

***THE GRAMMAR OF FICTIONALIZING BORDERS: AN ECLECTIC
ANALYSIS OF SELECT NOVELS***

(Dissertation submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfilment for award of the
Degree of **Master of Philosophy in English**)

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DECLARATION

I, **Ms. Salma Begum**, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled ***The Grammar of Fictionalizing Borders: An eclectic analysis of select novels*** submitted for the award of **Master of Philosophy in English** is an authentic record of research done by me under the guidance and supervision of **Dr. Md. Akhtar Jamal Khan**, Associate Professor in the Department of English, Kohima Campus, Meriema during the period of 2018-19. The work has not been submitted either in full or part to any other university or institute for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or title.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The partition of India in 1947 was one of the most devastating breaches in human history because of the horror it unleashed. It caused the detachment of West Punjab, Sindh, the NWFP and East Bengal, where the majority of the population was Muslim, from the rest of India to form Pakistan. It is said to be one of the largest dislocation of population ever. This dislocation not only resulted in collateral damage but also unbelievable violence leading to the deaths of millions of people on both sides. There were riots, killings, lootings, abductions and rapes. Since religious difference was the basis of the division of territory, it made things worst. It resulted in religious fanaticism and communal hatred all over the country and more so in border areas. Riots, loots, rapes, murders, abductions were modes of revenge used by the victims in both sides. Each religion hated the other, blamed the other and tortured the other. They justified their actions by accusing the other but as Khushwant Singh laments, ‘the fact is, both sides killed. Both shot and stabbed and speared and clubbed. Both tortured. Both raped.’

After a hundred years of appeals and revolts, India was finally getting its freedom but the price that she would pay was much more than she had foreseen. Because of various reasons, especially the inability to maintain a unity between the two parties, i.e. the Indian National Congress and The Muslim League it was decided that India will be divided into two countries. The British left but left an India that was vulnerable and shattered to the core. It created a breach in one of the oldest civilizations and made irreparable damage to the socio political fabric of the nation. Since the aim of this chapter is to analyze the fictional representation of Partition, it is now worthwhile taking a bird’s eye-view of the process of the Partition- historical and political background- to get a proper perspective in interpreting the fictional narratives of Partition. Hence, the present chapter traces the events leading to the Partition from the historical and political point of view.

India triumphed in its independence but the triumph of a long awaited transfer of power was accompanied by the tragedy of Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. This Partition was the fruit of an age old agitation between the Hindus and the Muslims. In order to understand the hostility between these two religious groups of people, one would have to look into the past. India is a multilingual and multicultural nation. History provides various reasons for the plurality

of Indian culture, for example, invasions and immigrations of foreigners. The arrival of the Aryans, the Kushans, the conquest by the Arabs and other Muslim rulers, and the advent of European colonial powers have made the cultural ethos of India one of the most mixed variety embedding many complexities.

The invasion of the Arabs marks the beginning of the Muslim presence in India. With the invasion of Sicunderkhan in 786AD, the Muslim life began in India and reached its climax with the slave dynasty in Delhi in 1206AD. It was then followed by the Tughlugs, the Khijlis, the Lodhis and the Mughals who succeeded one after another. With the transfer of power to the hands of the British, there developed an antagonism between the British and the Muslims. At this stage, the British favoured the Hindus and that led to western education which later fostered Renaissance in India through the process of modernization. While the Hindus welcomed the change, the Muslims resisted it. The result was the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, along with it there were other changes such as social and religious transformations. Muslim elite, Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, realized the negative impact of remaining aloof from modernization or the Indian Renaissance. He felt that the Muslim Youth would soon disappear from Indian politics and power. Sir Sayeed Ahmed Khan urged the community to modernize themselves but at the same time, he also wanted them to be more Islam-conscious and this was the first step of formation of a Muslim Political Party that would be the counterpart of the Indian National Congress. To fulfil his goal he had to mobilize the Muslim mass and to do that he established various institutions out of which the most notable was the Mohamedan Anglo – Oriental College in 1875, which later became the Aligarh Muslim University. He also founded the ‘Muslim Education Council’, the ‘Indian Patriotic Association’ (1888) and the ‘Mohammedan Defence Association of Upper India’ (1893). He was then followed by leaders like Iqbal, Rahmat Ali, and M.A. Jinnah.

Apart from this, there was also the colonial power’s policy of ‘Divide and rule’. After the mutiny of 1857 the British realized the strength of united India and so they conspired to incite hatred on the basis of religion amongst the ignorant masses. It was this Hindu-Muslim conflict that the British used as a weapon. Partition was a tool to ensure their survival in India. They began with the Partition of Bengal in 1905. With the Partition of Bengal they also provided separate electorates for Muslims. The motive was to create a Muslim province which would

further their cause to separate the Hindus and the Muslims. This separatism was authenticated with the creation of the All India Muslim League on 30th Dec 1906. This party gave the Muslims a united voice as well as a platform to raise the issues that concerned them. However, in the beginning the Muslim League had other important matters at hand than the creation of Pakistan, Which was still an unconsummated idea. They started with an agenda which did not voice out the need for Pakistan but it also did not specify the need to unite with the Indian National Congress. The aims of the Muslim League were:-

- 1) To promote among the Muslims of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconceptions that might arise as to the intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures.
- 2) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Muslims of India and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.
- 3) To avoid hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League.

It was only later that the Muslim League felt that a democratic nation would mean the rule of the majority which was in fact the Hindus. They feared that the independence would mean that India would be under total control of the Hindus and so they did not join in the fight for freedom. They demanded for a separate state. This was again intensified by the Morle-Minto reforms of 1909 that provided separate electorates for the Muslims which gave the Muslims a distinct political identity.

The second phase (1909-1919) in the freedom movement demanded a national consciousness, a feeling of unity within the nation. At this stage the Indian National Congress realized its motto to be 'swaraj', complete independence. Lal Bahadur Shastri demanded, 'swaraj is my birth-right.' In order to attain 'swaraj' the Indian National Congress will have to promote national consciousness on the basis of unity of the masses. The next step would be to attain a place in the high level administration. Here, both the British and the Indian National Congress made efforts for constitutional reforms and there were reforms in 1919. The Simon Commission was formed to evaluate India's readiness for self rule but the commission was highly criticized as

it had no Indian as its member. It was severely criticized and boycotted and so the famous slogan, 'SIMON GO BACK'.

The Muslim League also supported the Indian National Congress in this and appointed a sub-committee along with The Indian National Congress to draft a constitution for India. However, this unity did not last long as there was soon a clash of demands. Some of the important demands set out by the Muslim League were the formation of a separate province of Sindh and reforms in the NWFP and Baluchistan. In 1928, an all Parties Conference was organized to finalize a plan which is popularly known as The Nehru Report after its chief author Jawaharlal Nehru. This report rejected the demand for a separate electorates but accepted reserve seats for Muslims in minority areas. The Muslim League was quite dissatisfied and Jinnah came out with his 'Fourteen Points.'

The idea of a separate state for the Muslims was proposed for the first time in the 1930s by a poet named Sir Muhammad Iqbal who sowed the seed for Partition. This idea was again upheld by Chaudhuri Rehmat Ali, Cambridge educated, who went to the extent of drawing a blue print and naming it Pakistan. In a leaflet called "Now or Never" issued in 1933, he explained that he had taken P from Punjab, A from Afghanistan, K from Kashmir, S from Sindh and tan from Baluchistan. However, both of their ideas were rejected as baseless and obscure. But it was here that the idea of a separate state was implanted. The failure of Simon Commission, the Nehru Report, and the Fourteen Points etc deepened the separatism even more. Moreover, Nehru's insistence on Congress to be the sole representative of India made the Muslim League insecure. The lack of mutual co-operation led to the failure of ministry formation of the 1937 elections under the Government of India Act 1935.

The All India Muslim League's Lahore Resolution also known as the Pakistan Resolution of 23rd March 1940 was a turning point as it convinced the Muslims that a separate nation was the right of every Muslim. Jinnah out rightly preached his two nation theory, and accordingly the Pakistan Resolution stated that there can be no constitutional plans until India has made territorial adjustments. M.A. Jinnah also put forward his Lahore Resolution of 1940 which he calls 'Tentative Proposals of Jinnah' to the British Government. Here, they appealed to the British Government that they should not consent on any constitutional scheme until the Muslim league was given equal terms with Congress. All efforts such as 'the Cripps Mission', 'the

August Offer', 'the Rajaji formula' etc remained unsuccessful. The Muslim League also did not support the Congress during the Quit India Movement of 1942, and showed no consideration towards any reconciliation amongst the parties. So, there was no way this matter could be solved but only through partition.

Lord Wavell who was the Viceroy of India from 1943 to 1947 played a pivotal role in the last years that led to the divided India. He took three important initiatives to resolve the situation of India. The first effort was the Shimla Conference of June/July 1945, the second to the elections of 1945-46, and the third compelled the parties to come to a final decision. The Shimla conference failed because the Congress did not allow the Muslim League to select their candidates in the constituency; instead they tried to forward two Muslims of their choice. The elections of the 1945-46 failed because both the parties were dissatisfied regarding the terms of division of India by the Atlee Commission which had consisted of three Cabinet members- Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India; Alexander, the Naval Minister; and Cripps, the Minister for Trade. The aim of the cabinet mission was to frame a new constitution and hand over political administration to the Indians. They supported the unity of India and also wanted to uphold the interests of the Muslim community. Hence, it devised a three-tier state structure comprising a central government, the regional unions and the provinces. According to the plan, India was to be divided into three major regions- section A consisting of Madras, Bombay, U.P., Bihar, C.P., and Orissa; section B consisting of N.W.F.P and Sind; section C consisting of Bengal and Assam. And it proposed for that the central government be in charge of foreign affairs, defence and communication. The British created such a plan so that the dispute is solved and everybody could feel contented. The Congress could see the undivided India which it hoped to inherit from the British, while the Muslim could have their own provinces and a place in the Government. Yet it failed as the Congress was not satisfied with the accordance in which the States were divided and the point that this division cannot be altered in future. Seeing the Congress demand changes, the Muslim League also backed off.

The third step taken by Lord Wavell was to finally break ties and leave India to its fate. He convinced the congress government to form the interim government on 2nd September 1946 and accordingly Jawaharlal Nehru took his oath as the first Prime Minister of India. Meanwhile under the leadership of Jinnah, the Muslim League decided to observe the Direct Action Day on

16 August, 1946. It was a day, the Muslim League had planned general strike to protest the rejection of the June 16th Cabinet Mission Plan by the Congress Party and to assert its demand for a separate homeland. This led to a chain of events, a state of civil war and the massacre of Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta. Jinnah gave a battle cry '*Lekar rahenge Pakistan, Larke lenge Pakistan*'. He also declared, 'This day we bid good-bye to constitutional methods....Today we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it.' This brought about a communal frenzy which spread all over India and thus the interim government also failed. In Calcutta, within 72 hours, more than 4,000 people lost their lives and 100,000 residents in the city of Calcutta were left homeless. This final step brought about two changes. Firstly, Lord Mountbatten succeeded Lord Wavell and secondly, the Atlee Government gave June 1948 as the deadline to end this dispute and transfer power to Indians.

When Lord Mountbatten came to India there was no time for any better solutions and so it was finally decided that India will be divided as two nations. Lord Mountbatten was the great grandson of Queen Victoria and the second cousin of George v. He was the last viceroy of India and his sole purpose was to release India from British rule and return to Britain with all her troops and assets intact. The violence was at its heights and the congress government has also now given in to the demands of a separate nation for the Muslim League. For the task of drawing the lines of division between India and Pakistan, Sir Cyril Radcliffe was appointed as the Chairman of the Boundary Commission. He arrived in Delhi on 8th August 1947. He had never visited India before and this was seen as an advantage as he would be unbiased. In order to maintain this idea he also kept his distance from Lord Mountbatten. Along with the help of his secretary, Christopher Beaumont who was a little familiar with Punjab, Radcliffe drew the line. He submitted the report on 13th August 1947. The line of Partition between India and Pakistan is famously called the Radcliffe line.

The rules and regulations for the partition were according to the VP Menon's plan. The idea is to be forwarded to the Legislature where the votes will decide. According to the plan the provinces of Punjab and Bengal were to be divided to create a separate state-East Pakistan and West Pakistan. NWFP went in favor of joining Pakistan and the district of Sylhet also decided to join Pakistan. As soon as the plan was prepared, Mountbatten broadcast it on June 3 and called it 'the June 3rd plan. On 4th July 1947 itself the bill was passed in the British Parliament. The Act

was formulated on July 18th 1947 and thus Pakistan celebrated its independence on 14 August 1947 and India on 15th August 1947.

However, this was not the end; it was followed by mass migration of millions of people, bloodshed and great tragedy which will go down in history. India had won her freedom at the cost of thousands of lives. In August 1947, when after two hundred years the British finally left India, the Indian subcontinent was divided into two- India and Pakistan. This was followed by the greatest mass migration in history. The Hindus and Sikhs headed towards the East while the Muslims moved to West. Many millions moved and many could not make it to their destinations. According to an article on BBC.com “Partition 70 years on: The turmoil, trauma – and legacy” published on 27 July 2017, about 12 million people became refugees, between half a million and a million people were killed in religious violence. Many Sikhs and Hindus from Pakistan migrated to Eastern India and North-Eastern India, settling down in close-by states like West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura. Similarly, many Muslims from India also migrated to Pakistan. The Punjabi Muslims were easily accommodated in border areas, while others migrating from UP and MP were settled in Karachi and Hyderabad. The atrocities that occurred during partition are compared to the holocaust of the Jews by many historians. The newly formed governments were just born and very incompetent regarding this issue of migration. They were staggered and unprepared for such vast population exchange and it resulted in massive violence and slaughter of about 14.5 million people on both sides. The refugee camps that were built for this purpose were also inadequate, both in terms of food and shelter. People suffered from the lack of food and shelter. The dirt and squalor in the camps led to various diseases which again resulted in deaths. The pictures that one comes across provide a testimony to the horrific conditions that prevailed in the refugee camps.

Violence against women is a major outcome of partition and dealt very sensitively in Partition Narratives. Women were kidnapped, raped, molested, paraded naked in the streets, mutilated, forced into prostitution, forced into marriages, identities were forged and this was seen as a way to extract revenge. By ‘dishonouring’ the chastity of a women and making them their victims, the imposer thought that he was in a way dishonouring the men, the religion and the nation related to her. They believed that they had defiled the race by impregnating their women and raping them. In December 6th 1947, an agreement was made between the two governments

regarding their victimized women. Both India and Pakistan would recover their abducted women and Mridula Sarabhai was appointed as the chief social worker. An 'abducted' woman is defined as 'any woman seen to be living with, in the company of, or in a relationship with a man of the other religion, after March 1, 1947 would be presumed to have been abducted, taken by force.' The outcome of this project was quite satisfactory as many women were returned to their respective countries, yet many had to live in camps as they have lost their homes and families, and had no clues to whence they were, alive or dead.

The impact of Partition did not stop with just its aftermath of killings and violence, it continues in the political and social lives of the people, generation after generation. Some of the major impacts it had in politics was the unending animosity between the two nations that were separated. The separation did not bring peace, as it intended, instead it only fuelled war after war, nuclear weapons pointed at each other, insecurities leading to great armies, weapon display and what not. The Kashmir conflict is a major outcome of Partition which was the reason for many Indo-Pak wars and conflicts to come. The first Kashmir War regarding the borders of the Princely State Jammu and Kashmir was fought in 1947-1948. Pakistan in order to capture Kashmir launched the lashkar (tribal militia) from Waziristan. Maharaja Hari Singh made a plea of assistance and help was offered in exchange for instrument of Accession. The war resulted in a ceasefire agreement, Jammu and Kashmir joining India and the Loc with a few alterations which allowed a third of Kashmir to Pakistan.

This was followed by the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, which was again caused by the same conflict. Pakistan landed an operation Gilbratar , which aimed to infiltrate into Kashmir and support an uprising in the states against India .India retaliated with a fully fledged attack on Pakistan . The war was lasted for 17 days and resulted in many casualties on both sides. The aftermath was the Taskkent Declaration which was an attempt at peace by external powers who convinced the nations to ceasefire.

The third and most aggressive was the Indo-Pakistan war of 1999, commonly known as the Kargil war. The Pakistani troops infiltrated the Loc and the Indian territory of Kargil. India launched a major military mission to drive out the Pakistan troops .Within two months India reoccupied of the its territory . Again with the intervention of external powers, Pakistan retreated from Kargil.

Apart from these three major wars regarding Kashmir, there is also the war of 1971 which resulted in the partition of East Pakistan from West Pakistan into the creation of Bangladesh. Other than these wars, there have always been skirmishes and a constant hostility between the two nations. This hatred for one another is an aftermath of partition. One can contemplate at the idea that even if the Kashmir issue was to be resolved, the two nations would always find something or other to fight on. Recent developments and attempts at peace made no changes. The deep ingrained hatred among the public remained. And one could only hope.

Much has been said about it but still there remains the need for a lot to be said on it. Partition Narratives fulfil this need. It provides a global platform for the writers to convey their feelings through the assimilation of history and fiction. Literature provides a spectacle to all the happenings and similarly Partition Narratives provide an insight into and trace the lives of people who suffered during partition. They deal with the causes and consequences of the phenomenal event. They depict the horrors and experiences of the partition along with its sorrow, suffering, bitterness, pathos and compassion. They are powerful portrayals of the fragmented and wounded society which resulted from Partition. These Narratives can be used to reconstruct the various aspects of those tumultuous days when communal feelings subjugated over the secular and human feelings.

The trauma of Partition was a catatonic shock from which it was hard to recover. It silenced the whole nation and this silence was the silence one feels after a shocking trauma. There is hardly any desire to convey one's feelings but as any sensitive writer, these writers also felt the need to communicate through their works. Therefore, the Partition Narrative is also an attempt to give voice to the silenced. The narratives are mostly about the violence, the communal carnage, the cruelty and the suffering which engulfed the victims. They are about withered human relationships, identity crisis, nostalgia and the problem of rehabilitation.

Unlike communal histories, the Partition Narratives discuss more about the actualities of human experience during Partition. They look at the problems and violence created through Partition with a sense of equality and impersonality and without any discrimination in treating the people of different communities. The characters, instead of traditional heroes and heroines are displaced, distressed and defeated personalities. They are basically the uprooted migrant, the abducted girl, or the man with a guilty conscience. They are drawn from all communities and all

classes. The characters are true to life, effective and interesting. The form also adheres to this continuity. It is fragmentary, conscious, filled with flashbacks and memories. The fragmentary form reflects the sense of shattered existence which is a common aspect of Partition. Similarly, memory also plays an important role in Partition Narratives. The memories are the only link to the past and the only way to keep the past alive and pass it through generations. Thus, Partition Narratives reflect the Partition comprehensively in all its totality.

Several books such as Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Amitav Ghosh's *Shadow lines*, Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, H.S Gill's *Ashes and Petals*, K.A Abbas *Inquilab*, Anita Desai's *Clear Light of Day*, Kartar Singh's *Twice Born Twice Dead* etc deals with the major issues of Partition. They provide horrific images of the barbaric situations faced during those turbulent days. However, to examine the various conditions and issues of Partition, I would like to explore five remarkable works of renowned writers –Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*, Sadaat Hasan's *Toba Tek Singh* and Bapsi Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man*.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is the first notable and an utmost remarkable work on Partition published in 1957, ten years after Partition of India – Pakistan. The wounds were still fresh and unhealed, which remains unhealed and will till the existence of time, may be. The work deals with a small village called Mano Majra, located in the outskirts of Punjab. The village has a meagre population but is important as it remains untouched by the issues of Partition and both the opposing communities- the Sikhs and the Muslims live in peace and brotherhood till the coming of the ghost trains and the concerned government officials. Yet one cannot ignore the undercurrents of the tensions that are slowly seeping in poisoning the minds and hearts of the dwellers in the village. The people residing there are simple ignorant villagers who are least affected by outcomes of Partition or the Freedom Movement. They believed that they cannot be affected by communalism that has plagued the whole nation as they held brotherhood above their ideas of religion. More than being governed by time, they are governed by the arrival and departure of trains. In a sense it is the trains that harmonise the lives of the people. Even the two communities are governed by the trains with which they time their prayers. The mullah and the priest time their prayers in harmony to each other. The priest begins his day with the ajan like the mullah acknowledges the priests prayers.

Before daybreak, the mail train rushes through on its way to Lahore...the mullah at the mosque knows it is time for the Morning Prayer. He has a quick wash, stands facing west towards Mecca and with his fingers in his ears cries in long sonorous notes, 'Allah-o-Akbar'. The priest at the Sikh temple lies in bed till the mullah has called. Then he too gets up, draws a bucket of water from the well in the temple courtyard, pours it over himself, and intones his prayer in monotonous singsong to the sound of splashing water.(Singh,5)

Mano Majra has only about seventy families out of which only Lala Ram Lal, the money lender is hindu, the rest are Sikhs and Muslims, equal in number and a few families of sweepers who are supposedly Christians. The Sikhs are the Land owners and the Muslims are tenants and helpers in the tilling of the land. Therefore we see equality in numbers as well as belief. Mano Majra can be seen as the symbolic Eden before its fall in the summer of 1947. The fall exposes the hypocrisy and savagery of the bureaucrats, government officials and of humanity. It is a transformation from the static to the dynamic, from peace to unrest, from brotherhood to hatred and animosity. While Mano Majra is the static, the train is the dynamic. The train brings in the unrest and communal tensions driving the people of Mano Majra to a communal frenzy and genocide. They cannot adjust to the sudden turn of events and the village is transformed into a madhouse where people find it hard to keep their wits about them.

