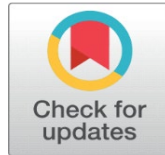
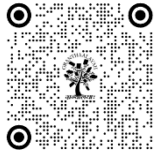


THE UNFOLDING OF PARTITION: OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS AND LIVED REALITIES IN DELHI (1947-1949)

Harnoor Kaur Bhatia ¹✉

¹ MA History, Ambedkar University Delhi, India



Corresponding Author

Harnoor Kaur Bhatia,
harnoor15@gmail.com

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v2.i2.2021.5791](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v2.i2.2021.5791)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2021 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

This research examines the complex realities of the 1947 Partition of India through the migration and resettlement experiences of West Punjab refugees in Delhi between 1947 and 1949. Breaking away from macro-politics narratives, the paper draws on oral histories, state records, and historical newspapers to investigate how material failures, unequal state support, ubiquitous class hierarchies, and gendered suffering influenced the "last journey" of the thousands. Gleaning from memory studies, trauma theory, and subaltern historiography, it complicates the simplistic imaging of Partition as one uniformly shared suffering experience, instead highlighting the stratified form of displacement and rehabilitation. The study identifies the key role of unofficial community support amidst tardy official intervention and highlights the ethical complexity involved in post-Partition resettlement, such as property occupation. Finally, this paper makes an innovative contribution to a nuanced understanding of Partition as an extended human disconnection, repeatedly renegotiated through individual accounts and evolving historical analysis.

Keywords: Partition of India, Refugee Migration, Delhi, Oral History, Class and Gender

1. INTRODUCTION

The Partition of India in 1947 remains one of the most violent ruptures in twentieth-century history, leading to the displacement of nearly twelve million people across newly created borders. While often recalled through the lens of communal conflict, Partition was also a consequence of colonial withdrawal without proper planning, which created institutional gaps that worsened existing tensions. As Yasmin Khan (2007) states, the hurried nature of British disengagement weakened administrative capacity, allowing fear and rumours to spread faster than law or order. In Punjab—the center of the divide—state collapse was complete, and ordinary civilians endured the worst of the violence and uncertainty.

Much of the existing literature has focused on the macro-political dimensions of Partition, highlighting negotiations between the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League, and the British Raj. However, scholars such as Ian Talbot and Gurharpal Singh (2009) have emphasized that the **real meaning of Partition unfolded locally**, where bureaucratic decisions translated into the lived experience of migration, dispossession, and survival. This study seeks to extend that line of inquiry by focusing on **Delhi-bound refugees from West Punjab**, tracing their journeys and resettlement

between 1947 and 1949. By focusing on this subset, the paper explores how **logistical failures, uneven state aid, class hierarchies, and gendered trauma** shaped the "last journey" of thousands who fled toward the new Indian capital.

The study draws on three intersecting frameworks: **memory studies, trauma theory, and subaltern historiography**. Building on the work of Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora, it acknowledges that memory is not a passive recall of events but an active cultural process, tied to symbols, places, and silences (Nora 1989). Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma theory provides interpretive tools to read silences and narrative ruptures in survivor testimonies as markers of emotional aftershock, rather than historical absence. Additionally, the **subaltern approach**, as articulated by Spivak and Guha, challenges official history by foregrounding the marginal voices—those of women, lower castes, and the working class—whose perspectives are often elided in nationalist archives.

One of the main ideas in this paper is Ravinder Kaur's (2006) concept of the "class effect," which criticizes the simplified portrayal of Partition as a shared suffering. (R. Kaur 2006, 2222) ¹Kaur explains that migration was highly divided: access to safe transportation, government protection, and later compensation were influenced by one's economic and social status. This paper expands on her idea by comparing stories of elites who were airlifted to those who walked barefoot through violence-filled border zones.

It also engages with feminist historiography, especially the work of Urvashi Butalia (1998) and her earlier essay (1995), to highlight the gendered aspects of displacement. Women were not just passive victims of violence but also caregivers, witnesses, and moral guides. Their stories reveal how displacement intersected with expectations of honour, domestic roles, and silence. Butalia (1995) contends that women's bodies became symbolic sites of community pride and revenge; therefore, their recovery or violation was politicized by both the state and society.

Furthermore, this study draws on Vazira Zamindar's (2007) concept of the "Long Partition," which explains the lengthy and bureaucratic process of refugee identity formation. Her work shows that post-1947 boundaries were not only geographic but also psychological and legal, shaped by files, permits, and proof. Zamindar's insights enable this paper to view resettlement as more than just logistical recovery; it is a morally complex process involving property transfers, identity changes, and contested notions of belonging.

The methodology of this research—combining oral histories, government records, and archival newspapers—enables a dialogic reading of Partition, where survivor voices engage with state documents, revealing gaps, contradictions, and moral tensions. The stories that follow are not simply accounts of suffering but testimonies of agency, survival, and resistance, showing how the legacies of Partition were navigated long after borders were drawn.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The historiography of the Partition of India has evolved significantly, moving beyond the earlier focus on political elites and high-level negotiations to include a deeper exploration of memory, trauma, gender, class, and everyday experience. Initial scholarly work framed Partition as an inevitable outcome of communal division and colonial withdrawal. However, contemporary scholarship challenges this teleological narrative by foregrounding the lived realities of displacement and violence.

A major historiographical turn came with the emergence of memory studies. Gyanendra Pandey (2001) critiques the reliance on official documents and chronological narratives, arguing that memory—fragmented, nonlinear, and emotionally charged—offers a more complete understanding of Partition. In a similar vein, Pierre Nora's (1989) concept of *lieux de mémoire* situates physical sites like refugee camps, homes, and border crossings as repositories of symbolic meaning, layered with collective trauma and emotional resonance.

Cathy Caruth's (1996) trauma theory complements this perspective, suggesting that silence, gaps, and repetition often mark narratives of trauma, features evident in oral histories of Partition survivors. These absences, rather than signalling faulty memory, serve as indicators of enduring emotional rupture, necessitating interpretive methods that read beyond the spoken word.

Class-based inequalities have also come to the forefront of Partition studies. Ravinder Kaur (2006), in her analysis of Punjab's migration, introduces the "class effect," a term denoting how the dominant narrative of shared suffering

¹ Kaur, Ravinder. "The Last Journey-Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.41, No. 22, June 3-9, 2006: 2221

obscures the stratified nature of displacement. While refugee trains and bullock carts dominate the visual archive, Kaur notes that many elite families accessed safer evacuation routes via airlifts or secured convoys, enjoying logistical privileges denied to the poor.

