

Grade: 8

Course: Virṣā (ਵਿਰਸਾ)

Lesson Number: 23

Unit Name: Partition

Title: The Partition of Pañjāb 2

Standards

Standard 6: Partition in 1947

- Students identify the situation and events leading to the partition of Pañjāb (ਪੰਜਾਬ).
 - Students understand events affecting the Sikhs leading to partition, the main players, the options available, and the consequences of their decision.

Objectives

1. Students will better understand the turmoil of the partition of Pañjāb through analyzing certain clips of the video *Piñjar* (ਪਿੰਜਰ) (2003) pictures of the partition or poetry of the partition.

Prerequisites

- Lesson 22 on the Partition in 1947

Materials

- Copy of reading, K-W-L-H- charts (from Lesson 22)
- Journals
- Pencils
- Chart paper or Board

Advanced Preparation

- Teacher should be familiar with the partition of Pañjāb and if possible watch portions of the movie *Piñjar*.
- Graphic organizer from the previous class.
- Draw the graphic organizer/ web on chart paper or on the board so you can have a larger web to complete with the students (you can use the chart from the previous lesson).
- Teachers might want to cut up pictures for the students if the movie cannot be shown. Teachers should feel free to add other pictures which would help students understand the difficulties of migration during the partition.

Engagement (15 to 20 minutes)

- Hand back to students the K-W-L-H charts from the last class if they do not have them.
- Ask students to look at the W (what you want to learn) section of their chart. Ask students if there was additional information that they wanted to learn or know, that had yet not been answered. Ask students to share their thoughts with the class.
- Let the students know that we will continue discussing the Partition of 1947 and see if some of the other questions can be answered, and then complete the H (how you learned the information) part of your chart.
- Now ask students what they think the word *Piñjar* means? Hopefully someone will know that it means cage.
- Explain to students that they will watch video clips of the movie *Piñjar* that will display visually certain aspects of the partition of 1947. They should pay attention carefully because questions will follow each clip.

Exploration (25-30 minutes)

- Show video clip one, or pictures (in Teacher Resources).
- Now ask students to answer the questions (in Teacher Resources).
- Ask students to discuss what they wrote with the class.
- Move on to video clip number two. Ask students to answer questions in their journals and then discuss thoughts/ answers with the class.
- Repeat until all video clips are shown and discussed.
- Now ask students to add to their K-W-L-H- chart anything additional they learned while watching the video clips. They also need to complete the H part of their organizer.

Explanation/ Extension (10-15 minutes)

- Discuss with students that *Piñjar* is based on a novel by Amritā Prītam (ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ).
- Now ask students to read the short biography on Amritā Prītam (see Teacher Resources).
- Now read aloud or play the audio version of ‘The Girl from Gujrāmvalā’ (ਗੁਜਰਾਂਵਾਲਾ) while students follow along silently.
- Ask students about the theme in her poems. (Students should be able to see that her poems are mostly depressing and address the pain a women faced during the Partition of 1947).
- Ask students if they could find more poems by Amritā Prītam.

Evaluation (On-Going)

- Teachers should collect K-W-L-H charts and now check for completion. Teachers may also collect questions (optional).
- Teachers should also pay special attention to discussions around the movie clips or pictures.

Teacher Resources

- General Questions to ask after every clip:
 - Describe what you see.
 - Explain how it makes you feel and why?
 - What would you do if you were in a similar situation?
 - How would you describe the ways Sikhs are being portrayed in this clip? (If applicable)

Below is a brief description of the clips that should be shown. Please do not show the entire film. Preview the entire film for yourself before showing it to the class.

Clip One: Is at the beginning of the movie. First scene. The scene opens with a Nagar Kīrtan (ਨਗਰ ਕੀਰਤਨ). Muslims are going around looting and burning down an entire village. Sikhs are being pulled out of their homes and being chased by the Muslims. This scene should stir up some emotions and the students should realize how brutal 1947 was for some families and the children at that time. **Please note this scene is very graphic and violent. (About 4 minutes should be enough)

Clip Two: There are also two scenes that can be used for this clip. One is with a Muslim speaker addressing a large audience. There are a lot of Indian Flags in the background. Teachers and students should discuss what he is saying and the impact that will have on the partition. There is also another scene that says 1947 on the screen and then there are jeeps with men that are burning villages.

