

Punjab Migration 1947: Violence against Muslim Women and the Settlement

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ABSTRACT

Large-scale migration had taken place between the borders of Pakistan and India with the announcement of independence and transfer of power from the British colonial masters to two independent states in August 1947. This paper deals with the issues including what kind of problems were faced by Muslim women in the whole process of migration? What help and support had been extended to them by the women on Pakistani side to settle down in the new country? After giving background of partition, paper will mostly focus on the months from August 1947 to December 1947 during which most of the massacre, ethnic cleansing, rape and kidnapping of women had taken place. Communal civil war 1947 of the Punjab had proved to be one of the largest campaigns of ethnic cleansing in the world history. The horrible experiences of Muslim women included, besides bloodshed, thousands of incidents of rape, kidnapping, keeping women as hostages, forced conversion to Sikhism or Hinduism, killing and forced marriages. It was very hard to sooth the traumatic women but the settled women of West Punjab helped the migrated ones to settle down gradually.

This paper has been produced on the basis of primary source material which includes the archives of the Pakistan Movement Workers Trust. Personal narratives of the female victims are the most important source of information to build the argument in this paper, which also enriches the living history of the Punjab partition. The newspapers, biographies and autobiographies of women workers and victims are other important source materials.

Key Words: Punjab, Migration, Women, Violence, Settlement

Introduction

Migration is a painful process for every human being to pass through but it is more vulnerable when is happened under terror and is imposed by force. One this kind of migration had been imposed on Muslims of India generally and on Muslims of Punjab specifically at the time of independence in 1947. Muslim women especially of Punjab had to face great violence through the hands of Sikhs and Hindus in Indian Punjab and states located in East Punjab including Patiala, Nabha, and Kapurthala etc. and those who had successfully reached in Pakistan had to face other kinds of social and economic problems like their male counter-parts.

This paper deals with the issues including what kind of problems were faced by Muslim women in ‘patriarchal society’ (Didur, 2007: 35) on Indian side and then on Pakistani side also? What help and support had been extended to them by the women on Pakistani side to settle down in the new country? After giving background of partition, paper will mostly focus on the months from August 1947 to December 1947 during which most of the massacre, ethnic cleansing, rape and

kidnapping of women had taken place. Especially from August 1947 to October 1947 communal civil war of the Punjab had proved to be one of the largest campaigns of ethnic cleansing in the world history. (Hassan, 2006: 42) These elements had reached at its climax after announcement of Radcliff Award on 17 August 1947 and it continued till December 1947. However IAN Talbot has mentioned that this phase of violence continued till November 1947. (Talbot: 2006, 37) Muslim women had to pass through the horrible experience of their lives. Besides bloodshed there were thousands of incidents of rape, kidnapping, keeping women as hostages, forced conversion to Sikhism or Hinduism, killing and in some cases forced marriages.

This paper has been produced on the basis of primary source material which includes the files of the Gold Medalists, available at archives of the Pakistan Movement Workers Trust. Oral history or personal narratives of the female victims are the most important source of information to build the argument in this paper. Each such account of the women is contributing in enriching the living history of the Punjab partition. The author had conducted interviews of a lot of females who had passed through the bad experience and of those who had helped the migrated ladies in the settlement process. The interviews had been conducted since last many years from many elderly ladies of author's own family also who had also migrated from different parts and states of Indian Punjab to Pakistani Punjab. The newspapers, biographies and autobiographies of women workers are other important source material.

Why is there Need to Produce Living Women History of the Partition of Punjab?

The partition of Punjab and then migration is still a cataclysmic event in the history of Pakistan movement. Until now some valuable works had been produced on partition experiences of Muslims of Punjab, but such works mostly present general picture and general plight of human being. Ishtiaq Ahmed's *The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed* is an excellent work but it has depicted the event, seen with men's eyes only and the voice of female gender could not get its space in his work. Being a man he had to be conscious of the social and cultural boundaries of the area. Pippa Virdee had accepted that many Pakistani women were not ready to share their traumatic experiences with her. (Virdee: 2013, 49-62). It might have happened due to her foreign nationality. Tai Yung Tan's *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia* deals mostly with Sikhs and their problems. It generally covers all sorts of migration of post-partition era including migration from Delhi and Bengal also, so women of Punjab could get less space in it. Sarah Ansari's *Partition, Migration and Refugees* is another valuable work but it deals with the Urdu-speaking migrants of Delhi and other areas who had been settled in Karachi and other Urban centers of Sindh, Pakistan. Urdu literature had produced a number of works on human experience of the Punjab partition. Females' feelings, sorrow and depression is well depicted in the works of Sa'adat Hasan