This paper draws upon that critique by aligning with Ian Talbot and Gurharpal Singh (2009), who, in their regional analysis, show that state responses and rehabilitation schemes were not monolithic but varied according to geography, class, and political access. The experience of Delhi-bound migrants was shaped by its administrative centrality and resource availability. Similarly, Yasmin Khan (2007) underscores how the British administration's abrupt withdrawal and lack of preparation contributed to the scale of humanitarian disaster, rather than merely communal animosity.

Urvashi Butalia has powerfully documented gendered experiences of Partition. In *The Other Side of Silence* (1998), she emphasizes the suppression of women's voices in both public memory and private discourse, especially concerning sexual violence and abduction. Butalia's earlier essay (1995) critiques how women's bodies were turned into symbolic sites of community honour and humiliation, often narrated through male voices. These insights underscore the need to read female testimonies not just as personal accounts but as interventions into historical discourse.

Expanding on this, Anjali Gera Roy and Nandi Bhatia's (2008) edited volume *Partitioned Lives* bridges literary and testimonial narratives to reveal how displacement produced emotional geographies—of home, loss, and belonging—that persist long after physical resettlement. Their interdisciplinary approach validates this paper's use of oral histories as emotionally and politically significant sources.

Vazira Zamindar's (2007) formulation of the "Long Partition" further complicates the understanding of 1947 as a discrete rupture. She argues that Partition must be seen as a protracted process of bureaucratic regulation, surveillance, and identity management. Her work on legal documentation and refugee classification reveals how many migrants remained in limbo for years, constantly navigating a state apparatus that continued to redraw the boundaries of belonging.

In this context, Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin (2004) critique the imbalance in Partition historiography: "the paucity of social histories almost equals the abundance of political histories on Partition." They argue that literary texts have partially filled this gap, functioning as "non-official contemporary records" that mirror reality with vivid intensity. Alok Rai's concept of literature as a "slavish imitation of reality" is invoked here to affirm the documentary quality of fiction, which has captured the human cost of Partition, often absent from state archives and media reports. (Chand Jan28-Feb3, 2006)

However, Menon and Bhasin also highlight a problematic tendency in such literature: the replication of patriarchal tropes. Women are frequently portrayed as passive victims or symbols of communal honour, with limited agency. This reiterates official and communal narratives that silence women, making them both "invisible" and "inaudible" in public memory.²

Most Partition histories—whether celebratory or tragic—tend to adopt a teleological structure, retroactively ordering events to justify the outcome. These narratives often prioritize metaphysical identities and collective destinies over the fragmented realities of individuals. They draw from a limited repertoire of archival sources—government files, police records, speeches, and newspaper clippings—leading to repetitive storytelling that either vilifies or victimizes entire communities.

Ravinder Kaur's research on "The Last Journey: Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration"³ provides an empirical correction to such overgeneralizations. She records the different modes of transportation used by Hindu and Sikh refugees fleeing West Punjab, including bullock carts, foot columns, trains, and aircraft. This disparity in mobility highlights significant class-based differences in the experiences and memories of Partition. Her narrative also includes a poignant government report describing refugee caravans: "Here a cart dragged wearily by a

² Sherry V. Sarvar, Chand. "Manto's 'Open It': Engendering Partition Narratives." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 41, No.4, Jan28-Feb3, 2006: 308

³ Ravinder, Kaur. "The Last Journey-Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.41, No. 22, June3-9, 2006: 2221

lean, hungry bullock... Multiply a hundredfold... The streams mingle and flow ever eastwards... for on the long way out, danger lurks—bands of marauders prey on their very helplessness.” (Kaur 2006).⁴

Such evocative imagery—whether of overstuffed trains or foot migrants—has come to dominate the visual and emotional archive of Partition. Yet, these iconic representations often universalize the experience, eliding caste, class, and gender distinctions. Kaur warns against this flattening of memory, arguing that the popular image of Partition migrants as united in trauma overlooks the privileges enjoyed by the upper caste. These elite families were evacuated in relative safety and comfort. Their stories, bank transfers, and asset protections rarely appear in mainstream narratives.

Thus, the literature reveals that Partition is best understood not as a singular event but as a complex and uneven process shaped by intersecting factors of class, gender, location, and memory. This study seeks to build upon these insights by offering an empirically grounded, survivor-centric account of the Delhi refugee experience, where logistical operations, personal suffering, and moral dilemmas intersect in historically significant ways.

3. GUIDING INQUIRIES

This research is informed by a cluster of interconnected research questions that aim to examine the socio-historical aspects of Partition migration, specifically from West Punjab to Delhi. It begins by examining whether there were any pre-declaration signs of communal riots and disturbances in the Undivided Punjab area prior to the official announcement of Partition in 1947, and how these tensions could have influenced the anticipatory movements among concerned communities. A second line of inquiry involves the experiential dimensions of migration—namely, how families were able to move from their original villages in today's Pakistan to India, and what transportation was available or within reach to them during this time of displacement. The study further endeavours to comprehend the financial consequence of Partition on migrant lives, and with great scrutiny, how the lives of business-class families compared to those working in government establishments.

Further, the study explores shared problems migrants experienced as they traveled, such as the religious dynamics involved and the conduct displayed within Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh groups when facing attacks. A significant aspect of the research concerns support systems in operation at the time of migration: whether migrants were assisted along the journey and whether there were volunteer service groups available at key transitional locations like border terminals, bus stops, and railway stations. The state's official response to the refugee crisis is also examined—namely, the character of preparations undertaken for refugee reception, including the establishment of camps, first aid, and provision of food.

Lastly, the early resettlement process upon arrival in India is examined. It inquires into where migrant families were sheltered after crossing the border and if they were given formal shelter. It also examines the condition of the houses they lived in, specifically whether they were second-hand homes, empty houses left behind by migrants to Pakistan, or occupied buildings. These queries as a group constitute an elaborate examination of the logistical, economic, and ethical challenges encountered by Partition survivors in their "last journey."

4. DATA COLLECTION

Methodology: This research adopts a **qualitative historical approach**, drawing upon oral testimonies, government records, newspaper archives, and published scholarship. It aims to reconstruct the migration trajectories, challenges, and post-Partition experiences of refugees who relocated from West Punjab to Delhi between 1947 and 1949. The methodology blends **archival research** with **oral history**, grounded in narrative analysis and memory studies.