Clips Three and Four: These two clips are near the middle of the movie and show the mass migration that took place. Many Hindu and Sikhs families are crossing the border. They are walking while the older people are on bullocks. The scene is about 10 minutes long so divide it up. Part of the scene shows them being attacked by Muslims. You might want to show part of this.

Clip Five: This is also in the middle of the movie. It is while they are crossing the border. They set up camp with tents during the night. Ask students to pay attention as to who is doing most of the night-guard. They should notice it is the brave Khālsā (ਖਾਲਸਾ). Ask them to think about why that might be.

Answer: The Khālsā was considered fearless and because of what the Gurūs had instilled in the Sikhs they were able to fight against injustice and stand up for what was right.

Amritā Prītam

Amritā Prītam (ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤਾ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ) was an Indian poet. She is considered the first prominent female Pañjābī (ਪੰਜਾਬੀ) writer and poet. During the 1947 partition, she migrated to India from the now Pakistan side.

She was born in 1919 into a Sikh family in Gujṛānvalā (ਗੁਜਰਾਂਵਾਲਾ), Pañjāb, today in Pakistan. She was the only child of a school teacher, and a poet. Her mother died when she was eleven and she had many adult responsibilities early on. She also began to write at an early age, and her first collection was published when she was only sixteen years old. That same year she was married to an editor to whom she had been engaged in early childhood.

She was deeply impacted by the communal violence that followed the partition in 1947. She wrote extensively about this human dilemma. At the time of the partition, she moved to New Delhi, where she began to write in Hindī as opposed to Pañjābī, her mother tongue. She worked until 1961 for All India Radio. She also edited the Nāgmanī (ਨਾਗਮਨੀ), a literary monthly magazine. She is the author of more than 100 books, and has produced poetry, fiction, biographies, essays, a collection of Pañjābī folk songs and an autobiography that has been translated into several Indian and foreign languages. ‘The Skeleton’ was her first Pañjābī novel to be translated into English.

In 1960 she was nominated to the Rajya Sabhā (ਰਾਜਯ ਸਭਾ), the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. She also decided to divorce her husband the same year. Her work became more feminist and she began to draw on her unhappy marriage for many of her stories and poems. She was also awarded the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary award, in 1981, for Kāgaz te Cainvas (ਕਾਗਜ਼ ਤੇ ਕੈਨਵਸ) (Paper and Canvas).

It is interesting to note that even though Amritā Prītām's father was a devout Sikh, she was certainly not. She openly cut her hair, drank alcohol and smoked in public. She also took no stand on the attack on Harimandar Sāhib (ਹਰਿਮੰਦਰ ਸਾਹਿਬ) or the anti-Sikh pogroms in Dillī in 1984. Amritā Prītām spent the final years of her life with renowned artist, Imroz (ਇਮਰੋਜ਼). She died on October 31st 2005 at the age of 86 after a long illness. She is survived by her daughter Kundalā (ਕੁੰਡਲਾ), her son Navrāj (ਨਵਰਾਜ) and her grandson Aman (ਅਮਨ).

A few months after being uprooted by the partition, she wrote her immortal poem addressed to the Sufī (ਸੂਫੀ) poet Vāris Shāh (ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ), who had wrote the tragic love story of the Pañjābī folk girl, Hīr (ਹੀਰ).

Amritā's poem, transcending geographical and communal boundaries, captured the pain of the partition. Below is an example of one of the poems Amritā Prītām wrote during the partition.

ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ!