The novel is set into motion with the murder of the local money lender, Ram Lala, by a gang of dacoits. The suspicion falls on Juggut Singh who is under house arrest for past crimes. He is unable to explain his absence from the village when the crime was committed because he was with his beloved, Nooran, the daughter of the Imam, meeting her secretly by the river. Almost at the same time, Hukum Chand, the Divisional Commissioner arrives at the Official Rest House and gets involved in the Murder Case. He sees it as an impact of the communal tensions in other parts of the state. . He is a man in his fifties, fond of women and alcohol. He is shown as obese and ugly. He was once married and had a daughter but now she is dead. He holds power over the inspector and constable, both of whom are corrupted. After a drunken evening of entertainment, he begins a relationship with Haseena, a teenaged Muslim prostitute. He develops love for Haseena because she is around the same age as his daughter. Chand is obsessed by a fear of death and aims to evacuate the Muslims to prevent a massacre. He decides that the only way

to save them is to send them to Pakistan. His prediction comes true with the arrival of the ghost trains in Mano Majra.

At the same time arrives Iqbal Singh, a Western-educated youth, who has been deputed by the People's party to work among the common folk. The Westernized young man goes over to the village Gurudwara and is welcomed by the Sikh priest who allows him to stay in the Gurudwara. Iqbal is also arrested on the basis that he was connected to the murder of Ram Lala. As both Iqbal and Juggut remain captive in the cells, Mano Majra faces a shocking turn of events with the arrival of the ghost trains. People of the village become concerned at the secrecy of the government officials. However they easily make out from the burning and collection of wood and kerosene that the trains were filled with corpses which are being burnt outside the village. The Muslims in Mano Majra are concerned and they decide to confront the Sikh elders. 'What have we to do with Pakistan? We were born here, so were our ancestor. We have lived amongst you as brothers.'(Singh,133)

The Sikh Lambardar (head man) answers:

Yes, you are our brothers. As far as we are concerned, you and your children and your grandchildren can live here as long as you like. If anyone speaks rudely to you, your wives or your children, it will be us first and our wives and children before a single hair of your heads touched. But Chacha, we are so few and the strangers coming from Pakistan are coming in thousands. Who will be responsible for what they do?(Singh,134)

To be on the safe side, the Muslims decide to go. But presently the situation deteriorates still further. A few Sikhs come late at night in Khaki uniforms in a jeep, and the villagers (Sikhs) are thrown into confusion. The leader of the Khaki-clad is but 'A boy in his teens with a little beard which was glued to his chin with brilliantine.' Surveying the scene, the boy asks:

Do you know how many trainloads of dead Sikhs and Hindus have come over? Do you know of the massacres in Rawalpindi and Multan, Gujranwala and Sheikhpora? What are you doing about it? You just eat and sleep and you call yourselves Sikhs – the brave Sikhs martial class!(Singh,156)

The lambardar answers: 'What can we do, Sardarji?'. 'If our Government goes to war with Pakistan, we will fight' provokes a diatribe from the boy-leader: Government! You expect the

government to do anything? A government consisting of cowardly money lenders!’ The lambardar hesitantly says: ‘Do tell us what we can do’. And promptly the answer comes: ‘For each Hindu or Sikh they kill, kill two Mussulmans. For each woman they abduct or rape, abduct two ... For each trainload of dead they send over, send two across...’(Singh,156)

When the government decided that the Muslims of the village would be deported to Pakistan, there was a hue and cry. The Muslims were asked to leave with only minimum of their belongings. This mass migration was one of the pathetic outcomes of partition. The villagers have a sense of belongingness and do not want to migrate. They have hope that things will settle down after some days and they will be able to return to their home. They entrust their belongings to their neighbors hoping to return soon. As they were to be deported by a train that will cross Chuddunaggar and pass on to Pakistan, the Sikh goons thought this to be easy catch. They placed a rope on the way that will obstruct the train which will give them time for massacres. Hukum Chand uncovered their plan but he had no means to stop that through official powers and so he saw the opportunity in Juggut Singh, who would be able to save the people, they released him. As Juggut Singh was out of his cell he soon understood the situation. All he could think of was saving his Nooran. He went on the tracks and attempted to cut the rope. The train was coming towards him yet he remained hanging on to the rope, severing it. He managed to cut it and along with the rope he fell on the tracks and was run over by the train. Juggut saved Nooran, sacrificing himself. Jugga sacrifices his life to save Nooran who is on the train and this last act saves the lives of Muslims on the train. It is their love which transcends all manmade barriers and depicts hope in a time of bestiality.

The novel concludes with a climax that leaves the reader gasping for more. Khushwant Singh does not deal with the political aspect of Partition but with the social aspect. He does not describe Partition or its causes in much detail but go on to explore the minute changes in the society. It portrays a politically polluted society, pawned by the bureaucrats to meet their personal and private ends, under the pretext of executing policies of the Government.

The second novel that has been selected for analysis is Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* published in 1988 is a non-linear narrative which describes the meagerness of Borders. Borders are seen as lines that separate people from their kin which are at times existent while at other times a non-existent entity. Through a young nameless narrator who is the cousin of Tridib,

the novel traces the lives of two families- the Duttas and the Prices living miles apart but sharing history and mutual friendship. The story revolves around Tridib's horrific death in a riot in Bangladesh and the different versions of the same story that each character holds dear. The major themes include borders, freedom, love, memory, imagination etc.

Ghosh's second novel *The Shadow Lines* has won him the Sahitya Academy Award. The novel is divided into two parts, 'Going Away' and 'Coming Home'. It deals with issues of identity versus nationhood, the representation of history and ultimately concludes that all borders are imaginary constraints. The novel attempts reconstruction of history through individual memory and interpretation. The novel holds in its backdrop the history of the WWII, the freedom movement and the Partition, juxtaposing it with the present as it reflects the restlessness and turmoil of the times and its meaning in the present context.

The narrator or the 'I', the central voice controls the meaning and understanding of the novel. It narrates the history of the Duttas who presently reside in Calcutta but have their roots in Dhaka, Bangladesh. On its counter- position is the Price family residing in London. The story then shifts from London to Calcutta to Dhaka is told through the point of view of the narrator, although the plot concerns mainly with Tham'ma and Tridib. The nameless narrator recounts in flashbacks the people and places in his past as well as those to him by Tridib. He considers these reconstructed memories to be more real than the present as he lives through the stories and memories.

The narrator reveals his affinity with his uncle Tridib who had gifted him a perspective to see the world. He is also influenced by Thamma, his grandmother, who is a constant presence in his life. He also discloses his unrequited childhood love for Ila, his cousin who is quite contrast to his character and also the character of Thamma. The story is set in motion with a whim of Thamma to bring back her Jethamoshai, who lives in Dhaka alone with no family in such tumultuous times. Thamma along with Mayadebi, Tridib and May go to her ancestral house. They see that the house is already occupied by other families. They realize that the old man is deranged and it is only Khalil, a Muslim taking care of him, who can convince the old man to come out of the house. Khalil in the pretext that he is taking jethamoshai to court follows the car. While returning they are surrounded by an angry mob who attack jethamoshai and khalil. May, the daughter of the price family, runs out to save them. Tridib follows her and pushes her aside

while he jumps into the crowd. After some time the crowd disperses and the corpses of Khalil, jethamoshai and Tridib lie there.

This incident has everlasting impact in May's life as she had loved Tridib. It is her love for him that brings her to India in the first place. Tridib had jumped into the crowd only to save her and this realization changes her very outlook towards life. She works for philanthropic causes and has also joined a few relief agencies that provide help to earthquake victims in Central America. She also collects money for her cause from road to road. In this way she believes that she will be able to forgive herself as she holds herself responsible for the death of Tridib.

Thamma's whim to bring her Jethamoshai back which has led to the tragedy is also not just some uncooked plan. It had sprung from her years of sacrifice and her nationalistic zeal towards Bangladesh. Even though she moves to Calcutta as a young girl after her marriage, she could never forget the Bangladesh she had held so dear. After being widowed at a very young age, Thamma was grounded with responsibilities of the family. She worked hard and retired as a headmistress from a girl's school in Calcutta. After her retirement she had time to reflect at her past. She thinks of her youth when she would have done anything to just belong to the Nationalistic Movement of Bangladesh. When she gets the opportunity to return to bring back her jethamoshai, she is overwhelmed. She questions her son about the borders and is shocked at his reply that there are no such trenches as she had imagined. She reacts:

But if there aren't any trenches or anything, how are people to know? I mean, where's the difference then? And if there's no difference, both sides will be the same; it will be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day with anybody stopping us. What was it all for then- Partition and all the killing and everything- if there's isn't something in between?(Ghosh,)

Therefore, Ghosh fiddles with the idea of freedom and brings to surface the meagerness of borders as well as the attempts to create one. Thamma realizes the harsh reality of borders and how it blurs the identity of people like her.

Bapsi Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man* also published in 1988 traces Partition through the eyes of an eight year old handicapped Parsi girl, Lenny, and her experiences with her nanny Shanta.

Lenny along with Shanta visits different places and gathers myriad experiences. She meets people like the masseur, the shopkeeper, the gardener, the ice candy man etc. People she would have never known otherwise. Shanta's abduction at the end of the narrative brings about a twist and engages us as readers.

To begin with, the Sethi family can be seen as representatives of the Parsees and the Parsees were minorities, out of the power structure which makes them subalterns in a sense. The meeting prayer held which was actually a meeting to discuss their situation in the Partition. Their speeches surface their fear of being left out. The only solution they find is to sit back and side with the winning side. Colonel Barucha is the president of the Parsee community. He is the voice of reason cautioning his people to side with no one and to keep a low profile. As they are a vulnerable minority group because only two hundred Parsees live in Lahore and only one lakh twenty thousand Parsee exist world-wide. The Colonel understands the danger of the Parsee people's predicament and believes this is the only way that they can survive. Most of the Parsee, including the Seth extended family, survives in this manner.

The character of Lenny is an eight year old Parsee girl child crippled by polio. She is the narrator and it is through her eyes that we see partition. Her myriad experiences with her ayah, Shanta, give us an insight into the feelings of other characters. Lenny witnesses all the events first hand. She gives us an overall view of partition. She also visits the village of Imam Din, Pir Pindo, and we see the plight of the poor Muslim families in a Sikh dominated village. The Muslims and Sikhs were like brothers. They assure Imam Din that, nothing will ever happen to them. The village belongs to both the communities. Later we see that Sikh Militants start coming in and when Imam Din's son confronts the Sikh priest, he says that they are only for safety. Towards the end of the novel we see that Imam Din's relatives are all dead and only Rana along with an aunt who happens to meet him by chance in a refugee camp come to stay with Imam Din as they have nowhere else to go. She also sees the fire burning out the town from the roof top of the ice candy man's house. She sees the changes taking place in the ice candy man. How he turns from a vendor to a man of God, the sudden religious fervour that drives him crazy. It is through her eyes that we see the violence meted out during partition. She sees the gunny sacked body of the masseur and later she sees ayah being abducted. The female body is seen as a place for the outlet of frustrations. During Partition, the violence on women was a way of revenge. By

dishonouring the women they believed that they had dishonoured the religion and country she belonged to. Sidhwa gently deals with this aspect of partition where the voice of the women is muffled under the cries of nationalistic slogans.

Shanta, ayah of Lenny and Adi, is a beautiful eighteen year old girl. Because Lenny is disabled and does not attend school, the closeness between them grows until Lenny loves “her Ayah” as she does her mother, father, and the rest of her family. Ayah takes Lenny everywhere she goes, and she therefore introduces Lenny to an adult world. Ayah’s cheerful and proud demeanor is shattered by the ruination of her beauty and her life as a captive dancing girl, or forced prostitute, imprisoned by the Ice-candy-man. Until Godmother intervenes to save Ayah and send her home to her family in Amritsar, which remains in India after Partition, her life is hopeless. Even after her rescue, Ayah is never the same again. Her previously light-hearted and joyful approach to life has been drained out of her.

Taslima Nasrin’s *Lajja* published in 1993 deals with women oppression and criticism of religion. It describes the horrid experiences that befell the victims of Partition in general and migration or displacement in particular. She describes thirteen days in the life of the Dutta family after the demolishment of the Babri Masjid in India in 1963. The Dutta family had chosen to live in Bangladesh during Independence and had equally contributed in the war of liberation, 1971 but they never could belong. With every riot or disturbance they found themselves as the other and this one was no different. Muslim fundamentalists avenged the demolishment of the Babri Masjid by targeting the Hindus living in Bangladesh. Through the Dutta family, Nasrin has presented the condition of minority living in a majority area. Sudhamoy is shown as a patriotic person who would never betray his Bangladesh while his son Suronjon questions his as well his father’s stand in a country which is moving towards Islamization. Sudhamoy faced many atrocities in just choosing not to leave his country and the final blow comes with the abduction of his daughter Maya during the riots of 1963. Sudhamoy finally decides to leave for India but now they had nothing more to lose. The novel ends in a desperate note of failure.

Saadat Hasan Manto’s “Toba Tek Singh” deals with the disillusionment of freedom of India for which it had to pay the heavy price of Partition. It describes the inmates of a lunatic asylum in Lahore who are to be sent to India after partition. After a few years of Partition, the governments of both the nations decide to exchange the lunatics as they have exchanged

everything else. The Muslim lunatics who do not have families in Hindustan are to be sent to Pakistan while all the Hindu lunatics are to be sent to Hindustan. As the inmates of the asylum learn that they are being exchanged, they began to react in their own peculiar ways. Some could not understand where they are or where they will be sent, while some were sad at the idea of being separated from their loved ones. Some started fighting with each other imagining that they were the politicians while one climbed a branch declaring that he will neither be in Hindustan nor Pakistan but stay at the branch in a tree. Apart from these lunatics, the asylum also had pretenders who had escaped the gallows by pretending to be insane. Even these people could not gather much information though they understood that India was being divided into two. The questions asked by these lunatics are in a sense meaningful as they question the very basis of how a country could be divided into two. Bishan Singh, an inmate in the same asylum is a Hindu and so will be sent to India but he realizes that his village, Toba Tek Singh, which is also used as his nickname, is now in Pakistan and he refuses to go there. Singh uses odd long fragmented sentences to steam off his frustration of being unable to understand where he belonged, where his village was. His sentences went thus, *‘Aupur di, gur gur di, annex di, bedhayana di, mung di daal of the Pakistan and Hindustan of the dur phitte muh.’*

He knows that it will be at the same place but he could not understand how it would be in a different nation and what if it was in Pakistan. When Bishan Singh was to be exchanged at the Wagah Border he asks the concerned officer ‘Where is Toba Tek Singh? In Hindustan or in Pakistan?’ to this the officer replies that it is in Pakistan. Bishan Singh turns and runs to join the others going towards Pakistan. He is seized by the guards but Singh refuses to move. The guards try to persuade him in every way they could but to no avail. Singh will not move from there. At the end he dies in between the barbed wire which is neither Pakistan nor India. His meaningless fragmented utterances are symbolic of the meaninglessness of the breach of India and Pakistan.

The reason behind selecting these five texts is that they deal with different aspects of Partition. Khushwant Singh depicts how tension seeps into an earlier unaffected village; Amitav Ghosh deals with socially and politically constructed borders; Bapsi Sidwa deals with the condition of the marginalized communities, Taslima Nasrin deals with the atrocities faced by the Hindu community in Bangladesh and Saadat Hasan Manto with the disillusionment regarding

Independence and Partition. Each text will be analyzed in detail as we move along tracing and unveiling the different aspects of Partition as reflected in these texts.

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CHAPTER 2: Partition Through the Subaltern Lenses in Select Partition Narratives.

Since the last two decades the theory of Subaltern has attained much recognition. The term subaltern, coined by Antonio Gramsci, designates the people who are socially, politically and geographically outside the power structure. This chapter aims to study partition in the light of the subaltern theory. It tries to study the subaltern characters and partition through their eyes. More so, because the subalterns were only represented by others, and so, it puts forth the argument, that whether they were modified while being represented. Would the story be any different if it were told by the subalterns themselves? The subalterns had nothing much to lose and did partition matter to them as they were already depressed enough.

The term subaltern was coined by Antonio Gramsci in connection to his theory of 'cultural hegemony'. The term designates those who are socially, politically and geographically out of the power structure. This people are denied the means to present themselves and so are without a voice in the society. The term subaltern studies gained significance through the studies of a group of scholars who identified themselves as the Subaltern Studies Group. This group of theorists explored the political role of the masses than the elites. According to this group the term subaltern encompasses a much larger area; it refers to any person of inferior rank or station because of its race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity or religion. The agenda of this group was first summarized by its founder Ranajit Guha in his several works. He felt that the history produced by the elites is incapable of presenting the grim realities. Though it started as an insight into the political situation, the group later started engaging with the social and cultural condition. Some of the scholars associated with the Subaltern Studies Group include Eric Stokes, David Arnold, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Partha Chatterjee, Ranajit Guha, Sudipta Kaviraj, Gyan Prakash, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak etc.

Since the chapter aims to search the voice of the subaltern and whether the partition mattered to them, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak" is pivotal here. She has become the authoritative voice with the publication of her essay. Spivak, the post-colonial intellectual, was born in Calcutta on 24 February 1942. She graduated from Presidency College of the University of Calcutta in 1959 with first-class degree in English. She left India in the same year to take a Masters degree at Cornell University in the U. S. A. And it was followed by

a year's fellowship at Girton College, Cambridge, England. Spivak returned to the U. S. A, after the completion of the fellowship in England for taking up the position of an Instructor at the University of Iowa. Meanwhile she completed her doctoral dissertation on the Irish poet W. B. Yeats and the research work was guided by the literary critic Paul de Man at Cornell University, New York. At present she is Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University, New York. Her translation of Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* brought international recognition.

Spivak, through her critical discourse raises the issues of marginal subjects, such as, the place of the subaltern in the society and their empowerment. Though the people could surpass the colonial rule, they are not actually free from its influences and power structures. According to Spivak, the subaltern women are colonized twice, once through colonization and again through patriarchy. Giving the example of Sati, she wonders if the subaltern can even speak as they face the problem of representation and are seen as anonymous and mute. The subalterns are never given a chance to tell their own story as the superior knows better. He knows the subaltern more than the subaltern can know himself and in this way suppresses him from even having a voice. And so, Spivak concludes that the subaltern cannot speak as all his cultural history has been erased.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* published in 1988 study the position of the subaltern characters in partition narratives. The novel traces Partition through the eyes of an eight year old handicapped Parsi girl, Lenny, and her experiences with her nanny Shanta. Lenny along with Shanta visits different places and gathers myriad experiences. She meets people like the masseur, the shopkeeper, the gardener, the ice candy man etc. People she would have never known otherwise. Shanta's abduction at the end of the narrative brings about a twist and engages us as readers.

Even though Lenny is the narrator and also it is her experiences that we feel, yet the character of Shanta is the one that takes us through the events. Both these characters can be designated as subalterns. Even if Lenny was from a rich family, yet she was handicapped, a little girl of eight, and also a Parsee. She was a subaltern because of her physical deformity, gender and religion. She was also left out of the power structure not only because of her age and deformity but also

because of her religion. Shanta, on the other hand, though she belonged to the major Hindu religion, she was only an Ayah with no voice and no power.

The servant quarters of the Sethi house provides us with many subaltern characters. The sweeper's family is one such. The characters Muchoo(mother) and Papoo(daughter) work in the Sethi household. The gardener Hari is an untouchable Hindu. Again, the cook Imam Din is also a subaltern. The Kabuli who sharpens knives also is a subaltern as he is an outsider and there is little he can do or say on partition or even the abduction of Shanta.

If we look acutely we can also consider the Sethi Family as subaltern because of their religious minority. The Parsees wait to join the winning side. They try to remain as neutral as possible so that they can save themselves as they are very few. They believe that they have no say in Partition as it would hardly matter to them whichever side they end up on.

The partition of India in 1947 has caused irreparable damage to the socio-political fabric thereby creating a breach to one of the oldest civilizations. It was the detachment of West Punjab, Sindh, the NWFP and East Bengal where the majority of the population was Muslim from the rest of India to form Pakistan. It is said to be one of the largest dislocation of population ever. This dislocation not only resulted in collateral damage but also unbelievable violence leading to the deaths of millions of people on both sides.

Partition Narratives provide an insight into and trace the lives of people who suffered during partition. They deal with the causes and consequences of the phenomenal event. They depict the horrors and experiences of the partition along with its sorrow, suffering, bitterness, pathos and compassion. They are powerful portrayals of the fragmented and wounded society which resulted from Partition the Partition Narrative is also an attempt to give voice to the silenced. The narratives are mostly about the violence, the communal carnage, the cruelty and the suffering which engulfed the victims.

To begin with, the Sethi family can be seen as representatives of the Parsees and the Parsees were minorities, out of the power structure which makes them subalterns in a sense. The meeting prayer held which was actually a meeting to discuss their situation in the Partition. Their speeches surface their fear of being left out. The only solution they find is to sit back and side with the winning side. Colonel Barucha is the president of the Parsee community. He is the voice

of reason cautioning his people to side with no one and to keep a low profile. As they are a vulnerable minority group because only two hundred Parsees live in Lahore and only one lakh twenty thousand Parsee exist world-wide. The Colonel understands the danger of the Parsee people's predicament and believes this is the only way that they can survive. Most of the Parsee, including the Seth extended family, survives in this manner.

The character of Lenny, though she is from a rich background can be considered to be a subaltern, because she is an eight year old parsee girl child crippled by polio. She is the narrator and it is through her eyes that we see partition. Her myriad experiences with her ayah, Shanta, give us an insight into the feelings of other characters. Lenny witnesses all the events first hand. She gives us an overall view of partition. She also visits the village of Imam Din Pir Pindo and we see the plight of the poor Muslim families in a Sikh dominated village. The Muslims and Sikhs were like brothers. They assure Imam Din that nothing will ever happen to them. The village belongs to both the communities. Later we see that Sikh Militants start coming in and when Iman Din's son confronts the Sikh priest he says that they are only for safety. Towards the end of the novel we see that Imam Din's relatives are all dead and only Rana along with an aunt who happens to meet him by chance in a refugee camp come to stay with Imam Din as they have nowhere else to go.