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Manto and Intizar Hussain, (Naim and R. L. Schmidt: 1965, 19-23) which are literary sources, not historical.

The Punjab's case was different from the other parts of the British empire in India as three communities; Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims were busy in 'communal war of succession' (Mansergh and Moon: Vol: XII, 1982, 512) at the time of transfer of power from colonial masters to the local communities. Sikhs and Hindus were united against Muslims. In the episode of communal war of succession, extreme violence had taken place against the women. In other words, it is hard but neglected truth that women were the 'chief sufferers' of the Partition of Punjab and sexual violence against them became a 'conscious process of maximizing intimidation.' (Manor: 1995, 453). They came to be seen as 'territory' to be occupied and rape became a method to 'demoralize and defeat rival men.' (Manor: 1995, 453). They had to pass through such terrible cruelties as the chopping of their breasts and noses and 'impregnation by sticks and metal rods.' (Talbot and Singh: 2009, 68) Even Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru felt ashamed on the deeds of his people. In a radio broadcast on 9 September 1947, he said:

...there are some things much worse than the deaths that have taken place. I am ashamed of the acts that my people have done and I fear the disgrace and the consequence of evil deeds will remain with us for a long time... (Gopall: 2001, 15).

This epic tragedy had changed the destiny of thousands rather millions of women who had not been given centric position in the historical analysis. It seems the reason is unwillingness of female victims to share their traumatic experiences with the strangers. The positive element of this paper is that the women of author's own family who had migrated from East Punjab or states of East Punjab were ready to share their experiences. Some were ready to mention their names and the others told horrible eye-witness accounts which were associated with the other females of their circle, street, village or of any friend's account. This paper is an attempt to discover the buried truths of human especially female sacrifices and hardships associated with the freedom struggle.

The women had to leave their homes in odd circumstances under high level of fear and many of the females had never reached to Pakistan as they were kidnapped, raped, killed and in other cases were forcefully converted to Sikhism. Manor had mentioned that the total number of abducted women in Punjab alone was in the range of forty to forty-five thousand. (Manor: 1995, 454). Begum Salma Tassaduq Hussain has mentioned that the number of abducted women was around ninety thousand. (Hussain: 1990, 125). Another opinion is that around sixty thousand Muslim women were abducted. (Masroor: nd, 43). Those who managed to reach Pakistan had to face other kinds of economic and social problems. Besides these problems, the trauma of sexual violence, which many of them had to experience, observe or face, haunted them through-out their lives. All experiences

and observations, mentioned in this paper are true, except names in few cases, and present the real picture of the events of 1947 Punjab migration.

The Independence from British Raj or Partition

It is still a phenomenon for some of those unlucky women who passed through the traumatic situation to remember the event of independence as only independence or as partition. Whatever we call it, the transfer of power from British to India and Pakistan had taken place on 14th August 1947. Independence had been achieved by Muslims of India after a long struggle under the leadership of Quaid-i-Azam. Muslim women of Punjab and North West Frontier played leading role to achieve the target of independence. The British wanted to leave India as a united country but it was due to efforts of the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and open support of Muslim masses for establishment of an independent Muslim country that the British had to accept their demand of partition of India. Lord Mountbatten was sent as the last Viceroy of British India on 24 March 1947 who had materialized the Plan of Independence and Partition.