ਅਜ ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਤੋਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬੋਲ!
 ਤੇ ਅਜ ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅਗਲਾ ਵਰਕਾ ਫੋਲ!
 ਇਕ ਰੋਈ ਸੀ ਧੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਤੂੰ ਲਿਖ ਲਿਖ ਮਾਰੇ ਵੈਣ
 ਅਜ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਧੀਆਂ ਰੋਂਦੀਆਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵਾਰਸਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿਣ:
 ਵੇ ਦਰਦਮੰਦਾਂ ਦਿਆ ਦਰਦੀਆ! ਉਠ ਤਕ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ
 ਅਜ ਬੋਲੇ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਛੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਦੀ ਭਰੀ ਚਨਾਬ
 ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਰਲਾ
 ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਧਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਲਾ
 ਇਸ ਜ਼ਰਖੇਜ਼ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਦੇ ਲੂੰ ਲੂੰ ਫੁਟਿਆ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ
 ਗਿੱਠ ਗਿੱਠ ਚੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਲਾਲੀਆਂ ਫੁਟ ਫੁਟ ਚੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਕਹਿਰ
 ਵਿਹੁ ਵਲਿੱਸੀ ਵਾ ਫਿਰ ਵਣ ਵਣ ਵੱਗੀ ਜਾ
 ਓਹਨੇ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਵਾਂਸ ਦੀ ਵੰਝਣੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਨਾਗ ਬਣਾ
 ਪਹਿਲਾ ਡੰਗ ਮਦਾਰੀਆਂ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਗਏ ਗੁਆਚ
 ਦੂਜੇ ਡੰਗ ਦੀ ਲਗ ਗਈ ਜਣੇ ਖਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਗ
 ਲਾਗਾਂ ਕੀਲੇ ਲੋਕ-ਮੂੰਹ ਬੱਸ ਫਿਰ ਡੰਗ ਹੀ ਡੰਗ
 ਪਲੇ ਪਲੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਨੀਲੇ ਪੈ ਗਏ ਅੰਗ।
 ਗਲਿਓਂ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਗੀਤ ਫਿਰ ਤੁੱਕਲਿਓਂ ਟੁੱਟੀ ਤੰਦ
 ਤਿੰਜਣੋਂ ਟੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਸਹੇਲੀਆਂ ਚਰਖੜੇ ਘੁਕਰ ਬੰਦ
 ਸਣੇ ਸੇਜ ਦੇ ਬੇੜੀਆਂ ਲੁੱਡਣ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਰੋੜ੍ਹ
 ਸਣੇ ਡਾਲੀਆਂ ਪੀਂਘ ਅਜ ਪਿੱਪਲਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਤੋੜ
 ਜਿਥੇ ਵਜਦੀ ਸੀ ਫੁਕ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੀ ਵੇ ਉਹ ਵੰਝਲੀ ਗਈ ਗੁਆਚ
 ਰਾਂਝੇ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਵੀਰ ਅਜ ਭੁਲ ਗਏ ਉਹਦੀ ਜਾਚ

ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਵੱਸਿਆ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਚੋਣ
 ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਹਜ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਅਜ ਵਿਚ ਮਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਰੋਣ
 ਅਜ ਸੱਭੇ ਕੈਦੋ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਹੁਸਨ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦੇ ਚੋਰ
 ਅਜ ਕਿਥੋਂ ਲਿਆਈਏ ਲੱਭ ਕੇ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ
 ਅਜ ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਤੂੰਹੋਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੋਲ!
 ਤੇ ਅਜ ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅਗਲਾ ਵਰਕਾ ਫੋਲ!

English Translation

Today, I call Vāris Shāh, “Speak from inside your grave”
 And turn, today, the book of love’s next affectionate page
 Once, one daughter of Pañjāb cried; you wrote a wailing saga
 Today, a million daughters, cry to you, Vāris Shāh
 Rise! O’ narrator of the grieving; rise! look at your Pañjāb
 Today, fields are lined with corpses, and blood fills the Cināb
 Someone has mixed poison in the five rivers’ flow
 Their deadly water is, now, irrigating our lands galore
 This fertile land is sprouting, venom from every pore
 The sky is turning red from endless cries of gore
 The toxic forest wind, screams from inside its wake
 Turning each flute’s bamboo-shoot, into a deadly snake
 With the first snake-bite; charmers lost their spell
 The second bite turned all and sundry, into snakes, as well
 Drinking from this deadly stream, filling the land with bane
 Slowly, Pañjāb’s limbs have turned black and blue, with pain
 The street-songs have been silenced; cotton threads are snapped
 Girls have left their playgroups; the spinning wheels are cracked
 Our wedding beds are boats, their logs have cast away
 Our hanging swing, the Pīpal tree has broken in disarray
 Lost is the flute, which once, blew sounds of the heart
 Rāñjhā’s brothers, today, no longer know this art
 Blood rained on our shrines; drenching them to the core
 Damsels of amour, today, sit crying at their door
 Today everyone is, ‘Qaidō;’ thieves of beauty and ardor
 Where can we find, today, another Vāris Shāh, once more
 Today, I call Vāris Shāh, “Speak from inside your grave”
 And turn, today, the book of love’s next affectionate page
 The Girl from Gujrāmīvālā