She also sees the fire burning out the town from the roof top of the ice candy man's house. She sees the changes taking place in the ice candy man. How he turns from a vendor to a man of God, the sudden religious fervour that drives him crazy. It is through her eyes that we see the violence meted out during partition. First she sees the gunny sacked body of the masseur and later she sees ayah being abducted. The female body is seen as a place for the outlet of frustrations.

Shanta works as an ayah at the Sethi household. Because Lenny is disabled and does not attend school and so she has a close affinity with ayah. Ayah takes Lenny everywhere she goes, and she therefore introduces Lenny to an adult world. Her extreme beauty, make her a target of men's desire, drawing a coterie of characters to her daily trips with Lenny to the park. Ayah's cheerful and proud demeanor is punctured by the ruination of her beauty and her life as a captive dancing girl, or forced prostitute, imprisoned by the Ice-candy-man. Until Godmother intervenes to save Ayah and send her home to her family in Amritsar, which remains in India after Partition,

her life is hopeless. Even after her rescue, Ayah is never the same again. Her previously light-hearted and joyful approach to life has been drained out of her.

Even the character of Papoo and Mochoo are of importance here. Though they do not have much of a say in partition yet the marriage of Papoo to a middle aged dwarf is significant from the subaltern perspective. Papoo is always thrashed by her mother for not working and one day we see that Papoo is being married off. She hardly had any say in any of it. Did partition even matter to Papoo and her mother? They are the subalterns in the real sense. They had nothing much to lose in Partition and were least affected by it. Even the violence of partition meant nothing to them as they were celebrating Papoo's marriage in midst of all the refugees staying in the servant quarters. Here we can also question the idea of misrepresentation as there are chances that partition hastened the marriage of Papoo and that it was overlooked since she would be married anyway. They belonged to the low caste and may be her marriage instead of being seen as something tragic was passed off as usual.

The character of Hari the gardener is also a subaltern. He was from the low caste. It was Hari who found the body of the massuer in the gunny bag. Hari is a jolly person and good to everyone. He is however the target of every joke. All the others make fun of him by pulling off his dhoti. This act started off with innocence, simply as a joke but later we see that Hari actually suffered from it. The ice candy man was brutal to him the last time he pulled of the dhoti, flashing his private parts and jeering at him but Hari did not and could not fight back even if he was shamed. This act performed repeatedly showed Hari's weakness and his inability to speak up.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* brings forth the partition in all its totality. If one would want to relive the times it is the right book to go to. The novel encompasses myriad events and many characters. This paper has successfully linked the subaltern theory to Partition. Almost all the characters can be identified as subalterns yet there are some like the Papoo and Mocho who actually do not have any say in partition while others play their part, some as victims like Shanta and Rana while others as Saviours like Mrs Sethi and her friend who sells petrol in black to raise money to save women from forced prostitution and marriages.

Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*(1993) is not only about the suffering of people belonging to the minority religion in a state but also of the oppression of women in a patriarchal society. Women

face certain atrocities in a time of violence. The women body is both worshipped as well as condemned. It is seen as a space for contesting power. By dishonoring, or trespassing, the body of a woman, they feel that they had dishonored the country or religion she is related to. By humiliating her, they feel that they have avenged themselves. This very idea is pitiful one. As per Gayatri Chakraborty's definition of Subaltern the whole of Dutta family can be seen as subalterns as they belong to the minority and have suffered silently for years since independence.

Let us begin with the male characters, Sudhamoy Dutta and Suranjan Dutta. Sudhamoy Dutta is an old respectable doctor living in the district of Sylhet. Sudhamoy is a staunch nationalist and he had literally contributed for the freedom of Bangladesh which he thought would be a free nation unlike India and Pakistan that are divided in the name of religion. He believed that Bangladesh would be a nation united by its language. He gave all of his heart and soul to nationalism, so much so that, he suffered patiently in the hands of Pakistani soldiers. He was proud of the choices he had made, the choice to call Bangladesh his own. But soon after the independence of Bangladesh, he was disillusioned. He had realized that he would never be free from the tag of religion. He would always be a Hindu yet he denied accepting that as his identity. He believed that 'religion could never be the foundation of a national identity.' He would never forsake his Bangladesh and sooner or later he would earn his right to call her as his own.

Sudhamoy Dutta has faced many atrocities because of his choice to live in Bangladesh. Most of his friends had left for India but he would not. He taunts them for being coward, for running away when faced with a problem. He would say, 'When war broke out in the country, you fled to India like emasculated men. Once the country was liberated you came back like heroes. And now, whenever there is a spot of trouble, you say you'll go away to India. A cowardly bunch, that's what you are.'(Nasrin,27). Like his father, Sudhamoy also intended to live in his ancestral home forever. But soon he was disillusioned. How he rejoiced at the independence of his Bangladesh. During the Liberation War, Sudhamoy had decided that he would join the war to fight for his country. All his acquaintances, Sukanto Chattopadhyay, Sudhanshu Haldar, Nirmolendu Bhowmik and Ronjon Chakrabarty were leaving for India, but Sudhamoy decided against it. He decided that he would keep his family at a friend's house and go to war. However he fell into the hands of the Pakistani Army and was taken away. He was tortured in ways one would shudder. He was forced fed urine and his penis was sliced off as

circumcision and it is a miracle that he survived. After he returned he was never the same. A silent fear crept into his heart, yet he remained strong enough to go back to living as it were earlier. But soon he could see the changes that had also crept in like the fear in his heart. He could see that a secular Bangladesh had now pronounced Islam as its State religion. The Hindus were now minorities who held lowly positions in the government offices and only a few would be in the higher administration of the Government and Sudhamoy, was one of them.

In 1971, Sudhamoy lived in his ancestral home which was spread across two bighas of land in Mymensingh. He earned his living as a doctor at the Surjo Kanti Hospital in Mymensingh. He would spend his evenings in a private clinic at the market. After the war, things were no longer the same. Sudhamoy was forced to sell his land and move to Dhaka. He was as unhappy as was his wife and children but they had no other option. They were blackmailed and threatened but Sudhamoy was adamant until they kidnapped his daughter, Maya, who was only six years old. Sudhamoy could not find her for two days and when she finally returned alone by herself, she was in a pitiful state. She would startle up from sleep, stay silent and distanced from the family. Moreover, sudhamoy had also learned that his neighbor had forged papers of his land. He knew that he would not be able to keep his land for long so he sold his land which would otherwise cost millions for a mere two lakhs. All he could say was that, 'Life is short; I want a carefree life with my children.' They moved to a rented house in Dhaka but things were no different. Sudhamoy had lost his social standing. He did not have many friends and acquaintances and even the number of patients visiting his clinic had declined. He also could not get his promotion while even his juniors were going ahead of him. When he would go to enquire about it he was asked to wait in a room of a lowly clerk and nothing ever happened.

Sudhamoy Dutta had inculcated his beliefs of nationalism in his children. His son Suronjon Dutta and his daughter Nilanjana dutta (Maya), were fierce, independent and strong youth. Suronjon at present was a young man in his mid twenties. He was a man with vast knowledge and a broad outlook. He was influenced by thinkers like Marx, Lenin, Gramsci etc. Sudhamoy had brought up his children to believe in nationalism and humanism before they compartment themselves as Hindu. As a child, Suronjon had faced various situations where he would feel left out but Sudhamoy was always there to make them understand and bring them up as the right kind of person. Suronjon had once got into a quarrel with a boy in his class and they

were hauling insults at one another when the boy called him a 'Hindu'. Suronjon was much agitated by the remark. He thought it to be a derogatory word. It was only later that he realized that Hindu was a minority religion and he happened to be one. Another such incident occurred when he was at school. One of his friends had fed him beef during lunch break under the pretext that it was a treat. Suronjon was very happy to have such a good friend but as soon as he finished eating. His friend ran downstairs and told all the others that Suronjon had eaten beef. Suronjon could not understand the reason all the students were jeering at him. He cried at the way his friends treated him. He could feel that he was alone and the 'other.' Once he reached home he cried his heart out in front of his father. Sudhamoy made his son realize that eating beef did not degrade him and to prove that he brought beef and cooked it for his son and they ate together.

Suronjon grew up to be an atheist. He was closer with his Muslim friends than his Hindu friends. His father had influenced him to grow up as 'a right kind of person' than a Hindu or a Muslim. He was smart and intelligent. However, he did not have a job. When it came to jobs, others with lower scores than him seemed to get all the jobs. Even in interviews, candidates who said that their interview did not go well would get the jobs. Suronjon soon became infamous in interviews that he did not greet the interviewers properly with '*asalaam-u-alaikum*' or '*adaab*' as he is supposed to. He knew that all this issues were just excuses to deny him the post he deserved. The fact that he was Hindu had made all the difference.

Suronjon was at a position where he began to question everything that he believed in. he started questioning what his father and grandfather had fought for or lived for. Did suronjon actually belong to Bangladesh? If so then why is he treated as the 'other'? Why does he have to hide every time there were some riots? Why did he have to take help from some Muslim friend to be safe in a nation which was as much as his as everyone else's? He had equally contributed to the party. He had taken part in peace rallies. He had supported them yet every time he would feel left out. He had tried to voice his concerns of the oppression in the Ekata magazine that he was working for. But all his editor could say was:

Suronjon, you must understand that this is the oppression of the powerless by the powerful. The tyranny of the rich on the poor. If you are rich it doesn't whether you are Hindu or Muslim that is how a capitalist society works. Take a look, poverty-stricken Muslims are in a similar situation. The rich, be they Hindu or Muslim, are subjugating the poor.(Nasrin,71)

The male characters suffered a lot and even tried to voice out their concerns, but the female characters suffered even more. They did have opinions and beliefs which were hugely overshadowed by their male counterparts. They suffered in the background quietly, silently, bottling up their grief and expressing their concern through tears. They had to face the wrath in silence. They had to take equal share in the sufferings of the actions taken or not taken by their male counterparts. The two female characters in the novel are Kironmoyee Datta and Nilonjona Datta. Kironmoyee is an obedient wife who would stand by her husband no matter the consequences. She is seen as a beautiful woman with great potential. Sudhamoy sacrifices more than one could endure but Kironmoyee also goes hand in hand with him, one can hardly compare because both have been through so much. However, Kironmoyee does not feel the affinity towards Bangladesh as much as Sudhamoy. She wants to move away to India for her children's sake, especially Maya. She in fact once tried to send Maya to her Aunt's but Maya was so homesick that she returned in a few days. Kironmoyee had always tried to convince her husband to leave for India. She felt they would at least be safe there. Her desire to escape is triggered by the sacrifices she had made.

Kironmoyee is the daughter of a well known police officer of Brahmonbaria. She was married off at the young age of sixteen. She used to sing Kirtans beautifully. After her marriage to Sudhamoy she started taking lessons and soon she was well known. She was invited to sing at the various concerts. After the liberation of 1971 and the sufferings she went through, Kironmoyee stopped singing. When Sudhamoy tried to convince her, she referred to communal comments made on their singing, 'the people who clapped were the ones who said that Hindu women have no sense of shame and that's why they learn to sing. Then they show their bodies off in front of men.' (Nasrin, 52). Kironmoyee would only sing privately when she was deeply emotional.

Kironmoyee was again devastated when they had to sell their house in Mymensingh and move to Dhaka. She knew that it was necessary yet she could not endure the grief. She cried lying on the floor. Even after they had moved to their rented house in Dhaka she could not forget her home. She would wake up at night and cry bitterly as she missed her home. Her sadness had no bounds and even after years she would still talk about it. She would talk about the mango groves, the beetle nut, the bean plants, the fishes in her pond, the ducks etc. they had to move

into this small rented house which had nothing as compared to her beautiful house in Mymensingh.

During the Liberation war, Sudhamoy was taken captive and returned in very bad shape. This was the only time when she had taken control. She decided to ferry across the Brahmaputra with Sudhamoy and her children. She gave up her name and called herself 'Fateema', she gave up on her konch Bengals, her vermillion parting in her hair and any other signs that would identify her as a Hindu wife. There she tended to Sudhamoy's wounds in silence. She did not cry, she did not grieve; she waited patiently, cooking and caring after her family. On the day of Liberation she cried her heart out 'like a baby.' But she never wore her konch Bengals and vermillion again. Kironmoyee was a deeply religious woman and this sacrifice not only meant she was sacrificing her religion but along with it her identity. She had always been concerned about her religion. She was concerned when Sudhamoy fed the children beef and again when Maya would chant the Kalimas at home after taking religious lessons at school. She could see that their very existence was creeping towards an end. She wanted to fight back, she tried to in fact convince her husband, but at the end she would always give in.

Unlike Kironmoyee, Maya had stepped out of the house to fight for her rights. She did not give in. Maya's desperate need to belong is seen in her inclination towards the Muslim religion. Ever since a child Maya had been tried to blend in. once in school, Maya was made to stand outside during the class in religion. She felt left out and alone after which Sudhamoy requested the teacher that he let her in the class irrespective of her religion. In subtle ways Maya had tried to blend in. she had learned to recite the Kalima and was also ready to go away with Jahangir, a Muslim young man who was her boyfriend. Yet we notice that no matter how she tried yet she was unable to feel that she belonged. During the riots, Maya had stayed at Parul's house. She was her close friend and she had stayed many times at their house but this time it was different. She could feel that she was unwelcome. Parul had tried her best to make her feel at home yet there were times when Parul had to explain that Maya was not safe at her home. At one occasion she had to tell a different name so that her relatives won't question Maya's stay. Later Parul explained that if she did say her name they would say that they have been giving shelter to Hindus. Parul's explanation was just and Maya could understand that those were hard times yet she was hurt. She wondered if Parul would ever have to stay in their house like that.

Maya had faced a lot yet she never lost hope. She was kidnapped when she was only six years old and returned after two days. She came alone and could not say who had taken her or where she had been. Maya had suffered a lot. After returning she was in a state of shock. She would have nightmares and wake up shaken. She was afraid of people and behaved unnaturally for two months. Maya had a strong desire to live. Now, she is a young woman of twenty one with a will that can hardly be shaken. Since her childhood she had known that they belonged to a minority religion and she was at peace with it unlike Suronjon or Sudhamoy. She did not want to sacrifice her life trying to prove anything, she just wanted to live and she would compromise for it even though she was hurt. She went to Parul's house because she knew that Suronjon would not do anything.

The reason behind stating the atrocities faced by the Datta family is not to attain sympathy, but to show that they could not stand up for their rights even if they tried to. They suffered because they belonged to the minority religion in a Muslim majority state but at the same time one should also realize that the Muslim minority suffered in India as well. This proves that belonging to one religion or the other does not make any difference. The difference is in belonging to the minority, being marginalized, being voiceless, unable to make your voice heard. Even though Suronjon had the medium of his magazine Ekata, yet he could not convince his editor or his readers. Similarly, Sudhamoy went to the Police for Maya but that did not change anything. Kironmoyee celebrated liberation, stayed true to her religion and did not convert though she had opportunities and knew that might make things better, yet she failed miserably. Similarly, Maya tried to belong by accepting the terms of conversion or the idea of Marriage with Jahangir yet he left her. She also failed just like the other characters that stayed true to their cause. Therefore, the argument goes that no matter what, a subaltern cannot speak because his opinion does not matter, his questions will not be heard.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) deals with the social aspect of partition. He does not describe Partition or its causes in much detail but go on to explore the minute changes in the society. It deals with a small village, Mano Majra, at the border of Punjab which acts as a microcosm. This paper deals with the theme of partition. It aims to reveal the cause of all the violence. It raises the question of who is to blame. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) is considered to be the first Indian English novel on Partition. Khushwant Singh does not deal

with the political aspect of Partition but with the social aspect. He does not describe Partition or its causes in much detail but go on to explore the minute changes in the society. It deals with a small village, Mano Majra, at the border of Punjab which acts as a microcosm. Characters like Hukum Chand and Iqbal depict the intellectual, the link between Mano Majra. The people of Mano Majra are unaware of the political changes and see no reason to like or dislike the independence of India. They are contending in their little world filled with communal brotherhood and love. It is only the murder of Ramlala and the arrival of the ghost trains with dead bodies that there is commotion in the little village. Hukum Chand decides to deport the Muslims of the village to the nearby refugee camp in Chuddunugger from where they will be sent to Pakistan. Parallel to this story runs the love story of Jugga and Nooran, the Imam's daughter. Jugga sacrifices his life to save Nooran who is on the train and this last act saves the lives of Muslims on the train. It is their love which transcends all manmade barriers and depicts hope in a time of bestiality.

Khushwant Singh through his novel depicts that people in rural areas like Mano Majra had no interest in the political happenings. They were unaware of partition till things started getting quite out of hand. The people of Mano Majra were getting on with their lives, there was peace and brotherhood. The novel begins with a description of the monsoons of 1947. It goes on to describe how people led their lives according to the timing of trains. Even after learning about partition they could see no reason to hate. They could not even imagine hurting their neighbors. When the government decided that the Muslims of the village would be deported to Pakistan, there was a hue and cry. The Muslims were asked to leave with only minimum of their belongings. This mass migration was one of the pathetic outcomes of partition. The villagers have a sense of belongingness and do not want to migrate. They have hope that things will settle down after some days and they will be able to return to their home. They entrust their belongings to their neighbors hoping to return soon. The novel therefore shows peaceful coexistence and harmony among the people belonging to different religions before partition. The riots and violence begin in the cities and then sip into peaceful villages like Mano Majra.

Even if the village lived in harmony yet there was unspeakable violence on the outside and sooner or later it would have entered the village. The ghost trains are the perfect example of tension and violence literally reaching out to the village. There were several ghost trains passing

at odd hours which disturbed the simple life of Mano Majra. However one morning a train from Pakistan halted at the Mano Majra station. The people were sent away from the station but they could see from their roof tops. The mass graves and the burning of dead bodies horrified the innocent villagers. They started looking at each other suspiciously. This disturbed the peace of Mano Majra and the government decided to deport the Muslims.

Through the character of Hukum Chand, Khushwant Singh shows the mechanisms of the government. Hukum Chand is the deputy commissioner in Mano Majra. He is a man in his fifties, fond of women and alcohol. He is shown as obese and ugly. He was once married and had a daughter but now she is dead. He holds power over the inspector and constable, both of whom are corrupted. Instead of being interested in the welfare of the people, he is more interested in the riots. He believes that the Sikhs of the village should not let the Muslims live among them. Both Hukum Chand and the inspector discuss about the properties of the Muslims which gives out their corruption. After a drunken evening of entertainment, he begins a relationship with Haseena, a teenaged Muslim prostitute. He develops love for Haseena because she is around the same age as his daughter. Chand is obsessed by a fear of death and aims to evacuate the Muslims to prevent a massacre. He decides that the only way to save them is to send them to Pakistan.

The love story of Juggat Singh, the local dacoit and Nooran, the daughter of the imam runs parallel to the main story. It is because Nooran was on the train Juggat Singh sacrifices his life to save the train. He slashes the rope set by the sikhs of Mano Majra and while doing so falls under the train. It is also the love of Hukum Chand for Haseena that makes him so eager to save the people on the train. He realizes that only Juggat Singh is capable of saving the people. The ending of the novel gives us hope for a better future. Through the ending, Khushwant Singh makes us realize that love transcends all barriers.

Train to Pakistan has an array of characters. Singh has created a microcosm of India in Mano Majra slightly reminding us of Raja Rao's Kanthapura. The novel basically deals with the theme of Partition, but here we will try to look into the situation of the subalterns in a society affected by the tragedy of Partition. To do that, we will single out the characters which we can consider as subaltern and locate them in the disheartening situation of Partition. The inhabitants of the village are divided into four groups according to their religion and settlement. There is only one Hindu family, i.e, the family of Ram Lala, who is the wealthiest, thus placing them on

the highest rung of the society. The family of Ram Lala belongs to the minority and when the Dacoits robbed Ram Lala and shot him at his house, everyone watched in silence. It was only after the departure of the dacoits that everyone came to assist his family. In a sense he is deprived of friends in Mano Majra but one could also say that the same would have happened with anyone belonging to any caste. Say if a Sikh did be killed, may be the villagers would watch similarly. Therefore, the family of friendless, rich and lonely Ram Lala cannot be considered as a Subaltern.

Jaspreet K. Gill in his essay “Subaltern no more: Sikh redemption in Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan*” discusses the status of the Sikhs in India. The Sikhs form a group of minority in India, yet they stand out from the crowd as brave hearted and patriotic. At the same time they are also ridiculed as a community of drunkards and hotheads. Gill argues the status of the Sikhs is one of subalternity as they are constructed as different from the rest. The status of elite is maintained by the Hindus and the Sikhs are not a part of the great Hindu race, though they are respected for their patriotism.

Gill goes on to talk about the stereotypes created by the complex process inflicted by power and politics. He says that during the 1980’s, with the Bhindranwale issue, the Sikhs were demonized, seen as terrorists and a threat to the Hindu community. One can also link this with the murder of Ram Lala in Mano Majra, the only Hindu in the village of Sikhs. The demand for Khalistan colored the Sikhs as advocates of a separatist movement and their Gurudwaras as breeding grounds for terrorism and violence. Popular media created the negative stereotype of a ‘bearded, turban wearing Sikh male with sword as a negative icon symbolizing religious violence and separatism.’ (Gill,67). Khuswant commented on the 20th anniversary of the 1984 massacre that, “in secular India there is one law for the Hindu majority, another for Muslims, Christians and the Sikhs who are in minority.” In a sense, Singh also categorized the Sikhs into subalternity.

However, in *Train to Pakistan* through the character of Jugga, Sikh appropriates the stereotypes created by popular media. His hero, Jugga is a badmash with an extraordinary physique, which is hyper masculine and a characteristic feature of Sikhs. Yet Singh’s hero is introduced as deeply in love with a Muslim girl Nooran, the mullah’s daughter. He is not introduced in an act of violence but as making love to his beloved under the dreamy stars in the secrecy of midnight. He is ‘a man with the heart to sacrifice his life for a loved one.’ Crane

accuses Singh of being biased in his representation of Sikhs. He specially points to the character of Hokum Chand who is presented as corrupted and unclean.

