

Train to Pakistan Study Guide

Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh

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Plot Summary

For centuries, India was ruled by the British Empire. But India bargained for its independence from Britain by agreeing to help it fight the Axis Powers in World War II. After the war was over, the British left in 1947 and divided the country into two, secular/Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan. However, despite the fact that many Muslims lived in India and many Hindus lived in Pakistan, most Hindus lived in India and Muslims in Pakistan.

When the British withdrew, then, those who were not in the "right place" had to flee to a new country. In the summer of 1947, ten million people crossed what was known as "the partition." Due to religious and ethnic hatred, two million people were killed during the skirmishes and mob violence that occurred in the chaos. Local authorities were just taking over from the British and had no ability to control the populace.

Train to Pakistan takes place in the fictional town of Mano Majra, which was near the partition. Many border towns like Mano Majra contained great religious diversity, with Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs living side by side. But the British took no account of these towns, and so great violence erupted within them. In contrast, the author shows Mano Majra as maintaining its order, given its relative isolation. However, Mano Majra possessed a train station that would eventually make it a center of conflict.

The story begins with the robbery and murder of Lala Ram Lal, the only Hindu family in town. The murderers were a gang led by Malli, who were looking for their old fellow gang member and leader Juggut Singh, a Sikh hoodlum of great height, build and with a bad reputation. During the event of "dacoit", however, "Jugga" was making love with his girlfriend, Nooran, the daughter of the town's Mullah (the interreligious love was strictly forbidden). At the same time of the dacoit, Iqbal Singh, a well-educated, effeminate atheist, though ethnic Sikh, arrived in town to organize the peasants for the People's Party of India.

Malli and his gang try to pin the crime on Jugga, which results in the arrests of both Iqbal and Jugga due to local suspicions. They are arrested due to the orders of Hukum Chand, the regional magistrate, in part because of his suspicions of both characters for independent reasons. While they are in prison, however, conflict starts to rise in Mano Majra when a train full of Muslim corpses is brought to town and burned by soldiers. Not long after, a group of soldiers comes by to evacuate the Muslim half of town (the other half is Sikh) to Pakistan which leads Nooran to depart while Jugga is in jail in the regional capital of Chundunnugger.

After the Muslims are evacuated, a local band of Sikhs comes to Mano Majra to whip up anti-Muslim sentiment and sabotage the train that was taking the Muslims to Pakistan. Chand, normally corrupted but racked with guilt over his own sins, releases both Iqbal and Jugga to stop the killing, and despite Iqbal's self-image as a social reformer and Jugga's self-image as a thug, Iqbal drinks himself into a stupor while Jugga gives his life

destroying the rope the Sikh soldiers had set up to throw Muslims on top of the train off to their deaths.



Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 1

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 1 Summary

The story begins in the summer of 1947, when communal riots broke out between Hindus and Muslims over the proposed split of India into a Hindu India and a Muslim Pakistan. Both sides were brutal to one another and refugees fled to their respective safe areas. Ten million people were in flight and a million died that summer. Only a few places of peace remained in the crossroads, and one was the village of Mano Majra.

Mano Majra is a small village populated by Sikhs and Muslims. The Sikhs are wealthy and few in number, owning all the land, while the Muslims are tenants of the Sikhs. There are a few others, such as Lala Ram Lal's family, which is Hindu. Mano Majra is known for its railway station, and a small group of merchants has grown up around it. Since Mano Majra is small, it is conscious of its trains and comes alive when the trains arrive. Life continued in this way until the summer of 1947.

Late one August night, five Muslim dacoits, or robbers, appeared near Lala Ram Lal's house. They openly mock the one they call the "Jugga" and have bangles for him. They then approach Lal's house, find him, and demand the keys for Lal's safe, but Lal refuses to tell them. The dacoits beat him and stab him with a spear, killing him, and then they called out for the people of the house to give the bangles to the great Jugga.

Juggut Singh was not at home. In fact, he had slipped away to see his lover, Nooro. They had met and made love, though Nooro, despite her attraction to Juggut, felt guilty about it. Just after making love, they hear shots fired and see the dacoits move by close to them. Nooro knows Malli, the head dacoit, and both know something bad is going on. Nooro fears for her life and Juggut promises to protect her, though they fear that Nooro's father is the one she would be in trouble with.

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 1 Analysis

Section one introduces the setting and first plot event of Train to Pakistan. The setting is the summer of 1947, after the British have left India. It has been suggested that India will be separated into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. This led to the flight of ten million refugees, and a million died that summer. In an area surrounded by violence, particularly among different religions, little Mano Majra was an oasis of peace. But that night, dacoits (or robbers, for whom the chapter is named) kill the town moneylender, Lala Ram Lal and try to frame one of the main characters, Juggut Singh, for the murder.

Juggut was out having sex with his girlfriend, Nooran. The two have to keep their relationship a secret as they are members of different religions and Nooran's father is the town mullah. It becomes clear that Juggut is something of a "bad boy," very tall, strong, rough around the edges and always into mischief of some sort or another. It is clear that the relationship will be an issue in the book as will the attempt to frame Jugga.



Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 2

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 2 Summary

Mano Majra has some importance among India's bureaucrats because it contains an officers' rest house and often government officials will visit. The morning before the dacoity in Mano Majra, the rest house had a guest, Hukum Chand, magistrate and deputy commissioner of the district, a large man. He invites Mano Major's head policeman, Inspector Sahib, to come in. They discuss the massacres of the summer and Sahib informs Chand that the violence has not come to Mano Majra and that the people there are largely unaware of it, even figures like Ghandi. The only 'bad' person in the village is Juggut Singh, whose father had been hung two years ago. Chand had forgotten that he had confined Juggut to the village and that he must regularly report to the police station.

However, Jugga, Sahib reported, is a very tall and strong man, standing at six feet, four inches. The only reason he stayed in the village is because of Nooran, the beautiful daughter of the blind mullah of Mano Majra's mosque.

After the subinspector (Sahib) left, Hukum Chand was entertained by a family whose haggish mother brought him her daughter to have sex with him. The girl was uncomfortable but her mother wanted her to woo the Chand for benefits to the family. But before the two could have sex, Chand heard shots fired from the dacoity.

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 2 Analysis

Section two introduces the town legal bureaucrats, including the subinspector, Inspector Sahbi and the magistrate and deputy district commissioner, Hukum Chand. The subinspector is a somewhat honest man, partly interested in justice but one who must bend to the will of the more corrupt Chand. The two men discuss the case of Jugga, who Chand wants arrested and questioned on the suspicion of murder. Chand does not seem to think that Jugga is the murderer; instead, he thinks that Jugga knows who the murderer was.



Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 3

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 3 Summary

On the day following the dacoity, the train station is busier than usual, though it arrives more closely on time. A small, somewhat effeminate and well-dressed man named Iqbal emerges and goes to the Sikh temple to stay the night. There he engages in conversation with the Bhai of the temple, Meet Singh. Iqbal is a social worker and starts to inform the Bhai of his intention to reform Indian and Pakistani society by stopping the exploitation of the poor by the rich and ending corruption by ending poverty. The Bhai tells Iqbal of the murder and Iqbal is frightened; the Bhai is amused that Iqbal thinks he can change the country and yet cannot handle a single murder.

In the next section, Iqbal is stretched out on a hammock trying to sleep. The last night on the train he had been kept awake all night by Muslims asking him questions about his background, since he had been reading and appeared educated. When he got to the Sikh temple and had been welcomed by the Bhai, he had also not been left alone long enough to sleep.

It is reported that the authorities believe Jugga killed Lala Ram Lal and that he has disappeared. It is thought to be a particularly heinous crime since he killed a neighbor, which is never done. Further, they have found his bangles there (which had been planted by the dacoits). The Sahib Deputy (Hukum Chand) has already alerted the police stations to watch for him.

After a walk, Iqbal returns to his room and Meet Singh tries to give him food, which he declines. A small number of servants end up in Iqbal's room in the course of trying to bring him food.

A conversation begins. A Muslim asks him why the English left, and Iqbal tells them that the Indian army had hundreds of thousands of trained men and that the English were scared. But the men protest; he says that they liked serving under English officers, who were better than the Indians. But Iqbal complains that they did not want to be free. The group responds that freedom is only for the educated and that they will be slaves no matter who is in charge.

Iqbal agrees, but then encourages them to organize and fight for themselves. The group suspects him of being a communist and not believing in God, but Iqbal denies this. Members of the group wish that the English were still in charge and Iqbal proclaims that they are cheaters, but the group responded that there was no killing when they were in charge.

Eventually the goods train comes and the group leaves. Iqbal lies in his bed wondering what he could possibly do to help the people turn a bourgeois (upper class) revolution into a proletarian (working class) revolution. The problem is that he is not leader and



has not suffered for his cause and thus has no authority. He falls asleep dreaming of living peacefully in jail to gain credibility.

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section 3 Analysis

Section three introduces another main character, Iqbal. Iqbal is a well-educated man who was sent by the People's Party of India to organize local peasants to fight for a socialist economic system. This is not entirely clear until later in the book, but it is clear that Iqbal, a small, effeminate man, has dreams of revolution. Despite receiving some respect from the townspeople for his education, Iqbal knows that he is not the sort of man who can command a group of peasants for a revolutionary goal.

This becomes clear in an argument Iqbal has about the nature of the conflict in the area, as his theories about why the British left and on other matters that are rejected by some of those he speaks with. He also realizes that he has no credibility because he has not suffered for his cause. Thus, Iqbal dreams of being a revolutionary for equality but demands respect and the power to lead; he has greater aims than his personality permits him to achieve, or so it seems at this point in the story.



Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section IV

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section IV Summary

The next morning Iqbal is arrested. When he protests fiercely, the policemen let him clean himself up. They worry if they hadn't made a mistake. But when he continues to protest, they become frustrated and handcuff him and drag him off.

Ten men are sent to arrest Juggut Singh, all armed. He is handcuffed while he is asleep. When he awakes, he calmly explains that he had nothing to do with the dacoity. The head constable secretary wondered if he is right. Jugga's mother has evidence from Jugga's broken bangles and the constable tells her to hold onto it. Then they drag Jugga off to be interrogated. On the way, Iqbal and the two policemen join up with Jugga's party. The policemen know they had made two mistakes.

When they reach jail, Juggut starts a conversation with Iqbal. Iqbal complains that he was persecuted for trying to organize the peasants, but Juggut says he was used to being in jail. Iqbal claims that only the government made him a criminal, but Juggut maintains that it was his fate.

When the subinspector arrives, he chastises the constable for arresting Iqbal and reports back to Hukum Chand. Chand wants more information about Iqbal, like his religion and his full name, but Iqbal refuses to give it. Chand is furious and orders the subinspector to force it out of Iqbal. Iqbal is then stripped, humiliated and questioned. Iqbal had been sent by the People's Party of India, but the subinspector is sure he was a member of the Muslim League. They list him as Mohammed Iqbal and a Muslim Leaguer. Chand then orders the subinspector to get the names of the dacoits out of Jugga.

Iqbal and Jugga are taken to the Chundunnugger police station on a long drive. On the way, Jugga talks to the policemen about all the killing, and the policemen blame the Muslims. Jugga proclaims clearly that no one can escape God and that every innocent will be avenged. Towards the end of the conversation, one of the policemen makes fun of Jugga for his clandestine meetings with Nooran; Jugga didn't know the meetings were public knowledge and is furious.

They arrive and are marched into jail. Jugga is received with hilarity but Iqbal is treated with apologies and respect. Iqbal is not surprised by unequal treatment in a caste society, though he deplores the inequality. As Iqbal falls asleep, he tries to think of a way to contact his party and looks forward to being released with the credibility to become a leader.

In the evening, the subinspector comes to Iqbal's cell and tells him that he was only arrested because they could not allow political agitators in border areas. He then suggests that Iqbal go to Pakistan because he is Muslim. Iqbal exclaims that this is a lie



told to cover the subinspector's mistake. He then threatens to file a complaint. The subinspector laughs at him and leaves the cell. He then goes to question Jugga. He asks where Jugga was the night of the dacoity, and Jugga says he was out in the field. Then he asks Jugga who the dacoits were and Jugga refuses to reply. When the subinspector threatens him with being whipped, Jugga begs for mercy. The subinspector says he will give Jugga two days. The subinspector is frustrated that he got no answers from either Iqbal or Jugga.

Chapter 1, Dacoity, Section IV Analysis

While previous sections introduced many of the main characters—Jugga, Nooran, Chand, the subinspector and Iqbal, section four has four of the main characters interact for the first time, particularly Jugga and Iqbal. The morning after the dacoity (the name for the dacoit attack), both Iqbal and Jugga are arrested, Jugga on suspicion of murder and Iqbal for unknown reasons, which would later turn out to be to stop his political agitation and figure out who he was and where he came from.

Jugga knows he did nothing wrong and approaches his arrest with ease and self-assured relaxation. This is not arrogance. Instead, it becomes clear that Jugga regards his lot in life as fate and nothing more. It also comes out that he is something of a pious man and believes that God is just and will punish all evil done in the world. While he may have talents, he has sold himself short.

A large, reflective, calm but rascally and often hot-tempered man contrasts sharply with Iqbal in every respect. Iqbal is short, small, effeminate, well-educated and dreams of revolutionary activities that at this point seem beyond his personal abilities. The subinspector makes sure to humiliate Iqbal to find out who he is, and Iqbal loses the air of respectability that he brought into the police station with him. While Jugga is desperate to avoid being whipped, he maintains his cool, by and large. But both men, despite being so different, do not give the subinspector the information he wants.



Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section I

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section I Summary

Early in September, the train schedule becomes completely unpredictable in Mano Majra, which substantially changes everyone's schedules, making life generally unpredictable. A unit of Sikh soldiers comes to town as well and pitches tents near the train station; they stop all trains from Delhi. One morning, a train from Pakistan stops at Mano Majra, but this one has an eerie element since it has no signs of life.

A village meeting is held, but the only people who speak are Imam Baksh and Bhai Meet Singh, the mullah of the mosque and the Bhai of the Sikh temple respectively. The Imam is a weaver who ordinarily would not be respected, but his wife and only son had died within a few days of each other and he went blind and was forced to beg. He has a single daughter, Nooran, to care for and he started living in the mosque. He came to command respect. Meet Singh is simply a peasant who had taken his job to avoid work, has no family and is not learned.

At a town meeting, both men proclaimed it is a bad time, or "Kalyug". There had been an "incident" with the train. Then a policeman approaches and summons the people to bring wood and kerosene to the train station, offering to pay them. A few minutes later the collection is put together. No one knows what is going on save Meet Singh, and he will not share, but he tells the people that they can watch what is about to happen from their roofs. They watch until evening and the fires are started; then they smell burning flesh. They know that dead bodies from Pakistan are being burned.

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section I Analysis

Section one opens chapter two in part by introducing the term "Kalyug", the chapter title. A Kalyug is a dark time, and so it was in Mano Majra when a train arrived from Pakistan carrying what were presumably a load of dead Muslims from Pakistan that the Sikh soldiers were responsible for disposing of. To do so, they asked the people of Mano Majra to bring kerosene and wood to them; when the fires were lit, the people smelled burning flesh and knew what was going on. Nothing like that had happened in Mano Majra before and the people were stunned and horrified.



Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section II

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section II Summary

Section two begins with Hukum Chand reacting privately to the incineration of the bodies. Chand is secretly horrified and traumatized, having seen the train cars full of bodies with his own eyes and even touching a man he thought was alive. The images haunt him. While he had always been fascinated by death and had come to believe that death was inevitable, nothing was inevitable about this; it was sheer horror. Chand has great trouble calming down until he drinks some whiskey and falls asleep next to his young prostitute.

In the next section, the author notes the coming of the summer monsoon, which is a period of two months of rain that comes after a long drought. It is welcomed for the first few days, but afterward it fills Mano Majra with mud and overflowing water. The desert briefly comes alive and then dies off.

Hukum Chand awakes with the rain apace. The prostitute is sleeping in the other chair, presumably because of his stench, and he feels very guilty about the fact that he knew he would keep drinking and he knew he would sleep with her. The subinspector comes to him to ask about what to do with the bones of the dead Muslims. It is not clear to Chand what to do except to have the Muslims of Mano Majra evacuated so they will not suffer the same fate.

The subinspector tells Chand that Jugga told him that his old gang had committed the murder and that the leader's name was Malli. The subinspector said he was wrong about both Jugga and Iqbal, but Chand said to keep them in prison and let the people think that Malli and his gang are Muslim so that the people will think Muslims are safe; only in this way will the Sikhs release their Muslims so that they can be evacuated. The subinspector is proud to be entrusted with such a complex plan. Chand also orders him to keep Jugga and Iqbal behind bars.

After the subinspector leaves, Chand rationalizes his plan to himself on the ground that he was a magistrate and had to make hard decisions on a regular basis. But he had to save Muslim lives and would do it however he could. He is elated by his plan. At the same time, the girl wakes up; her name is Haseena Begum. She opens up a bit emotionally as they eat breakfast, but she still reminds Chand of his dead daughter, though he now feels little guilt. Haseena was from Chundunnugger whose Muslims were evacuating and Chand encourages her to stay in Mano Majra.

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section II Analysis

The primary event of section two is the examination of Hukum Chand's conscience. He had seen the dead bodies of over one thousand Muslims and he had been a part of having them burned. He was profoundly troubled and tried to hide this from his men. It



becomes clear that despite Chand's lecherousness, he has something of a conscience; this is also displayed in his guilt over the fact that he knows he will deflower the prostitute, who was yet a virgin. He also hatches a plan to evacuate the town's Muslims to prevent them from being killed, which involves letting Lal's murderers stay free and keeping Jugga and Iqbal in prison for the meanwhile.

In the same section, Chand gets to know Haseena, the young prostitute, whose personality seems lively and pleases Chand; he is proud of his plan and feels little guilt about his plans for her now that morning has come.



Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section III

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section III Summary

Iqbal is left alone in his cell for a week, with only newspapers and magazines. He sees little of Jugga until the day when the policemen bring in Malli and his gang, which infuriates Jugga. When a constable comes by, Jugga makes a joke involving Iqbal, which leads to a conversation. They get to know each other a bit, and Jugga explains where he was during the murder. He also asks Iqbal if he has slept with many European women. Iqbal is disgusted because of his perception that the people of India care only about sex and are obsessed with it. But he lies and says he has had many partners; Jugga claims the same. Jugga asks Iqbal how long he had been in school and it turns out Iqbal had sixteen years of education; Jugga was impressed and wanted Iqbal to teach him English. Then Malli and his gang are put in a cell near them and Jugga's mood turns dark.

The subinspector makes his way to the police station in Chundunnugger and tells the constable that Malli and his gang are to be released into Mano Majra in plain view of everyone (letting the people think they are Muslim despite their being Sikh) and then asks if they had seen Sultana and his gang, (Muslims themselves). They should also ask about Iqbal, who they will call Muhammad Iqbal. This is all to give the appearance that Muslims are being given special treatment, that they are safe, or that they have successfully escaped. Then the subinspector leaves.

There are difficulties in the jail, however. Jugga is enraged with Malli to a degree no one in the jail has ever seen. Malli himself is terrified, but feels that he had to insult Jugga to maintain his prestige in front of his men, which enrages Jugga all the more. When Malli and his gang are being marched out, Jugga grabs Malli's hair and bangs his head against the jail cell bars over and over and over again, making his skull bloodied and bruised and humiliating him.

Chapter 2, Kalyug, Section III Analysis

Section three sets up Chand's plot to have the Muslims of Mano Majra evacuated. The plan will be hard to execute because all the Muslims in town have to be convinced that it is safe for them to leave, but this requires subtly letting the town's Muslims (and their Sikh employers) know that Malli's men are (a) Muslim and (b) being arbitrarily released, that Sultana's gang (Muslims) are still afoot and that Muhammad Iqbal (Iqbal is not really Muslim) was missing. The subinspector instructs the constables at the Chundunnugger police station on the details of the plan.

However, Jugga and Iqbal at this time strike up a conversation that actually produces a small bond between them. Jugga honors Iqbal for his education with genuine compliments and Iqbal actually relaxes his sense of superiority a bit and engages in

conversation with Jugga. It turns out that despite Jugga's temper, he means well and even asks Iqbal to teach him English. However, the presence of Malli infuriates him and he ends up violently attacking him, not only horrifying Malli, his men and the constables, but Iqbal as well.