Partition Plan was introduced by Lord Mountbatten on 3rd June 1947 under which partition of Bengal and Punjab was fait accompli. (Sadullah: 1993, 4-10). Mountbatten, while presenting the Partition plan in a radio broadcast, said:

...the people of India themselves should decide this question of partition...It was necessary in order to ascertain the will of the people of Punjab...to lay down boundaries between the Muslim majority areas and the remaining areas, but I want to make it clear that the ultimate boundaries will be settled by a Boundary Commission and will almost certainly not be identical with those which have been provisionally adopted. (Mansergh and Moon: Vol. XI, 1982, 89)

To materialize the objective of partition of Bengal and Punjab, a boundary commission was formed under chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliffe. The Award was announced on 17th August 1947. Radcliffe Award is generally considered as the basic cause of a large scale migration, and of violence of Sikh and Hindu majority communities in East Punjab against Muslim women. It created problematic and in many cases 'illogical' (Tan and Kudaisya: 2000, 25) boundaries. The Boundary Commission was instructed to demarcate the boundaries on the 'basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims.' (Mansergh and Moon: Vol. XII, 1982, 758). But unfortunately, Muslim majority areas unjustifiably and illegally were given to India. Such areas included Gurdaspur, Batala, Pathankot, Amritsar, Jalandhar, Ferozpur, Zira etc. (Sadullah: 1993, I-LXVII) The Muslims of these areas and of Sikh states had to face the toughest time. Secondly, Sikhs got extremely reactionary because they considered themselves as real successor of Punjab because of different reasons; they ruled Punjab before the British occupation and the British government had extended 'flattering treatment' (Collins and Lapierre: 1982, 127) towards this

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community. Otherwise they were only four million out of total twenty-eight million of the Punjab's population. (Collins and Lapierre: 1982, 127).

Violence against Muslim Women

This part of the paper discusses about general plight of the Muslim women initially and then some individual and personal experiences of migrant females finally. Muslim massacre and violence against Muslim women on a lesser scale had been started even before the announcement of the Partition Plan. On 3rd March, 1947 the Sikh leader Master Tara Singh declared:

Let the Khalsa Panth now realize the gravity of the situation. I expect every Sikh to do this duty. We shall live or die but shall not submit to Muslim domination. (Mirza: 1985, 226).

After this statement, the Sikhs started killing the innocent Muslims. The process reached at its climax after announcement of Radcliffe Award. The Hindus and Sikhs had also migrated from the West Punjab to Indian areas on a very big scale. As Hindus had strong control on the transportation network, so migration was not difficult for Hindus. According to the announcement of 4th August district Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozpur and Jalandhar were going to be included in Pakistan. But due to evil designs of Hindu leadership these Muslim majority area with a lot of others were given to India. (Jallundhry: 1981, 238-39). The Hindus and Sikhs celebrated their first night of freedom with the blood of Muslims.

Khawaja Iftikhar has mentioned that the most horrible situation had been developed for Muslims in Amritsar, a neighboring city of Lahore. It was expected before final announcement of Radcliffe Award that the city would be given to Pakistan. Unlike the expectation the city was given to India and the Sikhs and Hindus celebrated their victory with disrespect of Muslim women and of killing the Muslims generally. Chawk Pragdas, Amritsar event was the practical implementation of Tara Singh's threat. (Talbot: 2006, 41-42). While giving graphic details of the scene of a mosque (Masjid Rangrezan) in Amritsar, where poor Muslim women and children had taken refuge, Iftikhar has written, 'The savagery that was let loose did not spare even milk-sucking infants, while women and young girls were lying dead, naked in pools of blood.' (Iftikhar: 1991, 214). The situation was so worst in Amritsar that Master Tara Singh wrote to India's first Chief of General Staff that he could not guarantee safe passage of Muslim refugees from Amritsar. (Hudson: 1969, 411). The British governor of Punjab had already had understanding of the upcoming violence which would take place after declaration of independence. He wrote to his Secretary Abbel, "the communal feeling is now unbelievably bad." (Tanwar: 2006, 251). Practically, complete anarchy prevailed in Amritsar. Field Marshal Sir C. Auchinleck while writing to Viceroy of India had mentioned regarding Amritsar:

The strife here was started by Sikhs who had formed armed bands of considerable strength which are carrying out raids on Muslims or preponderantly

Muslim villages. Three or four such raids have been occurring nightly. These bands are well organized and often include mounted men... (Mansergh and Moon: 1982, 734).