Sampling and Interview Design- The study is based on **ten oral history interviews** conducted between May and July 2018, as part of the 1947 Partition Archive Fellowship Project. Participants were selected using **purposive sampling**, with the criteria that they had:

- Direct experience of Partition-related displacement,
- Migrated from West Punjab to Delhi, and
- Willingness to share in-depth personal narratives.

⁴ Ravinder, Kaur. "The Last Journey-Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.41, No. 22, June 3-9, 2006: 2221

The ten interviewees include **nine migrants** and **one non-migrant witness**, representing diverse caste, gender, and economic backgrounds. The interviews were semi-structured, allowing participants to narrate freely while addressing key themes: travel, relief support, community violence, and resettlement.

Analytical Framework- The interviews were transcribed and coded thematically using a **narrative analysis** framework. Recurring motifs—such as the role of class in transport, witness to violence, institutional support, and gendered trauma—were identified and contextualized using secondary literature. Survivor stories were also cross-referenced with **archival materials** from the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), including Congress and Hindu Mahasabha documents, to highlight tensions between state narratives and individual memory.

Ethical Considerations- All participants gave **informed verbal consent** to share their stories for academic and archival use. Care was taken to approach traumatic topics sensitively, and names are used with explicit permission. Where emotional distress was evident, interviews were paused or shortened.

This study recognizes the ethical implications of retelling others' trauma and attempts to maintain **reflexivity and empathy** in both presentation and analysis.

Source Critique and Limitations - Oral histories, while rich in emotional truth, are influenced by time, memory loss, nostalgia, and sometimes silence. As Pandey (2001) and Butalia (1998) suggest, these gaps are not limitations but essential for understanding trauma and the politics of remembrance. While oral testimonies form the core of this study, a variety of primary sources were also examined to verify findings and confirm survivor stories. These sources include government reports, press notes, relief statistics, and evacuation records from institutions like the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, as well as official publications such as those from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

However, although these records provide insights into state planning during 1947–49, they often present a polished version of successful relief efforts. For example, reports from the Hindu Mahasabha highlight operational efficiency but omit key details like logistical delays, exclusions, and reliance on voluntary networks. In contrast, survivor testimonies describe poor camp conditions, lack of aid, and heavy dependence on community initiatives. One example from the archives is a Hindu Mahasabha Press Note dated October 22, 1947, which outlined evacuation plans across central districts but downplayed the hardships faced during implementation.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The findings, along with the discussion, are systematically organized into four distinct sections. The initial four sections follow the chronological order of events leading up to the Partition, whereas the concluding fifth section conveys interview narratives and short stories.

SECTION 1- COMMUNAL TENSIONS CULMINATING IN LARGE-SCALE VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN INDIA.

This section offers a concise overview of the origins of communal hostility and the crimes that started to emerge prior to Partition, thereby establishing the foundation for heightened social tensions throughout much of North India in 1947.

The report by the All-India Congress Committee provides a comprehensive analysis of the communal disturbances that commenced on March 4, 1947, and subsequently proliferated throughout the province of Punjab. These disturbances are directly attributable to an unconstitutional agitation characterized by widespread violence and pervasive provocative rhetoric. The agitation's stated objectives included the intimidation and subversion of the incumbent government.

The events unfolded as a coordinated campaign of terror, wherein armed factions systematically targeted vulnerable minority populations across urban and rural areas, including Attock, Multan, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, and Campbellpore. This period witnessed the brutal slaughter of thousands of minority men. Furthermore, women were subjected to egregious acts of sexual violence, murder, abduction, and immolation; some were dismembered in the presence of their families. Concurrently, the residences and personal effects of these communities were systematically plundered and incinerated, often prior to the arrival of military assistance.

The report indicates that the participants in the disturbances included **demobilized soldiers, pension holders, and Innam Khawars**. These individuals were equipped with **modern weaponry**, such as machine guns, grenades, tommy guns, and rifles. The systematic destruction of minority communities was further facilitated by **deception**, as these groups were reportedly assured of protection before being subjected to brutal and unparalleled assaults. As Punjab

descended into chaos, characterized by widespread violence and suffering, the region appealed to the All-India leadership for intervention. In response, **Sardar Baldev Singh** visited Punjab, followed by **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru** on March 14th. Both leaders toured the riot-affected regions, witnessing first-hand the devastation, including smouldering ruins and numerous wounded and maimed individuals.

Consequently, the **Punjab Disturbed Area Act** was promulgated and enacted on March 19th. This legislation granted extensive powers to government, police, and military officials. The Act stipulated **death penalties** for severe offenses committed within the disturbed areas, including murder, attempted murder, kidnapping, abduction, rape, robbery, dacoity, and arson.⁵

The Committee report indicates that the **Punjab Disturbed Area Act** was applied to the districts of Rawalpindi, Multan, the city and cantonment of Lahore, Amritsar, Sialkot, Jullundur, Ludhiana, and Hoshiarpur. These measures, alongside increased military patrols and appeals from political leaders, progressively ameliorated the immediate situation. However, the ongoing influx of refugees, bearing testimonies of extreme violence and widespread atrocities, sustained an underlying tension, leading to sporadic outbreaks of unrest. (Committee 1947)

The incipient phase of unrest across multiple regions of North India progressively intensified during the months of August and September. This segment holds significance as it signifies the inception of communal animosity within the populace and prompted governmental measures such as the Disturbed Area Act implemented in Punjab prior to Partition to manage the escalating situation. This event laid the groundwork for subsequent communal riots, which eventually contributed to a perilous environment for the inhabitants of Undivided Punjab.

Several newspapers also reported communal riots across various parts of Punjab and North India. According to Hindustan Times, in August 1947, areas such as Hapur, Ghaziabad, Pilkhawa, and Kithor in Meerut were designated as “disturbed areas” because of communal violence.

A July 1947 press note by the All-India Congress Committee states that approximately 80% of minorities migrated from this province to Punjab, UP, and other Indian states. The Frontier Hindu Sabha has organised Relief for the sufferers here. It has been running six camps since 10th March, 47, and these camps have not been disbanded as yet.” (Committee 14th July, 1947)⁶

Therefore, between March and July, various forms of communal tensions erupted across multiple cities in India. These tensions were exacerbated following the declaration of the final Partition of Punjab, which led to the world's largest migration amid violence and animosity directed at communities that had coexisted for centuries and shared a common cultural heritage.

