Shodhbodhalaya: An International Peer reviewed Multidisciplinary Journal

Volume 2 | Issue 1 | ISSN: 2584-1807 | (https://shodhbodh.com/)

PARTITION NARRATIVES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF AMITAV GHOSH AND BAPSI SIDHWA'S WORKS

Manjeet Kumar

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Government College Bahadurgarh (Evening Shift)

Abstract:

This research paper embarks on a critical comparative study of the works of Amitav Ghosh and Bapsi Sidhwa, with a focus on their depiction of the Partition of India and the ensuing violence. By exploring Ghosh's "The Shadow Lines" and "Sea of Poppies" alongside Sidhwa's "Ice-Candy Man" and "Water," the paper investigates how these authors narrate the complexities of identity, displacement, and the human cost of political upheavals. The study aims to unravel how historical events are personalized in their narratives, offering a voice to the marginalized and presenting a nuanced understanding of the past. It examines the psychological impact of Partition on different communities, while also considering the role of gender, as depicted in Sidhwa's works. Furthermore, this paper delves into the ideological perceptions of the minority Parsi community during the tumultuous times of Partition, as reflected in Sidhwa's narrative stance. By dissecting the varied responses to the political rhetoric of the time, this study seeks to illuminate the broader implications of Partition and its portrayal in key literary works.

Keywords: Partition of India, Amitav Ghosh, Bapsi Sidhwa, Violence, Narrative Analysis, Historical Fiction, Parsi Perspective, Gender and Displacement, Post-Colonial Literature

Introduction

To partition is to split or separate by establishing a border that separates or divides. As British colonization came to a close, India and Pakistan were split into their own nations. Political figures such as Gandhi, Jinnah, and Nehru sought to bring about national division in the name of bringing peace to the people's lives. India finally achieved its long-sought goal of independence from British imperialism in 1947, but only in a weakened state. While India did get its freedom, the authorities there failed miserably in their attempt to unite the country's Hindu and Muslim populations. As a consequence, Muslims formed their own country while Hindus and adherents of other faiths formed their own. Many minorities, including Hindus, considered India their country, whereas Muslims saw Pakistan as theirs. Nearly half a million people were killed in sectarian riots linked to the partition, drawing the boundary between these two nations with the blood of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs.

For the average person, the division became a more pressing issue, particularly in Punjab and Lahore. For India, it was a Watershed moment in history.

One is compelled to seek out the broader implications of this terrible event because to its size, the forced migration, the looting, the abductions, and the rapes of defenseless women and girls, as well as the vicious politics of the time. People conclude that the partition of India was more perilous than British control due to all the aforementioned reasons. Sidhwa says that while most people were aware of the consequences of division, their views on it were mixed.

AMITAV GHOSH

In his fiction, Amitav Ghosh utilizes historical events to provide a voice to those who have been marginalized and to reveal a different view of the past than what historians can provide. Ghosh emphasizes how public events affect private lives by recounting them across time. His narrative in The Shadow Lines takes us on a journey across time, challenging conventional wisdom while revealing hidden truths about the past. Countless people may be seen in each of his personas.

People impacted by the riots and division of the past might be shown via the recounting of historical events. From the

point of view of the average person, Ghosh depicts the effects of riots and partitions, which cause people to flee to unsafe countries.

The historical event that is the center of attention in The Shadow Lines is the riot that occurred in the Khulna area in 1964. Through the tragic death of their son Tridib, Ghosh portrays the impact of the violence on the Datta Chaudary family. Ghosh shows the women's consciousness of the need for political independence and their will to struggle for it via the grandma Thamma. Characters like Thamma were relocated from Dhaka to Bengal due to an event that he explains. When Thamma returns to Dhaka to pick up her uncle, she experiences a sense of being an outsider. The rioting and the subsequent interference with public events and individual life put a stop to Thamma's nationalism.

Riots in communities often have political, religious, economic, cultural, and linguistic underpinnings. They are usually carried out after careful preparation. As a result, the crimes and brutalities perpetrated are likewise meticulously orchestrated.