Shamim Jallundhry, a women worker of the Muslim League had given a detailed account of what had happened with her, her family and generally with the Muslims in Jalandhar. With the announcement of partition Plan, the Sikhs and Hindus in Jalandhar spread horror in the city. She had mentioned that men were mostly killed and good-looking young girls were forcefully taken over and taken to Sikh and Hindu homes and many others were publically or individually raped. She and some other members of her family could save their lives with the help of her uncle who was a Major in army and played important role in the Second World War. (Jallundhry: 1981, 238-281).

Outside Amritsar and Jalandhar, the most serious communal disturbance had been observed in Gurgaon district. Around fifty villages were either burnt or destroyed; large number of people were burnt or killed and hundreds of females were molested. (Ahmed: 2012, 227). Sikh princely states of East Punjab including Patiala, Nabha, Faridkot and Kapurthla observed the worst disrespect of Muslim females as well as massacre. The states were given the choice in Partition Plan either to join Pakistan or India. Muslims were killed in the state of Patiala 'like goats and sheep.' (Sohail: 1991, 89). All Sikh states which were located around Punjab, decided in favour of India. It is mentioned that large number of Sikhs had already started migration in December 1946 from Rawalpindi, Attock and Jehlum of West Punjab to Sikh Princely states. They told exaggerated accounts of brutality of Muslims of West Punjab to their brothers in Princely states. That's why Sikhs in such states got highly reactionary. (Ahmed: 2012, 483).

Inam Bibi, a veteran of migration process, lived in village Jigrawan of state Patiala with her extended family including her nine children. She was a teacher in Girls School of the village and her husband was also a teacher in Boys School. They were supporters of the ML since many years, even in the months of fear when Sikhs had become reactionary after the announcement of partition plan. Inam Bibi had never thought that their neighboring Sikh friends would turn against them in a matter of minutes. She told that with the announcement of Boundary Commission's Award Sikhs in her area became horrific and started massacring Muslims. Her husband and elder son had happened to be outside of the home when she heard loud shouts of Sikhs and then of great trouble outside of her home. She took her children inside and tried to make them comfortable. She told with great sorrow that her eldest son came back but her husband had never returned. He had been martyred by the Sikhs. She kept her children inside home till mid-night and then left their home empty-handed under great fear to find a safe place.

Inam Bibi led her children towards the main road. There was death-like silence, when they walked through the ruined village. They walked across fields littered with dead-bodies. Her children were two to sixteen years. She was able to find the main road. There she came across with some other split-Muslim families

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who could also managed to save their lives. She with the other members of foot-caravan reached to the nearby Muslim refugee camp. She told that appalling conditions were prevailing in refugee camps on Indian side. Toilets were full of excrement and insects crept all over the place. Her four children were died one after the other due to less food, no milk, dirty-water and due to epidemics like cholera, malaria and others on her way to Pakistan. (Interview of Choudhry Habibullah). A report in Dawn justifies the point of view of Inam Bibi regarding shabby-living conditions in the camps on Indian side. It reported that the Muslim camp near Ambala was badly managed and two hundred deaths were observed on daily basis. (*Dawn*, 28 October 1947). She could manage to reach Pakistan after facing great hardships of many days with foot-caravan. She had to cover the heads of her sons with Sikh turbans to give impression that she was Sikh to pass through Amritsar region. She shared that, "I had lost my husband, my four children but I was happy to reach in the land of my dreams with the rest of my children."

Her problems and difficulties were not over with her entry in Pakistan. Her account of settlement process was similar to many other refugees who had travelled from place to place in search of a new home for them for permanent settlement. (Talbot and Singh: 2009, 99). She had to stay in the refugee camp on Pakistani side for many days. As she did not have support of any male family elder so it proved a test for her to find a home for her family in Lahore. Whatever home was occupied by her, proved to be a temporary place of refuge as other strong migrants would force her to leave the home. She had to go back to refugee camp again and again and then started search for a new place of refuge. Finally, she had been allotted a home by the city authorities on assurance that she had reasonable property in her ancestral village. (Interview of Choudhry Habibullah). The rest of her life was a great example of sacrifice, hard work and truthfulness.