The third group is of the Muslims in Mano Majra. The Muslims were only tenants and worked in the lands of the Sikhs who were the land owners. The major characters belonging to this community would be the weaver, Imam Baksh, who is also the mullah and his daughter Nooran. The character of Haseena Begum is also important even though she belonged to some other village and not Mano Majra. There is not much description of the Muslims of Mano Majra yet from the episode in the Gurudwara where they discuss the fate of the Muslims we can gather they did not have much a say of their own. Imam Baksh was the only men who voiced the opinions of the Muslim living in Mano Majra. He was the mullah of the mosque. He was a weaver by profession and commanded great respect not only among the Muslims but also the Sikhs. He had lost his wife and son and also his eyesight. Due to his economical conditions he began living in the mosque teaching the children and lived off the little he got as gifts or offerings for his services and talismans that he gave the villagers. It was his appearance that commanded respect. He was a sixty year old, tall, lean man, with silky white flowing beard which he occasionally dyed with henna. His cataract eyes gave him a philosophical and mystical look. He had an aura of righteousness and dignity. Everyone addressed him as 'Chacha' or 'Uncle'. The novel begins describing the Sikhs and the Muslims co-existing peacefully. The Sikhs considered the Muslims as their brothers till the very end when they leave for Chuddunugger. They grieve at the parting of their neighbors. The meeting at the gurudwara where Imam Baksh questions directly, 'well, brothers, what is your decision about us?' reflects the dependency of the Muslims on the Sikhs. They were only tenants and had to do whatever they would order. When the trucks came to pick up the Muslims and announced that they would be transported to Pakistan we realize the finality of the situation, the confusion and their helplessness. When the officers asked the villagers to take care of the belongings of the Muslim tenants, they had it as a surprise. The villagers would not take the risk as it would only create misunderstandings among friends. Meet Singh said, 'One should not touch one's property. There is always danger of misunderstanding.' This infuriated the officers as they wanted to evacuate the Muslims quickly with as little belongings as possible. And finally they gave it under the charge of the dacoit Malli Singh who had recently murdered Ram Lala and the villagers remained silent. This incident at the surface level would seem as an action of good will but one is

also bent to think of their adamant behavior, so much so that even they would let Malli loot everything but not keep the belongings as it would create misunderstanding. Can they justify the lootings and their good will to their Muslim counterparts? Did this act keep their relation intact? At a deeper level one might also think that the Sikhs of Mano Majra was affected by the news brought by the Refugees and the preaching of the Atkali. They did not want to have anything to do with the Muslims. Though they were sad at their departure but they made no effort to save their belongings or prevent the lootings of the Muslim houses. They watched in silence.

The character Haseena Begum, a teenage Muslim prostitute, can also be categorized as a subaltern. She is brought in by a group of musicians and a pimp, her grandmother, to entertain the magistrate at the bungalow. Hokum Chand keeps her for the night but the murder of Ram Lala disturbs their affair. Hokum Chand has to leave at the middle of the night. Haseena is a girl of around fifteen, not very pretty, and very thin and greasy with all the makeup and oil. Haseena is pushed around by her grandmother who pimps her for their living. She does as her grandmother orders her to. Even when left with Chand she does as she is ordered to. She stays mum until the gun shot which breaks the ice between the two. Her account of how only they are allowed to stay while all the other Muslims were sent away gives us an impression that the girl is very innocent. She says that she is a dancer and dance had no religion and so they are allowed to stay which is naïve. She calls herself an artist but the way she is given to Hokum Chand one could easily figure it out. However, what Chand does not ask is if she wanted to stay. May be she wanted to join her community and leave as she does in the end. We should question her stand in Partition. One could also see undertones that they were being kept regardless of their opinion because the wealthy people liked to visit her and be entertained. Therefore like all other subalterns, Haseena also doesn't have a voice.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* published in 1988 is a non-linear narrative which describes the meagerness of Borders. Borders are seen as lines that separate people from their kin which are at times existent while at other times a non-existent entity. Through a young nameless narrator who is the cousin of Tridib, the novel traces the lives of two families- the Duttas and the Prices living miles apart but sharing history and mutual friendship. The story revolves around Tridib's horrific death in a riot in Bangladesh and the different versions of the same story that

each character holds dear. The major themes include borders, freedom, love, memory, imagination etc.

Ghosh's second novel *The Shadow Lines* has won him the Sahitya Academy Award. The novel is divided into two parts, 'Going Away' and 'Coming Home'. It deals with issues of identity versus nationhood, the representation of history and ultimately concludes that all borders are imaginary constraints. The novel attempts reconstruction of history through individual memory and interpretation. The novel holds in its backdrop the history of the WWII, the freedom movement and the Partition, juxtaposing it with the present as it reflects the restlessness and turmoil of the times and its meaning in the present context.

The narrator or the 'I', the central voice controls the meaning and understanding of the novel. It narrates the history of the Duttas who presently reside in Calcutta but have their roots in Dhaka, Bangladesh. On its counter-position is the Price family residing in London. The story then shifts from London to Calcutta to Dhaka is told through the point of view of the narrator, although the plot concerns mainly with Tham'ma and Tridib. The nameless narrator recounts in flashbacks the people and places in his past as well as those to him by Tridib. He considers these reconstructed memories to be more real than the present as he lives through the stories and memories.

The narrator reveals his affinity with his uncle Tridib who had gifted him a perspective to see the world. He is also influenced by Thamma, his grandmother, who is a constant presence in his life. He also discloses his unrequited childhood love for Ila, his cousin who is quite contrast to his character and also the character of Thamma. The story is set in motion with a whim of Thamma to bring back her Jethamoshai, who lives in Dhaka alone with no family in such tumultuous times. Thamma along with Mayadebi, Tridib and May go to her ancestral house. They see that the house is already occupied by other families. They realize that the old man is deranged and it is only khalil, a Muslim taking care of him, who can convince the old man to come out of the house. Khalil in the pretext that he is taking jethamoshai to court follows the car. While returning they are surrounded by an angry mob who attack jethamoshai and khalil. May, the daughter of the Price family, runs out to save them. Tridib follows her and pushes her aside while he jumps into the crowd. After some time the crowd disperses and the corpses of khalil, jethamoshai and Tridib lie there.

This incident has everlasting impact in May's life as she had loved Tridib. It is her love for him that brings her to India in the first place. Tridib had jumped into the crowd only to save her and this realization changes her very outlook towards life. She works for philanthropic causes and has also joined a few relief agencies that provide help to earthquake victims in Central America. She also collects money for her cause from road to road. In this way she believes that she will be able to forgive herself as she holds herself responsible for the death of Tridib.

Thamma's whim to bring her Jethamoshai back which has led to the tragedy is also not just some uncooked plan. It had sprung from her years of sacrifice and her nationalistic zeal towards Bangladesh. Even though she moves to Calcutta as a young girl after her marriage, she could never forget the Bangladesh she had held so dear. After being widowed at a very young age, Thamma was grounded with responsibilities of the family. She worked hard and retired as a headmistress from a girl's school in Calcutta. After her retirement she had time to reflect at her past. She thinks of her youth when she would have done anything to just belong to the Nationalistic Movement of Bangladesh. When she gets the opportunity to return to bring back her jethamoshai, she is overwhelmed. She questions her son about the borders and is shocked at his reply that there are no such trenches as she had imagined. She reacts:

But if there aren't any trenches or anything, how are people to know? I mean, where's the difference then? And if there's no difference, both sides will be the same; it will be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day with anybody stopping us. What was it all for then- Partition and all the killing and everything- if there's isn't something in between?(Ghosh,167)

Therefore, Ghosh fiddles with the idea of freedom and brings to surface the meagerness of borders as well as the attempts to create one. Thamma realizes the harsh reality of borders and how it blurs the identity of people like her.

Amitav Ghosh has very successfully bridged the gap between fiction and subaltern. Through his fictional narrative *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Ghosh has been able to render a perspective that focuses on the little narratives against the grand. He has selected small events, characters that are not main stream and created a collage that gives voice to the historically repressed event and the marginal. Ghosh employs a complex inversion of the subaltern method

into his fiction. He neglects some aspects of mainstream history by keeping it silent till the end and then meditating on the impregnated silence that has so much to say. In *Shadow Lines*, Tridib's death is the silence that the narrator has to shatter so that he finds his own voice and sheds off Tridib's overpowering influence.

This 'silence' is an important aspect that interests the subaltern. This silence is the silence of the subaltern against the mainstream and it is this silence that needs an agency to speak. Ghosh uses this 'silence' as the repressed history around which he structures his narrative. The recovery of the repressed silence of Tridib's death is what is central here.

Ranajit Guha has pointed to four effects of subaltern practice: it challenges the univocity of statist discourse, puts the question of agency back into the narrative, makes audible other small voices, and interrupts the telling of the dominant version. By suppressing the voice of the narrator, giving the reader a preconceived notion that it is Tridib's voice, his ideas, his notions etc and that the narrator is only the spokesperson here, Ghosh brings into notice that a subaltern has a repressed voice and the journey here is to find his subaltern repressed identity. Therefore, identity plays a pivotal role here. The narrator is nameless, with no concerns of his own, his love for Ila is also at dead end and so is his career. He has nothing but a journey, a search of his identity or rather the silencing of Tridib's identity. The moral shift in the fiction is tied up with concerns about subaltern voice. The narrator finally overcomes the enthrallment to Tridib that keeps him silent through the novel and speaks in his own voice at the end after the redemptive relationship with Tridib's girlfriend May allows him to recover a lost selfhood.

Another important aspect that can be related to subalternity is migration and dislocation which leads to not only violence but also the loss of history. The idea of borders is only a mirage which is made very clear in the conversation of Thamma and her son where she questions about the presence of borders. Thamma is confused as why there is no actual difference between the two sides and if there is no such separation then all the war and blood was meaningless. In another episode the narrator keeps searching for an incident that he clearly remembers but could not find it in his history books or the papers. He goes around searching for it in frenzy because he feels that it was very important and had quite an impact during that time. This loss of history can be seen as one instance of the loss of subaltern history or its aspects with the prevailing mainstream history. Therefore Ghosh has provided various instances where he has placed

individual history against mainstream history. The loss of individual history triggers the need to belong to mainstream history. The idea of freedom of the different characters are juxtaposed, especially that of Thamma and Ila. Both Thamma and Ila belong to two different generations but they have one thing in common that is the desperate desire to be somehow included in mainstream history. Thamma narrates an incident of her college days when a classmate was arrested for being involved in the freedom fight for Bangladesh. As he was being dragged out of the class, Thamma feels a strong desire to follow him and help their cause in any way she could. She had this strange idea of leaving everything behind and going with them to help them, even in meager ways like cooking and cleaning for them. Similar is the desire of Ila who is living in London with a group of friends in a small flat. She stays in such condition, sharing her room even though there was no need as she belonged to a privileged family, only with the belief that her flat mates were involved in a revolution and along with them she was also being a part of something much larger. Her marriage to Nick is also another instance of asserting her need to belong. Her failed marriage is a verdict in how she can never belong to something she is not a part of. So is the death of Tridib a reminder that Thamma's return was only a mistake.

As Ghosh's novels repeatedly open the neat files of migration experience that hide the untidy history of India's eastern regions, this suppression of the experiential becomes a necessary critique of the way the migration studies industry has effectively erased the 'experience' of the migrant and the host under the conventions of human rights discourse, and political strategies and interventions. By seeking areas of individual human experience as its locus, the postcolonial novel transforms fiction's approach to experience. Taking individual empathy and identification out of collective migrant experience it revises the history of a society and a people through the newly bestowed authority and agency of an unknown event. And Ghosh himself stakes his claim on this individuated territory in his declared interest in the family and not the nation as "the central imaginative unit". For example, how in *Shadow Lines* the nation and its tortured birth and existence is only available to us through the political, social and psychological experiences of the two families.

Ghosh is therefore engaged in a very special practice of postcolonial historical fiction writing that uses subaltern history not only to understand historical events that have been marginalized, but that also offers a strong critique of subaltern history.

The partition of India in 1947 is mainstream history, in fact one of the largest dislocation of population and a breach in the fabric of the oldest human civilization. Subalternity is a search for the individual histories that run parallel to mainstream history. The voices of the minority play an important role in diverting the focus from the main stream history and what could be more suitable than fiction to present these offbeat voices. All the narratives analyzed in the chapter present a miniature view departing from mainstream history. They try to find that is lost by retelling history grafting it with fiction. Here I have successfully attempted to trace the subaltern characters in the novel and how their telling of history is different from mainstream history. I have pointed out the sufferings they had to undergo because they were different from the majority and I have also traced the mechanisms used to subdue their voice.

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Chapter 3: Cleaving the Trauma of Select Partition Narratives.

Much has been said about the Partition of India, 1947, yet there remains an unbreakable silence about the trauma that Partition caused. It not only resulted in political or historical changes but was accompanied by a baggage of trauma which effected generations after. This chapter will discuss the outcomes of Partition that ingrained different kinds of trauma on its victims. Partition inflicted fatal wounds which are still healing. These wounds are passed on from generation to generation in the form of stories, tales or narratives that describe the experiences and the trauma inflicted. Every experience and the trauma lives on through the narratives feeding on the souls of generations after that relived this experience in their imagination.

Urvashi Butalia in her essay, “Community, state, and Gender: on Women’s Agency during Partition” focuses on the woman identity and their experiences of women during Partition. According to Butalia, history is inadequate in depicting the various aspects of Partition as it leaves behind the crucial individual experiences. History provides a very compact and factual description of the incidences and thus leaves out traumatic experiences and its impact. She also accuses history of being biased as it is always written from a certain perspective. ‘Clearly there is no way that history can incorporate all experiences at all times for much depends on who writes history, when it is written, who it is written about and so on.’ She goes on to say that the historical record of partition of 1947 is also similar as it remains stiff and silent. The reason for this stiffness and silence is a much deeper fear and guilt of facing the trauma which remains like a gaping pit, waiting to swallow generations of victims. She states, ‘a fear of the past of some historians of reopening a trauma so profound, so driven with pain and guilt, that they were reluctant to approach it.’

Violence is always almost instigated by men, but its greatest impact is felt by women. In violent conflict, it is always the women who is raped, women who are widowed, women whose children and husbands are sacrificed in the name of national integrity and unity. (Butalia,

Women comprise half the population, yet there is always inefficiency in voicing sufferings of women. By nature, women are more sensitive and thus more prone to trauma. Yet we fail to elicit sufficient attention to the dimension of women's sufferings that accompanied the event.

Women faced the brunt of partition, as it was her body that was being violated in both sides. Her body was being used for contesting power in both sides, for avenging, for proving one's national devotion and loyalty. By violating her body, the man believed that they were shaming or dishonouring the community/nationality she belonged to. The men who failed to protect the honour of their women felt that they were emasculated. This feeling led to mass suicides and honour killing. Butalia provides examples of a Sikh family that beheaded their own daughters and wives before they fell into the hands of their enemies. In another incident eighty women followed a woman who jumped into a well and martyred herself to protect her honour. The well filled with dead bodies to the brim.

In spite of such attempts to save one's honour, many fell into the hands of the enemies. They were abducted and taken away to be sold off, forced into marriages and conversion or even sometimes just passed on from hands to hands. Few had the privilege to start a new life with better perspectives. However, the problems were far from the end even after Partition. In fact it had all just started, leading to more complications. These women were victims to a newly formed agreement of the two governments to recover their women. In this process of rescue they were again torn away from their newly formed life. They did not have any say in whether they wanted to stay or not. The unmarried women who were rescued had a larger burden to carry. They were not accepted by their families and even if they were accepted, they had no prospects of a marriage or respectable future. They had to spend their lives associating themselves to women's homes. This treaty is termed as the Inter Dominion Treaty. A few important terms are as follows:-

1. Every effort must be made to recover and restore abducted women and children within the shortest time possible.
2. Conversions by persons abducted after March 1947 will not be recognized and all such person must be restored to their respective dominions. The wishes of the person concerned are irrelevant and consequently no statements of such persons should be recorded before magistrates.

3. The primary responsibility of abducted person will rest with the local police who must put all effort in this matter. Good work done by police officers in this respect will be rewarded by promotions or cash rewards.
4. MEOs (military evacuation officers) will render assistance by providing guards in the transit camps and escorts for the transport of recovered person from the transit camp to their respective dominions.
5. Social workers will be associated actively with the scheme. They will look after the camp arrangements and receive the abducted persons in their own dominions. They will also collect full information required about persons to be recovered and supply it to the inspector general of police and the local SP.
6. The DLOs will set up transition camps with the Deputy Commissioners and local Public Workers and supply information regarding abducted persons to be recovered.
7. Coordination between the different agencies working in the district will be secured by a weekly conference between the superintendent and the local MEO officer, the District liaison officer and the Deputy Commissioner. In this meeting progress achieved will be reviewed and every effort made to solve any difficulty experienced.

The victims of partition were mainly the women who had to endure the grief of humiliation, dishonour and rape. However, very little is known of the women who were recovered. Butalia poses the question that whether they were ready to face a second dislocation. These women had somehow managed to create a new life out of the scraps and held it dear. Butalia states, ‘we know little of how many women actually wanted to be rescued, how many were ready to face a second trauma, a second dislocation and what their feelings were about the larger discourse.’(Butalia,

Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man* (1988) is a mirror to the traumatic experiences of Partition of India in 1947. It explores how the idea of a nationalism or national identity was turned into communalism. One’s identity was defined not by the nation he belongs to but by the religion he belonged to. This deeply ingrained communalism resulted in uncountable problems such as the dishonouring of women belonging to the other caste, which is particularly dealt with in Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man*. The novel traces Partition through the eyes of an eight year old handicapped Parsi girl, Lenny, and her experiences with her nanny Shanta. Lenny along with

Shanta visits different places and gathers myriad experiences. She meets people like the masseur, the shopkeeper, the gardener, the ice candy man etc. People she would have never known otherwise. Shanta's abduction at the end of the narrative brings about a twist and engages us as readers.

To begin with, the Sethi family can be seen as representatives of the Parsees and the Parsees were minorities, out of the power structure which makes them subalterns in a sense. The meeting prayer held which was actually a meeting to discuss their situation in the Partition. Their speeches surface their fear of being left out. The only solution they find is to sit back and side with the winning side. Colonel Barucha is the president of the Parsee community. He is the voice of reason cautioning his people to side with no one and to keep a low profile. As they are a vulnerable minority group because only two hundred Parsees live in Lahore and only one lakh twenty thousand Parsee exist world-wide. The Colonel understands the danger of the Parsee people's predicament and believes this is the only way that they can survive. Most of the Parsee, including the Seth extended family, survives in this manner.

The character of Lenny is an eight year old Parsee girl child crippled by polio. She is the narrator and it is through her eyes that we see partition. Her myriad experiences with her ayah, Shanta, give us an insight into the feelings of other characters. Lenny witnesses all the events first hand. She gives us an overall view of partition. She also visits the village of Imam Din Pir Pindo and we see the plight of the poor Muslim families in a Sikh dominated village. The Muslims and Sikhs were like brothers. They assure Imam Din that, nothing will ever happen to them. The village belongs to both the communities. Later we see that Sikh Militants start coming in and when Imam Din's son confronts the Sikh priest, he says that they are only for safety. Towards the end of the novel we see that Imam Din's relatives are all dead and only Rana along with an aunt who happens to meet him by chance in a refugee camp come to stay with Imam Din as they have nowhere else to go. She also sees the fire burning out the town from the roof top of the ice candy man's house. She sees the changes taking place in the ice candy man. How he turns from a vendor to a man of God, the sudden religious fervour that drives him crazy. It is through her eyes that we see the violence meted out during partition. She sees the gunny sacked body of the masseur and later she sees ayah being abducted. The female body is seen as a place for the outlet of frustrations. During Partition, the violence on women was a way of revenge. By

dishonouring the women they believed that they had dishonoured the religion and country she belonged to. Sidhwa gently deals with this aspect of partition where the voice of the women is muffled under the cries of nationalistic slogans.

Shanta, ayah of Lenny and Adi, is a beautiful eighteen year old girl. Because Lenny is disabled and does not attend school, the closeness between them grows until Lenny loves “her Ayah” as she does her mother, father, and the rest of her family. Ayah takes Lenny everywhere she goes, and she therefore introduces Lenny to an adult world ayah’s cheerful and proud demeanour is shattered by the ruination of her beauty and her life as a captive dancing girl, or forced prostitute, imprisoned by the Ice-candy-man. Until Godmother intervenes to save Ayah and send her home to her family in Amritsar, which remains in India after Partition, her life is hopeless. Even after her rescue, Ayah is never the same again. Her previously light-hearted and joyful approach to life has been drained out of her.

Sidhwa shifts the attention from androcentric reality to gynocentric reality which puts forth the sufferings of the female or feminine psyche and experiences with acute freshness. She brings to forefront a female protagonist, keeping behind the male characters that are passive, lagging behind or else indulged in violence. The narrator being a girl child brings forth issues that are commonly faced by women such as gender biasness, forced marriages, racism etc. since the focus of this chapter is to cleave the trauma that resulted from partition, the character of Lenny’s ayah holds prominent place here. Partition narratives have used the ‘women as victim’ paradigm as an important device to present the violence emitted during the beastial times. Therefore, *Ice Candy Man* also uses the women’s consciousness and her shared experiences to foreground political turmoil. Women are victims caught in the whirlwind of political changes. The major female voices in the novel are of Lenny, ayah, her grandmother, Mrs Sethi etc. These characters do not just witness the violence from an impersonal distance but instead their small world is affected by it. Violence seeps into their world though they try to keep themselves objectively distanced. The story has been narrated through the eyes of Lenny who projects not only the turmoil, trauma and physical pain inflicted on women but also the degrading status of man and how they objectify women reducing them to mere sexual objects to be preyed on and played with in their whims and fancy.