Additionally, anti-social components are used for this objective. In India, riots have been commonplace since the 1960s. The deaths during the riots were cruel and horrific, but we failed to take them seriously enough to find a solution.

Independence, according to many Indian politicians, would put a stop to strife. The Muslim community's socioeconomic structure, however, saw a dramatic shift after independence. As part of their campaign against the Nehru government, Hindu organizations were demoralizing Indian Muslims. The Muslims were branded as spies and operatives of Pakistan. Murders of innocent Muslims occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s as a result of mob violence. The minority group was said to have been the spark that ignited the riots. The riots were mostly driven by

political agendas. A methodological lunacy manifested itself when riots that had previously lasted just two or three days now dragged on for weeks.

riots have persisted and even escalated in India since its independence. In 1730, Ahmedabad was the site of the first riot. The riots in Moplah in 1921, Calcutta in 1946, and Naokhali in 1809 followed. Following the murder of Mahatma Gandhi, a decade of harmony ensued from 1950 to 1960. Brutal riots erupted in Ranchi, Calcutta, Jamshedpur, and Rourkela in 1964. Ghosh describes what happened to him that made him want to create The Shadow Lines. It stands apart from the works of other Indian artists who portrayed the riots that accompanied the partition of India. Ghosh depicts the riots' effects on everyday people's lives and relationships in addition to recounting the historical events:

He thinks back to 1984, when a series of violent events rocked India to its core: the Bhopal gas tragedy, the death of Indira Gandhi, riots in several cities, and separatist violence in Punjab. In the wake of the carnage, Ghosh recalled seeing riots when he was a kid. A somber examination of the aftereffects of horrific experiences is central to the narrative of The Shadow Lines. (Banerjee 43-44)

Religious intolerance and long-standing animosity have dogged Hindu and Muslim societies for millennia. The level of tension changes as circumstances do. In the course of their daily lives, they incorporate each other's cultural customs and religious beliefs. Tension may sometimes explode into wrath. Riots of any form are made worse by economic crises. The situation escalates into riots as employers' power struggles and jealousy in the workplace spark a power conflict. A major economic crisis hit the nation in the middle of the 1960s, shifting political and party loyalties. Hindu groups took advantage of the ongoing unrest in the 1960s to portray Muslims in a negative light, suggesting that they were loyal to Pakistan. Midway through the 1960s, a new wave of Muslims in India started to come to terms with the fact that, in order to be really Muslim in India after partition, they needed to find common ground with other secular groups. This realization prompted a different kind of connection, particularly in places where riots broke out within the community. The community phenomenon, as previously noted,

emerges when religion is used for political purposes, according to the engineer. Therefore, it is false to say that the "illiterate and backward" people are to blame for causing conflict or violence inside communities. (3).

This chapter uses Amitav Ghosh's book The Shadow Lines as a key to unlock the past. The goal of every book of Amitav Ghosh is to unearth the hidden past. The events surrounding India's division and subsequent independence are discussed in The Shadow Lines. Ghosh draws attention to the vast

expanse of lost history that renders all recorded histories insufficient. Despite bringing attention to the collective and individual pain and grief, he keeps quiet. The novel's central emphasis is the 1964 Hindu-Muslim riot in Khulna and its effects on Dhaka and Calcutta, although it also takes place in London, Colombo, and Delhi. Additionally, he brings up the events of WWII, India's partition, anti- Sikh initiatives in New Delhi, and the theft of the holy artifact in Srinagar. There was victory and sorrow in the transfer of authority from the British to India. Feelings of misery, powerlessness, and despair gripped India. Neither the officials who made the decision nor the millions of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs who would be killed as a result of it had any idea what it meant. The event's effects were totally unanticipated. State governments were thrown into disarray as a result of social and ethnic upheaval. He was presented with the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1989 for the work. This work is regarded as an exceptional addition to Indian English literature due to its "sensitivity of perception," "living Indian quality of its language," and "expert recreation of atmosphere," according to the Sahitya Akademi citation. cited in Banerjee's work (44).