Chapter 3, Mano Majra

Chapter 3, Mano Majra Summary

In chapter three, the constable brings Chand's plan into action. The village is in a state of depressed shock over the burned corpses when the constables release Malli and his gang; the villages know Jugga had nothing to do with it, but the fact that Malli has been released signaled to them that the police were sure. The constable also makes the appropriate inquiries about the Muslim gang and about "Muhammad" Iqbal, who Meet Singh protested was Sikh.

The constable's visit divides Mano Majra into two neat halves. The Muslims are afraid that, since they were tenants and at their Sikh landlords' mercy, that they would be hurt or expelled. The Sikhs seem like strangers. For whatever reason, the Sikhs become angry; they feel that the Muslims cannot be trusted and that they mistreat women and arbitrarily kill their subjects when they rule. The Sikhs believe that Muslims killed Ram Lal. A group of Sikhs gather to speak with Meet Singh and argue about whether Iqbal is Sikh or Muslim; the peasants dismiss Meet. Some are worried that the Muslims would hurt them. They want to ask the Muslims to leave but feel bad about it.

Eventually Imam Baksh comes to the door with two Muslim followers; the Imam asks what the Sikh decision is about them; Meet begins to cry and says that they would defend their Muslim brothers with their lives if they wish to stay. But the lambardar, while willing to defend the Muslims, says that they could not ably protect them and that the Muslims should flee to a refugee camp. The Imam and his companions are devastated but seemed to agree.

When the Imam returns home, he wakes up Nooran and tells her that the Muslims are evacuating to Pakistan. Initially Nooran refuses, but relents when her father tells her that she would otherwise be killed by those running Muslims to Pakistan. Nooran quickly runs over to Jugga's house to speak to his mother, Beybey. Beybey will not let her in and blames her for Jugga's imprisonment. Nooran then tells Beybey that she is carrying Jugga's child and that she must tell Jugga where she is when he returns. Beybey agreed. Nooran leaves with a vague hope.

Not many sleep in Mano Majra that night, as all the Muslims are busy packing, crying and rushing around. It rains the whole night, and eventually the convoy of evacuation trucks arrives. A Sikh and a Muslim are running the convoy and have a number of armed soldiers with them. They then order the Muslims to board only with what they can carry. They would be going to Pakistan, and this surprises many Muslims. The Sikhs are to care for the property the Muslims leave behind, though Meet Singh expresses discomfort with this arrangement.

The Muslim officer mocks Meet and someone laughs behind them. It is Malli and five companions with some refugees; none of them are from Mano Majra. Malli then



proclaims that he would care for the Muslim property, and complete confusion follows. The Sikh officer arranges that Malli and the refugees would look after Muslim property; the Muslims are helpless and are driven off. When the Muslims are gone, the Sikh officer tells the villagers that he is making Malli the chief of the Muslims' property and that anyone interfering with him would be shot. Then Malli and his gang loot the Muslim's property and drive their livestock away.

Chapter 3, Mano Majra Analysis

Chapter three brings Chand's plan to completion, but not without significant cost to the Muslims. The constable arrived in Mano Majra and set up the deceptions about Muslims having escaped and being given special treatment. Malli and his men were released, Iqbal proclaimed to be a Muslim, and so on. The town quickly realized that the Muslims were not only safe to leave, but that they should probably leave soon. Briefly tensions between Sikhs and Muslims flared, but the Imam and Bhai worked out a plan where the Sikhs would care for the Muslims' property while they were away in Pakistan.

However, when the evacuation trucks arrived, the Muslims were packed on and driven off, and instead of being able to indirectly watch over the Muslims' property as Meet wanted, the Sikh officer appointed Malli and his newly expanded gang to watch the Muslim property instead. Once the Muslims left, Malli and his gang looted the Muslims' property.

The Muslims were saved; they would not die in a massacre. Nonetheless, they were taken advantage of by the evacuation officers and by Malli and his gang in particular. The Sikhs were helpless to stop the looting due to the officers' protecting Malli's men.

The reader also learns that Nooran desperately wants to see Jugga, and that she is pregnant with his child. A conflict is set up that only Jugga can solve: he must return to Mano Majra, defeat Malli and stop the looting, and rescue Nooran and his unborn child. Iqbal may well have his chance for heroism and freeing the people from oppression.



Chapter 4, Karma, Section I

Chapter 4, Karma, Section I Summary

The same day of Malli's looting, the Sikhs look on with dismay, depressed by their inability to stop Malli. However, the rain continues to fall and the nearby river, the Sutlej, continues to rise. Some of the townspeople keep watch over the river's level. When night falls, it is not clear whether the river is still rising and whether their mud dam would hold.

Some of the villagers go out to the riverbank and hear some human yells, though they are hard to make out. After some searching, the villagers hear and see a number of large objects floating down the river. A train rushes by with no lights on. When the sun rises, it is revealed that the large objects were human bodies and body parts. There had been a massacre upstream.

When the villagers return to Mano Majra, the people are gathering on their rooftops due to the rain. After a few hours, a train full of soldiers arrives; this time, instead of asking for wood and kerosene, a bulldozer comes and many more corpses are unloaded and buried.

In the evening, the whole remaining village gathers to pray at the gurdwara, a very rare event. The Muslim houses are abandoned. Meet Singh leads them in prayer and hymns, but then a jeep arrives. Several Sikh soldiers arrive, wearing uniforms. They are led by a teenage boy with a bossy and insolent charisma. He challenges the men in the temple to fight under him and kill Muslims who could not be trusted. When Meet protests, the boy mocks him to simply go "say your prayers."

At first, no one volunteers. Since the tale of Jugga's humiliation of Malli had spread through the village, Malli felt that he needs to redeem himself and volunteers, as do his men. Once enough men volunteer, the boy needs no more. He then hatches a plan to set up ropes over the train station such that when a darkened train comes through the station again, the rope would knock several hundred Muslims off and kill them all. Everyone thinks this is a good plan, one without risk of retaliation. After a prayer for victory, the meeting disperses. The lambardar takes two villagers and leaves for the Chundunnugger police station.

Chapter 4, Karma, Section I Analysis

Section one sets the scene for the climax of the book. The Sikhs look on with dismay as Malli loots the village, but the looting is soon forgotten as the river swells. Villagers realized that bodies have been thrown into the river, and they get on their roofs to avoid being flooded. More corpses arrived on the train and were buried. The next evening the villagers all gather at the Sikh temple to pray, but when some soldiers and their leader, a teenage boy, arrive, he tries to whip them into an anti-Muslim frenzy. The Bhai resists,



but the boy dismisses him. To regain his stature after having been embarrassed by Jugga, Malli and his men volunteer. The boy, who is not named, wishes to tie a rope over the railway station to knock hundreds of Muslims off the top of the train to Pakistan, killing them all.