Courtesy: <http://www.apnaorg.com/poetry/amrita-r/>

Audio version: <http://www.apnaorg.com/audio/amrita/>

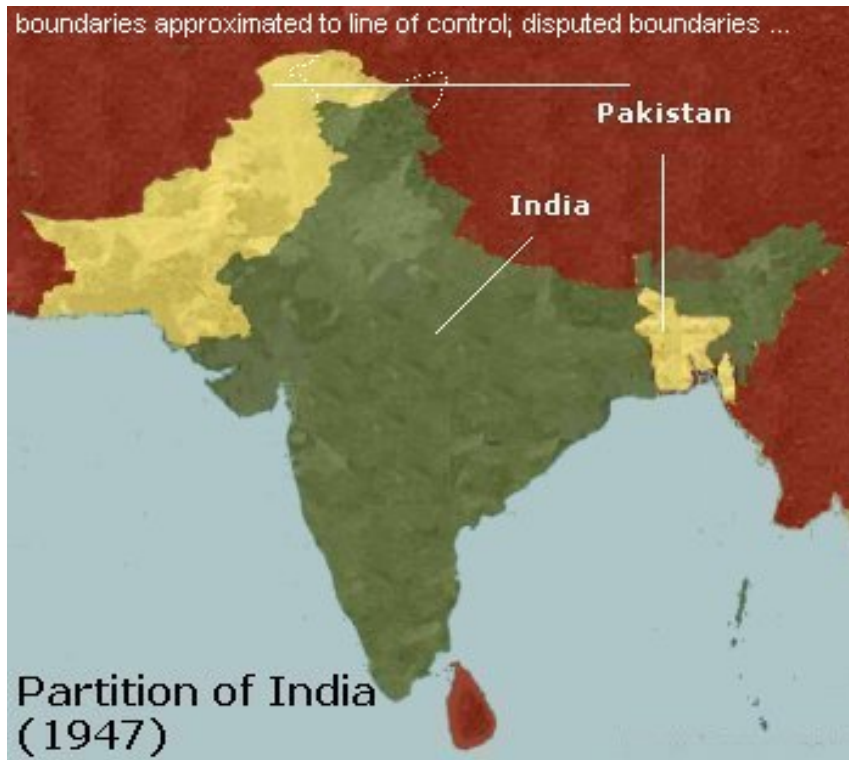
After this poem Amritā became dear to the heart of the Pañjābīs on both sides of the border. Over the years, her fame spread worldwide. Everyone looked at this rising star on the horizon of Pañjābī literature. Besides poetry, she wrote fiction, biography, personal prose and travelogues. She authored many books in a career spanning seven decades.

The Partition of India and the Literature

The partition of India has been the theme of many a novel or poem, of many writings. To name a few, Khushvant Singh's *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*, or *Train to Pakistan*, Mano Majrā (ਮਨੋ ਮਜਰਾ); Manohar Malgōmkar's (ਮਨੋਹਰ ਮਲਗੋਂਕਰ) *A Bend in the Ganges*. One needn't be reminded of names such as Jaliāmṡālā Bāg (ਜਲਿਆਂਵਾਲਾ ਬਾਗ), Bhagat Singh (ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ), Lālā Lājpat Rāi (ਲਾਲਾ ਲਾਜਪਤ ਰਾਇ) and General Reginald Dwyer. The partition made Pañjābī writers more self-conscious of their social responsibilities.

