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# Gulzar's *Two* Appeals: Let Us Live our Lives in Peace not in Pieces

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## ABSTRACT

Iyanla Vanzant has said: "Live your life in PEACE, not in Pieces"

Why break the world into fragmented pieces? Is there any end to the greed for power? War is something that makes all shiver and fear. War accompanies violence, aggression, hatred, jealousy, might ... .and has at any cost disturbed the global peace.

The serenity of this world created by God has been disturbed by wars, partitions, separations, slaughters and upheavals. Whether between the nations, the civil wars, the rebellions or terrorism—all have curbed humanity.

When literature is the reflection of life, how could it leave this painful aspect from its vicinity? The literary writers of India like Mulk Raj Anand, Khushwant Singh, Manto, Bhishma Sahani, Chitra Divkaruni, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, have penned down masterpieces to show this brutality and its aftermath.

The recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, Gulzar, has enriched the Partition literature with his debut novel *Two*. Published in 2017, the novel reflects the continual pangs of separation and the loss of one's land. The characters had to leave Campbellpur, and find shelter. So the story takes us through the refugee life of sustenance and survival as well. The novelist has shown how the lives of innocent people are torn apart by a line on a map….

The world today needs peace. There has to be an end to these series of wars now. Aristotle, a great philosopher has said, "It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organize the peace."

**Key words:** Peace, Humanity, War, Brutality, Cruelty.

Those who were the victims of the severance were never able to overcome the heartbreak caused by the same. It is their laceration, sufferings, anguish, experiences and pain that elaborates the aftermath of partition. One of the victims was the veteran writer and lyricist Gulzar. His debut novel *Two* takes us back to the partition and explicates why some wounds will never heal.

The need to write *Two* arose from the fact that people, like him, who had experienced the Partition first hand, hadn't fully recovered.

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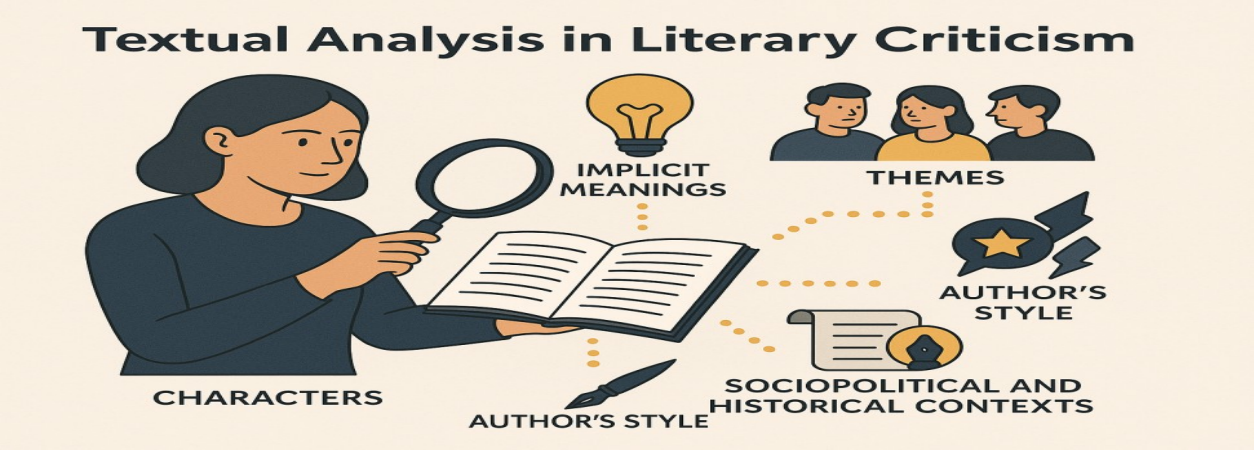
This paper aims to bring out the meaninglessness of war and also to highlight the relevance of the purpose of this novel in the contemporary scenario.




(image-https://www.lettria.com/blogpost/textual-analysis-definition-approaches-and-examples)

Through the methodology of Qualitative Textual Analysis and critical interpretation

of the text, this study traces the impact of such dreadful incidents on humanity.

Wars have been fought for the past centuries. Most of them were the result of the greed for power, for expansion of one's territory and to prove supremacy over the other. Whether it was a world war. a war between the nations, a civil war, a rebellion or partition, all made life on earth challenging . The innocent were also victimized along with the soldiers who were directly involved in the same.