With the cracking of India into modern India and Pakistan, there followed a wild untamed rage and genocide. Lenny depicts how the ice candy man seizes this opportunity to pollute Ayah and brings a mob into their house. Lenny being innocent betrays her Ayah who is dragged by the mob and raped. Ice candy man then sets her up as a prostitute in a house in Lahore. He later claims to be in love with her and wants to marry her. Ayah accepts her fate and even her name is changed to Mumtaj but this does not improve her situation. She still lives in the 'kotha' where she has to perform in front of strangers. When she is found by grandmother, she insists on returning to her family and leaving the Ice Candy Man. Ayah is later saved by the women of the Sethi family who bring her back to a rehabilitation center.

Sidhwa has given us an insight into the communal frenzy, genocide, hatred and exploitation of women during the turbulent times of 1947. The series of events are described in such a way that the tragedy comes to life and this distinguishes Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* from other Partition narratives. The character of ayah and her tragedy is only one aspect of the atrocities faced by the women during Partition of 1947. According to Urvashi Butalia, around 33000-50000 women were raped abducted or killed and ayah is only an example of such atrocity. Another character is of Hamida that gives us a glimpse into the life of women who faced such atrocity. Mrs Sethi brings in Hamida from the rehabilitation camp to replace ayah. The focus on the rehabilitation camp is a mirror to vivid reality describing the fruitless attempts, made by common people who were moved by the trauma and pain they witnessed during partition, to recover and rehabilitate these women. The efforts made by the Sethi women are remarkable. Lenny could see their effort which affected even their family life. Lenny's mother and electric aunt would go for roundabouts with petrol in their dikkies to help people cross the border safely.

The trauma or violation that Hamida faced is unknown but we know that she has left behind four children and her husband. Her family would not accept her back and not let her meet her children as well. This situation was faced by many countless women after Partition, unmarried women even more so as they had no future prospects. Urvashi Butalia deals with this issue in her essay, where she stresses about the fate of these women who were rehabilitated. They were not accepted by their family and the children born of this violation faced even more rejection. Hamida is an ignorant woman who feels that all she had to face was because of her

‘kismet’, her fate. Hamida believes that we mortals are ‘khut-putlis, puppets, in the hands of fate. It’s my kismet that’s no good’, she tells Lenny once. Ironically, it is this belief of hers in the inevitability of fate that helps sustain her and sees her through this crisis in her life. However, Hamida is only a minor character and unlike ayah, we do not know what happened to her at the end of the novel. Yet her character is equally important as through her Sidhwa has portrayed not only the tragedy faced by such women but also the failure of the government to take proper decisions regarding the rehabilitation of the women and people in general.

Another important aspect is the tragedy that befell Papoo, the daughter of Muchho, the sweeper. From the very beginning we see that Papoo is maltreated by her mother. The cause is mostly the household chores. Muchoo beats her daughter regularly for not finishing her work properly, so much that one time she was hospitalized for a concussion in her head. All this however, least affected Papoo. She keeps on her jolly attitude even when she is being beaten up by her mother. Papoo is maltreated by her mother mainly because she is a girl and thus a liability. She is hurt only when her marriage is fixed to an elderly man. She is drugged so that she does not cause any trouble. When Lenny visits her on her wedding, she notices that Papoo is sitting there dreamily, half asleep with a plastered smile on her face. We do not know what befell on Papoo after she is married off yet one can only imagine the worst scenario. She would most probably be leading a life of sexual and physical violence. This sudden marriage of Papoo should not be overlooked as a case of mere child marriage. It can also be seen as a ripple of Partition. Sidhwa again draws our attention to victimization of women but here the victimization is a result of collective action such as the communal riots that followed the partition. Riots are largely orchestrated by mobs and become a signifier of a collective male victimizer.

Apart from the tragedy that befell women, there was tragedy everywhere. Lenny provides witness to the two sides of the coin, that is, what happened in the city as well in the village. Lenny loved Lahore and was very worried about the concept of Partition that she could hardly grasp. She wondered what would happen if their house was divided into two or if grandmother’s house falls into the other side of the line. ‘And what happens if they break it where our house is? Or crack it further up on Warris Road? How will I ever get to Godmother’s then?’ (Sidhwa 101). She was even more troubled by the hellish fire that burned Lahore day and night.

How long does Lahore burn? Weeks? Months? (...). Mozang Chawk burns for months... and months... And the hellish fires of Lahore spawn monstrous mobs. These no more resemble the little processions of chanting urchins that Warris Road spawned – and that Adi and I shouted ourselves hoarse in – than the fires that fuse steel girders to mortar resemble the fires that Imam din fans alive in our kitchen grates every morning. (Sidhwa,139-40)

Lenny could see the change in ice candy man and their circle of friends which was also the change in Lahore. Ayah's entire circle gathered in Queen's park as always but things were different this time. Everyone was suddenly overtly religious and thin undercurrents of hatred ran beneath the friendship that they tried to display. 'It is sudden. One day everybody is themselves and the next day they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink, dwindling into symbols.' We are reported about the situation in the city through the two places, i.e, Lahore and Gurdaspur. Lahore is already burning as Lenny and ayah witness it from the terrace of the Ice Candy Man. Everyone was leaving Lahore, Lenny's street was empty except for two Sikh families that had stayed behind. As they left in such short notice, they had to leave behind a lot of their belongings and so within a fortnight everything were looted and houses were burned. The whole situation was devastating and it seemed impossible to remain detached. Even though Colonel Barucha had asked the Parsees to "run with the hare and hunt with the hound", it was not as simple as it sounded.

The situation in Gurdaspur which is another major city is reported by Hari, the gardener. There is 'trouble' and then 'the situation is reported to be under control', which, as the gardener says, only means that there is 'uncontrollable butchering going on in Gurdaspur' (Sidhwa, 148). Very soon there is news that a train comes from Gurdaspur to Lahore. As the Ice-candy man reports to his friends soon after the arrival of this train, 'Everyone in it is dead. Butchered. They are all Muslim. There are no young women among the dead! Only two gunny-bags full of women's breasts.'(Sidhwa,149). Ice-candy man knows about the incident because this train full of corpses incidentally included his own relatives, for whom he has been anxiously waiting for more than a day. The Hindus and Sikhs in the group cannot face him after this incident; and when he sees them next, Ice-candy-man's rage is uncontrollable:

I lose my senses when I think of the mutilated bodies on that train...that night I went mad, I tell you: I lobbed grenades through the windows of Hindus and Sikhs I'd known all my life! ... I want to kill someone for each of the breasts they cut off the Muslim women. (Sidhwa,156)

Ice Candy Man becomes the killer or the villain in the narrative as he is the one that burns loots abducts and rapes but Sidhwa makes it very clear that this killer is also like every other born out of the violence spawn at them.

Ranna's story provides an insight into the situation in the villages which was no less terrifying than the one in cities. Whole villages were wiped out in a blink. When Lenny visits Dara Tek Singh with Imam Din for the first time, she saw the harmony and brotherhood that prevailed in the village amongst the Muslims and the Sikhs. The Sikhs assured them that no harm would ever come to them as they were brothers. But in her second visit we can feel the undercurrent of the tensions that had seeped in. There were Atkaris(sikh religious soldiers) roaming in the village fair with their long kirpans and swords. More were pouring in everyday and when accused the Sikh Lambardar said that it was only for their safety. After a few days we see that Ranna along with few relatives turn up at the Sethi household to Imam Din as they have nowhere else to go. They inform that the whole village has been murdered within a night. There were many such villages in border areas that faced the same fate. The trauma that a child like Ranna had faced was immense and a boy who had once been full of mischief and playfulness had only misery and hollow eyes filled with terror and pain.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1958) deals with the impact of Partition in a small village on the border of Punjab called Mano Majra. Unlike Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* that focuses mostly on the atrocities on women during Partition, Singh tries to encompass the entire picture by creating a microcosm of India. Singh depicts the traumas inflicted due to migration, killings, communal violence etc which were the instant outcomes of Partition. The violence of Partition seeps in with the arrival of Hukum Chand and the ghost trains at the same night. These 'ghosts trains' were filled with corpses coming from the other side of the Border. Similar trains were also going from this side of the border as reported by the Sub-inspector to the Magistrate, Hukum Chand.

The novel begins with the description of the 1947 summer:

The summer of 1947 was not like other Indian Summers. Even the weather had a different feel in India that year. It was hotter than usual, and drier and dustier. And the summer was longer. No one could remember when the monsoon had been so late. For weeks, the sparse clouds cast only shadows. There was no rain. People began to say that God was punishing them for their sins.(Singh,1)

Mano Majra had remained unaffected until the arrival of the ghost train. The arrival of the ghost train, filled with corpses at Mano Majra from Pakistan, Created a commotion among the Sikhs and Muslims, who have lived together for centuries. The trauma faced by the characters of Train to Pakistan are not individual traumas but presented in a collective manner. We get a hint of the situation prevailing in other parts through the conversation of the Magistrate and the Sub-inspector. ‘The Sikhs retaliated by attacking a Muslim Refugee train and sending it across the border with over a thousand corpses? They wrote on the engine Gift to Pakistan!’ said the Magistrate. This inhuman act of massacre according to the sub inspector was ‘They say that is the only way to stop killings on the other side. Man for man, women for woman, child for child.’ The discussion between the Magistrate and the Sub -Inspector highlights the bestial bloodshed that took place across as a consequence of partition. According to the Sub -Inspector the leaders in Delhi did not witness or experience the brutal act in Pakistan and so they remained silent without insisting on revenge. However, Hukum Chand silences the Sub-inspector by ordering him to maintain peace in Mano Majra. This peace is soon shattered when the second ghost train arrives in broad daylight. The people are restricted from going anywhere near the railway station. Wood and kerosene was collected from the villagers. Everyone whispered about it, women did not cook meals; men did not feed the cattle. The villagers waited and finally in the evening they witnessed the fire and smoke from their roof tops and with the smell of searing flesh in fire they realized that corpses were being burned. This train changed the whole scenario of Mano Majra. Communal tension seeped in and a silence engulfed the whole village. It rained that night and another situation came to the forefront. The river had swelled with the rain and the villagers noticed something floating in the river. These were dead bodies of men, women and children that were killed in some nearby village and thrown into the river. Dead bodies of young and old, men and women, some without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, and the skin was full of kites and vulture.

The villagers were ignorant about the circumstances till then, but now they knew about the situation outside. Hukum Chand decided that it will be safer if the Muslims evacuated. This is followed by a heartbreaking conversation between Imam Baksh and Meet Singh who were elders of both the communities. 'You have heard what is being said! All the neighboring villages have been evacuated. Only we are left. If you want us to go too, we will go.' One of the younger men from the village spoke, 'It is like this, uncle Imam Baksh. As long as we are here nobody will dare to touch you. We die first and then you can look after yourselves.' However, it is finally decided that the Muslims would leave for the safety of everyone in the village. Meet Singh assures them that this migration to the refugee camp is only temporary. He asks them to lock their houses and takes the responsibility to look after the cattle till they return. The villagers were unaware that they would be sent to Pakistan from the refugee camp. That night was one of the saddest nights in the village. As Nooran walked across the village to meet Jugga's mother, she could see that everyone was crying as if there was death in every house.

The whole village was awake. In most houses she could see the dim flickers of oil lamp. Some were packing; others were helping them to pack. Most just talked with their friends. The women sat on the floors hugging each other and crying. It was as if in every home there had been a death. (Singh, 137)

Next morning trucks arrived in the village along with armed soldiers. They called for all the Muslim to come out who were going to Pakistan and slowly the Muslim began to come out of their homes along with all their belongings and the rest of the Mano Majra came out to see them off. Most of them brought with them huge luggage and the Muslim Officer warned them to take only the necessary things. The lambardar was shocked along with all the villagers when they were told that the convoy was going to Pakistan. No one in the village was ready to look after property of the Muslims as it was not a matter of a day or two, everything was confusing and left to fate. The Officer asked the villagers to look at the property and houses of the Muslims who were taken to Pakistan but the villagers were not ready as they thought property poisons one's mind. But the soldiers insisted that they can carry only necessary belongings and no cattle. The Muslims looked on helplessly and the convey left and all the villagers went back to their home with heavy heart.

Apart from this major pain of death, violence and partition, Singh has also portrayed heart wrenching episodes of situations faced during Partition. In one such episode he talks about a Sikh family crossing the border. Sunder Singh was an army man. He was travelling with his wife and three children, the train was full of passengers and the train had no food and water. The train was held up at a station for four days surprisingly no one was allowed to get off. Sunder Singh's children cried for food and water. Sunder Singh gave them his urine to drink. Soon he had no option left, so he removed his revolver and shot them all. He also wanted to kill himself but then the train moved on there was no point in killing himself. Sunder heaved out the dead bodies of his wife and children and came alone to India. Such were the times and the brutality which had left an everlasting impact on the mind.

Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* published in 1993 encompasses the tragedy of displacement, disillusionment, anxiety etc. She describes vividly the horrid experiences faced by the Dutta family in Bangladesh who are victims of displacement. It presents the diverse shades of communal riots that were a result of the demolition of the Babri Masjid in India in 1992. This demolition had created ripples in the subcontinent creating havoc across the borders. Taslima Nasrin in her preface states:

I detest fundamentalism and communalism. This was the reason I wrote *Lajja* soon after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on 6 December, 1992. The book which took me seven days to write, deals with the persecution of Hindus, a religious minority in Bangladesh, by the Muslims who are in the majority. It is disgraceful that the Hindus in my country were haunted by the Muslims after the destruction of the Babri Masjid. All of us, who love Bangladesh, should feel ashamed that such a terrible thing could happen in our beautiful country. ...*Lajja* is a document of our collective defeat. (Nasrin, 1994).

The book was banned two months later. She again clarifies this in her preface of 2014 where she says that she does not criticize Islam in *Lajja* and the government had banned it because it proves that it had failed to protect its Hindus. Infact, she has criticized the Muslim fundamentalists that avenged the destruction of the Babri Masjid by attacking blameless Hindus, burning their homes, destroying their temples and raping Hindu women. The novel presents thirteen days within which the series of incidences occur beginning with the demolition and ending with the abduction of Maya.

Each character is so minutely detailed that it is hard to believe that such a work could be completed in a week. History and fiction is merged into one creating a piece worthy of admiration. In this short span of thirteen days each character reveals layers of emotions and how it shaped them to what they have become. The novel opens up with the stubbornness of Suronjon to take his family to some place to hide and then his search for his own identity reveals and relates to his father's.

Sudhamoy Dutta chooses to live in Bangladesh during Partition. Most of his friends had left for India but he would not. He taunts them for being coward, for running away when faced with a problem. He would say:

When war broke out in the country, you fled to India like emasculated men. Once the country was liberated you came back like heroes. And now, whenever there is a spot of trouble, you say you'll go away to India. A cowardly bunch, that's what you are.(Nasrin,27)

Like his father, Sudhamoy also intended to live in his ancestral home forever. But soon he was disillusioned. How he rejoiced at the independence of his Bangladesh. During the Liberation War, Sudhamoy had decided that he would join the war to fight for his country. All his acquaintances, Sukanto Chattopadhyay, Sudhanshu Haldar, Nirmolendu Bhowmik and Ronjon Chakrabarty were leaving for India, but Sudhamoy decided against it. He decided that he would keep his family at a friend's house and go to war. However he fell into the hands of the Pakistani Army and was taken away. He was tortured in ways one would shudder. He was forced fed urine and his penis was sliced off as circumcision and it is a miracle that he survived. After he returned he was never the same. A silent fear crept into his heart, yet he remained strong enough to go back to living as it were earlier

In 1971, Sudhamoy lived in his ancestral home which was spread across two bighas of land in Mymensingh. He earned his living as a doctor at the Surjo Kanti Hospital in Mymensingh. He would spend his evenings in a private clinic at the market. After the war, things were no longer the same. Sudhamoy was forced to sell his land and move to Dhaka. He was as unhappy as was his wife and children but they had no other option. They were blackmailed and threatened but Sudhamoy was adamant until they kidnapped his daughter, Maya, who was only six years old. Sudhamoy could not find her for two days and when she finally returned alone by

herself, she was in a pitiful state. She would startle up from sleep, stay silent and distanced from the family. Moreover, sudhamoy had also learned that his neighbor had forged papers of his land. He knew that he would not be able to keep his land for long so he sold his land which would otherwise cost millions for a mere two lakhs. All he could say was that, 'Life is short; I want a carefree life with my children.' They moved to a rented house in Dhaka but things were no different. Sudhamoy had lost his social standing. He did not have many friends and acquaintances and even the number of patients visiting his clinic had declined. He also could not get his promotion while even his juniors were going ahead of him. When he would go to enquire about it he was asked to wait in a room of a lowly clerk and nothing ever happened.

As a child, Suronjon had faced various situations where he would feel left out but Sudhamoy was always there to make them understand and bring them up as the right kind of person. Suronjon had once got into a quarrel with a boy in his class and they were hauling insults at one another when the boy called him a 'Hindu'. Suronjon was much agitated by the remark. He thought it to be a derogatory word. It was only later that he realized that Hindu was a minority religion and he happened to be one. Another such incident occurred when he was at school. One of his friends had fed him beef during lunch break under the pretext that it was a treat. Suronjon was very happy to have such a good friend but as soon as he finished eating. His friend ran downstairs and told all the others that Suronjon had eaten beef. He cried at the way his friends treated him.

Kironmoyee used to sing Kirtans beautifully. After her marriage to Sudhamoy she started taking lessons and soon she was well known. She was invited to sing at the various concerts. After the liberation of 1971 and the sufferings she went through, kironmoyee stopped singing. When sudhamoy tried to convince her, she referred to communal comments made on their singing, 'the people who clapped were the ones who said that Hindu women have no sense of shame and that's why they learn to sing. Then they show their bodies off in front of men.'(Nasrin,52) Kironmoyee would only sing privately when she was deeply emotional.

Kironmoyee was again devastated when they had to sell their house in Mymensingh and move to Dhaka. She knew that it was necessary yet she could not endure the grief. She cried lying on the floor. Even after they had moved to their rented house in Dhaka she could not forget her home. She would wake up at night and cry bitterly as she missed her home. Her sadness had

no bounds and even after years she would still talk about it. She would talk about the mango groves, the beetle nut, the bean plants, the fishes in her pond, the ducks etc. they had to move into this small rented house which had nothing as compared to her beautiful house in Mymensingh.

During the Liberation war, Sudhamoy was taken captive and returned in very bad shape. This was the only time when she had taken control. She decided to ferry across the Brahmaputra with Sudhamoy and her children. She gave up her name and called herself 'Fateema', she gave up on her konch Bengals, her vermilion parting in her hair and any other signs that would identify her as a Hindu wife. There she tended to Sudhamoy's wounds in silence. She did not cry, she did not grieve; she waited patiently, cooking and caring after her family. On the day of Liberation she cried her heart out 'like a baby.' But she never wore her konch Bengals and vermilion again. Kironmoyee was a deeply religious woman and this sacrifice not only meant she was sacrificing her religion but along with it her identity. She had always been concerned about her religion. She was concerned when Sudhamoy fed the children beef and again when Maya would chant the *Kalimas* at home after taking religious lessons at school. She could see that their very existence was creeping towards an end. She wanted to fight back, she tried to in fact convince her husband, but at the end she would always give in.

Unlike her mother, in subtle ways Maya had tried to blend in. she had learned to recite the Kalima and was also ready to go away with Jahangir, a Muslim young man who was her boyfriend. Yet we notice that no matter how she tried yet she was unable to feel that she belonged. During the riots, Maya had stayed at Parul's house. She was her close friend and she had stayed many times at their house but this time it was different. She could feel that she was unwelcome. Parul had tried her best to make her feel at home yet there were times when Parul had to explain that Maya was not safe at her home. At one occasion she had to tell a different name so that her relatives won't question Maya's stay. Later Parul explained that if she did say her name they would say that they have been giving shelter to Hindus. Parul's explanation was just and Maya could understand that those were hard times yet she was hurt. She wondered if Parul would ever have to stay in their house like that.

Maya had faced a lot yet she never lost hope. She was kidnapped when she was only six years old and returned after two days. She came alone and could not say who had taken her or

where she had been. Maya had suffered a lot. After returning she was in a state of shock. She would have nightmares and wake up shaken. She was afraid of people and behaved unnaturally for months.

Apart from the personal sufferings, the novel provides us detailed description with factual dates and data of riots and killings in different areas. Nasrin takes the pain to keep a record of numerous newspaper articles, incorporate them within the narrative to show the shame, the '*lajja*' of humanity. Suronjon's conversation with his friends gives us reports of the loots, burning of temples and violence in different places in Bangladesh. Whenever he would ask, his friend would give a detailed description of such and such place being burned and looted, such temples being broken, numbers of Hindus being killed etc. Sudhamoy is also visited by his old friend and they also talk in a similar manner.

Each character had suffered. The climax is brought about by the abduction of Maya which leaves the whole family devastated. Suronjon returns home from his usual meeting with friends. As he enters he finds that his house is all in shatters, things are all on the floor and broken. Kironmoyee informs him that Maya is abducted by a few men who came into the house breaking everything and destroying until they found Maya and took her away with them. Sudhamoy and his wife are in no position to do anything to help. Suronjon wanders about in the streets to find his sister. Every voice he hears reminds him of his sister as he wanders the streets. *Lajja* is, therefore, not just a political novel as it seems apparently but is also a psychological one as it delves deep into the psyche of the characters to portray the fear, trauma and hysteria from within. The novel discussed the fractured psyche of the characters that had to shed off the identity that defined their very existence and take on a new one to survive and submit to the existential angst and depression. The novel shows the discord between the family and lack of consensus to arrive at a point to choose between heart and mind. Finally, Sudhamoy's decision to return to India shows his submission to unavoidable circumstances, the pathetic condition in which a person has no other option but to fall beneath one's honour and dignity preserved for so long.

Partition of India in 1947 was the reason for a number of atrocities faced by people on both sides of the border. The cost they had to pay for independence was much more than expected. The trauma that came along with Partition lasted for generations. Communal violence,

riots, mass migration, violence, disillusionment, rape, anxiety, death etc were only the direct impact of Partition but the trauma remained forever and was passed on to generations. Even after seventy two years of Partition, one would still shudder at the thought of the bestial times when men were out of their senses. Partition has left an indelible mark on Indian history. The horror it unleashed is a very critical aspect to understand. A nation that was a symbol of peace and non-violence showed such barbarism is something inexplicable. The narratives provide a vivid picture of the circumstances and along with that they probe into the deeper psyche of the characters. No doubt the pain is immeasurable but the trauma is immense and psychological pain exceeds physical pain.