Perhaps no other state in India felt the sorrows and effects of the partition as did Pañjāb. It was a great bloodbath, on both sides and the biggest migration the world has ever known. In this land of Hīr and Rāñjhā (ਹੀਰ ਰਾਂਝਾ), Sohnī Mahīvāl (ਸੋਹਨੀ ਮਹੀਵਾਲ) and others fallen by the way, Amritā Prītam addressed Vāris Shāh (ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ) the legendary poet of Pañjābī romantic immortals. Undoubtedly this poem carries the complete load of the people of Pañjāb and those now of Pakistan with such emotion and longing for the dead and separated that soaked the eyes of its readers on both sides. No compensation of any kind could stem the flood of tears.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, following World War II, is perhaps the most tragic of all political events to affect India in its long political history. The partition divided Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims who had lived together for hundreds of years. It led to endless boundary disputes and three wars between the two neighbors. The agony and horrors of partition also gave rise to a new genre of moving art and literature of India.





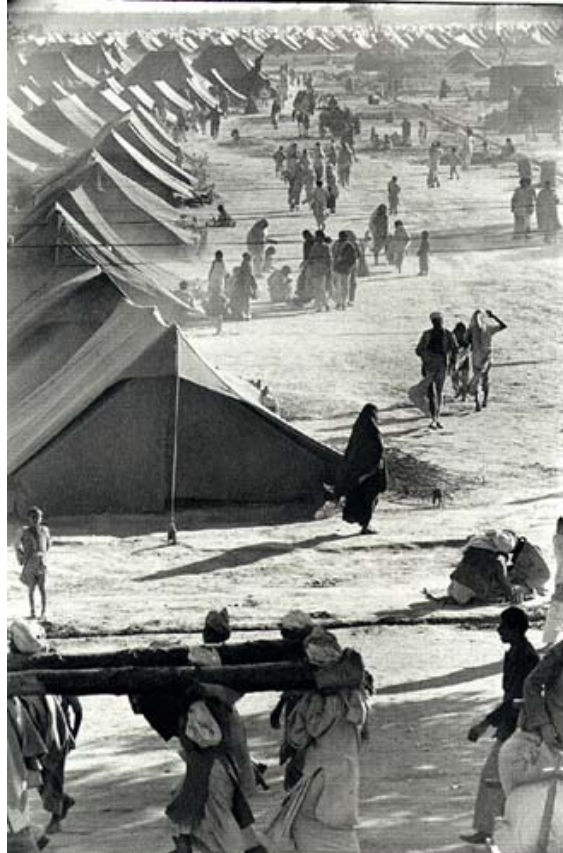
Another map of India during the partition 1947 and areas of migration.



Above are pictures that clearly show how difficult the journey was for so many Indians.



People crossing the border.



A refugee camp.



Over 10 million people were uprooted from their homeland and travelled on foot, bullock carts and trains to their promised new home.



With the tragic legacy of an uncertain future, a young refugee sits on the walls of Purānā Kīlā (ਪੁਰਾਨਾ ਕਿਲਾ), transformed into a vast refugee camp in Delhi.

Pictures courtesy of: http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/aug2007/partition_india.html

Name: _____

Title: _____

| What I Know | What I Want to Find Out | How I Can Learn More | What I Have Learned |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
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- General Questions to ask after every clip:
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 - Explain how it makes you feel and why?
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Below is a brief description of the clips that should be shown. Please do not show the entire film. Preview the entire film for yourself before showing it to the class.

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Clip Two: There are also two scenes that can be used for this clip. One is with a Muslim speaker addressing a large audience. There are a lot of Indian Flags in the background. Teachers and students should discuss what he is saying and the impact that will have on the partition. There is also another scene that says 1947 on the screen and then there are jeeps with men that are burning villages.

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Amritā Prītam

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Amritā's poem, transcending geographical and communal boundaries, captured the pain of the partition. Below is an example of one of the poems Amritā Prītām wrote during the partition.

ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ!