(image-https://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-62467438)

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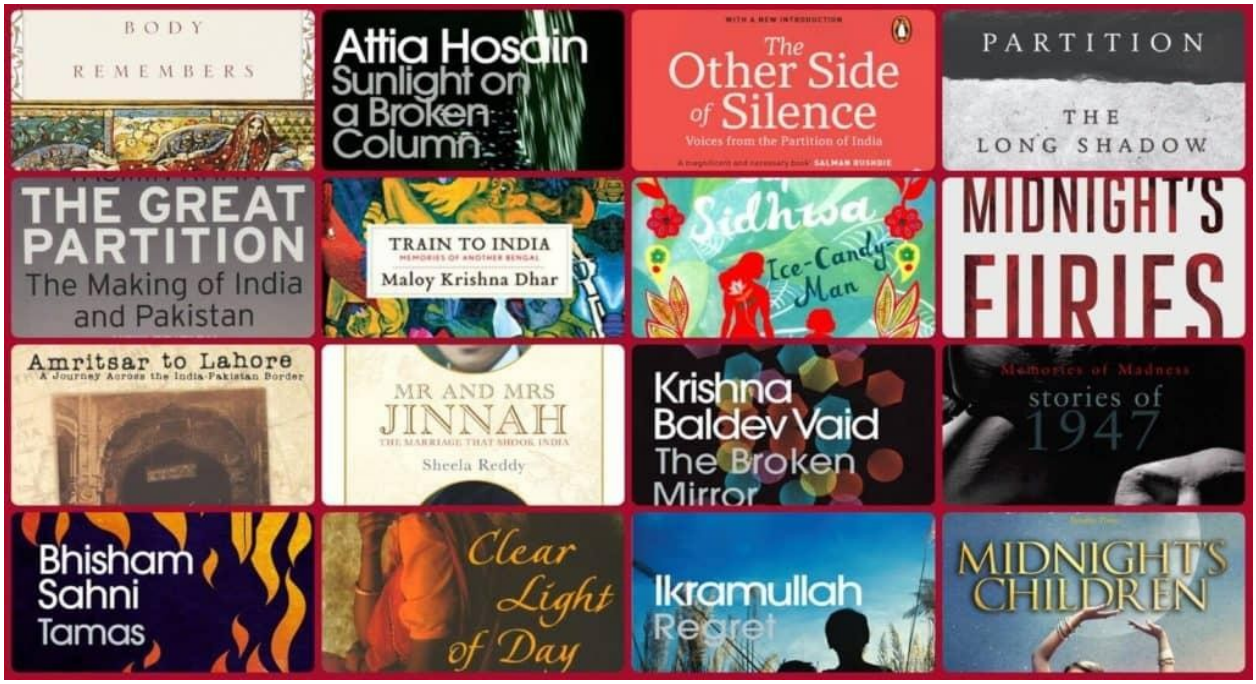
The word ‘partition’ gives a shock. It reminds all about the setbacks, the turmoil and the loss of the roots. It adds fuel to the fire of the separation of the loved ones, the family and friends. How can the geographical boundaries ever separate the emotional ties? How can they ever make people forget the care and concern they got for each other? The memorable moments of happiness that they had shared and the time of crisis during which they stood by each other because of the cruelty of the partition. The Indian novel in English was born before independence. The politics of the freedom movement plays an integral part in the genre‘s development.

In the words of M.K. Naik,

> Up to the 1930's there was no Indian novelist who could claim sustained and considerable achievement in fiction originally written in English. Then came a sudden flowering, and it is significant that it came in 1930's a period during which the glory that was Gandhi's attained perhaps its brightest splendour. The Indian freedom struggle was already more than a generation old, yet with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi it was so thoroughly democratized that freedom consciousness percolated for the first time to the very grassroots of Indian society and revitalized it. It is possible to see a connection between this developments and the rise of the Indian novel in English; for fiction, of all literary forms is most vitally concerned with social conditions and values. (Naik, 194)

In the words of K.R.Srinivas Iyengar, “The ‘leaders’ had sowed the wind of communal differences, and Partition was the evil result; like a whirlwind, the mad act of Partition was uprooting masses of humanity, mangling them, and throwing them across the border in heap after heap.”




