the violent destruction of humanity. The reverberations of partition are so challenging and alarming that they can't be avoided.

In conclusion it can be asserted that the selected texts showcase clear cut demarcation between the politics of people and politics of elites or politicians, therefore, by foregrounding their versions they not only interrogate elitist historian's history of partition but also create alternative versions of history creating a space for their understanding of secularism based on the age-old pluralistic, inclusive cultural past rather than exclusionary politics of the politicians. Shared past which these texts exhibit is their strong faith deeply rooted in the pluralistic culture of tolerance, which can divert both the countries from the course of animosity towards rebuilding harmony and re-bridging their relations.

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