ਅਜ ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਤੋਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਬੋਲ!
 ਤੇ ਅਜ ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅਗਲਾ ਵਰਕਾ ਫੋਲ!
 ਇਕ ਰੋਈ ਸੀ ਧੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੀ ਤੂੰ ਲਿਖ ਲਿਖ ਮਾਰੇ ਵੈਣ
 ਅਜ ਲੱਖਾਂ ਧੀਆਂ ਰੋਂਦੀਆਂ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵਾਰਸਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਕਹਿਣ:
 ਵੇ ਦਰਦਮੰਦਾਂ ਦਿਆ ਦਰਦੀਆ! ਉਠ ਤਕ ਆਪਣਾ ਪੰਜਾਬ
 ਅਜ ਬੋਲੇ ਲਾਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿਛੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਦੀ ਭਰੀ ਚਨਾਬ
 ਕਿਸੇ ਨੇ ਪੰਜਾਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ ਰਲਾ
 ਤੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਧਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਲਾ
 ਇਸ ਜ਼ਰਖੇਜ਼ ਜ਼ਮੀਨ ਦੇ ਲੂੰ ਲੂੰ ਫੁਟਿਆ ਜ਼ਹਿਰ
 ਗਿੱਠ ਗਿੱਠ ਚੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਲਾਲੀਆਂ ਫੁਟ ਫੁਟ ਚੜ੍ਹੀਆਂ ਕਹਿਰ
 ਵਿਹੁ ਵਲਿੱਸੀ ਵਾ ਫਿਰ ਵਣ ਵਣ ਵੱਗੀ ਜਾ
 ਓਹਨੇ ਹਰ ਇਕ ਵਾਂਸ ਦੀ ਵੰਝਣੀ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਨਾਗ ਬਣਾ
 ਪਹਿਲਾ ਡੰਗ ਮਦਾਰੀਆਂ ਮੰਤ੍ਰ ਗਏ ਗੁਆਚ
 ਦੂਜੇ ਡੰਗ ਦੀ ਲਗ ਗਈ ਜਣੇ ਖਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਗ
 ਲਾਗਾਂ ਕੀਲੇ ਲੋਕ-ਮੂੰਹ ਬੱਸ ਫਿਰ ਡੰਗ ਹੀ ਡੰਗ
 ਪਲੇ ਪਲੀ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਦੇ ਨੀਲੇ ਪੈ ਗਏ ਅੰਗ।
 ਗਲਿਓਂ ਟੁੱਟੇ ਗੀਤ ਫਿਰ ਤੁੱਕਲਿਓਂ ਟੁੱਟੀ ਤੰਦ
 ਤਿੰਜਣੋਂ ਟੁੱਟੀਆਂ ਸਹੇਲੀਆਂ ਚਰਖੜੇ ਘੁਕਰ ਬੰਦ
 ਸਣੇ ਸੇਜ ਦੇ ਬੇੜੀਆਂ ਲੁੱਡਣ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਰੋੜ੍ਹ
 ਸਣੇ ਡਾਲੀਆਂ ਪੀਂਘ ਅਜ ਪਿੱਪਲਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੀ ਤੋੜ
 ਜਿਥੇ ਵਜਦੀ ਸੀ ਫੁਕ ਪਿਆਰ ਦੀ ਵੇ ਉਹ ਵੰਝਲੀ ਗਈ ਗੁਆਚ
 ਰਾਂਝੇ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਵੀਰ ਅਜ ਭੁਲ ਗਏ ਉਹਦੀ ਜਾਚ

ਧਰਤੀ ਤੇ ਲਹੂ ਵੱਸਿਆ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਪਈਆਂ ਚੋਣ
 ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਹਜ਼ਾਦੀਆਂ ਅਜ ਵਿਚ ਮਜ਼ਾਰਾਂ ਰੋਣ
 ਅਜ ਸੱਭੇ ਕੈਦੋ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਹੁਸਨ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦੇ ਚੋਰ
 ਅਜ ਕਿਥੋਂ ਲਿਆਈਏ ਲੱਭ ਕੇ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ
 ਅਜ ਆਖਾਂ ਵਾਰਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ ਨੂੰ ਤੂੰਹੋਂ ਕਬਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਬੋਲ!
 ਤੇ ਅਜ ਕਿਤਾਬੇ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਅਗਲਾ ਵਰਕਾ ਫੋਲ!