SECTION 2- MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND EVACUATION ROUTES TO FACILITATE THE MOVEMENT OF HINDUS, SIKHS, AND OTHER COMMUNITIES TO INDIA.

This process commenced gradually in August but culminated in the evacuation of millions of refugees from diverse regions of West Punjab by late November. During this period, the primary concern was the mode of transportation, with four options available to the populace: 1) on foot, 2) military vehicles and buses, 3) government-arranged trains, and 4) airplanes, subject to affordability.

By the end of August, numerous newspapers reported that Indian National Airways intended to commence two daily flights between Delhi and Lahore, beginning on August 28. Effective August 29, there will be (1) a daily service in either direction between Delhi and Rawalpindi on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and (2) a same day return service between Delhi and Peshawar via Lahore and Rawalpindi in both directions on Wednesdays and Fridays. (Times, Advertorial Insert 1947)⁷

According to Hindu Mahasabha documents, a press note detailed the population transfer and transportation, stating, “A fleet of transport planes, motor trucks, and special trains has been mobilized to evacuate over 1.8 million non-Muslims from West Punjab and the Northwest Frontier Province.” The majority will be moved on foot under escort. The latest plan anticipates the evacuation to be completed within 5 to 6 weeks. (Hindu Mahasabha, October 22, 1947) Nearly 30

⁵ Report of All India Congress Committee (G-10, 1947) dated-26/03/1947 on Recent Disturbances in Punjab- March and April, 1947, retrieved from Manuscript section of Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi on 19/03/2019.

⁶ Report of All India Congress Committee (G-10, 1947) dated-26/03/1947 on Recent Disturbances in Punjab- March and April, 1947, retrieved from Manuscript section of Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi on 19/03/2019.

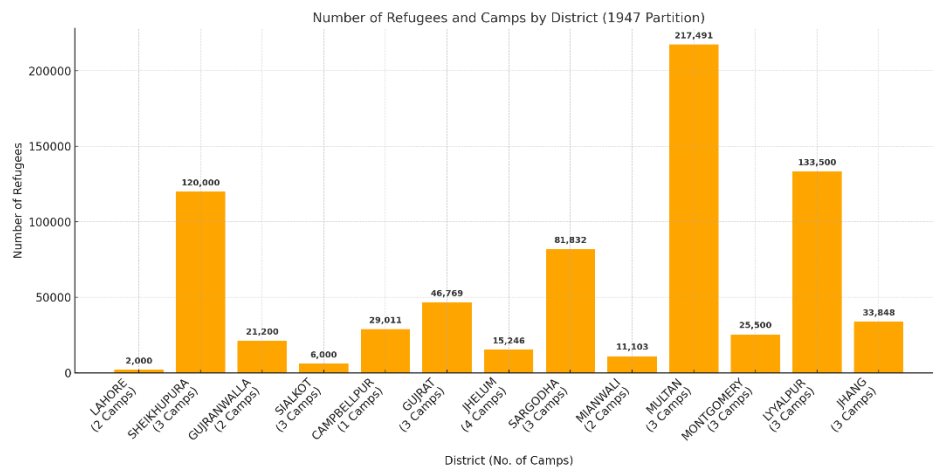
⁷ Hindustan Times, “Editorial Insert”, dated: 28, August, 1947, was retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

transport planes are currently evacuating about 2,500 non-Muslims daily from remote areas in West Punjab and NWFP. More planes are expected to join the fleet of government-chartered aircraft soon.

At the time of chaos, no immediate organisation took up the responsibility, but in late August, the Military Evacuation Organisation was provided with many trucks for evacuation operations. Motor transport, however, was continuously employed for short distances, up to 100 miles, and to clear the small pockets. They also used shuttle services to transport people between small and large camps.⁸

As mentioned earlier, the process of transportation and evacuation accelerated in late September and October, when it became apparent that large numbers of refugees were being moved by train. Special trains were already running daily from Wah, Mianwali, Multan, Jhelum, Mian Channu, Muzaffargarh, and Lyallpur. More trains were cleared for the concentration of non-Muslims from Rawalpindi, Campbellpur, and D.G. Khan in West Punjab, and special trains were also being arranged to run from NWFP to Wah. Each train can carry from 2000 to 4000 passengers.” (Hindu Mahasabha October 22, 1947)

The bar chart below displays 13 districts and camps, along with the number of non-Muslim refugees scheduled for evacuation during late September to October, as issued by the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation.⁹



SOURCE – Hindu Mahasabha Papers, Press Note - Evacuation operation of over 18 Lakhs non-Muslims to be completed in 5-6 weeks, dated October 22, 1947.

Until late October, the most notable activity involved people marching on foot. Plans were suggested to organize convoys of up to 30,000 people, equipped with adequate protection, food, water, and medical supplies. A national newspaper reported that around 3 refugees crossed into India during October 1947, and the rescue of 400 forcibly converted girls was achieved successfully.¹⁰

The task of handling the evacuation of such large masses of men, women, and children, fleeing their homes for their very lives from towns and villages all over West Punjab, first, and then the Northwest Frontier and Sindh, fell on the Government of India on the morrow of the transfer of power. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 1) The question of evacuating non-Muslims from West Punjab by air and by civil and Military Lorries under proper escort was next taken up with the Government of Pakistan. Arrangements were made to organise evacuation by air from distant towns such as Sialkot, Rawalpindi, and Multan, as well as intermediate points like Gujranwala and Lyallpur. Air services between Delhi and Lahore were duplicated with a halt at Amritsar. Immediately began the mobilisation of aircraft and civilian and military

⁸ Report of Hindu Mahasabha (C-168) on “Evacuation of over 18 lakhs of Non-muslims from West Punjab”, dated-22/10/1947, was retrieved from Manuscripts department of Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi on 18/03/2019.

