

## ABSTRACT

This research aims at bringing out ambivalence in the literary representations of Partition of India. The goal is to show that cultural differences and religious intolerance existed amongst different communities living together in Indian Sub-Continent whereas the creative writers of Partition fiction seem to deny it in their writings by evoking images of unity instead. The limitations of Partition fiction to be a reliable source for understanding Partition are analyzed in the light of Derrida's concepts about conflict literature, Mikhail Bakhtin's observation about plurality of consciousness and Lyotard's theory of narratives. The texts under observation are short stories and novels on Partition written by both Indian and Pakistani writers. On examining these Partition stories closely, it becomes clear that the focus of the writers is only on the consequences of the Partition essentially the effects of violence and they avoid probing into the causes of Partition and its riots. The silence of the writers on these aspects of the Partition makes the phenomenon of Partition remain unexplored in all its complexities. Moreover, the writers do not like to focus on religion as the basis of the Partition violence. They tend to dismiss the Partition riots as madness. It shows how fragmented a picture of Partition is presented in the fiction. Bakhtin's plurality of consciousness does not make a part of the Partition fiction as the creative writers do not seem to differ in their take on the conflict of Partition of India. Moreover, the effect of Lyotard's localized narratives is also missing in the Partition fiction. Despite having different plots, distinct voices are contained neither in a single narrative nor in the diverse collection of narratives. Instead all of them manifest the same thematic concerns. The whole focus of the creative writers is on violence, madness and other common themes like displacement and nostalgia whereas the real issue, that is, the causes of Partition or the violence is not looked into. Therefore, Partition fiction fails to explain the mayhem of Partition of India. It is also analyzed that the truth is compromised in representing a conflict for it only forms the perspective of the author which is subjective in nature. Thus, it only represents a fragment of the whole picture as it is just a linguistic reworking of one's experience. All these factors together make the Partition fiction fall prey to Derrida's concept of conflict literature to be perjury, fiction and lie. Therefore, this study aims at defamiliarizing the readers with the conventional ways of reading the Partition fiction and determining that Partition literature can play a significant role in averting such communal riots with regard to future. It seeks to determine that we exist in a post-partition world today, therefore, instead of going for collective amnesia, a deep study is required to keep the memory of such traumatic events alive for a more harmonious and non-violent future. It implies that there is need of introducing Partition Studies as a separate discipline in the educational institutions of our region.