Habib Begum, eldest daughter of Inam Bibi, was newly-wed at the time of independence. She was living in a village Kot Kapura of Jalandhar with her in-laws. Her in laws were well settled and had appropriate land in the village. Sikh women were their servants. She told that with the start of disturbances those Sikh maids looted each and every thing of their home in presence of armed Sikh men. They ordered the Muslim families to make lines outside of their homes in the streets and then killed the young men, children, even milk sucking babies were thrown in the air and hanged on the spears in front of the eyes of their mothers. The beautiful girls were abducted by Sikhs and the others were permitted to go. She put ashes on her face so she could look ugly and squinted her eyes at the time of Muslim girls' parade. Sikhs usually took Muslim girls for parade, like it is done to choose best animal for sacrifice, to choose beautiful girls for them. This tragic and shameful fact had been shared by multiple women whom had been interviewed by the author. Habib Begum told joyfully that Sikhs rejected her due to her ugly looks. She said that many other girls and women had also applied coal, dust and mud on their faces and bodies to disfigure them. In this way, the remaining members of her family could manage to reach near railway line, stood in front of the train which they had seen was coming. The train was stopped and

they were seated in the compartments. They took refuge in the refugee camp and could reach to Pakistan in military trucks. (Interview of Habib Begum).

She mentioned that wife of her cousin, Rafique, was kidnapped by the Sikhs. He loved her a lot and went back to India in disguise of a Sikh beggar for two times to search his wife but he could never see her again. Later, he lost his mental stability. Another unfortunate element of the account of Habib Begum was the abduction of one of her younger sisters by a Sikh. She was a beautiful girl of fourteen years. Later, when governments of both the countries recovered abducted ladies, she was one of those fortunate Muslim girls who could return back to her families. She came with a baby girl who was born of a Sikh husband. She told that how cruelly she had been forcefully converted to Sikhism and then that Sikh married with her. On her return to her family, her daughter was sent back to his Sikh father and her sister was then married to her cousin with the consent of family elders. The sister of Habib Begum shared her horrible experiences with Habib Begum but those are not being mentioned here as Habib Begum had not permitted to do so.

Ahmed Zarullah was a tenant farmer in a small village near Ferozpur, assaulted one night by a Sikh jathra (armed force). "We knew we were going to be killed like rats...I saw Sikhs shooting down the Moslems coming from the other huts. Some were carrying away girls on their shoulders. There were shrieks and wailing and shouting.." (Collins and Lapierre: 1997, 361-62). Sitaran Bibi and Balkeese Bibi who originally belonged to Ambala, East Punjab of India, shared almost similar horrible, painful memories about migration. (Interview with Sitaran Bibi).

Hamida Begum's account is different from the above mentioned accounts. She lived with her extended family in village Sitara, situated near cantonment of District Jalandhar. Very less number of Muslim families were living in the village. Fortunately, one of her uncle was in the British army. He brought a military jeep near her home at night. Women of her family could escape from the village at night with the help of few Sikh friends of her uncle. Unluckily, her grandmother could not run and she was martyred at the spot. They were dropped in the Dakoha refugee camp of Jalandhar. Her family had reached Pakistan in a military truck. (Interview with Hamida Begum).

Naimat Bibi, had three young children of nine, six and two, at the time of announcement of independence. Her husband was an employee in the North West Railways and was on tour to Lahore in August 1947. Her family lived in Jalandhar, near Railway station. She took her children to her parents' home in Jigrawan as she considered that area as comparatively safe. Unfortunately, series of massacre, violence and rape started there as well. (Interview of Naimat Bibi). She had observed series of massacre and bloodshed from the third floor of her parents' home. The remaining Muslims and her family left their homes early in the morning of 17 August in great fear and greif and reached at a refugee camp outside of the city. She told that her children were crying for water in extreme hot weather and she was helpless. She had seen deaths of many children and elderly people in

