**PERSONAL PROFILE: Abducted Women**

In the events that followed Partition, tens of thousands of women and girls suffered rape and abduction, others were murdered. Some of those who survived found their way back to their families and struggled to re-integrate themselves.

In order to survive, many abducted women and girls were forced to build lives within new communities or were forced into prostitution. Others committed suicide, either as a means of preventing further dishonour, or following their return home. In December 1947, both India and Pakistan participated in a Recovery of Women week, with disappointing results.

Here, Mohammed talks about his recollections of this further inhumanity and Dr Pippa Virdee attempts to uncover some of the quietened voices of women in her podcast 'Hidden Women'.

**ASSIGNMENT**:

**PART 1**:

Read the transcript of the interview with Tilak Raj on the following page (additional option: watch the video and read more about Tilak Raj here: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/panjab1947/abducted-women.htm>

Then, answer the questions below on a separate piece of paper:

1. In a paragraph (in your own words) describe how the partition of India affected the many abducted women of this region (be specific).

2. Why do you think so many people (women included) kept quiet about the atrocities against women that took place during this time?

**PART 2**: After meeting the other people in your round table discussion, answer the following questions:

1. Which people do you think the women would have the most in common with (if any)? Why?

2. Which people do you think the women would have the least in common with (if any)? Why?

3. If this group of people was called upon to solve political, ethnic, and social tension during the partition, what do you think they would have suggested as the most important thing for political leaders to do?

**Transcript**

That is another thing that hurts me, is that there were young women - I can still remember - who were abducted from their houses and taken away by these rascals, raped and some of them were returned, some of them probably killed or something. Nobody knew what happened to these girls.

I know this sort of thing happened on both sides of the border. I still can't believe how women - their own women (of) people who were doing it, seeing this happening could keep quiet. Nobody was raising a voice against this because whatever else you do, you can't go down and degrade yourself to that level. You have women in your own family…why didn't they speak up at the time? Why didn't they protest? Why didn't they stop their men doing this sort of thing?

But I have seen that. I know those women. I have also seen those women who returned and they committed suicide.

I think this was the lowest position that a human being can go… and we are all - not me because I was too young at that time - but my elders and the elders from Sikh and Hindu communities, what we did, we must feel ashamed.