(image--https://www.bookgeeks.in/books-on-the-partition-of-india/)

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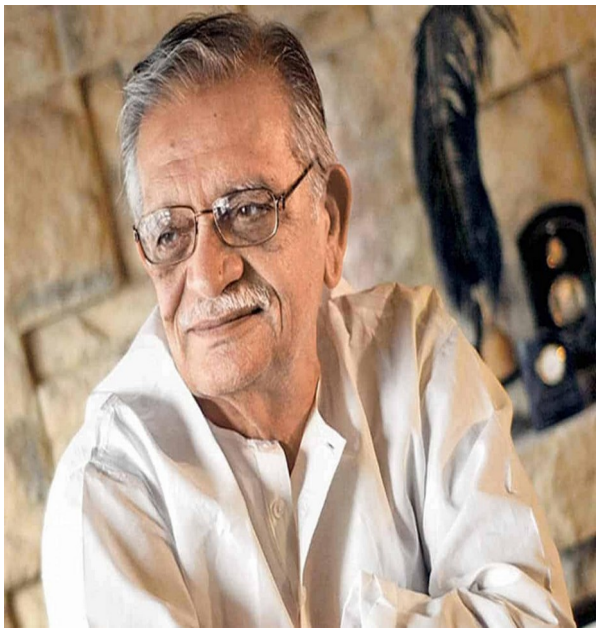
Partition had left a permanent wound on the psyche of the nation. When literature is the reflection of life, how could it leave this painful aspect from its vicinity? This unforgettable historical moment has been captured by the novelists like Khushwant Singh in *Train to Pakistan* (1956), *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) by Manohar Malgaonkar, Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961), Rajan's *The Dark Dancer*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy-Man*, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* and Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas*.

Who can ever forget these masterpieces like Manto's *Mottled Dawn*, to name a few? The literary writers have showcased this brutality and its aftermath.

Let us know the writer Gulzar before we analyse his novel. **Sampooran Singh Kalra** (born 18 August 1934), known professionally as **Gulzar**, is a very well-known Indian poet, lyricist, author and film director. He was born to Makhan Singh Kalra and Sujan Kaur, in Dina (now in Pakistan). His family was a victim to Partition. He had to come to India. After a lot of struggle, he could start his career with music director S D Burman as a lyricist in the film Bandini in 1963.



(image--https://archive.siasat.com/news/renowned-lyricist-gulzar-turns-86-here-are-some-of-his-memorable-quotes-1950696/)

A versatile personality, Gulzar was not only a writer but also a director and a novelist. He directed remarkable films like *Aandhi* and *Mausam* in 1970s. The TV series *Mirza Ghalib* (1980s) was also his direction and *Kirdaar* in 1993. A leading poet he has written volumes of poetry. He is also considered one of the finest writers for children. It took a long time for Gulzar to put together a collection of stories on Partition.