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Chapter 4: Borders as a Social Construct in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and Saadat Hassan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh".

In his most influential work, *Nation and Narration*, Homi K Bhaba in his preface questions, 'What kind of a cultural space is the nation with its transgressive boundaries and its interruptive interiority?' (Bhaba,5). The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a nation as "a country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture and history, who live in a particular area under one government as an independent nation." However, the concept of a "nation", as is popularly understood, implies a large community of people whose singular identity comes with a commonly shared territory and government irrespective of their language, race or religion. Ernest Gellner in his book *Nations and Nationalism* says that "nations are not inscribed into the nature of things, they do not constitute a political version of the doctrine of natural kinds" (Gellner,47) but are deliberately constructed by people upon specific fundamentals. It is these fundamentals that forge the identity of a nation and simultaneously help to differentiate a nation from another. Gellner elaborates on these fundamentals: 1. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communication. 2. Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. (Gellner,6-7)

In an iconic work on *Nation and Nationhood: Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson opines that the novel is perhaps the most suitable apparatus to embody national imagination as it has the technical resources to conjure up an "imagined community that is the nation" (Anderson,25). This is because novels, like nations, have space enough to gather together a variety of people into one collective body even when it is extremely unlikely that all the individuals will ever get to meet one another.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* published in 1988 is a highly celebrated, complex and innovative novel. It received the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award in the following year. The novel mainly focuses in a post Partition scenario where the characters are dealing with the idea of displacement and identity loss, but its overall form is a complex weaving of fact, fiction and memory. It's non linear and multi layered narrative makes it difficult yet provides the reader with an enriching experience. It describes the meagreness of borders. Borders are seen as lines that

separate people from their kin which are at times existent while at other times a non-existent entity. Through a young nameless narrator who is the cousin of Tridib, the novel traces the lives of two families- the Duttas and the Prices living miles apart but sharing history and mutual friendship. The story revolves around Tridib's horrific death in a riot in Bangladesh and the different versions of the same story that each character holds dear. The major themes include borders, freedom, love, memory, imagination etc.

The novel is divided into two parts, namely, 'Going Away' and 'Coming Home'. The novel is narrated in the first person. The nameless narrator recollects and narrates the events that happened even before his birth. The namelessness of the narrator and memory are the narrative strategies employed to supplement the thematic concerns of the novel. Ghosh deliberately denies the narrator an authentic identity. The narrator is present both in the past and the present. He keeps recalling the past through his memory as well as from what has been handed down, especially from Thamma and Tridib. He also narrates the present by digging deep into the psyche of the present characters and along with it is also his search for his own voice and identity.

. It narrates the history of the Duttas who presently reside in Calcutta but have their roots in Dhaka, Bangladesh. On its counter-position is the Price family residing in London. The story then shifts from London to Calcutta to Dhaka is told through the point of view of the narrator, although the plot concerns mainly with Tham'ma and Tridib. The nameless narrator recounts in flashbacks the people and places in his past as well as those to him by Tridib. He considers these reconstructed memories to be more real than the present as he lives through the stories and memories.

The narrator reveals his affinity with his uncle Tridib who had gifted him a perspective to see the world. He is also influenced by Thamma, his grandmother, who is a constant presence in his life. He also discloses his unrequited childhood love for Ila, his cousin who is quite contrast to his character and also the character of Thamma.

The first part of the novel, 'Going Away' begins in 1939, thirteen years before he was born, soon after the second World War when Mayadebi, his Grandmother's sister, her husband, Shaheb, and her son Tridib visits England. Tridib had two brothers. One was Jatin-Kaku who was two years older and he used to be away since he worked for the United Nations. The other brother was Robi. Tridib was the only one of the three who had spent much of his life in

Calcutta, living in the sprawling old family house in Ballygunge Place with his aging grandmother.

Mrs. Price, her daughter May and her son Nick lived in north London. Mrs. Price's father, Lionel Tresawsen, had been stationed in India when she was young, and he had become a good friend of Tridib's grandfather, who was a judge in the Calcutta High Court. The narrator met May when she came to India for a visit some years later and then did not see her for another seventeen years. He was spending a year in London doing research at the India Office Library for a Ph.D thesis on the textile trade between India and England in the nineteenth century. They met and started talking about the old days and she filled in many of the details of her life that he had been wondering about all those years. For instance she told him that in 1959, when she was nineteen and Tridib was twenty-seven, they had begun a long correspondence. He had been sending her family Christmas cards ever since he had left London in 1940, but now he began writing specifically to her alone.

Ila is the narrator's cousin and the daughter of Jatin, the diplomat. She has travelled widely and seen a lot of places but unlike the narrator, she lives in the present with a very limited imagination. She feels insecure in her personal relationships. She marries Nick and lives in Mrs. Price's house in London, but the narrator picks up tensions between Ila and her husband. Some years earlier Nick had not defended Ila in an incident at school when she was ridiculed; in fact he had left early to avoid being seen with her. This incident left a very deep impact on Ila and ignited in her a desire to belong which results in her marriage to Nick. Part One (Going Away) ends with the narrator recalling the events that happened eighteen years ago.

Part Two (Coming Home) begins in 1962. In the same year the narrator's father became the General Manager of his firm and his grandmother retired as headmistress of a girls' school after twenty seven years of service. After retirement the grandmother confined to her room and began to share memories of her home in Dhaka. The grandmother tells the narrator how she had eventually married an engineer and spent twelve years of her marriage in the railway colony towns like Moulmein and Mandalay. The narrator's father was born in Mandalay in 1925 and Thamma used to take him back to Dhaka once a year, when the narrator's father was six, her parents died. After that the narrator's grandmother and father seldom visited Dhaka again. In 1935 when the grandmother was hardly thirty-two her husband died of pneumonia. After

partition she had never returned to Dhaka. With the help of railway officials using her degree in history from Dhaka University she got a teaching job. But in 1964, by chance, the grandmother meets a distant relative who also lives in Calcutta and learns that her family house in Dhaka is now occupied by her uncle, Jathamoshai, who is now over ninety, and by Muslim refugees from India. Her sister had moved to Dhaka when her husband had become Councilor in the Deputy High commission there. Therefore, the grandmother decides to make use of this occasion to visit Maya and to bring Jathamoshai back to India.

As she planned the grandmother leaves for Dhaka on the third of January, 1964. The narrator is eleven at that time. Tridib accompanies her along with May Price who had been visiting him from England. The trip is momentous for everyone. The grandmother, her sister, Tridib and May visit to grandmother's old house to bring Jathamoshai to India. They see that the house is already occupied by other families. They realize that the old man is deranged and it is only khalil, a muslim taking care of the him, who can convince the old man to come out of the house. Khalil in the pretext that he is taking jethamoshai to court follows the car. While returning they are surrounded by an angry mob who attack jethamoshai and khalil. May runs out to save them. Tridib follows her and pushes her aside while he jumps into the crowd. After some time the crowd disperses and the corpses of khalil, jethamoshai and tridib lie there. After Tridib's death the narrator is sent to his mother's brother's house. Tridib is cremated and May leaves for London the same day.

This incident has everlasting impact in May's life as she had loved Tridib. It is her love for him that brings her to india in the first place. Tridib had jumped into the crowd only to save her and this realization changes her very outlook towards life. She works for philanthropic causes and has also joined a few relief agencies that provide help to earthquake victims in Central America. She also collects money for her cause from road to road. In this way she believes that she will be able to forgive herself as she holds herself responsible for the death of Tridib. This climax of the novel is rightly narrated by May and Robi who are the witnesses to this event. The novel ends with the narrator's union with May.

Ghosh through his novel interrogates the validity of the geopolitical borders of a nation. The prevailing concept that a nation is divided on the basis of race, religion, language and borders are proved irrelevant here. By presenting characters from different countries, religion

and generations, Ghosh has adequately provided the space for a detailed in depth analysis. Thamma was born and brought up in Dhaka. She completed her studies from Dhaka University. After her marriage she moved to Calcutta along with her husband. After his death due to pneumonia she managed to acquire a job in Calcutta as a teacher in a girl's school where she rendered twenty seven years of service. Meanwhile, India was divided and she never returned to Bangladesh after Partition of 1947. After her retirement, Thamma learns of a relative staying in Calcutta. She insists on visiting them. From them she learns that her Jethamoshai is still living in their old house in Dhaka and is taken care of by a Muslim refugee family from India who had started living there.

Though Thamma had a problematic relationship with her uncle during their childhood, she suddenly feels the need to reunite and save her Jethamoshai, who she feels is leading a hard life their alone, wants to bring him back to India to live with them and take care of him in his final days. She learns that Maya, her sister is in Dhaka with her husband for some diplomatic work. Thamma writes to her sister and arranges a trip to Dhaka to retrieve their Jethamoshai. She reminisces on how they had spend their childhood believing that the other part of the house in which their cousins and Jethamoshai had lived to be upside down. This journey was a momentous one as May Price was also visiting them in Calcutta then and so they decided that they would take Tridib and May along with them to Dhaka to visit their ancestral home.

Thamma along with Mayadebi, May and Tridib started their journey. This is Thamma's first visit to Dhaka after the partition. She is very excited and expects to see the boundary between India and Bangladesh as they cross by air. So she asks her son "whether she would be able to see border between India and East Pakistan from plane" (Ghosh,151). Her son mocks her saying that it is not like in school atlas where there is green on one side and scarlet on the other. He says that she would not be able to see anything except clouds and if she is lucky, some green fields. The grandmother is surprised and agitated.

If there aren't any trenches or anything, how are people to know? Where is the difference then? And if there is no difference both sides will be the same; it'll be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day without anybody stopping us. What were it all for then, partition and all the killing and everything, if there isn't something in between? (Ghosh,151)

This naive remark of Thamma mirrors the disillusionment regarding borders. The concept of countries being divided literally by borders is questioned here. It also intensifies the meaninglessness and meagerness of borders. Thamma is a staunch nationalist who believed in the fight for liberation. She narrates an incident of her college days when a shy student was arrested for being involved in the freedom movement. She tells the narrator how she longed to take part in it. She would have done anything just to belong, even if it meant cooking and cleaning for them. If allowed she would also go to the front with a pistol to kill. This disillusionment of borders had made her realize the futility of war. Even after Partition everything remained same. Therefore all the bloodshed had no meaning if there was no fixed visible line between the two sides. Ghosh manifests the fluidity of border lines and also focuses on how this borders separate people and families.

This fluidity of borders is recognized by Tridib who mentors the narrator, teaching him to cross borders by a strong imagination. Tridib is a man with an extraordinary imagination. He passes on this skill to the narrator when he teaches him to conjure up images from places in Atlas so exactly that the imagined places seem real. He knew places even before he had moved out of Calcutta. So, when he visits London he is only reliving the experiences of Tridib. Tridib had taught him the desire to imagine that could carry people across borders and continents, beyond the limits of one's mind to other places and other realities. He makes it seem so real that there is no border between oneself and one's image in the mirror. The narrator like Tridib had perfected the skill of imagination. When he visits London for the first time he could easily find out places on his own. He could tell his way to the kitchen and to the courtyard where stood the cherry tree that Tridib had told him about. In their shopping trip the narrator gives the exact place of the Samantra road where uncle Alan along with Mayadebi and Mrs Price had ducked into on their way back from the Mill Lane when the bomb exploded there. Through the narrator's experiences and Tridib's use of imagination, Ghosh tries to show the meagerness and futility of borders. He tries to prove that a person can transcend borders with one's imagination. By blurring the thin line between reality and imagination he exposes the fragility of borders.

Ghosh foregrounds that nations are not naturally formed and boundaries are not fixed but they are socio-political construct. So, fighting and bloodshed are not acceptable in the name of nation. It is futile to divide nations as there is no end to these demands of Partition as it will

forever exist. This frustration is seen in Jethamoshai's stubbornness not to leave Bangladesh. Even when he is deranged he still is adamant about his decision. After the partition his sons had requested him to go to India along with them, but he had refused it. When the grandmother comes to Dhaka to take him back India he says:

Once you start moving you never stop. That's what I told my sons when they took the trains. I don't believe in this India-Shidnia. It's all very well, you are going away now, but suppose when you get there they decide to draw another line somewhere? What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have anywhere. (Ghosh,215).

Jethamoshai believed that even if he goes to India there is no stopping as borders are randomly created at the whims of the politicians. He felt that he belonged to the place he was born in and if he moves away he will lose his identity. One's identity is connected to the place he lives in and the decision to move is lethal. A person, according to him, should die in the same place that he is born in. this concept is also reflected in Thamma's excitement in returning to Dhaka. As they entered the streets, both Maya and Thamma began to feel like young girls. They remembered the sweet stall and the book shop. Even after living for so many years in Calcutta she never felt at home. The author considers that the concept of nation with borders is mirage or memory. The anger of the author is expressed through Robi's words.

Why don't they draw thousands of little lines through the whole subcontinent and give every little place a new name? What would it change? It's mirage; the whole thing is a mirage. How can anyone divide a memory? If freedom were possible, surely Tridib's death would have set me free. (Ghosh,247).

Thamma's idea of borders is a fixed one. Ghosh interrogates this fixity of borders by juxtaposing it with the globalized context. In the present state confining to one place is impossible and so travelling inevitable. Therefore, he uses the motif of travelling which contributes to the dismantling of constructed borders. *The Shadow Lines* spans three generations of the Dutta Chaudhuri family of Bengal and the Price family of London. The members of the two families travel to Calcutta, Dhaka and London. Tridib tells the narrator that Lionel Tresawson had left the farm in Southern Cornwall and he turned to become the owner of a tin mine in Malaysia. He extended his business to encompass Fiji, Bolivia, the Guinea Coast and Ceylon. Furthermore, he opened his own factory at Barrackpore in Calcutta. In his middle age,

he tried to open a homeopathic hospital in Calcutta where he met a number of leading nationalists and became a very close friend of Mr. Justice Datta Chaudhari, Tridib's grandfather. Later on, Tresawsen went back to London and settled there for the rest of his life. Like his ancestors, Nick Price, son of Mrs. Price, loved the concept of travelling abroad. So, he decided to travel to Kuwait to work as an accountant. On the other hand, the Datta Chaudhuri's son the Shaheb, Maydebi's husband, was a diplomat, and travelling was a part of his job. The family had three sons namely Jatin, Tridib and Robi. Jatin was an economist with the U.N. so, he spent most of his time outside India, along with his wife and his daughter Ila. As the nature of his work required travelling abroad, he went, along with his family, to many places around the world such as Colombo, Addis Ababa, Cairo etc. Later he became a Visiting Professor of a university in North of England. His wife and daughter, decided to stay at Mrs. Price's house in London, where Nick Price and Ila went to the same school.

Tridib spent most of his time with his aging grandmother in Calcutta. He lived in an ancestral house in Ballygunge place. At the age of eight, he had visited London along with his parents and they lodged in the Price's house. He saw May Price when she was an infant. His journey to London had broadened his imagination of the world that enabled him to develop his point of view. While coming back to Calcutta, he told people about his wonderful experience in London and the narrator admired him and considered him as his hero. Robi was the youngest son of Mayadebi and he accompanied her wherever she went. He travelled to London and later on he went to Dhaka where he saw the dramatic death of Tridib. Likewise, Thamma, the narrator's grandmother was born and brought up in Dhaka. After her marriage she travelled with her husband to several railway colonies in Burma. After the death of her husband she came to Calcutta. Narrator's father, as a general manager of his firm, travelled to many countries. So also the narrator was born in Calcutta and got his college education in Delhi. Later he goes to London to pursue his Ph.D programme. Thus, most of the characters of the novel travel freely to many parts of the world. Travelling signifies border crossing and consequently boundaries lose importance. So, also he shows that it is not possible to separate people simply by erecting borders as both the families keep their friendship alive even after being across the seas.

The Shadow Lines also blurs the distinction between races and culture. Though the correspondence and love between the two families, Ghosh proves that borders cannot separate

the intermingling of different cultures and also that a nation is not defined only by its religion race or culture. The Price family and the Dutta family belong to two cultures that are distinctly apart yet the frequent visits bring about a cultural transformation. The close affinity between the two families results in a cultural amalgamation. The character of Ila is a perfect example of such cultural distancing. She has lived with Mayadebi in London with the Price family since childhood and had adapted to their lifestyle. When she visits India as a child and meets the narrator, she is more sophisticated and had travelled more than him. However, Ila lives in the present and has a very limited imagination unlike the narrator. When they play together in the house scene, Ila tells a story about her doll Magada and Nick, she describes how Magada is not loved and how she is bullied at school. Through her narration one can sense the desire to belong. She wanted that Nick be her friend and this desire remains in her forever and finally she marries Nick, though they lead a disturbed married life, yet she remains with him. When the narrator describes this to Thamma, she says that Ila face such a treatment because she does not belong there.

I don't blame the boy. It was Ila's fault. It was bound to happen: any one can see that... She has no right to live there. She doesn't belong there. It took those people a long time to build that country; hundreds of years, years and years of war and bloodshed....They know they are a nation because they have drawn their borders with blood...War is their religion. That is what it takes to make a country. Once that happens people forget, they were born this or that, Muslim or Hindu, Bengali or Panjabi: they become a family born of the same pool of blood. That is what you have to achieve for India, don't you see? (Ghosh,77).

In another episode, the narrator, Ila and Robi go to a hotel for a party hosted by Ila. After a few drinks Ila invites Robi for a dance but he would not so she goes to dance with an unknown businessman. Robi warns her not to do so. Ila taking the suggestion as an insult goes ahead. Annoyed Robi fights with the businessman and tells her, 'you ought to know that; girls don't behave like that here' (Ghosh,88). She retorts 'I'll do what I want to do'. Robi tells her, "You can do what you like in England. But here there are certain things you can't do. That's our culture; that's how we live" (Ghosh,88). She shouts she wants to be free of this bloody culture. The narrator, who loves Ila, tells her, "you cannot be free of me because I am within you...just

as you are within me” (Ghosh,89). This sentence evokes that one cannot be completely free from the native culture and the influence of other cultures.

Similar is the case of May Price and Tridib. A romantic relationship has developed between them through intimate correspondence, transcending the shadow lines of nationality and cultural boundaries. May comes to India to meet Tridib. She travels all across the sea yet she brings her culture along with her. For instance when Tridib and May are driving on the highway they see a stray dog suffering and May insists on stopping the car and relieving the dog from its pain. This is similar to her instinctive act of getting down from the car when Jethamoshai and Khalil were attacked. This difference in culture made her instinctively react differently thus leading to the death of Tridib. Again even after she returns after the death of Tridib, the Indian culture has influenced her. In the memory of Tridib she does certain humanitarian acts to help people and specially children in need. She also observes fast on Saturday which is unusual as it is Indian custom to observe fast on Saturday. This union between two races is kernel of the novel’s concern of blurring the racial and cultural boundaries. So this episode and the marriage between Ila and Nick signify the interrogation of concept of pure race and culture.

Ghosh also blurs the distinction between the voiced and the voiceless. Through *The Shadow Lines* Ghosh depicts characters like Khalil and May who would go out of their way to help people. Whenever there are riots media always highlights the mainstream news leaving out the voiceless martyred. By doing this they infuriate the public giving them reasons to spread out the riots even more. Unfortunately the praiseworthy works like relief works, peace marches and humane pieces of reporting are not foregrounded. Such riots have disappeared into a ‘volcano of silence’ (Ghosh,230) and have not been thought about or discussed. Ghosh provides space for the voiceless people who have done memorable work. For example, after the partition all the relatives of Jethamoshai had left Bangladesh and scattered across several countries. He stays alone in his ancestral house. But fortunately he is looked after by Khalil and his family, a Muslim from Murshidabad in Bengal. Khalil takes Jethamoshai in his rickshaw to follow the car of Mayadebi and Thamma and ultimately to send him with them. But when the mob surrounded Khalil was also killed. The irony of the context is that there was a time when this old man was so orthodox that he would not let a Muslim’s shadow pass within ten feet of his food. Through this episode Ghosh suggests that it is not possible to remain isolated and thus blurs the

boundaries between religions. This episode highlights the shared history and culture between Hindus and Muslims and it is not an easy task to dismantle it. It also suggests that even the undeniable hatred between the two communities is a sign of continuing emotional involvement. Thus, the marginalized are raised to positions of martyrs.

Similarly, Saadat Hasan Manto's *Toba Tek Singh* also establishes the fact that borders are incapable of dividing people and history. *Toba Tek Singh* focuses on the sense of despair and dislocation caused by the Partition of 1947. He vividly recreates the anger, horror, and trauma faced by the victims of arbitrary borders. Manto is one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century. Through his work he has portrayed much of the social violence that prevailed during Partition. The times were one of madness and Manto has explored this theme to shed light on the foolish and irrational forces that dominated Partition of 1947. Insanity is a mechanism used to highlight the blind violence and the arbitrariness of borders.

The story opens in a mental asylum where the inmates are to be transported to their respective countries after Partition. Like everything else, the government of both countries decided that they would exchange the inmates of the mental asylum on basis of the country they belonged to. The Muslim lunatics who do not have families in Hindustan are to be sent to Pakistan while all the Hindu lunatics are to be sent to Hindustan. As the inmates of the asylum learn that they are being exchanged, they began to react in their own peculiar ways. Some could not understand where they are or where they will be sent, while some were sad at the idea of being separated from their loved ones. Some started fighting with each other imagining that they were the politicians while one climbed a branch declaring that he will neither be in Hindustan nor Pakistan but stay at the branch in a tree. Apart from these lunatics, the asylum also had pretenders who had escaped the gallows by pretending to be insane. Even these people could not gather much information though they understood that India was being divided into two. The questions asked by these lunatics are in a sense meaningful as they question the very basis of how a country could be divided into two.

