

Remember, Recover: Trauma and Transgenerational Negotiations with the Indian Partition in *This Side, That Side* and the *1947 Partition Archive*

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The traumatized, we might say, carry an impossible history within them, or they become themselves the symptom of a history that they cannot entirely possess. (Caruth, *Trauma* 5)

The impossibility of completely understanding a traumatic event makes the victim vulnerable to being possessed by it. The lived experience infuses the present with the past because it has not been fully experienced at the time of occurrence. This quality stems from the dialectic nature of trauma: grappling to come to terms with what had happened, the event has to be re-storied by the victim who becomes a living vessel of that history. The need to narrate trauma comes as a step towards the acceptance of the reality of that traumatic event, if not towards a possible healing of wounds. Since it can only be understood belatedly, the voicing of wounds is an incomplete task. The need to tell and retell is to keep the memory alive, to let the next generation know of the experience, and for the victims to connect through their testimonies of witnessing, sharing that burden.

In 1947, the political partition of the Indian subcontinent truncated and divided the country into two parts – Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. In the span of a few months around a million people died, ten million mass migrated across the border, thousands died from

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