Thus the plot is set—the boy, Malli and the hateful "bad guys" will try to kill Mano Majra's Muslims; somehow they must be stopped.



Chapter 4, Karma, Section II

Chapter 4, Karma, Section II Summary

Back in Chundunnugger, Chand is tired and unrecognizably aged due to the stress of the last week. He proclaims his indifference to the mass killing, telling the subinspector that they simply have to give the appearance of having tried to stop the massacre. The subinspector knows that Chand is despairing and subtly explains to him that he has been able to evacuate all the Muslims from Chundunnugger. Chand is impressed.

The subinspector then tells him that the Chundunnugger refugees are going to be taken away by the night train, much to Chand's surprise. He also knew of the attack planned on the train. Chand explosively wonders why the subinspector didn't tell the refugee camp commander. The subinspector replies that otherwise the entire town of Chundunnugger would probably be destroyed. He then encourages Chand to use his influence to quiet the mob while the subinspector informs the camp commander about the plan to ambush the train.

Chand then asks about Iqbal and Jugga. They are still locked up. He then asks whether Nooran is still in Mano Majra. Apparently she has left. Chand then tells the subinspector that Iqbal is Iqbal Singh, after all. He orders the subinspector to immediately release Jugga and Iqbal and send them to Mano Majra by the evening.

Chapter 4, Karma, Section II Analysis

Chand is understandably stressed over the massacres happening all around him. He has despaired, but his subinspector tries to help him hope that they can find a way to save the Chundunnugger and Mano Majra Muslims. Chand hatches a plan to let Jugga and Iqbal go, to send them to Mano Majra to disrupt the assault on the Muslims and give him time to quiet the hordes of mobs while the Muslims escape to Pakistan, waiting for the violence to calm down. This act is, in a way, Chand's rebellion against his fatalism. He feels that he can do nothing, but in fact he does the one thing he can to stop what he believes is inevitable.



Chapter 4, Karma, Section III

Chapter 4, Karma, Section III Summary

When the subinspector releases Iqbal and Jugga, he tells them that Mano Majra has changed and that a tonga is coming for them. That afternoon they leave, and there is little talking. On the way, Iqbal is disgusted that he could be killed over something like his ethnic and religious affiliation; he dreamed of escaping to Delhi and having a news story printed about his heroic imprisonment. Jugga, in contrast, is worried only about Nooran; he hopes she was hiding in the fields.

As the tonga drives past the Sikh temple, Jugga jumps out and runs to the fields. Iqbal gets off as the tonga stops a few moments later. After a prayer is finished, Meet Singh meets with Iqbal and introduces him as Iqbal Singh, a social worker from England. He admits to the group that he is Sikh, or at least that he was born Sikh. Meet tells him of the massacre, the Muslim evacuation and the flood. They also tell him about the plan to kill the Muslims of Chundunnugger and Mano Majra on the train to Pakistan, along with Malli's association with the plan.

Iqbal demands that Meet do something, that he could not let such a thing happen, that he must inform the people. Meet claims that he can do nothing and encourages Iqbal to act. Iqbal packs and is eager to lead, but does not know how. He wants people to see his act of sacrifice and wonders if it would do any good. He knows, so he thinks, that good only matters when others can see it done; otherwise, one would simply die and no one would know.

Iqbal rants to himself that India is full of superstitious nonsense; religion is based on arbitrary ritual, no matter the type; ethics is removed. Iqbal simply wants Indian culture to be scrapped for its backwardness. All the while he is drinking whisky and his mind is becoming "clearer." Eventually Iqbal falls asleep with his whisky and internal rant in full gear.

Elsewhere, Jugga goes to find Meet Singh and asks him to read a verse from the Guru. The Guru begrudgingly obliges. Jugga then proclaims that the meaning of the text didn't matter, just that it is the Guru's word. He believes that if he was going to do something good, that the Guru would help and that if he was going to do something bad, the Guru would make it difficult. Then Jugga leaves.

Chapter 4, Karma, Section III Analysis

Section three shows Iqbal and Jugga's return to Mano Majra. Both are thinking their characteristic thoughts to themselves. Iqbal is obsessed with his hopes to be recognized as being famous for his suffering, only caring about his own glory and not about helping anyone but his own reputation. When he returns, he gets drunk while ranting to himself about his future glory. Then he falls asleep. But Jugga, widely



regarded as an uneducated thug, is thinking only of Nooran, and rushes to the Sikh temple to receive the Guru's blessing. He then runs off to stop the men at the railway station.

The irony here is that Iqbal always conceived of himself as an aid to the poor and downtrodden. He was well-educated, but in his way always looked down on the people he was sent to help. All he ultimately cared about was himself and his own glory and in the end thought nothing of the people and only of his future. Thus he falls asleep drunk. But Jugga is selfless and focuses on saving another, Nooran; he grows and evolves, moving from thug to pious hero, seeking the Guru's blessing to rescue his lover and her people.

In some ways, this is the irony of the book—that the proud social reformer did no good in the end; instead, it was the "uneducated budwash" whose own change of heart was to make all the difference. The author thus repudiates the common image of the social reformer and leftist activist as the savior of society and instead argues that the real hero is the man who is honest, true and willing to humble himself.



Chapter 4, Karma, Section IV

Chapter 4, Karma, Section IV Summary

Chand no longer feels elated by his plan; he has released Iqbal and Jugga and knows little about them. He does not know if they will do as he hoped. He also does not know if he could get his magistrates to help him. He then thinks to himself about how great magistrates motivated their men and considered his own. He also regrets letting his prostitute go back to Chundunnegger and feels guilty for developing feelings for her. She was in the train. Chand despairs, starts to cry and then starts to pray.

After eleven, the moon comes up near the railway. The line over the railway line has been tied. The boy commands the men to be quiet so that they can hear the train. And on it comes. A long way beyond the station, a dot of light appears and goes out; another comes nearer, and the train keeps coming. All of a sudden, a man climbs the steel span where the rope is drawn and tugs. The people on the top of the train can be seen in clear view. The man has stretched himself across the entire rope and hacks away.

The boy lifts his rifle and shoots one of the man's legs off the rope, but the man keeps slashing. Another shot is fired and the man's body falls off the rope, but he holds on with his hands and chin, pulling himself up; he continues to hack and the rope is in shreds. He cuts it and even bites it. After another volley of shots, the man shivers and collapses, but as he falls, the rope snaps. The train goes over him to Pakistan

Chapter 4, Karma, Section IV Analysis

Section four brings the book to its climax and ends quickly thereafter. Chand, a lecherous character out for himself, realizes that he has developed feelings for the young girl that was to be his prostitute. He never deflowered her and instead worried himself sick over her as she was in the train. He let himself release his fatalism and cried over the suffering around him. He even prayed, in an ultimate rejection of his bad qualities.