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front of her eyes which was a great traumatic experience for her life. She had tears in her eyes while telling that her children sucked their wet cloths to overcome their thirst, which were wet due to rainfall. She could not forget the dead body of a women lying in the middle of the road with her baby who was alive. She told that the soothing element of the incident was that another woman who had lost her son in hands of Sikhs had adopted that baby. They had been brought to Pakistan in military trucks. The travel to Pakistan in military truck was another test of their patience as it was highly congested. (Interview of Hakim Mohammad Aslam). They had been provided with food in the refugee camp in Lahore. Her husband, Mohammad Siddique reached in the camp and met with her and children on the same day. They started their new life with old fears and traumas. (Interview of Naimat Bibi)

Chawdhury Mukhtar Ahmad Sajjad was from Chumiyari Bhugiyari of Tehsil Dasuha, District Hushiarpur. He told that his village consisted of purely Muslim population but thirty-four surrounding villages were of Sikhs. Sikhs attacked his village after announcement of partition. Each and every male of the village was brutally massacred and females were either kidnapped or killed within few hours. He had seen some horrible scenes while hiding behind *turi* (piles of grass) but went into unconsciousness later. After spending one night and one day there, he came out of his place of refuge to find some other alive family member, but all twenty four members of his family were massacred. He was unable to find dead bodies of some females of his family, who, in his opinion, had been abducted. He left the village after 24 hours and after passing through many difficulties he had reached in a refugee camp. (Interview with Chudhury Mukhtar). He had never seen any of his family member including abducted women and started his life from scratch after coming to Pakistan.

Except those women who had been adopted by their abductors, the rest of them were simply dumped after being physically abused. Literary accounts reveal that in many instances women bodies were tattooed on very private parts of their bodies. The markings reflected the religious symbols of the other community like *Jai Hind* or so. (Tan and Kudaisya: 2000, 22) All kinds of violence against women was clear manifestation of collapse of social and moral values in East Punjab's society. The sorrow and grief of the people had been portrayed by some poets like Nasir Kazmi had written and Carla Petievich had translated:

O my Busy God:
just look at this world of yours---
so well-peopled and yet the cities are silent
the sun has reached its peak,
it's hot Day of Reckoning:
(the) parched earth aflame,
rivers dried up as they flowed,
crops burned to ashes,
famine fallen on village and town.
o my busy God:

just look at this world of yours. (Ali: 2015, 31)

Violence went uncontrollable due to collapse of civil administration in East Punjab. The British governor of West Punjab wrote to Jinnah on 23 September 1947 that, 'East Punjab government has lost all control of the situation and that it ceased to exist as a government.' (Talbot: 1996, 158). Not even a single shot was fired by the Police during this whole massacre and rage. (Moon: 2007, 78). Police itself was involved in attacking on Muslims. Besides Police, the administration had taken sides against Muslims with Sikhs and Hindus. (Tanwar: 2006, 375). Railway employees also helped the attacks on trains of Muslim refugees coming to Pakistan. The situation in princely states was even worst as armies of such states and princes themselves were involved in genocide of Muslims. Trains coming from Ludhiana and Hissar were detained at Dhuri in the Patiala state, where Muslim migrants were 'systematically butchered'. (Copland: 2002, 401). The Punjab Boundary Force, consisted of 55000 men under the command of British Major General, T. W. Pete Rees, (Collins and Lapierre: 1997, 272) had been deployed on 1st August in twelve districts of Punjab. It had been set up by Lord Mountbatten to maintain peace but it could do nothing.

Settlement and Recovery of Muslim Women

Around seven million Muslims migrated from India to Pakistan and out of seven million seventy percent were East Punjabis who were mostly settled in West Punjab. (Ahmed: 1998, 91). Thousands of the women were either sick or injured and all of them were without fundamental needs of life. They needed refuge, foodstuff and clothing, dressing their injuries and finding protection for them. (Ikramullah: 1998, 166). The newly established government of the new state could not provide all necessities to millions of refugees as it was new and without resources. The refugee issue was the toughest test to deal with for the new nation of Pakistanis. The courageous and patient women of Punjab were in the forefronts to help their refugee brothers and sisters without any expectation or incentive. Many Muslim house-wives left the seclusion of their homes and came forward to help wounded, psychologically upset and traumatized women. Some Muslim women extended their services on individual level and others through the platform of smaller or bigger organizations.