⁹ Table designed in Hindu Mahasabha Press Note on “Evacuation of over 7,43,500 refugees from West Punjab, dated 22/10/1947, retrieved from manuscripts section of Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

¹⁰ “3 Lakh Refugees enter India”, “Return of Girls abducted in Punjab”, articles from Hindustan Standard, dated: October 26, 1947, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

vehicles, later to concentrate in essential places like Amritsar, Batala, and Ferozpur, from where road convoys into West Punjab were organised. At the same time, separate organisations were set up for evacuation and relief. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 3)

Every operation and task on a massive scale has a different set of problems in front of them, like in the case of people who were walking by foot faced different sets of problems, like - When the supply of food failed, the Government of India had to drop cooked food as well as food grains and sugar by R.I.A.F. planes which flew from Amritsar and Delhi to Jaranwala, Lyallpur, Churkhana, Dhabhansinghwal, Balloki headworks, and Bhai Pheru. Drugs, vaccines, and doctors were rushed by air and motor transport. A field ambulance unit was sent to Raiwind to inoculate refugees before they crossed the border. On the way, the columns were often attacked and sometimes suffered heavy casualties. Women and children were abducted, and an unauthorised search deprived them of the few valuables they carried. The combined efforts of man and nature have sustained the columns. Exposure and devastating floods thinned their ranks. Nevertheless, the determined caravan moved on. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 5)¹¹

SECTION 3: STATE ARRANGEMENTS

The riots started before the partition, around March and April. Still, according to government records, various organisations took action to speed up the evacuation and relief process from late September to October 1947.

The government employees were well cared for, as shown in the following news report. The rehabilitation ministry established a transfer bureau, a dedicated agency created specifically to assist the affected state employees due to violence and population movements. The relocation process for government employees was different from that of ordinary people, as their travel, housing, and ongoing employment were managed by the state. "The staff coming to Delhi is of three categories: those who are posted permanently to Delhi, those who are to go elsewhere in India, and those who have left Pakistan because of disturbances. Each category is being handled properly. A special officer has been appointed to receive everyone arriving by air, take care of them, and arrange their housing."

The most important step taken up by the Government of India was, in consultation with the Government of Pakistan, to provide Indian Troops to escort non-Muslims from West to East Punjab by rail, road, and on foot. A new military organisation called the Military Evacuation Organisation was set up to run refugee trains from East to West Punjab and back under escort, to have non-Muslim refugee camps in West Punjab protected by Indian troops, to organise and defend road convoys, to provide mobile escorts for the large marching columns, to carry food to refugee camps in West Punjab suffering from the shortages of food and to look after refugees stranded in many parts of that province. This organisation began to work towards the end of September. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 4)

Next to the foot columns of the government's instructions, trains carried the largest number of refugees. Between August 27 and November 6, 1947, approximately 673 refugee trains were operated, responsible for the movement of over 2,300,000 refugees within India and across the border. Of these 13, 62,000 were non-muslims and 9, 39,000 Muslims. With the restoration of rail communications after the floods and the reduction in the heavy movement of refugees, it was possible to run 16 trains on alternate days on the branch lines of the East Punjab Railway. Like the foot columns, the refugee trains also were attacked by armed mobs in East and West Punjab, necessitating heavy military protection, the introduction of stern measures against the villages through which the trains passed, the imposition of collective fines, and curfew in the affected areas along the railway lines. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 6)

SECTION 4: IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES FROM PAKISTAN

Following the mass exodus of refugees into Indian territory, the immediate challenge confronting the nascent Indian state was the provision of necessities—food, shelter, medical aid, and clothing—to those arriving from West Punjab. While the state's response was considerable in both scale and intent, the urgency and enormity of the refugee crisis exposed significant administrative limitations and infrastructural inadequacies.¹² The archival and testimonial evidence shows that, although state interventions were eventually arranged, improvisation, delays, and an excessive dependence on voluntary organizations often characterized early relief efforts.

¹¹ "Millions on the move: The aftermath of Partition" (BOOK), published by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, dated-27/07/2009, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library.

¹² "Million on the move: Aftermath of Partition" (BOOK), published by Ministry of information and broadcasting, Government of India, dated-27/07/2009, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

Between September 11 and October 19, 1947, the Government of India provided large quantities of food to refugee camps, including essential staples such as rice, flour, lentils, salt, and sugar. In addition, an allocation of 28,000 tons of food grains was sanctioned for October and November specifically for East Punjab. However, despite assurances from both the Indian and Pakistani governments that food and necessities would be provided in equal measure, the implementation on the ground was patchy. Emergency airdrops of cooked meals and food grains were undertaken by the Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) in several West Punjab locations—Wah, Jaranwala, Balloki, Khuddian, and Chunian—highlighting the logistical challenges and the reactive nature of relief operations.(Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 12)

Brigadier **Mohinder Singh Chopra**, the area commander of Amritsar, recounted the scale of human dislocation with palpable urgency. In his memoir, he described refugees “sprawled everywhere, along the roads, in makeshift camps, in school buildings, in private houses, in fields and on the streets.” He noted that he personally observed “columns of humanity stretching unbroken for 15 to 20 miles,” and described how food packets containing chapatis and vegetables were airdropped from military aircraft to relieve immediate hunger. These accounts emphasize both the scale of the humanitarian catastrophe and the improvisational strategies employed to mitigate it.(R. Kaur 2006, 2224)

In *The Hindustan Times*, a report from mid-August 1947 noted that over 100,000 refugees had already arrived in Delhi. Thousands continued to pour in daily from the Northwest Frontier Province, Punjab, and Alwar. The influx heavily strained civic infrastructure: over 1,000 ration cards were issued daily in Delhi alone, highlighting the scale of logistical efforts needed to provide basic sustenance.¹³

Equally urgent was the need to provide medical relief. The closure of Lahore—the main medical depot of undivided Punjab—meant that East Punjab and Delhi had to depend on distant centres like Bombay and Calcutta for supplies. Cholera vaccines, sulfa drugs, penicillin, surgical dressings, and cans of evaporated milk were sent to key locations such as Lahore, Wah, and Peshawar, as well as to camps in West Punjab. Between August and November, the Ministry of Health shipped over 3,50,000 doses of vaccines and 45,000 pounds of medical supplies via 20 wagonloads.¹⁴

Furthermore, 263,000 vaccine doses were allocated to the Military Evacuation Organization, and an additional 32,000 doses were supplied to the Kurukshetra camp, along with over 32,000 pounds of medical supplies. Despite these efforts, conditions remained severe. On December 15, 1947, a national daily reported 2,484 refugee deaths caused by dysentery and pneumonia, highlighting the delayed response and the inadequacy of preventive healthcare infrastructure.¹⁵ (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 13)

The issue of exposure during the upcoming winter months added more complexity. Refugees needed woollens, quilts, and protective clothing in large quantities. Appeals for donations from senior leaders were met with considerable public generosity. Relief organizations like the United Council for Relief and Welfare helped gather and distribute clothing across major camps, especially in Delhi and East Punjab. These items were vital for survival, particularly in poorly insulated refugee tents and shelters. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 14)

