APPENDIX 12

PARTITION LITERATURE

In order to understand what Partition really meant for the survivors a literary genre called Partition Literature has arisen in South Asian writings. Many literary outpourings, in the form of novels, short stories and poems, came out in English, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and Punjabi languages during those years, which dealt in vivid detail with the violence of the holocaust. However, the past twenty years or so have seen a re-evaluation of communalist explanations for Partition and Partition violence. In particular there has been an unprecedented focus on literary and testimonial accounts representing local experiences at the time. While a number of Indian novels in English focusing on this experience have been published as early as 1956 with the publication of Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan*, it was only after a marked increase in incidents of sectarian violence during the mid-1980s, and in anticipation of the fiftieth anniversary of Indian independence, that an interest in what has came to be known as Partition Literature come into focus.