No Muslim nurse was available at the time of creation of Pakistan and non-Muslim nurses had migrated towards India. Common Muslim women of Lahore and of other areas where refugee camps were established had done the service of looking after the sick women, men and children in the camps. Begum Habib told that she with many other women was sick at the time of arrival in Pakistan and many of them were badly wounded. She was treated by the students of Islamia College, Lahore. (Interview with Begum Habib).

Khalida Rathur, a student of Islamia College, Lahore set aside her studies and served day and night in the refugee camp with other students of the college. She collected eatables on daily basis from her neighborhood, while holding a bucket or

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basket in her hand. The housewives, who could not serve in the camps, eagerly helped that young girl. After collecting the vegetables, pulses, rice, wheat etc, she used to cook it at her home with the help of her mother and other girls and used to take the food to refugee camps. (Interview with Khalida Munir ud din). Her friends also knocked each and every door for donation in form of money, food and clothing. At that time heart of every Muslim was filled with sympathy, sincerity and intimacy. If they were requested with donation, they got ready to donate everything of their homes. Collection of goods had adopted the shape of a movement. A large number of female oriented donation camps supported the government a lot which was resourceless at that time. (Qurshi: 1984, 165). Besides serving food to the refugees, she also worked as nurse in the camps and stayed there to look after wounded and sick refugees in camps for many hours on daily basis. She had also given refuge to some highly deserving refugee women at her home with the support of her family elders. She further requested to the ladies of some other well to do families to give only their verandahs for the refugees on temporary basis. The poor people lived in her home for many days and she continuously worked for them. They shifted to their homes after allotment of the houses.

The leaders and workers of the Muslim League had also worked hard to help the refugees on individual as well as joint basis. Fatima Begum, the principal of Islamia College for girls, appointed Muslim League women workers as nurses in the refugee camps. They not only looked after the sick and wounded refugees but also regulated the work of providing eatables and clothes to them in time. (Qurshi: 1984, 434). Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan established a female Volunteer Service to help the females. A large number of local women got membership of it and helped the refugee women in their capacities. She further established Employment Bureau, marriage Bureau and an Office for Recovered Abducted Women in Lahore. (Ahmed: 1975, 25; Begum: nd, 1975 and Mumtaz and Shaheed: 1987, 51). She further patronized the profession of nursing as Muslim girls were kept away from this profession. Under her supervision many girls were given short-term training of nursing. Later long-term arrangements were done. (Qurshi: 1984, 44). Begum Amir-un-Nisa (Lady Mohammad Shafi), Anwari Begum (Lady Abdul Qadir), Hasan Ara Begum (Begum Hakim), Sughra Begum (Lady Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah), Viqar-un-Nisa (Lady Noon) are some other wives of prominent ML leaders who not only donated a considerable amount of money for the help of poor refugees but also looked after the refugees in the camps. (Mirza: 1985, 117-120) Begum Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz also worked in Pakistan Women's Voluntary Service. She said that people of Lahore including housewives were extremely kind and open-hearted. They collected heavy amount of food on daily basis for the refugees. (Nawaz:2002, 214).

These individual efforts were highly effective but some collective services were also extended. Punjab Provincial Women Muslim League established Relief Camps under headship of Begum Salma Tassaduq Hussain to further organize the work. Salma Tassaduq presented her home to open Central Relief Office, situated

on the Empress Road. That Office provided with every kind of relevant information, economic assistance, immediate shelter, clothing, food and other facilities to the refugees. (Hussain: 1990, 110-112) Women Refugee Relief Committee was another organization which was headed by Geeti Ara (Begum Bashir Ahmed) and its secretary was Salma Mehmooda (Begum Salma Tasadduque Hussain). (Mirza: 1985, 127)