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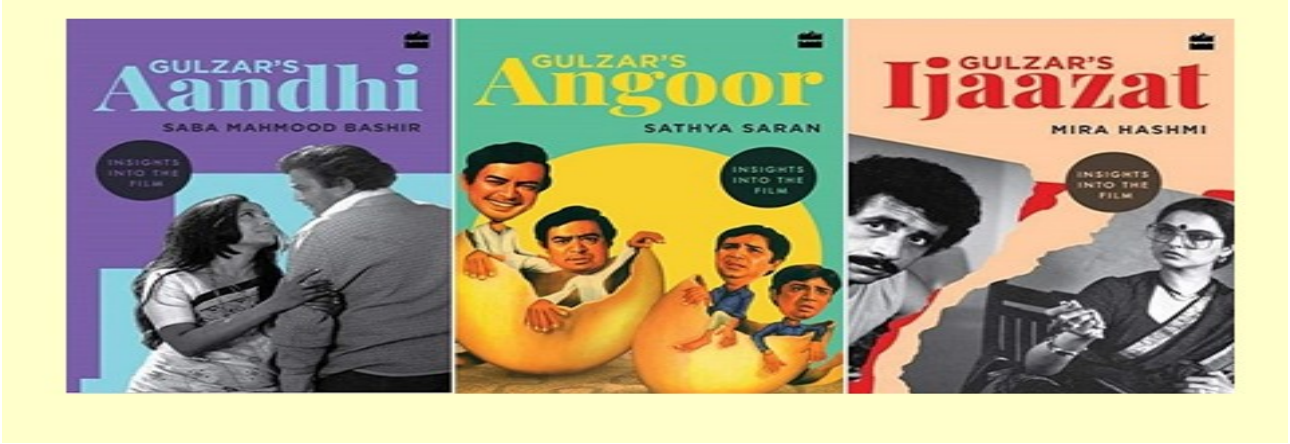
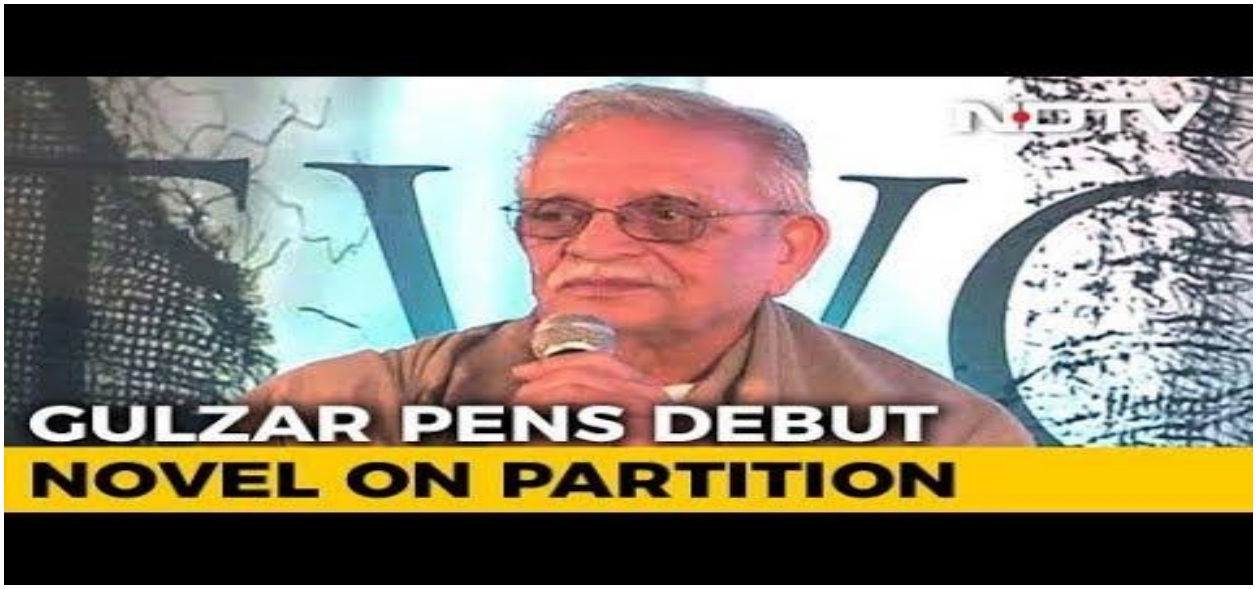



(image-https://www.dtnext.in/news/chennai/a-bouquet-of-gulzar-three-classics-conversations-and-a-whiff-of-nostalgia)

He has won 5 Indian National Film Awards, 22 Filmfare Awards; an Academy Award; the Grammy Award. To add to these Gulzar has also received the Sahitya Akademi Award—Hindi in 2022 and the Padma Bhushan in 2004. To crown these, he was conferred the Dadasahen Phalke Award in 2013.




(image--https://www.ndtv.com/video/gulzar-dil-se-474183))

At 84, Gulzar becomes a novelist for the first time with *Two*, a fictitious account of some real encounters during the partition of India. Originally this novel was written in Urdu. Published in 2017, when India completed seventy years of Partition.

*Two* was originally written in Urdu—Gulzar's regular medium of writing. "But then, it included many words and phrases in Punjabi, Saraiki and other dialects spoken in that area of Punjab which became Pakistan after Partition. I belong to that area," he said.