English Translation

Today, I call Vāris Shāh, “Speak from inside your grave”
 And turn, today, the book of love’s next affectionate page
 Once, one daughter of Pañjāb cried; you wrote a wailing saga
 Today, a million daughters, cry to you, Vāris Shāh
 Rise! O’ narrator of the grieving; rise! look at your Pañjāb
 Today, fields are lined with corpses, and blood fills the Cināb
 Someone has mixed poison in the five rivers’ flow
 Their deadly water is, now, irrigating our lands galore
 This fertile land is sprouting, venom from every pore
 The sky is turning red from endless cries of gore
 The toxic forest wind, screams from inside its wake
 Turning each flute’s bamboo-shoot, into a deadly snake
 With the first snake-bite; charmers lost their spell
 The second bite turned all and sundry, into snakes, as well
 Drinking from this deadly stream, filling the land with bane
 Slowly, Pañjāb’s limbs have turned black and blue, with pain
 The street-songs have been silenced; cotton threads are snapped
 Girls have left their playgroups; the spinning wheels are cracked
 Our wedding beds are boats, their logs have cast away
 Our hanging swing, the Pīpal tree has broken in disarray
 Lost is the flute, which once, blew sounds of the heart
 Rāñjhā’s brothers, today, no longer know this art
 Blood rained on our shrines; drenching them to the core
 Damsels of amour, today, sit crying at their door
 Today everyone is, ‘Qaidō;’ thieves of beauty and ardor
 Where can we find, today, another Vāris Shāh, once more
 Today, I call Vāris Shāh, “Speak from inside your grave”
 And turn, today, the book of love’s next affectionate page
 The Girl from Gujrāmīvālā

Courtesy: <http://www.apnaorg.com/poetry/amrita-r/>

Audio version: <http://www.apnaorg.com/audio/amrita/>

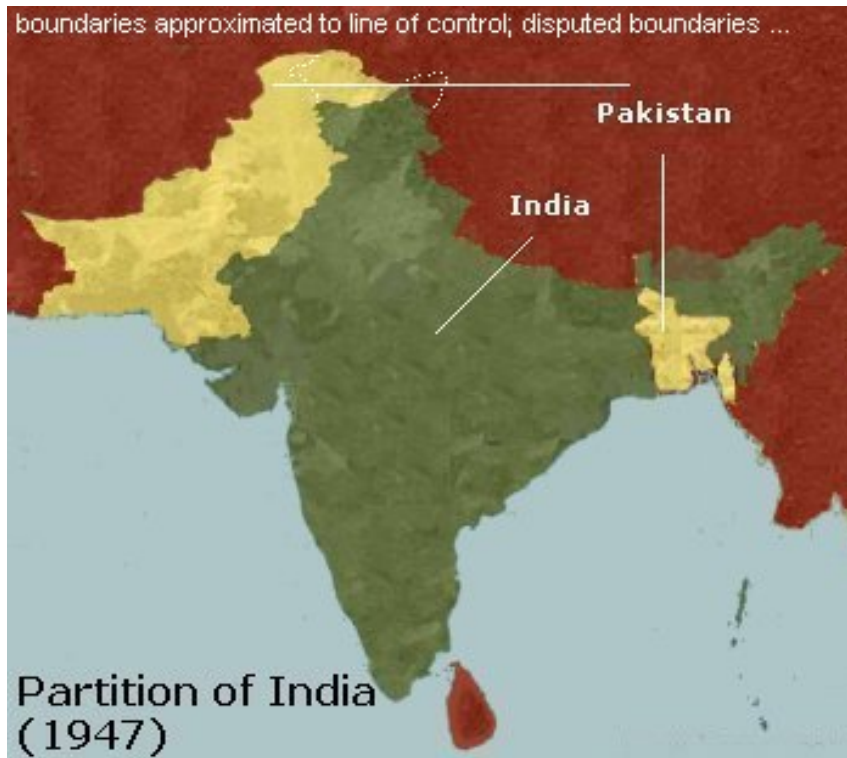
After this poem Amritā became dear to the heart of the Pañjābīs on both sides of the border. Over the years, her fame spread worldwide. Everyone looked at this rising star on the horizon of Pañjābī literature. Besides poetry, she wrote fiction, biography, personal prose and travelogues. She authored many books in a career spanning seven decades.