But the true hero of the story is Jugga. In the final pages of the book, he is not named; he is only a "dark figure" of a "large man" on the steel span where the rope was tied. He hacked away at the rope even as he was being shot by the boy and his men, one of whom was presumably Malli. Jugga never killed Malli or hurt him again; he was not even thinking of this. Instead, he was only tearing the rope apart to save Nooran and her people. It was symbolic that the author refrained from naming him. It was Iqbal who cared only about being named, who thought doing good only mattered if others knew it was done and who had done it. Jugga was wholly anonymous; he seemed indifferent as to whether he died and as to whether anyone knew of his sacrifice. And he dies at the end, but saves everyone and the Muslims escape to Pakistan.



In the end, Train to Pakistan is set in an area and time of religious violence to show how easily people can despise one another, despair and become cruel, vicious and even genocidal. Despite it all, several people rise to their call, especially Chand and Jugga. Even the subinspector does some good. The Imam and the Bhai both exhibit their own characteristic goodness, though the Bhai believes he is unable to stop the boy and his men. The only figure who remains unmoved is Iqbal; the author seems intent on critiquing the kind of people that Iqbal represents against the common people who he believes really made the difference.



Characters

Jugga Singh

Juggut "Jugga" Singh is probably the main character of Train to Pakistan. In the beginning of the book, Jugga is introduced as the local town gangster responsible for all sorts of wrong doing and confined to town at night so that he could be kept track of. However, Juggut, a Sikh, has an illicit relationship with Nooran Baksh, the daughter of the local Muslim leader.

While they are making love, some of Jugga's old gangster buddies murder the town money lender, Lala Ram Lal, and try to pin the crime on him. This leads to Jugga's arrest, which he accepts as his fate. While in prison, Jugga gets to know Iqbal and seems resigned and indifferent to being treated badly by the police. It is clear that Jugga does not enjoy the bad things that he does but instead sees his behavior as the work of fate.

When Jugga is released from jail and returns to Mano Majra, however, he seems to have had a change of heart. First, he seems to have learned that his girlfriend, Nooran, was carrying his child (information probably learned from his mother, who Nooran had informed just a day before). When Jugga discovered that Nooran was on the train to Pakistan that was to be ambushed by Sikh soldiers, he immediately rushed to the Sikh Temple to receive the Guru's blessing. This uncharacteristic act of faith illustrated that Jugga was giving up his acquiescence to fate and his station in life.

Jugga then climbs the steel span where the Sikh soldiers had placed the large rope to kill the Muslims on top of the train and cuts it, though he is shot in the process. Thus in the end, the man who saw himself as made evil by fate believes that he had the help of divine power to die in a sacrificial act.

Iqbal Singh

Iqbal Singh is an atheist who was raised Sikh; he was educated in England and had returned to India in order to work as a social worker for the People's Party of India. While he was an organizer, he understood that he had no charisma and little authority, as he had not suffered for his cause. And while he saw himself as a potentially great social reformer and man of the people, he actually seemed to expect special treatment due to his well-educated status. The book is filled with his political lectures to the townspeople who seem wholly indifferent to his ideas but eager to respect his degree of education.

Iqbal is imprisoned along with Jugga because it is thought that he may have been involved. He is outraged over being imprisoned but comes to interact positively with Jugga while he is there. Iqbal is somewhat pleased that he has been imprisoned, however, since he believed it would give him credibility as a leader and help him to raise



his public profile. Iqbal generally is easily embarrassed, flappable, and obviously insecure. His aims of grandeur seem to clearly outstrip his abilities.

When Iqbal and Jugga are released from jail, Iqbal dreams of going back to Mano Majra and saving the day, which would lead to grand headlines of Iqbal having suffered in prison and stopped a massacre. But when he reaches town, he merely chastises the local Sikh Bhai for not doing anything and drinks himself into a stupor, imagining the glories that he will achieve. It is Jugga who saves the day, though, not the social reformer.

Lala Ram Lal

The only Hindu in Mano Majra and the local moneylender, Lal is killed by Malli and his gang so that they could frame Jugga.

Hukum Chand

The regional magistrate and a fat and lecherous man with a guilty conscience, Chand is a consequential character in the book. While a corrupt leader, Chand constantly tries to redeem himself for his sins and is brought to a turning point through his guilt over wanting to deflower a prostitute that was the age his daughter would be had she lived. To save the local Muslims, Chand releases Iqbal and Jugga to Mano Majra in order for him to find time to distract the mobs that would almost certainly kill them and for Iqbal and Jugga to stop the Sikh ambush of the train.

The Subinspector

Chand's second-in-command who is a constant presence in the book, though never named. He primarily carries out Chand's wishes, though often with reservation.

Nooran Baksh

The daughter of the local Imam, Nooran is Jugga's girlfriend and pregnant with his child.

Bhai Meet Singh

The leader of the local Sikh temple and town leader despite not being widely respected.

Imam Baksh

The father of Nooran and the leader of the local mosque.



Malli and his Gang

Jugga's old cohorts, Malli and his gang are among the main villains of train to Pakistan. They frame Jugga for Lal's murder and participate in the attempted ambush of the train to Pakistan.

The Head Constable

The head constable is the leader of law enforcement in Mano Majra and simply follows Chand's orders despite being confused by them.

Haseena Begum

Hukum Chand is presented with a young prostitute for favors for her family, but she is the age of his dead daughter and very young, so Chand cannot bring himself to deflower her. He feels deeply guilty for his attraction to her.

The Boy Soldier

A young leader of Sikhs who comes to Mano Majra to encourage the Sikh men to join him in an attack on Muslims on the train to Pakistan.

Muslims

Mano Majra was half Muslim so Muslim characters are a constant presence in the book. Towards the end of the book, they have to be evacuated from Mano Majra so as not to be killed.

Sikhs

The other half of Mano Majra was Sikh and had the town Muslims as tenants. When the Sikh soldier came to recruit them to kill the Muslims, however, some gave in while others wanted to fight for them with their lives.

Hindus

While Lala Ram Lal and his family were the only town Hindus, the Hindu-Muslim conflict is a constant feature of the setting in the book.



Objects/Places

Mano Majra

The fictional partition town and main setting of the book. All the main characters save Chand and Iqbal are from there.

Chundunnegger

A local town where the regional police station is and where Jugga and Iqbal are held in jail.

The Train Station

Mano Majra had a train station; train arrivals organized town life. But the train also brought thousands of Muslim corpses to town at two points in the book.

The Sikh Temple

Mano Majra has a Sikh Temple where Iqbal stays when he arrives and where Meet Singh lives.

The Chundunnegger Police Station

The place where Iqbal and Jugga are jailed for a time.

Corpse-Filled Trains

Trains full of Muslim corpses come through to Mano Majra twice in the book, symbolizing the incredible violence surrounding Mano Majra and threatening to come in.

Religious Violence

The summer of 1947 was filled with religious violence between Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus.