Translating the novel into English became a bit of a hurdle, said the Dada Saheb Phalke award winner. Two of his friends, Sukrita Paul and Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri, tried, but Gulzar was not happy with the

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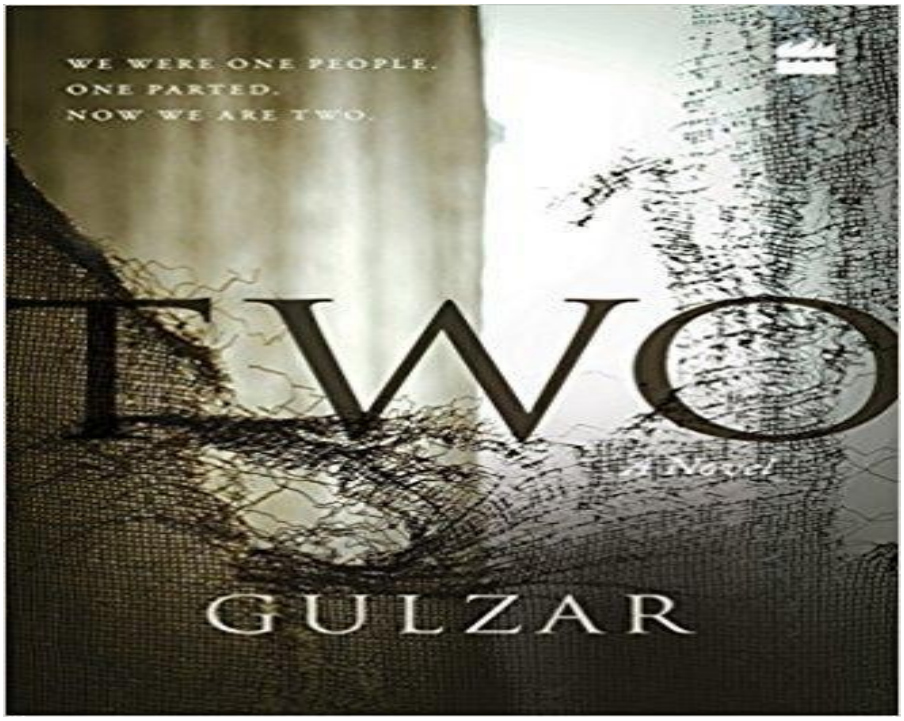
outcome. “It didn’t read like it read in Urdu, blending the tones and dialects I had used in the narrative," he said.

It was then that he decided to work on the translation himself. “You may not find ‘perfect’ or ‘proper’ English in it, but you will find stories of refugees, and how life planted them all over the world. A lot of Sukrita’s translated lines have remained in this. So have those of Shantanu’s," he said. The novel was published in 2017 by HarperCollins India.




(image-https://www.amazon.in/Two-Gulzar/dp/9351775208?s=bazaar)

This novel reflects the continual pangs of separation and the loss of one’s land. The characters who had no option but to leave Campbellpur, try to find a shelter. So the story takes us through the refugee life of sustenance and survival as well. The novelist has shown how do the lives of innocent people is torn apart by a line on a map…..how do their lives become a puppet show in the greedy hands of the politicians or the so called owners of the land. The title of the novel conveys what the novelist wants to emphasize:

“We were One people. One parted. Now we are Two” , i.e. after Partition we became two from one. (Cover page). “’ Six crore thirty lakh people lost their lives for this.’” (20)

The novel opens in Campbellpur, today's Attock (in Pakistan), and offers the reader a brief glimpse of the untainted lives of the people of this small city, before they turn against each other.

It's the winter of 1946. A truck leaves the village of Campbellpur after news of the impending Partition pours in. It is carrying people who don't know where they will go. They have just heard words like 'border' and 'refugee', and are struggling to understand how drawing a line might carve out Pakistan from Hindustan.

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Some of the prominent characters are Fauji the truck driver, two sisters Moni and Soni, Lakshneera the *dhaba* owner, a Rai Bahadur and his family, a young widow, a Kothewali. They all find themselves couched in the web of fate and to them partition seems inevitable.



(image--https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/8/15/)

As they reach the border, the caravan disperses and people go their own ways. Gulzar's first novel tracks the lives of the people in that truck right from 1946 up to the Kargil war. A novel on what the Partition entailed for ordinary people, *Two* is also a meditation on the fact that the division of India and the carnage that followed, once set into motion, kept happening inexorably and ceaselessly, and people like those who left their homes on that truck never found another home; they kept looking for a place called home, a place to belong to.