The Partition of India and the Literature

The partition of India has been the theme of many a novel or poem, of many writings. To name a few, Khushvant Singh's *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*, or *Train to Pakistan*, Mano Majrā (ਮਨੋ ਮਜਰਾ); Manohar Malgōmkar's (ਮਨੋਹਰ ਮਲਗੋਂਕਰ) *A Bend in the Ganges*. One needn't be reminded of names such as Jaliāmṡālā Bāg (ਜਲਿਆਂਵਾਲਾ ਬਾਗ), Bhagat Singh (ਭਗਤ ਸਿੰਘ), Lālā Lājpat Rāi (ਲਾਲਾ ਲਾਜਪਤ ਰਾਇ) and General Reginald Dwyer. The partition made Pañjābī writers more self-conscious of their social responsibilities.

Perhaps no other state in India felt the sorrows and effects of the partition as did Pañjāb. It was a great bloodbath, on both sides and the biggest migration the world has ever known. In this land of Hīr and Rāñjhā (ਹੀਰ ਰਾਂਝਾ), Sohnī Mahivāl (ਸੋਹਨੀ ਮਹੀਵਾਲ) and others fallen by the way, Amritā Prītam addressed Vāris Shāh (ਵਾਰਿਸ ਸ਼ਾਹ) the legendary poet of Pañjābī romantic immortals. Undoubtedly this poem carries the complete load of the people of Pañjāb and those now of Pakistan with such emotion and longing for the dead and separated that soaked the eyes of its readers on both sides. No compensation of any kind could stem the flood of tears.

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, following World War II, is perhaps the most tragic of all political events to affect India in its long political history. The partition divided Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims who had lived together for hundreds of years. It led to endless boundary disputes and three wars between the two neighbors. The agony and horrors of partition also gave rise to a new genre of moving art and literature of India.





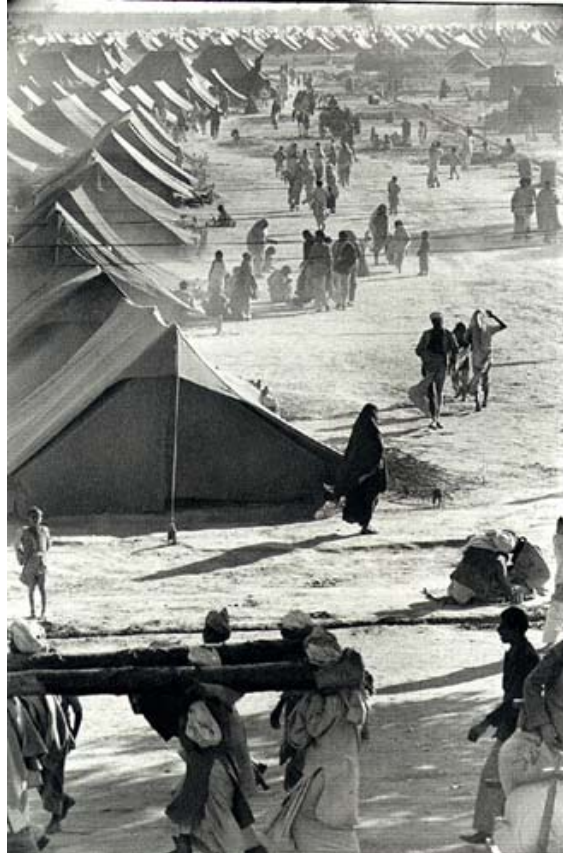
Another map of India during the partition 1947 and areas of migration.



Above are pictures that clearly show how difficult the journey was for so many Indians.



People crossing the border.



A refugee camp.



Over 10 million people were uprooted from their homeland and travelled on foot, bullock carts and trains to their promised new home.