Bishan Singh, an inmate in the asylum is a Hindu and so will be sent to India. Singh belongs to a small village called Toba Tek Singh which is located in Pakistan. He has been living in his asylum for fifteen years. Now after learning that he will be sent to Pakistan he is confused where his village will be. He tries to enquire but everyone is confused and they give ambiguous

answers. However, Bishan Singh is visited by a friend who informs him that his family and his daughter, Roop Kaur has migrated to India and is well. Singh questions Fazal Din about his village and learns that it is in Pakistan. Singh uses odd long fragmented sentences to steam off his frustration of being unable to understand where he belonged, where his village was. His sentences went thus, "*Aupur di, gur gur di, annex di, bedhayana di, mung di daal of the Pakistan and Hindustan of the dur phitte muh.*"

He knows that it will be at the same place but he could not understand how it would be in a different nation. When Bishan Singh was to be exchanged at the Wagah Border he asks the concerned officer "Where is Toba Tek Singh? In Hindustan or in Pakistan?" to this the officer replies that it is in Pakistan. Bishan Singh turns and runs to join the others going towards Pakistan. He is seized by the guards but Singh refuses to move. The guards try to persuade him in every way they could but to no avail. Singh will not move from there. At the end after standing there for a whole day and a night, he gives out a shriek and falls on the ground, dying in between the barbed wire which is neither Pakistan nor India. His meaningless fragmented utterances are symbolic of the meaninglessness of the breach of India and Pakistan. Manto ends the story with, "On one side behind him stood the lunatics of Hindustan and on the other side across the road, lunatics of Pakistan. Between them on the no man's land Toba Tek Singh lay stretched."

The asylum and the inmates allow Manto an opportunity to attack the politics and religious dogmatism of the period. One of the inmates proclaims himself to be Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Others declare themselves to be Tara Singh, Sikh and Hindu politicians and freedom fighters and a tremendous row ensues and everyone indulges in the fight. Another inmate who has become insane after being rejected in love learns that his beloved will be in Pakistan while he in Hindustan, climbs up a tree and gives an intense two hour lecture on the sensitive topic of India-Pakistan. When the guards try to bring him down he climbs even higher and insists on living on the tree. More confusion is faced by the Anglo-Indians who do not know where they belong to. This inversion of reality where the characters inside the asylum take up the role of politicians and people outside, while the sane people living outside behave insanely, in inhuman and irrational ways reveals the irony of the situation. Madness becomes a term that defines the political and social upheaval of Partition. Walls and borders lose their meaning and mentally

deranged characters face the same anxiety, contradictions and divided loyalties faced by sane people who are dislocated and misplaced.

As both a victim and an analyst, Saadat Hasan Manto was able to perceive the traumatic dislocation which resulted in anger, bitterness, and paranoia. He was able to vividly portray the secret fears of each individual caught up in the turmoil of the Partition of 1947. Even after more than seventy years of freedom we are still grappling with the same issues Manto confronted: freedom of expression, the trauma of displacement, and the dangers of identity politics. His stories are a mirror to the society.

Borders though could be formed with blood and war, riots and revolutions, it is still impossible to divide a person's loyalties and memories. No matter how far one might be from his own place or for how long in another country, they will always carry a specific concept of their home. That home can never be forgotten or taken away by drawing arbitrary lines. Memories and histories live on forever. These borders do not create new homes but are pregnant with hatred, violence, communalism, and war.

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CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

After thorough research and writing the above chapters, I have come to the understanding that the topic of *The Grammar of Fictionalizing Borders: An eclectic analysis of select novels* is a very intimidating one. Throughout my journey of trying to understand borders I have understood pain, trauma, anxiety, dislocation, violence, voicelessness etc faced by the victims of Partition. The price that was paid for partition exceeds the joy of freedom. The fruit of freedom that is enjoyed today is priceless. The aim of this dissertation is to highlight the mechanisms of borders and how they are portrayed in fictional narratives.

The dissertation *The Grammar of Fictionalizing Borders: An eclectic analysis of select novels* is divided into four chapters; Chapter 1: 'Introduction' where a detailed study of the history of India leading up to Partition of 1947 into India and Pakistan is provided; Chapter 2: 'Partition through the subaltern lenses in select partition narratives' tries to relate the Subaltern theory with Partition of India in 1947 in an attempt to demystify mainstream history and the idea of borders and hypocritical notion 'Nationalism'; Chapter 3: 'Cleaving the trauma of Select Partition Narratives.' tries to discuss the outcomes of Partition that ingrained different kinds of trauma on its victims; Chapter 4: 'Borders as a social construct Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and Saadat Hassan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" discusses borders as a non-existent entity that is politically and socially created and has a very threatening impact on the lives of people; Chapter 5: 'Conclusion' sums up the above four chapters and provides an insight into the social, political and historical condition of the unexplainable conditions during the Partition of 1947.

The first chapter: 'Introduction' traces the history of India and how the events leading to the Partition of India into India and Pakistan in 1947 from a historical point of view. It also provides a detailed description of the works that has been selected for analysis. The Partition of India of 1947 is a devastating breach in one of the oldest civilizations of history. However, the Partition was a result of the strife between two political parties namely: Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. Both the parties could not come to a settlement regarding the distribution of power. With the headstrong decision of forming a government, Lord Wavell

convinced Nehru to form the interim government on 2nd september, 1946. Meanwhile Jinnah had already declared the Direct Action Day on 16 August, 1946. It was a day, the Muslim League had planned general strike to protest the rejection of the June 16th Cabinet Mission Plan by the Congress Party and to assert its demand for a separate homeland. This led to a chain of events, a state of civil war and the massacre of Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta which gradually spread burning the whole country. This brought about a communal frenzy which spread all over India and thus the interim government also failed. In Calcutta, within 72 hours, more than 4,000 people lost their lives and 100,000 residents in the city of Calcutta were left homeless. This final step brought about two changes. Firstly, Lord Mountbatten succeeded Lord Wavell and secondly, the Atlee Government gave June 1948 as the deadline to end this dispute and transfer power to Indians.

When Lord Mountbatten came to India there was no time for any better solutions and so it was finally decided that India will be divided as two nations. For the task of drawing the lines of division between India and Pakistan, Sir Cyril Radcliffe was appointed as the Chairman of the Boundary Commission. Along with the help of his secretary, Christopher Beaumont who was a little familiar with Punjab, Radcliffe drew the line. He submitted the report on 13th August 1947. The line of Partition between India and Pakistan is famously called the Radcliffe line. The rules and regulations for the partition were according to the VP Menon's plan. The idea is to be forwarded to the Legislature where the votes will decide. According to the plan the provinces of Punjab and Bengal were to be divided to create a separate state-East Pakistan and West Pakistan. NWFP went in favor of joining Pakistan and the district of Sylhet also decided to join Pakistan. As soon as the plan was prepared, Mountbatten broadcast it on June 3 and called it 'the June 3rd plan. On 4th July 1947 itself the bill was passed in the British Parliament. The Act was formulated on July 18th 1947 and thus Pakistan celebrated its independence on 14 August 1947 and India on 15th August 1947.

The Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 did not end with its direct result of communal frenzy, violence and killings but had a long lasting impact on the social and political life of both the nations. Some of the major impacts it had in politics was the unending animosity between the two nations that were separated. The separation did not bring peace, as it intended, instead it only fuelled war after war, nuclear weapons pointed at each other, insecurities leading to great armies,

weapon display and what not. The Kashmir conflict is a major outcome of Partition which was the reason for many Indo-Pak wars and conflicts to come.

Much has been said about it but still there remains the need for a lot to be said on it. Partition Narratives fulfill this need. It provides a global platform for the writers to convey their feelings through the assimilation of history and fiction. Literature provides a spectacle to all the happenings and similarly Partition Narratives provide an insight into and trace the lives of people who suffered during partition. They deal with the causes and consequences of the phenomenal event. They depict the horrors and experiences of the partition along with its sorrow, suffering, bitterness, pathos and compassion. They are powerful portrayals of the fragmented and wounded society which resulted from Partition. These Narratives can be used to reconstruct the various aspects of those tumultuous days when communal feelings subjugated over the secular and human feelings.

The Partition Narratives discuss the actualities of human experience during Partition. They look at the problems and violence created through Partition with a sense of equality and impersonality and without any discrimination in treating the people of different communities. The characters, instead of traditional heroes and heroines are displaced, distressed and defeated personalities. They are basically the uprooted migrant, the abducted girl, or the man with a guilty conscience. They are drawn from all communities and all classes. The characters are true to life, effective and interesting. The form also adheres to this continuity. It is fragmentary, conscious, filled with flashbacks and memories. The fragmentary form reflects the sense of shattered existence which is a common aspect of Partition. Similarly, memory also plays an important role in Partition Narratives. The memories are the only link to the past and the only way to keep the past alive and pass it through generations. Thus, Partition Narratives reflect the Partition comprehensively in all its totality.

Here, five texts have been analysed namely Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*, Bapsi Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man* and Sadaat Hasan's "Toba Tek Singh". All these narratives focus on a particular aspect in more detail while dealing with Partition in general. For example Singh's *Train to Pakistan* deals with the violence meted out on the refugees specially those crossing the borders on trains, Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* deals with socially and politically constructed borders; Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man*

deals with the condition of the marginalized communities, Nasrin's *Lajja* deals with the atrocities faced by the Hindu community in Bangladesh and Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" with the disillusionment regarding Independence and Partition.

Chapter 2, "Partition Through the Subaltern Lenses in Select Narratives" deals with the theory of subalternity in partition narratives. This chapter aims to study partition in the light of the subaltern theory. It tries to study the subaltern characters and partition through their eyes. More so, because the subalterns were only represented by others, and so, it puts forth the argument, that whether they were modified while being represented. Would the story be any different if it were told by the subalterns themselves? The subalterns had nothing much to lose and did partition matter to them as they were already depressed enough. The theory of Subaltern is associated with a group of scholars led by Ranajit Guha. However, the term was first introduced by Antonio Gramsci, who used it to designate people who are socially, politically and geographically outside the power structure. The Subaltern Studies Group group of theorists explored the political role of the masses than the elites. According to this group the term subaltern encompasses a much larger area; it refers to any person of inferior rank or station because of its race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity or religion. He felt that the history produced by the elites is incapable of presenting the grim realities. Ranajit Guha has pointed to four effects of subaltern practice: it challenge the univocity of statist discourse, puts the question of agency back into the narrative, makes audible other small voices, and interrupts the telling of the dominant version.

This chapter deals with four novels namely Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man*, Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*. The partition of India in 1947 is mainstream history, in fact one of the largest dislocation of population and a breach in the fabric of the oldest human civilization. Subalternity is a search for the individual histories that run parallel to mainstream history. The voices of the minority play an important role in diverting the focus from the main stream history and what could be more suitable than fiction to present these offbeat voices. All the narratives analyzed in the chapter present a miniature view departing from mainstream history. They try to find that is lost by retelling history grafting it with fiction.

Bapsi Sidwa's *Ice Candy Man* published in 1988 traces Partition through the eyes of an eight year old handicapped Parsi girl, Lenny, and her experiences with her nanny Shanta. Lenny along with Shanta visits different places and gathers myriad experiences. She meets people like the masseur, the shopkeeper, the gardener, the ice candy man etc. People she would have never known otherwise. Shanta's abduction at the end of the narrative brings about a twist and engages us as readers. Though Lenny is the narrator and also it is her experiences that we feel, yet the character of Shanta is the one that takes us through the events. Both these characters can be designated as subalterns. Even if Lenny was from a rich family, yet she was handicapped, a little girl of eight, and also a Parsee. She was a subaltern because of her physical deformity, gender and religion. She was also left out of the power structure not only because of her age and deformity but also because of her religion. Shanta, on the other hand, though she belonged to the major Hindu religion, she was only an Ayah with no voice and no power.

The servant quarters of the Sethi house provides us with many subaltern characters. The sweeper's family is one such. The characters Muchoo(mother) and Papoo(daughter) work in the Sethi household. The gardener Hari is an untouchable Hindu. Again, the cook Imam Din is also a subaltern. The Kabuli who sharpens knives also is a subaltern as he is an outsider and there is little he can do or say on partition or even the abduction of Shanta.

If we look acutely we can also consider the Sethi Family as subaltern because of their religious minority. The Parsees wait to join the winning side. They try to remain as neutral as possible so that they can save themselves as they are very few. They believe that they have no say in Partition as it would hardly matter to them whichever side they end up on. The Sethi family can be seen as representatives of the Parsees and the Parsees were minorities, out of the power structure which makes them subalterns in a sense. The meeting prayer held which was actually a meeting to discuss their situation in the Partition. Their speeches surface their fear of being left out. The only solution they find is to sit back and side with the winning side

Even the character of Papoo and Mochoo are of importance here. Though they do not have much of a say in partition yet the marriage of Papoo to a middle aged dwarf is significant from the subaltern perspective. Papoo is always thrashed by her mother for not working and one day we see that Papoo is being married off. She hardly had any say in any of it. Did partition

even matter to Papoo and her mother? They are the subalterns in the real sense. They had nothing much to lose in Partition and were least affected by it. Even the violence of partition meant nothing to them as they were celebrating Papoo's marriage in midst of all the refugees staying in the servant quarters. Here we can also question the idea of misrepresentation as there are chances that partition hastened the marriage of Papoo and that it was overlooked since she would be married anyway. They belonged to the low caste and may be her marriage instead of being seen as something tragic was passed off as usual.

Therefore, by presenting characters that are not a part of mainstream culture and at the same time deprived of a voice, we see that Sidhwa has successfully presented history from the point of view of a subaltern and provided an agency, a voice to the voiceless. At the same time she has also questioned the authorities and their contribution in the keeping the peace as we see that the government has clearly failed.

Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* is not only about the suffering of people belonging to the minority religion in a state but also of the oppression of women in a patriarchal society. Women face certain atrocities in a time of violence. The women body is both worshipped as well as condemned. It is seen as a space for contesting power. By dishonoring, or trespassing, the body of a woman, they feel that they had dishonored the country or religion she is related to. By humiliating her, they feel that they have avenged themselves. This very idea is pitiful one. As per Gayatri Chakraborty's definition of Subaltern the whole of Dutta family can be seen as subalterns as they belong to the minority and have suffered silently for years since independence.

Sudhamoy Dutta is an old respectable doctor living in the district of Sylhet. Sudhamoy is a staunch nationalist and believed in his country. His decision to live in Bangladesh while all his friends left for India was the reason he had to face many atrocities. During the war of Liberation 1971, he was caught by Pakistani soldiers and he was physically and mentally assaulted in ways one could not imagine. Even after such pain and torture Sudhamoy never lost hope. He also lost his home and land which he had to sell at a very low price as he knew he could not hold for long. Because he resisted at first, his daughter Maya, only eight years old, was kidnapped and returned only after two days. Such was the pain that Sudhamoy had to endure yet he never once thought of leaving his Bangladesh.

Sudhamoy Dutta had incalculated his beliefs of nationalism in his children. His son Suronjon Dutta and his daughter Nilanjana Dutta (Maya), were fierce, independent and strong youth. Suronjon at present was a young man in his mid twenties. He was a man with vast knowledge and a broad outlook. As a child, Suronjon had faced various situations where he would feel left out but Sudhamoy was always there to make them understand and bring them up as the right kind of person. Suronjon had once got into a quarrel with a boy in his class and they were hauling insults at one another when the boy called him a “Hindu”. Suronjon was much agitated by the remark. He thought it to be a derogatory word. It was only later that he realized that Hindu was a minority religion and he happened to be one.

His son, Suronjon Dutta, grew up to be an atheist. He was closer with his Muslim friends than his Hindu friends. His father had influenced him to grow up as “a right kind of person” than a Hindu or a Muslim. He was smart and intelligent. However, he did not have a job. When it came to jobs, others with lower scores than him seemed to get all the jobs. Suronjon was at a position where he began to question everything that he believed in. he started questioning what his father and grandfather had fought for or lived for. Did suronjon actually belong to Bangladesh? If so then why is he treated as the “other”? Why does he have to hide every time there were some riots? Why did he have to take help from some muslim friend to be safe in a nation which was as much as his as everyone else’s? He had equally contributed to the party.

The male characters suffered a lot and even tried to voice out their concerns, but the female characters suffered even more. They did have opinions and beliefs which were hugely overshadowed by their male counterparts. They suffered in the background quietly, silently, bottling up their grief and expressing their concern through tears. They had to face the wrath in silence. They had to take equal share in the sufferings of the actions taken or not taken by their male counterparts. The two female characters in the novel are Kironmoyee Datta and Nilonjona Datta. Kironmoyee is an obedient wife who would stand by her husband no matter the consequences. She is seen as a beautiful woman with great potential. Sudhamoy sacrifices more than one could endure but kironmoyee also goes hand in hand with him, one can hardly compare because both have been through so much. However, Kironmoyee does not feel the affinity towards Bangladesh as much as Sudhamoy. She wants to move away to India for her children’s sake, especially Maya. Kironmoyee had also sacrificed a lot like her husband and may be even

more. She was a very talented singer and even performed in public. But later due to rude remarks Kironmoyee stopped singing in public. She was again devastated when they had to leave their home and move to Dhaka in a rented house. She would cry silently missing her home and her plants which she loved very much. During the Liberation war, Sudhamoy was taken captive and returned in very bad shape. This was the only time when she had taken control. She decided to ferry across the Brahmaputra with Sudhamoy and her children. She gave up her name and called herself 'Fateema', she gave up on her konch Bengals, her vermilion parting in her hair and any other signs that would identify her as a Hindu wife. There she tended to Sudhamoy's wounds in silence. She did not cry, she did not grieve; she waited patiently, cooking and caring after her family. On the day of Liberation she cried her heart out "like a baby." But she never wore her konch Bengals and vermilion again. Kironmoyee was a deeply religious woman and this sacrifice not only meant she was sacrificing her religion but along with it her identity.

Maya, unlike her mother was a headstrong girl. She tried to change her condition by trying to belong. She even thought of marrying her lover Jahangir but she was not accepted. At a very young age Maya was abducted and returned after two days. She behaved unnaturally for months after that. This incident had left an indelible mark on her and the need to belong. At the end Maya's abduction breaks down her family and they finally submit when Sudhamoy decides to leave for India.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) deals with the social aspect of partition. It deals with a small village, Mano Majra, at the border of Punjab which acts as a microcosm. This paper deals with the theme of partition. It aims to reveal the cause of all the violence. It raises the question of who is to blame. Characters like Hukum Chand and Iqbal depict the intellectual, the link between Mano Majra. The people of Mano Majra are unaware of the political changes and see no reason to like or dislike the independence of India. They are contending in their little world filled with communal brotherhood and love. It is only the murder of Ramlala and the arrival of the ghost trains with dead bodies that there is commotion in the little village. Hukum Chand decides to deport the Muslims of the village to the nearby refugee camp in Chuddunugger from where they will be sent to Pakistan. Parallel to this story runs the love story of Jugga and Nooran, the Imam's daughter. Jugga sacrifices his life to save Nooran who is on the train and

this last act saves the lives of Muslims on the train. It is their love which transcends all manmade barriers and depicts hope in a time of bestiality.

Amitav Ghosh has very successfully bridged the gap between fiction and subaltern. Through his fictional narrative *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Ghosh has been able to render a perspective that focuses on the little narratives against the grand. He has selected small events, characters that are not mainstream and created a collage that gives voice to the historically repressed event and the marginal. Ghosh employs a complex inversion of the subaltern method into his fiction. He neglects some aspects of mainstream history by keeping it silent till the end and then meditating on the impregnated silence that has so much to say. In *Shadow Lines*, Tridib's death is the silence that the narrator has to shatter so that he finds his own voice and sheds off Tridib's overpowering influence.

This 'silence' is an important aspect that interests the subaltern. This silence is the silence of the subaltern against the mainstream and it is this silence that needs an agency to speak. Ghosh uses this 'silence' as the repressed history around which he structures his narrative. The recovery of the repressed silence of Tridib's death is what is central here. By suppressing the voice of the narrator, giving the reader a preconceived notion that it is Tridib's voice, his ideas, his notions etc and that the narrator is only the spokesperson here, Ghosh brings into notice that a subaltern has a repressed voice and the journey here is to find his subaltern repressed identity. Therefore, identity plays a pivotal role here. The narrator is nameless, with no concerns of his own, his love for Ila is also at dead end and so is his career. He has nothing but a journey, a search of his identity or rather the silencing of Tridib's identity. The moral shift in the fiction is tied up with concerns about subaltern voice. The narrator finally overcomes the enthrallment to Tridib that keeps him silent through the novel and speaks in his own voice at the end after the redemptive relationship with Tridib's girlfriend May allows him to recover a lost selfhood.

Another important aspect that can be related to subalternity is migration and dislocation which leads to not only violence but also the loss of history. The idea of borders is only a mirage which is made very clear in the conversation of Thamma and her son where she questions about the presence of borders. Thamma is confused as why there is no actual difference between the two sides and if there is no such separation then all the war and blood was meaningless. In another episode the narrator keeps searching for an incident that he clearly remembers but could

not find it in his history books or the papers. He goes around searching for it in frenzy because he feels that it was very important and had quite an impact during that time. This loss of history can be seen as one instance of the loss of subaltern history or its aspects with the prevailing mainstream history. Therefore Ghosh has provided various instances where he has placed individual history against mainstream history. The loss of individual history triggers the need to belong to mainstream history.