Gulzar uses the truck to show the many ways human nature can react to danger, and discomfort, fitting in a story within the larger frame as the truck trundles along, skirting danger at every turn. The travellers, hungry, tired, scared and thirsty realize that, while they have carried as many valuables as space allowed, only one or two of them remembered to carry any food or water to drink. Or perhaps it is when Harinam, an old family servant, stays behind when the family leaves, because he cannot leave Tiger, his dog, behind. 'And if somebody sees you now, '? He quickly removed his cap and showed him his head. 'I have cut my choti — and Ghulam has given me his cap.' (87)

The story does not end with the truck reaching its human cargo across the border. It continues into the refugee camps, with the noise and the confusion, the wanting and hoping and the sense of deep loss. The novel captures the after-effects on the lives of the people. "Did they ever settle down after being uprooted?"

“The years rolled by. But the refugees were far from settled. They were trying to. The handful of passengers who had left Campbellpur with Fauji were still searching for their soil. They were still rootless.” (152)

Gulzar asks. “As Master Fazal used to say, ‘Millions will be crushed under the feet of this conceited history,. The wounds will take decades to heal, centuries to overcome the trauma’.” (111)

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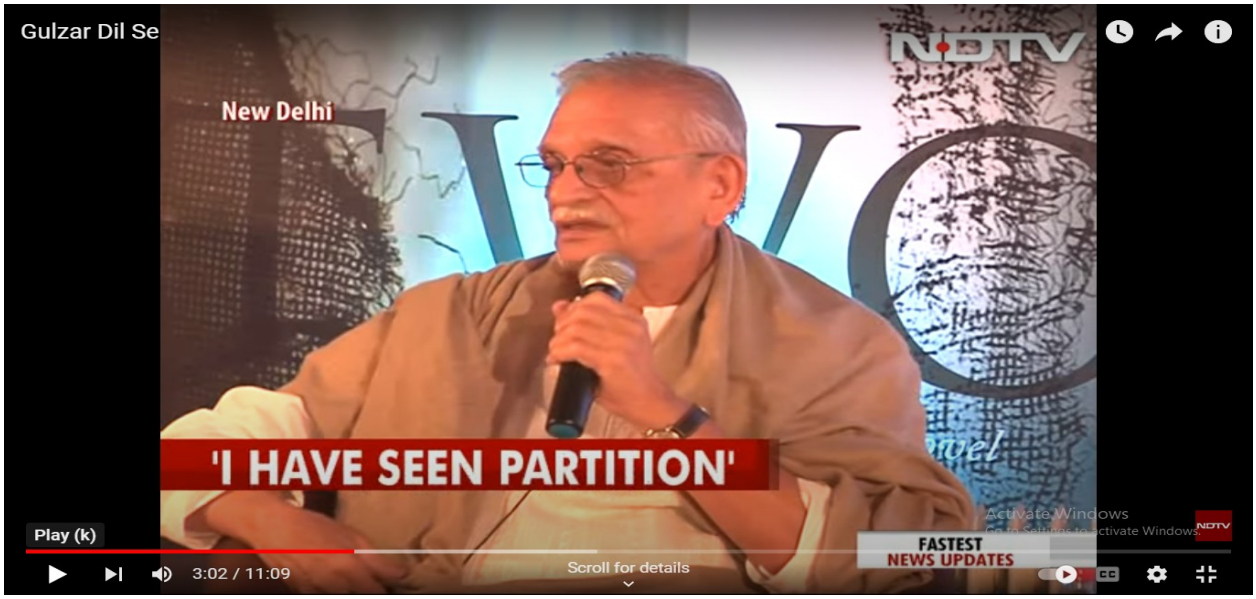
Another aspect that has been portrayed in the novel is how hatred grows among people. Karam Singh, who taught Arithmetic and Fazaldeen, a history teacher at a middle school are also affected by the same. Fazaldeen's house was raided by the British Police based on a false rumor and he was dismissed from his service (16) on the pretext of his involvement with the Indian Freedom Struggle.(14) Similarly, Rai Bahadur, a respectable person of Campbellpur was forced to remove his turban at the police station by inspector Rahim who had a deep rooted hatred for Hindus. (25) We also find people like Painti-Chhatti who spread fake rumors to intensify the anger and unrest among the people of different communities. (56) We are reminded of the Greek dramatist Euripides who has said, “What greater grief than the loss of one’s native land.”

(https://www.azquotes.com/quote/741958)




(image--https://www.ndtv.com/video/gulzar-dil-se-474183)

Gulzar who himself was a victim of this brutal Partition clarifies his purpose of writing this novel in his interview to *India Today* magazine he said--

Q The novel deals with Partition - a topic with enduring relevance today. Who is a refugee? Are you a refugee?