The most prominent example of institutionalized refugee care during this period was the Kurukshetra Camp in East Punjab. As reported by *The Hindustan Standard*, the camp was set up on a large mela ground and turned into a small-scale township with hundreds of tents raised each day. By November 15, 1947, about 250,000 refugees had arrived, though many still slept in the open due to a severe shortage of shelter. The camp was systematically divided into four towns, each housing 50,000 people. Every township had two dispensaries (25 beds each), a child welfare center, and access to 42 medical staff, including doctors and nurses.¹⁶ The healthcare infrastructure further included a central hospital (142 beds), a women’s hospital (80 beds), and an infectious disease hospital, providing a rare glimpse into the extent of post-relief institutional development.(Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 17)¹⁷

Government and voluntary sectors jointly contributed to refugee stabilization in the initial post-Partition years. The **Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation** played a central coordinating role, beginning with the establishment of the **Military Evacuation Organisation (MEO)** at Amritsar. Although **the ministry provided 700 civilian lorries**, these

¹³ *Hindustan Times*, “1, 00,000 Refugees in Delhi”, dated : August, 13, 1947, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

¹⁴ “Millions on the move: Aftermath of Partition (BOOK)”, published by Ministry of information and Broadcasting, Government of India, dated- 26/07/2009, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library.

¹⁵ *Hindustan Standard*, “Death and Desolation stalking West Punjab”, dated: December 15, 1947, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

¹⁶ “Kurukshetra Camp”, article from *Hindustan Standard* dated: October 17, 1947, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

¹⁷ “Millions on the move: Aftermath of Partition” (BOOK), published by Ministry of Information and broadcasting, Government of India, dated- 26/07/2009, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library.

were insufficient to penetrate deep into West Punjab and required the formation of mobile transport companies under the MEO. To maintain morale, **evacuation by air** was initiated concurrently. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 47)

Besides logistical support, financial and property issues were also addressed. The Ministry handled the transfer of savings bank deposits, cash certificates, and property claims, aiming to restore economic control to displaced individuals. However, these efforts often fell behind more immediate needs for food and shelter.

Efforts to recover information were also launched. The Information and Search Service, in partnership with the Indian Red Cross Society, was created to reunite separated families by collecting personal data through refugee interviews. Additionally, a dedicated committee for women and children was established under the Ministry, whose recommendations received “serious consideration,” recognizing the gendered aspects of refugee suffering.¹⁸

Multiple government ministries—including Defence, Transport, Health, Labour, Communications, and Education—were deployed to deal with Partition’s aftermath. However, retrospective evaluations suggest that earlier and more integrated coordination could have prevented much of the chaos. As the data demonstrates, had institutional preparations begun in early August, rather than post-September, thousands of lives may have been saved from exposure, malnutrition, and disease. (Broadcasting 27 Jul 2009, 47)

Based on the above section on relief, it can be said that the Government of India made significant efforts to provide immediate relief to the evacuated refugees. However, if an organization like the Ministry of Relief and Rehab had been established before Partition in early August rather than by late September, it could have saved hundreds of lives that died due to the lack of facilities in camps for food, shelter, and first aid.

SECTION 5: PARTITION NARRATIVES

This section utilizes primary oral interviews and published testimonies to explore the psychological, logistical, and moral aspects of the Partition as experienced by survivors of the West Punjab to Delhi migration. These stories not only record physical displacement but also expose emotional breaks, ethical conflicts, and acts of resilience that add complexity to the official narratives of nation-building and organized evacuation.

As **Rajee Seth** reflects in *Stories About the Partition of India*, the moment of evacuation was marked by terror and disorder: “fear-stricken crowds where each one pushing and shoving to get onto the trucks first... People were being loaded into trucks and carried to safety across the Indian border. Everyone was packed into trucks like animals.” Seth’s account captures the dehumanizing conditions of migration and the trauma that lingered long after resettlement. Her narrative situates Partition not simply as a historical event but as a psychological rupture—one that shaped the everyday life and subjectivity of survivors. (Seth 2012)

Urvashi Butalia underscores the paradox of trauma and memory: “Trauma brings with it the need to witness, to speak... But trauma also stuns, dazing us into silence... The traumatized, we might say, carry an impossible history within them”. Her insight is particularly resonant in the testimonies collected during this study, where moments of silence, fragmentation, and repetition were not indicative of forgetfulness but of emotional weight and unresolved grief. (Parasher 2015)

The testimony of **Suri Sehgal**, recorded by the 1947 Partition Archive at Stanford Libraries, presents a story of both displacement and miraculous survival. Sehgal describes how his family home in Pakistan transformed into a temporary refugee camp for dozens of displaced individuals. Despite witnessing “many horrific incidents,” Sehgal and his family managed to survive the journey to Amritsar and were later reunited. He attributes their survival to “true miracles,” noting that “not even one family member was harmed or killed during their Partition experiences.” This account, while exceptional, underscores the crucial role that acts of refuge and community support played in mitigating violence. (Sehgal 2016)¹⁹

According to the primary survey of 10 Partition survivors, the following is a map of Undivided Punjab. The map shows 10 different colored points where the migrants lived with their families before Partition. Soon after the declaration, all these families shifted to Delhi.

¹⁸ “Millions on the move: Aftermath of Partition” (BOOK), published by Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, dated-26/07/2009, retrieved from Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.

¹⁹ Interview of Mr. Suri Sehgal on Partition, 1947, dated-23/10/2016, interviewer- Marly Cornell, retrieved from 1947 Partition archives on 17/03/2019.

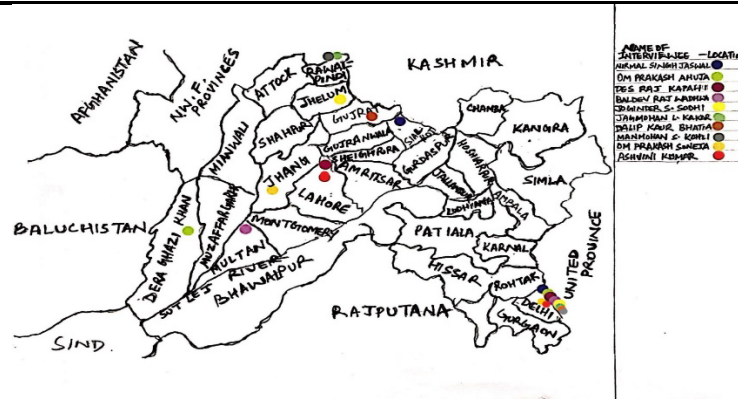


Figure 1 Primary Source- Travel route of 10 Partition Survivors from Pakistan to Delhi

Out of 10 recorded interviews, the narratives are described below. The goal is to highlight their different perspectives on Partition's journey and the relief provided by various agencies afterward. To understand the Partition situation, it is essential to know what happened when refugees migrated to different parts of North India.