The Partition of India in 1947 not only resulted in political or historical changes but was accompanied by a baggage of trauma which effected generations after. Chapter three: “Cleaving the Trauma of Select Partition Narratives”, will discuss the outcomes of Partition that ingrained different kinds of trauma on its victims. Partition inflicted fatal wounds which are still healing. These wounds are passed on from generation to generation in the form of stories, tales or narratives that describe the experiences and the trauma inflicted. Every experience and the trauma lives on through the narratives feeding on the souls of generations after that relived this experience in their imagination.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* (1988) is a mirror to the traumatic experiences of Partition of India in 1947. It explores how the idea of a nationalism or national identity was turned into communalism. One's identity was defined not by the nation he belongs to but by the religion he belonged to. This deeply ingrained communalism resulted in uncountable problems such as the dishonouring of women belonging to the other caste, which is particularly dealt with in Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man*. Sidhwa shifts the attention from androcentric reality to gynocentric reality which puts forth the sufferings of the female or feminine psyche and experiences with acute freshness. She brings to forefront a female protagonist, keeping behind the male characters that are passive, lagging behind or else indulged in violence. The narrator being a girl child brings forth issues that are commonly faced by women such as gender biasness, forced marriages, racism etc. since the focus of this chapter is to cleave the trauma that resulted from partition, the character of Lenny's ayah holds prominent place here. Partition narratives have used the 'women as victim' paradigm as an important device to present the violence emitted during the beastial times. Therefore, *Ice Candy Man* also uses the women's consciousness and her shared experiences to foreground political turmoil. Women are victims caught in the whirlwind of political changes. The major female voices in the novel are of Lenny,

ayah, her grandmother, Mrs Sethi etc. These characters do not just witness the violence from an impersonal distance but instead their small world is affected by it. Violence seeps into their world though they try to keep themselves objectively distanced. The story has been narrated through the eyes of Lenny who projects not only the turmoil, trauma and physical pain inflicted on women but also the degrading status of man and how they objectify women reducing them to mere sexual objects to be preyed on and played with in their whims and fancy.

With the cracking of India into modern India and Pakistan, there followed a wild untamed rage and genocide. Lenny depicts how the ice candy man seizes this opportunity to pollute Ayah and brings a mob into their house. Lenny being innocent betrays her Ayah who is dragged by the mob and raped. Ice candy man then sets her up as a prostitute in a house in Lahore. He later claims to be in love with her and wants to marry her. Ayah accepts her fate and even her name is changed to Mumtaj but this does not improve her situation. She still lives in the 'kotha' where she has to perform in front of strangers. When she is found by grandmother, she insists on returning to her family and leaving the Ice Candy Man. Ayah is later saved by the women of the Sethi family who bring her back to a rehabilitation center.

Sidhwa has given us an insight into the communal frenzy, genocide, hatred and exploitation of women during the turbulent times of 1947. The series of events are described in such a way that the tragedy comes to life and this distinguishes Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* from other Partition narratives. The character of ayah and her tragedy is only one aspect of the atrocities faced by the women during Partition of 1947. According to Urvashi Butalia, around 33000-50000 women were raped abducted or killed and ayah is only an example of such atrocity. Another character is of Hamida that gives us a glimpse into the life of women who faced such atrocity. Mrs Sethi brings in Hamida from the rehabilitation camp to replace ayah. The focus on the rehabilitation camp is a mirror to vivid reality describing the fruitless attempts, made by common people who were moved by the trauma and pain they witnessed during partition, to recover and rehabilitate these women. The efforts made by the Sethi women are remarkable. Lenny could see their effort which affected even their family life. Lenny's mother and electric aunt would go for roundabouts with petrol in their dikkies to help people cross the border safely.

The trauma or violation that Hamida faced is unknown but we know that she has left behind four children and her husband. Her family would not accept her back and not let her meet her children as well. This situation was faced by many countless women after Partition, unmarried women even more so as they had no future prospects. Urvashi Butalia deals with this issue in her essay, where she stresses about the fate of these women who were rehabilitated. They were not accepted by their family and the children born of this violation faced even more rejection. Hamida is an ignorant woman who feels that all she had to face was because of her 'kismet', her fate. Hamida believes that we mortals are 'khut-putlis, puppets, in the hands of fate. It's my kismet that's no good', she tells Lenny once. Ironically, it is this belief of hers in the inevitability of fate that helps sustain her and sees her through this crisis in her life. However, Hamida is only a minor character and unlike ayah, we do not know what happened to her at the end of the novel. Yet her character is equally important as through her Sidhwa has portrayed not only the tragedy faced by such women but also the failure of the government to take proper decisions regarding the rehabilitation of the women and people in general.

Another important aspect is the tragedy that befell papoo, the daughter of muchho, the sweeper. From the very beginning we see that papoo is maltreated by her mother. The cause is mostly the household chores. Muchoo beats her daughter regularly for not finishing her work properly, so much that one time she was hospitalized for a concussion in her head. All this however, least affected Papoo. She keeps on her jolly attitude even when she is being beaten up by her mother. Papoo is maltreated by her mother mainly because she is a girl and thus a liability. Once, we see Maccho's anger explode at her daughter for not doing her household chores: Wait till I fix you, you shaitan! You choorail! 'Macho screams vindictively. 'You've got a jinni in you.... but I'll knock it out or I'm not your mother! Just you see what I have in store for you... It'll put you right! You'll scream to the dead... May you die!' yet Papoo is resilient. She is hurt only when her marriage is fixed to an elderly man. She is drugged so that she does not cause any trouble. When Lenny visits her on her wedding, she notices that Papoo is sitting dreamily, half asleep with a plastered smile on her face. We do not know what befell on Papoo after she is married off yet one can only imagine the worst scenario. She would most probably be leading a life of sexual and physical violence. This sudden marriage of Papoo should not be overlooked as a case of mere child marriage. It can also be seen as a ripple of Partition. Sidhwa again draws our attention to victimization of women but here the victimization is a result of

collective action such as the communal riots that followed the partition. Riots are largely orchestrated by mobs and become a signifier of a collective male victimizer.

We are also reported about the situation in the city through the two places, i.e, Lahore and Gurdaspur. Lahore is already burning as Lenny and ayah witness it from the terrace of the Ice Candy Man. Everyone was leaving Lahore, Lenny's street was empty except for two Sikh families that had stayed behind. The situation in Gurdaspur which is another major city is reported by Hari, the gardener. There is 'trouble' and then 'the situation is reported to be under control', which, as the gardener says, only means that there is 'uncontrollable butchering going on in Gurdaspur' (p. 148). Very soon there is news that a train comes from Gurdaspur to Lahore. As the Ice-candy man reports to his friends soon after the arrival of this train, 'Everyone in it is dead. Butchered. They are all Muslim. There are no young women among the dead! Only two gunny-bags full of women's breasts.'(Sidhwa,149). Ice-candy man knows about the incident because this train full of corpses incidentally included his own relatives, for whom he has been anxiously waiting for more than a day. The Hindus and Sikhs in the group cannot face him after this incident.

Ranna's story provides an insight into the situation in the villages which was no less terrifying than the one in cities. Whole villages were wiped out in a blink. When Lenny visits Dara Tek Singh with Imam Din for the first time, she saw the harmony and brotherhood that prevailed in the village amongst the Muslims and the Sikhs. The Sikhs assured them that no harm would ever come to them as they were brothers. But in her second visit we can feel the undercurrent of the tensions that had seeped in. There were Atkaris(sikh religious soldiers) roaming in the village fair with their long kirpans and swords. More were pouring in everyday and when accused the Sikh Lambardar said that it was only for their safety. After a few days we see that Ranna along with few relatives turn up at the Sethi household to Imam Din as they have nowhere else to go. They inform that the whole village has been murdered within a night. There were many such villages in border areas that faced the same fate. The trauma that a child like Ranna had faced was immense and a boy who had once been full of mischief and playfulness had only misery and hollow eyes filled with terror and pain.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1958) deals with the impact of Partition in a small village on the border of Punjab called Mano Majra. Unlike Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* that

focusses mostly on the atrocities on women during Partition, Singh tries to encompass the entire picture by creating a microcosm of India. Singh depicts the traumas inflicted due to migration, killings, communal violence etc which were the instant outcomes of Partition. The violence of Partition seeps in with the arrival of Hukum Chand and the ghost trains at the same night. These 'ghosts trains' were filled with corpses coming from the other side of the Border. Similar trains were also going from this side of the border as reported by the Sub-inspector to the Magistrate, Hukum Chand.

Mano Majra had remained unaffected until the arrival of the ghost train. The arrival of the ghost train, filled with corpses at Mano Majra from Pakistan, Created a commotion among the Sikhs and Muslims, who have lived together for centuries. The trauma faced by the characters of Train to Pakistan are not individual traumas but presented in a collective manner. We get a hint of the situation prevailing in other parts through the conversation of the Magistrate and the Sub-inspector. This peace is soon shattered when the second ghost train arrives in broad daylight. The people are restricted from going anywhere near the railway station. Wood and kerosene was collected from the villagers. Everyone whispered about it, women did not cook meals; men did not feed the cattle. The villagers waited and finally in the evening they witnessed the fire and smoke from their roof tops and with the smell of searing flesh in fire they realized that corpses were being burned. This train changed the whole scenario of Mano Majra. Communal tension seeped in and a silence engulfed the whole village. It rained that night and another situation came to the forefront. The river had swelled with the rain and the villagers noticed something floating in the river. These were dead bodies of men, women and children that were killed in some nearby village and thrown into the river. Dead bodies of young and old, men and women, some without limbs, some had their bellies torn open, and the skin was full of kites and vulture.

Another trauma faced by the villagers was the migration of the Muslims from the village. it is finally decided that the Muslims would leave for the safety of everyone in the village. Meet Singh assures them that this migration to the refugee camp is only temporary. He asks them to lock their houses and takes the responsibility to look after the cattle till they return. The villagers were unaware that they would be sent to Pakistan from the refugee camp. That night was one of the saddest nights in the village. As Nooran walked across the village to meet Jugga's mother,

she could see that everyone was crying as if there was death in every house. Next morning trucks arrived in the village along with armed soldiers. They called for all the Muslim to come out who were going to Pakistan and slowly the Muslim began to come out of their homes along with all their belongings and the rest of the Mano Majra came out to see them off. Most of them brought with them huge luggage and the Muslim Officer warned them to take only the necessary things. The lambardar was shocked along with all the villagers when they were told that the convoy was going to Pakistan. No one in the village was ready to look after property of the Muslims as it was not a matter of a day or two, everything was confusing and left to fate. The Officer asked the villagers to look at the property and houses of the Muslims who were taken to Pakistan but the villagers were not ready as they thought property poisons one's mind. But the soldiers insisted that they can carry only necessary belongings and no cattle. The Muslims looked on helplessly and the convey left and all the villagers went back to their home with heavy heart.

Apart from this major pain of death, violence and partition, Singh has also portrayed heart wrenching episodes of situations faced during Partition. In one such episode he talks about a Sikh family crossing the border. Sunder Singh was an army man. He was travelling with his wife and three children, the train was full of passengers and the train had no food and water. The train was held up at a station for four days surprisingly no one was allowed to get off. Sunder Singh's children cried for food and water. Sunder Singh gave them his urine to drink. Soon he had no option left, so he removed his revolver and shot them all. He also wanted to kill himself but then the train moved on there was no point in killing himself. Sunder heaved out the dead bodies of his wife and children and came alone to India. Such were the times and the brutality which had left an everlasting impact on the mind.

Partition of India in 1947 was the reason for a number of atrocities faced by people on both sides of the border. The cost they had to pay for independence was much more than expected. The trauma that came along with Partition lasted for generations. Communal violence, riots, mass migration, violence, disillusionment, rape, anxiety, death etc were only the direct impact of Partition but the trauma remained forever and was passed on to generations. Even after seventy two years of Partition, one would still shudder at the thought of the bestial times when men were out of their senses. Partition has left an indelible mark on Indian history. The horror it unleashed is a very critical aspect to understand. A nation that was a symbol of peace and non-

violence showed such barbarism is something inexplicable. The narratives provide a vivid picture of the circumstances and along with that they probe into the deeper psyche of the characters. No doubt the pain is immeasurable but the trauma is immense and psychological pain exceeds physical pain.

Chapter four: “Borders as a Social Construct Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* and Saadat Hassan Manto’s “Toba Tek Singh” deals with the mechanisms of creating borders and its impact. It interrogates the meagerness and futility of borders as borders are only a mirage, lines are drawn but they are unable to divide the shared history and memories, neither can culture and race be kept separate as they will intermingle no matter how many lines are drawn. Amitav Ghosh, through his novel, *The Shadow Lines* interrogates the validity of the geopolitical borders of a nation. The prevailing concept that a nation is divided on the basis of race, religion, language and borders are proved irrelevant here. By presenting characters from different countries, religion and generations, Ghosh has adequately provided the space for a detailed in depth analysis. Thamma was born and brought up in Dhaka. She completed her studies from Dhaka University. After her marriage she moved to Calcutta along with her husband. After his death due to pneumonia she managed to acquire a job in Calcutta as a teacher in a girl’s school where she rendered twenty seven years of service. Meanwhile, India was divided and she never returned to Bangladesh after Partition of 1947. After her retirement, Thamma learns of a relative staying in Calcutta. She insists on visiting them. From them she learns that her Jethamoshai is still living in their old house in Dhaka and is taken care of by a Muslim refugee family from India who had started living there.

Though Thamma had a problematic relationship with her uncle during their childhood, she suddenly feels the need to reunite and save her Jethamoshai, who she feels is leading a hard life their alone, wants to bring him back to India to live with them and take care of him in his final days. She learns that Maya, her sister is in Dhaka with her husband for some diplomatic work. Thamma writes to her sister and arranges a trip to Dhaka to retrieve their Jethamoshai. She reminisces on how they had spend their childhood believing that the other part of the house in which their cousins and Jethamoshai had lived to be upside down. This journey was a momentous one as May Price was also visiting them in Calcutta then and so they decided that they would take Tridib and May along with them to Dhaka to visit their ancestral home.

Thamma along with Mayadebi, May and Tridib started their journey. This is Thamma's first visit to Dhaka after the partition. She is very excited and expects to see the boundary between India and Bangladesh as they cross by air. So she asks her son "whether she would be able to see border between India and East Pakistan from plane" (Ghosh,151). Her son mocks her saying that it is not like in school atlas where there is green on one side and scarlet on the other. He says that she would not be able to see anything except clouds and if she is lucky, some green fields. The grandmother is surprised and agitated. She feels that all the bloodshed has been meaningless if the countries are not strictly divided. This naive remark of Thamma mirrors the disillusionment regarding borders. The concept of countries being divided literally by borders is questioned here. It also intensifies the meaninglessness and meagerness of borders. This disillusionment of borders had made her realize the futility of war. Even after Partition everything remained same. Therefore all the bloodshed had no meaning if there was no fixed visible line between the two sides. Ghosh manifests the fluidity of border lines and also focuses on how this borders separate people and families.

This fluidity of borders is recognized by Tridib who mentors the narrator, teaching him to cross borders by a strong imagination. Tridib is a man with an extraordinary imagination. He passes on this skill to the narrator when he teaches him to conjure up images from places in Atlas so exactly that the imagined places seem real. He knew places even before he had moved out of Calcutta. So, when he visits London he is only reliving the experiences of Tridib. Tridib had taught him the desire to imagine that could carry people across borders and continents, beyond the limits of one's mind to other places and other realities. He makes it seem so real that there is no border between oneself and one's image in the mirror. The narrator like Tridib had perfected the skill of imagination. Through the narrator's experiences and Tridib's use of imagination, Ghosh tries to show the meagerness and futility of borders. He tries to prove that a person can transcend borders with one's imagination. By blurring the thin line between reality and imagination he exposes the fragility of borders.

Ghosh foregrounds that nations are not naturally formed and boundaries are not fixed but they are socio-political construct. So, fighting and bloodshed are not acceptable in the name of nation. It is futile to divide nations as there is no end to these demands of Partition as it will forever exist. This frustration is seen in Jethamoshai's stubbornness not to leave Bangladesh.

Even when he is deranged he still is adamant about his decision. After the partition his sons had requested him to go to India along with them, but he had refused it. Jethamoshai believed that even if he goes to India there is no stopping as borders are randomly created at the whims of the politicians. He felt that he belonged to the place he was born in and if he moves away he will lose his identity. One's identity is connected to the place he lives in and the decision to move is lethal. A person, according to him, should die in the same place that he is born in. This concept is also reflected in Thamma's excitement in returning to Dhaka. As they entered the streets, both Maya and Thamma began to feel like young girls. They remembered the sweet stall and the book shop. Even after living for so many years in Calcutta she never felt at home. The author considers that the concept of nation with borders is mirage or memory.

Thamma's idea of borders is a fixed one. Ghosh interrogates this fixity of borders by juxtaposing it with the globalized context. In the present state confining to one place is impossible and so travelling inevitable. Therefore, he uses the motif of travelling which contributes to the dismantling of constructed borders. *The Shadow Lines* spans three generations of the Dutta Chaudhuri family of Bengal and the Price family of London. The members of the two families travel to Calcutta, Dhaka and London. *The Shadow Lines* also blurs the distinction between races and culture. Though the correspondence and love between the two families, Ghosh proves that borders cannot separate the intermingling of different cultures and also that a nation is not defined only by its religion race or culture. The Price family and the Dutta family belong to two cultures that are distinctly apart yet the frequent visits bring about a cultural transformation. The close affinity between the two families results in a cultural amalgamation.

Ghosh also blurs the distinction between the voiced and the voiceless. Through *The Shadow Lines* Ghosh depicts characters like Khalil and May who would go out of their way to help people. Whenever there are riots media always highlights the mainstream news leaving out the voiceless martyred. By doing this they infuriate the public giving them reasons to spread out the riots even more. Unfortunately the praiseworthy works like relief works, peace marches and humane pieces of reporting are not foregrounded. Such riots have disappeared into a 'volcano of silence' (Ghosh, 230) and have not been thought about or discussed. Ghosh provides space for the voiceless people who have done memorable work. For example, after the partition all the relatives of Jethamoshai had left Bangladesh and scattered across several countries. He stays

alone in his ancestral house. But fortunately he is looked after by Khalil and his family, a Muslim from Murshidabad in Bengal. Khalil takes Jethamoshai in his rickshaw to follow the car of Mayadebi and Thamma and ultimately to send him with them. But when the mob surrounded Khalil was also killed.

Similarly, Saadat Hasan Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" also establishes the fact that borders are incapable of dividing people and history. "Toba Tek Singh" focuses on the sense of despair and dislocation caused by the Partition of 1947. He vividly recreates the anger, horror, and trauma faced by the victims of arbitrary borders. Manto is one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century. Through his work he has portrayed much of the social violence that prevailed during Partition. The times were one of madness and Manto has explored this theme to shed light on the foolish and irrational forces that dominated Partition of 1947. Insanity is a mechanism used to highlight the blind violence and the arbitrariness of borders.

The story opens in a mental asylum where the inmates are to be transported to their respective countries after Partition. Like everything else, the government of both countries decided that they would exchange the inmates of the mental asylum on basis of the country they belonged to. The Muslim lunatics who do not have families in Hindustan are to be sent to Pakistan while all the Hindu lunatics are to be sent to Hindustan. As the inmates of the asylum learn that they are being exchanged, they began to react in their own peculiar ways. Some could not understand where they are or where they will be sent, while some were sad at the idea of being separated from their loved ones. Some started fighting with each other imagining that they were the politicians while one climbed a branch declaring that he will neither be in Hindustan nor Pakistan but stay at the branch in a tree. Apart from these lunatics, the asylum also had pretenders who had escaped the gallows by pretending to be insane. Even these people could not gather much information though they understood that India was being divided into two. The questions asked by these lunatics are in a sense meaningful as they question the very basis of how a country could be divided into two.

The asylum and the inmates allow Manto an opportunity to attack the politics and religious dogmatism of the period. One of the inmates proclaims himself to be Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Others declare themselves to be Tara Singh, Sikh and Hindu politicians and freedom fighters and a tremendous row ensues and everyone indulges in the fight. Another inmate who

has become insane after being rejected in love learns that his beloved will be in Pakistan while he in Hindustan, climbs up a tree and gives an intense two hour lecture on the sensitive topic of India-Pakistan. When the guards try to bring him down he climbs even higher and insists on living on the tree. More confusion is faced by the Anglo-Indians who do not know where they belong to. This inversion of reality where the characters inside the asylum take up the role of politicians and people outside, while the sane people living outside behave insanely, in inhuman and irrational ways reveals the irony of the situation. Madness becomes a term that defines the political and social upheaval of Partition. Walls and borders lose their meaning and mentally deranged characters face the same anxiety, contradictions and divided loyalties faced by sane people who are dislocated and misplaced.

The character of Bishan Singh intensifies this idea. Singh is also known by the name Toba Tek singh which is also the name of his village. Bishan sngh is confused regarding the location of his village. He tries to find out and questions everyone while he is given ambiguous answers by the gaurds. Later his friend Fazal Ali who comes to visit him informs him that his family has left for India but he also is confused about the location of his village. In frustration Bishan Singh would always mutter odd long fragmented sentences. His sentences went thus, *“Aupur di, gur gur di, annex di, bedhayana di, mung di daal of the Pakistan and Hindustan of the dur phitte muh.”*

Only when they are taken to the border to be exchanged Bishan Singh asks the concerned officer and learns that his village is in Pakistan. Now Bishan refuses to move from his spot. He stands in between both the borders for a day and a night. The guards try to persuade him in every way they could but to no avail. Singh will not move from there. At the end after standing there for a whole day and a night, he gives out a shriek and falls on the ground, dying in between the barbed wire which is neither Pakistan nor India. His meaningless fragmented utterances are symbolic of the meaninglessness of the breach of India and Pakistan.

Therefore, chapter four establishes that borders though could be formed with blood and war, riots and revolutions, it is still impossible to divide a person's loyalties and memories. No matter how far one might be from his own place or for how long in another country, they will always carry a specific concept of their home. That home can never be forgotten or taken away

by drawing arbitrary lines. Memories and histories live on forever. These borders do not create new homes but are pregnant with hatred, violence, communalism, and war.

All the four chapters deal with four different aspects of Partition yet there remains a lot that is still unsaid and needs to be voiced. No doubt it has dealt with the major aspects of the Partition of India in 1947 such as history, trauma, subaltern and borders, yet it has left behind an indelible mark that needs to be thoroughly understood as understanding leads to healing. While dealing with his four issues other aspects has also been touched such as violence, migration, displacement, riots, anxiety etc yet this are not issues that can be just left without delving deep into it.

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