A *"Yehi ek baat toh takleef deti hai*." A migrant is an accepted reality. A refugee status is temporary. We have come to our own country and you call us "*sharnarthi*". It is not by choice that one becomes a refugee.

Q What do you remember of Partition?

A I remember my father roaming around the refugee camps. They would say, "*Qayamat aa gayi hai*..." he would look for people, relatives, neighbours, anybody to bring home. We lived in Old Delhi, near Ghanta Ghar. Each time I read the news about some event like in Syria, those memories come back.

Q Why did you write this novel?

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A Things have still not settled down. Our partition is still hurting us. There was so much of it within me that I had to bring out a longer version. Although I had written short stories and poems, I was still not over it... it is permanent.

Further his response to the question asked in an interview from *The Times of India* representative as we quote:

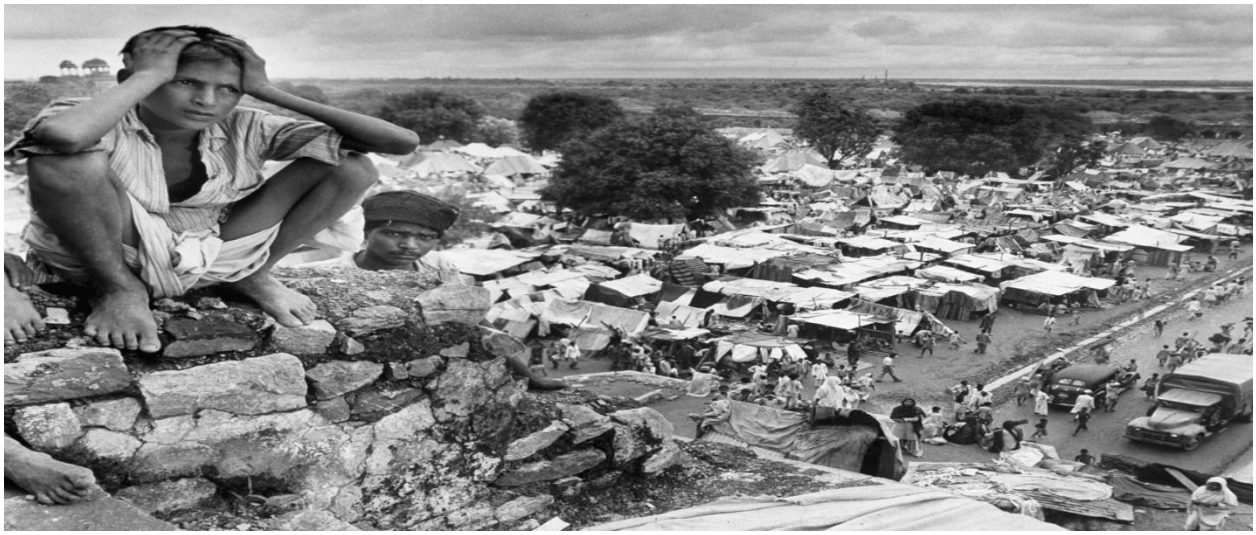
Did the current social scenario somehow set you off to get this book out now? "All day long I keep wishing, let partition be a past now. It should only remain a part of history. …..Partition is still going on. The splinters of that 1947 volcano are still burning. I wanted to do the same, to purge it off. And so, I chose the form of a novel to talk about the different eras I chronicle in the story – the partition and then 70 years after partition. There should have been a one-on-one between the heads of the two countries and we should have been friends by now. It must be over now! The prejudices must be kicked. But it still goes on and that bothers me".

He continues, "Television has become a very big source to voice somebody's ideas.

Start moving forward with time, to treat one another with respect, and let partition be a part of history, not our present".

But *Two* does not end with the Partition, he said. "It carries us along, to decades later, where, in the strangest ways, the strands that unravelled in 1947 come together. In that journey, the 1984 riots against the Sikhs become a metaphor for the continuance of hate and violence in societies."

*Two* narrates the traumatic experiences of the victims of Partition and the painful condition of the refugees before and after the partition of India in 1947.