Among these interviews, that of **Mr. Nirmal Singh Jaswal** stands out for its vivid depiction of the entire migration process. Born in Tapiala village, Sialkot District, he categorized his experience into three phases: pre-migration preparation, the journey itself, and post-migration resettlement. His family, aware of growing communal tensions, prepared simple meals and concealed valuables before fleeing. The journey was fraught with fear, particularly when they encountered scenes of mass violence near Dera Baba Nanak and were forced to travel atop overcrowded trains to reach Delhi. His family eventually settled in Karol Bagh and established a modest street shop (khoka), marking the beginning of a long process of rebuilding.²⁰ (Jaswal 2018)

The second interview is with Mr. Om Prakash Ahuja.²¹ who was born in Dera Ghazi Khan, recalled how his family was saved by a Muslim District Commissioner—a powerful counter-narrative to prevailing communal binaries. Through the DC's intervention, the family was transported safely via jeep and later placed on a reserved train compartment to India. Ahuja described a haunting moment when he witnessed two trains at the border: one filled with dead bodies, and another attacked by vengeful mobs. His account powerfully captures the cycle of violence, retaliation, and moral despair that accompanied Partition (Ahuja 2018)

The third interview is with a Non-Migrant who witnessed various groups involved in violence and provided voluntary services, helping to provide food and shelter.²² Mr. Chanan Singh Sandhu, a non-migrant witness, offers a different perspective. From his village near Baba Bakala, Sandhu described how Muslims in his locality were escorted to the border with military support, avoiding major violence. He also recounted the voluntary efforts to organize langar and relief for displaced Hindu and Sikh families. His narrative challenges the dominant portrayal of the Partition as universally violent, instead highlighting moments of dignity, protection, and solidarity. (Sandhu 2018)

While discussing the concept of "class effect" during a travel interview, Mr. Jagmohan Lal Kakkar's insights are particularly significant. His interview was conducted on June 24th, 2018, in Delhi. The interview with **Mr. Jagmohan Lal Kakkar** exemplifies the impact of socio-economic class on migration. Kakkar's family, prosperous grocers from Rawalpindi, initially fled to Srinagar and then boarded a flight to Delhi—an option unavailable to most refugees. This access to air travel, and later to property claims in Agra, highlights how wealth and status shaped not only the safety of evacuation but also the terms of post-Partition recovery. His case confirms Ravinder Kaur's concept of the "class effect," where structural privilege ensured a more dignified migration experience.²³ (Kakkar 2018)

²⁰ Personal Interview taken from Mr. Nirmal Singh Jaswal on Partition, 1947, dated 12/07/2018, interviewee- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

²¹ Personal interview from Mr. Om Prakash Ahuja on Partition 1947, dated-16/07/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

²² Personal Interview from Mr Chanan Singh Sandhu, Partition 1947, dated- 10/07/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

²³ Personal Interview from Mr. Jagmohan Lal Kakkar on Partition 1947, dated-24/06/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

The next interviewee is Mrs Harcharan Kaur.²⁴ whose interview was conducted on July 14, 2018, in Delhi. **Mrs. Harcharan Kaur's** testimony brings gender and health into focus. Recalling her journey from Kyota to Delhi, she described the use of poisoned fruits to target Hindus and the scenes of mass death near Qutub Road in Delhi. Her recollection of early health and food relief services reflects the sporadic but vital presence of informal aid, particularly before government ministries formalized relief operations. Her reference to military escort and the occupation of an abandoned Muslim home also underscores the moral tensions embedded in resettlement. (H. Kaur 2018)

The following interview is with Mr. Om Prakash Chawla.²⁵ The interview was conducted on June 13, 2018. **Mr. Om Prakash Chawla**, who migrated at age five from Jhang District, shared that his family was protected by a Muslim neighbour and later escorted by the **Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)** and the military. His family resided in multiple refugee camps, including the vast **Kurukshetra settlement**, which he remembered for its scale and the basic facilities it provided. Later, they were allotted a haveli once owned by **Ayub Khan**, the future President of Pakistan. Chawla's narrative illustrates how memory, place, and political symbolism intersect in the personal stories of Partition. (Chawla 2018)

The last personal interview I would like to mention here is that of Mr. Des Raj Kapaahi.²⁶ whose Interview was conducted on May 20, 2018. The story of Mr. Kapaahi, a refugee who traveled barefoot from his village to Amritsar, is genuinely intriguing. **Mr. Kapaahi's** experience encapsulates the precariousness of refugee journeys. Born in Lahore District, he and his family fled on foot after witnessing escalating violence. His grandfather, who stayed behind, was eventually killed despite promises of safe passage. Kapaahi himself was injured during a violent encounter while travelling barefoot to Amritsar. His still-visible leg injury serves as a corporeal reminder of the physical toll Partition exacted. (Kapaahi 2018)

These accounts reveal that the Partition was not a singular event of rupture but a layered and differentiated process. They bring to light the uneven geographies of displacement, the role of caste and class in shaping access to protection, and the complex moral landscape of post-Partition resettlement. Through these oral histories, we move beyond generalized narratives of trauma and begin to appreciate the multiplicity of voices that constitute the legacy of 1947.

6. CONCLUSION

The Partition of 1947 was not merely a geopolitical division but a profound human rupture—an event that reordered identities, moral frameworks, and social geographies across the subcontinent. This study, which centres on the migration journeys of survivors from West Punjab to Delhi between 1947 and 1949, has highlighted the complexities of this historical moment beyond official accounts. Through personal narratives, it has revealed how individual experiences often diverged from the state-sanctioned narratives of orderly evacuation, efficient relief, and national integration.