India

The part of British-occupied India that Muslims had to flee from, and the newly created secular-Hindu state.



Pakistan

The part of British-occupied India that Hindus had to flee from, and the newly created Muslim state.

Jugga's Bangles

Jugga's bangles were used by Malli to frame him for Lal's murder.

Iqbal's Bangles

Iqbal's bangles were the only visible evidence he had of being Sikh.

Iqbal's Circumcision

Iqbal's circumcision was taken as evidence that he was Muslim rather than Sikh.

Dacoity

The local name for an act of robbery.

Kalyug

The local name for a dark time.

The Rope over the Train Station

The device that the Sikh soldiers intended to use to kill the Muslims on the train to Pakistan.

The Guru's Words

Sikhism is built around the teachings of ten successive guru's concerning the nature of the Universal God. Jugga asks for Meet Singh to pray one of the Guru's prayers to him to prepare him spiritually to stop the Sikh soldiers from killing the local Muslims, including his girlfriend Nooran.



Themes

Religious War

Mano Majra is a small town divided between Sikhs and Muslims; until Lala Ram Lal is killed, there is a prominent Hindu family in town as well. There is no deep tension between these differing religious groups, an impressive social achievement particularly in a time with such deep religious tension. Religious tension was radically exaggerated during the partition period, however, and this put a massive strain on religious peace and tolerance in Mano Majra towards the end of the book.

The partition split India into a secular and Hindu India and a Muslim Pakistan. Those who had the "wrong" religion for their geography had to flee before the partitioning occurred at the end of the summer, which led ten million people to cross the partition area. Unfortunately, the mixture of individuals moving at such a fevered pace caused mass instability and ethnic and religious violence broke out, with Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs all killing one another. The author sets up Mano Majra so that it is largely separated from the religious violence.

In fact, religious tensions do exist within Mano Majra, though primarily in terms of Jugga, a Sikh, and Nooran, a Muslim, being forbidden to be lovers. But otherwise the town Bhai, Meet Singh, and the town Mullah, Imam Baksh, got along, as did their followers. Tension arises when it becomes clear that mobs will eventually pull Mano Majra into the violence and that the Muslims will have to be evacuated to Pakistan until the violence calms down. When Sikh soldiers arrive in the village, they browbeat the Sikh men to attack the Muslims on the train to Pakistan, and some agree.

Critique of the Social Reformer

Perhaps the most important feature of the characters in Train to Pakistan is the sharp contrast between Iqbal and Juggut. Iqbal is a slight, effeminate, English-educated social reformer. It is clear that he is hostile to religion and believes in political revolution as a solution to India's social problems. He is somewhat self-absorbed, though civilized, and while he is condescending, he seems to have some sense of care for the people he was sent to help.

Juggut, in contrast, is a tall, strong man who is wholly uneducated and cannot even read. He is considered a thug in his town and is in constant legal trouble. Juggut has a terrible temper and is engaged in an illicit love affair with the daughter of the town mullah, despite being Sikh. Juggut is resigned to fate and seems to have never even thought of the social issues that preoccupy Iqbal's mind.

Given these differences, one would expect Iqbal to be the one to save the Muslims in the Train to Pakistan. After all, he is civilized, well-educated, concerned with social problems, and trained by the People's Party of India to organize peasants and lead the



way in social change. Jugga, in contrast, seems as if he would be only out for himself and focused on petty crimes and animal pleasures. But in fact, the book is filled with subtle criticisms of Iqbal's self-absorption.

Iqbal seems far more interested in gathering fame for himself, nursing his insecurities and dreaming of his future grandeur than in helping the people that he was sent to help. In the end, Iqbal drinks himself asleep by imagining how he will be praised for saving the town's Muslims. On the other hand, Juggut's love for Nooran causes him to seek the aid of God in rescuing the town's Muslims by giving his life.

It appears, therefore, that the author finds the social reformer as vulnerable to arrogance and an inability to connect with people and bring his ideas into practice. In contrast, the local thug is the one who saves the day, despite the good intentions of the outsider social reformer.

Personal Transformation

Train to Pakistan, however, is largely a tale of personal transformation. There are a number of important minor characters, such as Nooran, Imam Baksh, Bhai Meet Singh, the subinspector and Malli and his gang. None of these characters undergo substantial or foundational changes throughout the book. Instead, it is the three main characters, Juggut Singh, Iqbal Singh and Hukum Chand that change the most.

Juggut, as we have seen, begins the book as a small minded thug forcing himself sexually on his lover Nooran Baksh. He seems resigned to his fate, believing that whenever he chooses to act, he does something wrong. He has an unmanageable temper and is poorly regarded in his town; he is also uneducated and has no ambition to speak of. By the end of the book, Jugga has changed into a man of faith who selflessly gives up his life to save the Muslims on the train to Pakistan, which include his lover and soon-to-be mother of his child, Nooran.

Iqbal Singh began the book as an effeminate and arrogant, though well-educated social reformer. In the end, Iqbal drinks himself to sleep while full of dreams of his future triumphs. However, there is some personal development in the book. When he first arrives, he seems wholly unconnected to the events in the town and completely insecure in his ability to accomplish the tasks he was sent for. He also refused to identify himself as a Sikh. But after his imprisonment and partial befriending of Jugga, he lets his guard down about his religious affiliation (though this did benefit him personally at the time) and seems to have gained some courage and care for the townspeople. That said, what is striking about Iqbal is how little he changes vis-à-vis Jugga.

Finally, Hukum Chand, the regional magistrate, is a corrupt government official who is filled with guilt not only due to his corruption but because of his enslavement to the passions of the flesh. He is very overweight, smokes, and feels deep guilt over his attraction to Haseena, a prostitute the same age as his young daughter would have



been had she lived. His guilt ultimately drives his personal growth as he moves from engaging in petty political imprisonment for his own benefit to employing his political and intellectual talents to save the town Muslims and repenting to God for his sins and hoping to make a new way for himself.



Style

Point of View

The author of *Train to Pakistan* is Khushwant Singh, a widely known Indian novelist and journalist and humorist, along with being a poetry lover. Singh was born to a Sikh family and was a secularist as an adult, educated in England. In August 1947, Sign was driving to his family's summer home in the partition area when he met a jeep or armed Sikhs who were bragging that they had killed an entire village of Muslims, which inspired *Train to Pakistan*.

One can see clear and obvious influences from Singh's life in the book, including his horror at the arbitrary killing during the summer of 1947 and his experience both as a Sikh but also as an English educated secularist. In many ways, Singh is most like Iqbal, though Iqbal is clearly not the favored character in the story.

The book is written in the third person, and so one does not receive the author's thoughts directly. Instead, the narrator describes each individual and often hones in on their perspective. Sections typically focus not only on the external actions but on the internal thought life of each character. The narrative is also not tied to a particular character, but regularly switches between characters like Jugga, Iqbal and Chand and between broad descriptions of the town, the weather and town social life.