(Partition displaced fifteen million people and killed more than a million.Photograph by Margaret Bourke-White / LIFE Picture Collection / Getty)

(https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/06/29/the-great-divide-books-dalrymple)

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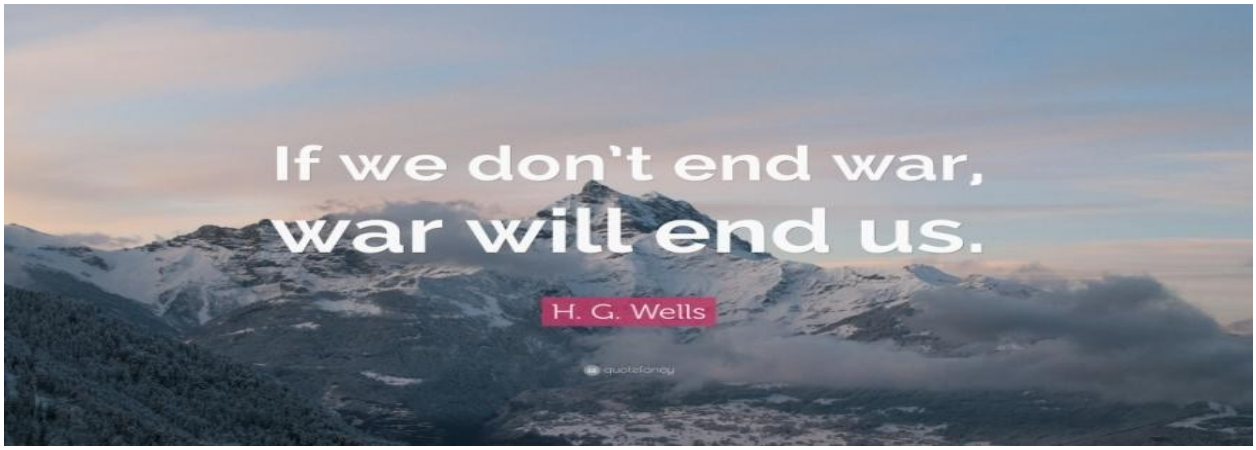
Nearly fifteen million people lost their homes, around two million people lost their lives in the riots that took place during these years. Seventy years have passed but those past memories still haunt them. Though there is no physical wound to heal an emotional loss they felt over the years. I remember the saying, “Not all scars show, not all wounds heal, sometimes you can’t always see the pain, someone else feels”.

Who is responsible for all this? Has war ever solved any problem? Has everyone forgotten the warning given by H.G. Wells who said,




(image--https://quotefancy.com/quote/820174/H-G-Wells-If-we-don-t-end-war-war-will-end-us)

God created the universe and sent the humans to the earth to live harmoniously and attain the aim of their life. Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said, “There is enough for everybody's need and not for everybody's greed". The lust for power, wealth or land has forced men to fight with each other. So many had to lose their lives because of this “Partition”. In the words of Niccolo Machiavelli, “Wars begin when you will, but they do not end when you please”. This novel captures the pain, agony and loss of separation and death of the innocent victims of Partition.

The novelist has shown how do the lives of innocent people is torn apart by a line on a map…..how do their lives become a puppet show in the greedy hands of the politicians or the so called owners of the land.

With *Two*, the novelist wants to purge off his ordeals and expects the whole country to do that -- once and for all. Gulzar's *Two* is an account of violence that urges a final outcry for eternal peace and friendship between the two neighbouring countries. He says, “Start moving forward with time, to treat one another with respect, and let partition be a part of history, not our present”.

His adjuration can be expressed through a quote by Philippa Gregory, “War does not answer war, war does not finish war. The only ending is peace.”

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(image--https://www.google.com/search?q=image+for+sdg+11)

The basic necessity of being able to live in peace, has been emphasized by the novelist. He asserts the need for a safe environment for the human beings to exist (partially indicating the Sustainable Development Goals—Number 11). The need for 'Safety', is not only the physical safety, but also the emotional, psychological, and social safety is the call of the hour. To draw a line on the geographical map to mark the boundaries causes loss of innocent lives. The evil effects of excess of power and greed will bring the downfall of man. Such calamities leave a scar even after years….and has to be ceased.

Let us make an appeal to one and all to bring better worldliness, harmony and peace for each other. The message of the song "Heal the world, make it a better place, for you and for me and the entire human race, there are people dying, if you care enough for the living, make a better place for you and for me" is the call.

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