One of the key revelations is that violence and displacement began well before the formal declaration of Partition. Communal tensions had already been surging by March and April 1947, particularly in Punjab, prompting the enactment of the Punjab Disturbed Areas Act. However, the delayed and ineffective implementation of such legislation, as well as the late formation of the Military Evacuation Organisation in September, meant that much of the evacuation took place amid chaos, fear, and unpreparedness. While state-led relief operations eventually arrived, they were often too late; voluntary organizations, religious bodies, and local networks bore the initial burden of rescue, shelter, and medical aid.

This study also makes a significant contribution to the discourse on **class-based disparities** in the Partition experience. Drawing on Ravinder Kaur's concept of the "class effect," and supported by testimonies such as those cited by U.B. Rao, it becomes clear that wealthier refugees had greater mobility and access to safer evacuation routes—often via rail and even rare instances of air travel—while the poor undertook harrowing journeys on foot or in overcrowded trains and trucks. These layered experiences disrupt the dominant narrative of a uniformly shared trauma and highlight how access to state care, dignity in migration, and visibility in national memory were all deeply stratified. (Rao 1967)

²⁴ Personal Interview from Mrs. Harcharan Kaur on Partition 1947, dated-14/07/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

²⁵ Personal interview taken from Mr. Om Prakash Chawla on Partition 1947, dated-13/06/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

²⁶ Personal Interview taken from Mr Des Raj Kapaahi on Partition, 1947, dated-20/05/2018, interviewer- Harnoor Kaur, interview conducted on behalf of 1947 Partition Archives.

In re-centering the gendered dimension of Partition, the paper emphasizes women's roles not only as victims of violence and displacement but also as survivors, caregivers, and custodians of memory. Their experiences, often underrepresented in official records, call for a more nuanced understanding of trauma and resilience in the context of nation-building. Similarly, the moral and ethical questions surrounding the occupation of properties left behind by Muslims add another layer of complexity to the post-Partition rehabilitation process.

The research also highlights the symbolism embedded in refugee narratives, such as the transformation of sites like the Kurukshetra Camp into massive hubs of post-displacement survival and state response. While institutions like the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation eventually addressed compensation, housing, and employment, much of the early survival and mobility was attributed to community resilience and informal networks.

In acknowledging this resilience, the study proposes the **"4 H" framework**—Hard Work, Humility, Hopefulness, and Health—not as a rigid theory, but as a moral tribute to the survivors who rebuilt fractured lives from the ruins of dislocation. This framework captures the spirit of those whose grit, courage, and quiet determination laid the foundation for the new nation.

As scholars like Urvashi Butalia (1998) and Gyanendra Pandey (2001) remind us, the memory of Partition is far from static. It is continuously reimagined through personal storytelling, community rituals, and evolving scholarly inquiry. This study contributes to that living archive by demonstrating how state narratives, personal testimonies, and ethical dilemmas intersect, overlap, and often contradict one another. In the future, comparative regional studies, deeper gender analyses, and memory studies can offer even richer insights." (Parasher 2015, 8,9) But what remains undeniable is this: Partition was not a singular rupture in time—it is a continuing inheritance, negotiated anew with every act of remembrance.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Ahuja, Om Prakash. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur Bhatia. 1947 Partition Migration, June.
- Chawla, Om Prakash. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur. Partition 1947, June 13.
- Jaswal, Nirmal Singh. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur Bhatia. 1947 Partition Migration, July 13.
- Kakkar, Jagmohan Lal. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur. Partition 1947, July 24.
- Kapaahi, Des Raj. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur. Partition 1947, May 20.
- Kaur, Harcharan. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur. Partition 1947, July 14.
- Sandhu, Chanan Singh. 2018. Interview by Harnoor Kaur. Partition 1947, July 10.
- Sehgal, Suri. 2016. Interview by Marly Cornell. 1947 Partition Archive, October 23.
- All India Congress Committee. 1947. Report of the Recent Disturbances in Punjab, March–April 1947. Manuscript. AICC.
- Committee, Frontier Hindu-Sikh Relief. 1947. Letter to the Honorary Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, July 14. Manuscript. Teen Murti Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi.
- Hindu Mahasabha. 1947. Evacuation of Over 18 Lakhs of Non-Muslims. Press Note. New Delhi: Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, October 22.
- Hardayal, Hardy. 1947. "The Helpless Thousands in West Punjab." *The Hindustan Times*, September 2.
- The Hindustan Times. 1947. "Government to Take Over Houses in Delhi." September 4.
- . 1947. "Advertorial Insert." August 28.
- Government Publication: India. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. 2009. *Millions on the Move: The Aftermath of Partition*. New Delhi: Government of India, July 27.
- Bhalla, Alok. 1999. "Memory, History and Fictional Representations of the Partition." *Economic and Political Weekly* 34 (44): 3121–25.
- Butalia, Urvashi. 1995. "Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency during Partition." *Economic and Political Weekly* 30 (17): WS12–WS24.

- . 1998. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. New Delhi: Viking.
- Caruth, Cathy. 1996. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chand, Sarvar V. Sherry. 2006. "Manto's 'Open It': Engendering Partition Narratives." *Economic and Political Weekly* 41 (4): 308–15.
- Duggal, Kartar Singh, and Sarla Cowasjee. 1987. *When the British Left: Stories on the Partitioning of India, 1947*. Delhi: Arnold Heinemann.
- Kaur, Ravinder. 2006. "The Last Journey: Exploring Social Class in the 1947 Partition Migration." *Economic and Political Weekly* 41 (22): 2221–28.
- Khan, Yasmin. 2007. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Menon, Ritu, and Kamla Bhasin. 2004. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.
- Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* 26 (Spring): 7–24.
- Pandey, Gyanendra. 2001. *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Parasher, Prajna Paramita. 2015. In *Partition: The Long Shadow*, edited by Urvashi Butalia, 8–9. Gurgaon: Zubaan Publishers.
- Rao, U.B. 1967. *The Story of Rehabilitation*. New Delhi: Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of India.
- Roy, Anjali Gera, and Nandi Bhatia, eds. 2008. *Partitioned Lives: Narratives of Home, Displacement and Resettlement*. Delhi: Pearson Longman.
- Seth, Rajee. 2012. "Whose History?" In *Stories About the Partition of India, Volume 4*, edited by Alok Bhalla, 111–12. Delhi: Manohar Publications.
- Talbot, Ian, and Gurharpal Singh. 2009. *The Partition of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zamindar, Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali. 2007. *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*. New York: Columbia University Press.