The most sensitive problem to deal with was of orphans. They needed more attention than elders and secondly homeless females needed a lot of attention. For these two groups of refugees, special arrangements were made. Two camps were opened, for the settlement of children issue, at Mulchand Hospital and Lady Walington Hospital. Here common women of common families did another great service for the country and adopted the children in large number. In this way, this issue was settled and future of these hundreds of children was secured. Another Centre was opened for females with the title of Qasar-i-Istiqlal at Rajgarh Road. The basic purpose of the institute was to make the women skillful. (Hussain: 1990, 112-13). Begum Saeeda Whaeed established a Bait-ul-Mal in an evacuee building on Montgomery Road. The things/material which used to be collected from evacuee houses was distributed among refugees through this organization. She along with her co-workers organized a nursing team of the Muslim League Women Volunteers at Mayo Hospital to look after the sick and wounded. This voluntary service continued for many weeks. (PMWT, GM, 1999, F/2124)

Recovery of abducted women was such a tragedy which had no answer. (*Dawn*, 25 October 1947). Governments of India and Pakistan signed an Inter-dominion Agreement to recover abducted women and children from both sides of the border. (Ali: 2015, 12) The task of the recovery of women was done in three stages. The immediate recoveries had been done from September 1947 to December 1947. Second and third stages were from December 1947 to July 1948 and from August 1948 to December 1948 respectively. (Tanwar: 2006, 434). Fatimah Begum with the help of some ML leaders and workers served a lot to find out the abducted women. She visited Indian Punjab on many occasions to find out the Muslim women from there. The recovered women were brought in the Office, were given places to live there on temporary basis and then advertisements were given on Radio and newspapers to find out their relatives. The condition of such women who had been repeatedly raped or had been brought back after a long period of abduction was the worst. (Masroor: nd, 41) Finally, most of the women were handed over to their families, who contacted the Office. She had given refuge to some lonely women whose families could not be found or who were mentally and physically highly disturbed due to their horrible experiences. She herself soothed the miserable women. She dined with them, listened to them, cried with them and gave them financial support. (Qurshi: 1984, 434) She also managed livelihood for them. It is worth mentioning here that there were many Muslim abducted women who were not ready to come back to join their families in Pakistan due to shame and some others due to their children. (Zamindar: 2008, 7). The efforts of West Pakistani women and West Punjab's government to take more

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initiatives to settle the abducted women had been well appreciated by different quarters. (*Civil and Military Gazette*, 10 October 1947 and 15 October 1947).

Shamim Jallundhry had written an account of eight recovered girls of a highly respectable family of Syeds. The girls told that the Sikhs took them to their temple at night. There, they tattooed the arms of the Muslim girls with Sikh sermons and dragged the Muslim girls to their homes. Meanwhile, Pakistani army attacked on the temple and recovered the remaining girls at the spot. The recovered girls were brought to Pakistan in the military truck and later were handed over to their families. (Jallundhry: 1981, 321-27) The last phase of recovery of abducted women was materialized in 1950 by the Committee of West Pakistan Abducted Women. It was revealed later by the recovered women that many girls were sold in the markets of Katmandu, Nepal, in far off areas of India. Many others had given birth to illegal babies. It was a painful reality that some of them were not ready to come back to join their families due to their 'impurity' which had been imposed on them by Sikhs and Hindus. (Hussain: 1990, 136)

Conclusion

This human dimension of historical discourse of Pakistan's birth has brought to light the fact that Muslim women's sacrifice to achieve independence was far greater than males. Violation against women was of diverse nature and so dreadful that the memory of that terrible upheaval still haunts the victims who could survive of the awful experience of torture, rape and disgrace. That violation against women had been done not only to humiliate the Muslims but also for so called purification of the land (Gilmartin: 1998, 1086) as it had been done in case of many women victims whose religion was forcefully changed and they had given birth to Sikh and Hindu children. In most of the cases, once the women were abducted, it was not mostly possible for them to come back and join their families, although thousands of them had returned back and restarted their normal lives but still thousands of them could never rejoin their families. With this it can be concluded that the partition involved the death of family ties as well as individuals besides disgrace of Muslim women. The positive element of this study is the behavior of native women of the Pakistani Punjab, who proved to be highly sacrificing. They received the refugees sympathetically and helped to accelerate the process of resettlement of the poor refugee women. They were ready to donate each and every belonging of theirs to make the refugee women comfortable. They spent long hours in the refugee camps to help their poor sisters and brothers. They further adopted many refugee orphans. Many aspects of this trauma of Pakistan's history are still to be discovered.

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