The point of view of *Train to Pakistan* then is unobtrusive and instead focuses on straightforward character and plot development.

Setting

For hundreds of years the British had been trading in India through the British East India company and by 1947, the year in which *Train to Pakistan* takes place, the British had had full control of India for one hundred years. The first half of the 20th century brought many challenges to British Rule, most prominently from Mahatma Gandhi. When World War II broke out, the British promised India independence if they would help the British fight against the Axis Powers.

When the war was over, Britain kept their word and left India in 1947. Before leaving, however, they partitioned India into Pakistan and India, a Muslim half and a Hindu/secular half. As a result, all the Muslims in India and Hindi in Pakistan had to flee. Ten million people crossed the partition in the summer of 1947 and due to ethnic violence, 2 million died.

The general setting of the book, then, is the partition in the summer of 1947. More specifically, however, the book takes place in a town bordering the partition named Mano Majra, which was largely unaffected by the partition violence until the end of the book. Mano Majra was evenly divided between a Sikh and Muslim population who got



along relatively well. In fact, one of the tragedies of the partition was that no accommodation was made for multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities.

A few surrounding areas are included in the book, such as the nearby town of Chundunnugger where the police station was located.

Language and Meaning

Train to Pakistan is not a complex work with respect to its language and meaning. But the text integrates a number of terms unique to the partition area, or at least to the ethnic groups that inhabit it. For instance, two of the chapter titles, "Dacoity" and "Kalyug", are regional terms, representing a robbery and murder and dark times, respectively. The text contains a number of regional titles like "Sahib" and employs characteristic names, such as "Singh", to denote Sikhs.

The language also includes a number of references to the sacred texts of Islam and Sikhism; often times poems are recounted and the words of Sikh Gurus are read. This is most prominent near the very end of the book when Jugga comes to a deeper sense of his faith and asks for Bhai Meet Singh to speak one of the prayers of the Guru to him. The book also includes the use of the greeting and salutation "Sat Sri Akal" from Sikhism, which is literally translated as "He/She Be Blessed Who says Truth is God".

Otherwise, the typical form of the text is relatively simple in its structure; with the exception of the occasional poem or song, the text divides normally into dialogue and commentary. As a result, the book reads in a straightforward fashion, focusing the story largely on its content rather than the fashion in which it is conveyed.

Structure

Train to Pakistan is a short book with only four chapters. However, each chapter is divided into sections, though the sections are not marked save with a two line space between paragraphs. Each chapter covers a number of sections, though some more than others.

Chapter one, Dacoity, introduces the story and main characters. First, it explains the setting and the events of the summer of 1947, along with the basic social structure of Mano Majra. It also describes the murder of Lala Ram Lal. Juggut and Nooran are introduced, making love in a clandestine place. Hukum Chand is introduced as the regional magistrate, as is his soon-to-be prostitute Haseena. The significance of the train station is outlined and Iqbal is introduced as well. Both Iqbal and Jugga are arrested for suspicion of Lala Ram Lal's murder. Iqbal and Juggut meet at the police station as well.

Chapter two, Kalyug, is a shorter chapter that describes the descent of Mano Majra into increasingly awful circumstances. The trains became irregular and a train carrying Muslim corpses arrived in town. Chand comes to be overwhelmed with guilt and the



monsoon comes. Chand hatches his plan to have the Muslims evacuated, and the author explains how Iqbal and Jugga fared in their cells.

Chapter three, Mano Majra, explains how Mano Majra dealt psychologically with the train full of corpses and the implementation of Chand's plan by his constables. The Muslims realized that they would have to leave, and tensions developed between them and the Sikhs. The Muslims quickly get ready to leave town on the trains and the convoy arrives that would transport them. The Muslim and Sikh officers also give the Muslim properties over to Malli.

Chapter four, Karma, brings the book to its climax. The Sikhs of Mano Majra are on the brink of despair and meet together at the temple. They discover another train of corpses littering human body parts in the ever rising river. Sikh soldiers arrived at the temple and challenged the Sikh men to fight against the Muslims by ambushing the train they were taking to Pakistan. Chand hopes desperately that his plan to release Jugga and Iqbal will succeed.

When Iqbal arrived, he chastises the Sikhs for not trying to stop the Muslim massacre and then drinks himself to sleep while he imagines how he will save the village. Jugga, on the other hand, desperately tries to break the rope on the steel span that threatens to kill hundreds of Muslim townspeople, perhaps including his own Nooran. He is shot and killed in the process but ultimately succeeds.



Quotes

"The summer of 1947 was not like other Indian summers."

Chap. 1, p. 1

"The only remaining oases of peace were a scatter of little villages lost in the remote reaches of the frontier. One of these villages was Mano Majra."

Chap. 1, p. 2

"You are in the same handcuffs and fetters which the English put on you. We have to get together and rise. We have nothing to lose but these chains!"

Chap. 1, p. 60

"It is our fate. It is written on our foreheads and on the lines of our hands. I am always wanting to do something. ... When there is no work, my hands still itch to do something. So I do something, and it is always wrong."

Chap. 1, p. 61

"The subinspector freed his feet from Jugga's hands and walked out. His visits had been a failure. He would have to change his tactics. It was frustrating to deal with two people so utterly different."

Chap. 1, p. 75

"That evening, for the first time in the memory of Mano Majra, Imam Baksh's sonorous cry did not rise to the heavens to proclaim the glory of God."

Chap. 2, p. 84

"But a trainload of dead was too much for even Hukum Chand's fatalism."

Chap. 2, p. 88

"... for Jugga was the most violent man in the district."

Chap. 2, p. 114

"When it was discovered that the train had brought a full load of corpses, a heavy brooding silence descended on the village."

Chap. 3, p. 117

"Beybey, I have Jugga's child inside me. If I go to Pakistan they will kill it when they know it has a Sikh father."

Chap. 3, p. 131

"For each Hindu or Sikh they kill, kill two Mussulmans. For each woman they abduct or rape, abduct two. For each home they loot, loot two. ... That will stop the killing on the other side."

Chap. 4, p. 149



"You will find big changes in Mano Majra!"
Chap. 4, p. 162

"The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the center as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan."
Chap. 4, p. 181



Topics for Discussion

What is the significance of rain in Mano Majra?

What is the significance of Mano Majra's train station? What might it symbolize?

To what extent do you think the author blames any one group in the religious conflicts at the partition in 1947 for what happened? Does he see the blame as spread around? Why do you think this?

Explain the contrast between Iqbal and Jugga, physically, emotionally, and in terms of their characters and personal growth throughout the book.

What is ironic about the fact that Jugga saved the town Muslims rather than Iqbal?

Why is Hukum Chand significant to the story? How does he grow over the course of the book? What role does Haseena play in his growth?

What do you think the overall moral of Train to Pakistan is?

Is the author out to critique Iqbal in the book? Or even the more general class of social reformer that he represents? Why or why not?