The worst carnage occurred in the state of Bengal. Such bloodshed occurred in Calcutta, the capital city, and was the consequence of an environment of dread, distrust, and retribution that had been building for some time. Bengal and Punjab, two crucial provinces, had religiously diverse populations. Land communities, economic systems, and governmental administration and military organizations were all divided as a result of the split. Calcutta, the economic hub and

main port of East Bengal, was annexed by India, threatening the state's reliance on jute exports. The boundary severed the province of Punjab's river and canal system, cutting off its extensive irrigation network. The sacred city of Amristar in India and Lahore in Pakistan were the two capitals of the Sikh community, which was divided in two. Among the Muslims, one-third were still in India, while millions of Hindus retreated to Pakistan. The worst period of civil unrest in India's history occurred during independence, and the subsequent acute suffering endured by the people of both nations was devastating:

Part one, "Going Away," and part two, "Coming Home," of Ghosh's The Shadow Lines confuse this "classical" globe map into East and West. Ironically, the narrator is compelled to ask, "What is home?" since his characters go off in all sorts of other ways, making him wonder whether there is a distinct hometown apart from one's experiences abroad. (Dixon 10)

The Shadow Lines delves into the question of country and belonging as it contemplates the aftereffects of a historically bloodiest event: the partition of India in 1947, which split the subcontinent into Pakistan and India and separated the Muslim and Hindu populations. Invisibly, the past looms over the present and future. In their varied reflections, the recollections of the riot cast varying hues on the same event. The boundary that unites and divides us is symbolized by The Shadow Lines. You can't see the line, but it's there. By attempting to recreate "public" history via a reconstruction of "private" or personal history, Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines reflects the need to authenticate the postcolonial experience and reminds us that those who fail to learn from past will always repeat it. It is a detailed analysis of how a story gains credibility both internally and with its target audience (Bagchi 187).

Nation states are built and destroyed as a result of human activity in writing and rewriting history. Many incidents are unrecorded and forgotten, while others are recounted. For example, there was the riot in 1964. By 1979, little record of the 1964 riot remained in books or history. In this work, Amitav Ghosh makes an effort to portray the monetary, social, and political effects of British dominance over India. He shows that we can't rely on the stability of national boundaries and that history is unpredictable. The riots are presumably happening at the same time. The riots

at Muzaffar Nagar are the latest iteration of a pattern that began in 1964 in Calcutta and has since spread to Delhi (1984), Meerut (1987), Bhagalpur (1989), and so on. "There are no reliable estimates of how many people were killed in the riots of 1964." This statement seems to be part of a larger pattern of mistrust, suspicion, and conditioned brains being activated by rumors. The figure may be anything from a few hundred to a few thousand; certainly not much lower than the casualties in the 1962 conflict (TSL 229).

Historical ties bind Calcutta, London, and Dhaka. From war-torn London to civil unrest in post-partition East Bengal to riot-stricken Calcutta, The Shadow Lines portrays the mentality of a violent man in the modern world:

The Shadow Lines, Amitav Ghosh's highly lauded novel, centers on three manifestations of violence that defined the past century: the brutality of war, the bloodshed caused by extremist groups, and the anonymous bloodshed that breaks out in riots. (Das and Anshumathi 197)

This historical process is marked by an inherent historical inevitability. Ghosh couldn't shake the feeling that the bloodshed that ensued after Mrs. Indira Gandhi's murder proved once and for all that destructive violence is pointless.

Every now and again, the author takes a trip down memory lane, returning to his youth. Even as an adult, he longs for the familiarity and comfort of his youth, whether it be the people or the locations he remembers fondly. The narrator, now a man of around 27 years of age, recounts the events of his youth in 1979. The narrator brings the memories back to life by drawing on his own experiences as well as those of others. While the narrator was born in 1952, the novel's protagonist, Tridib, was born in 1931. Beginning with the year of the Second World War's onset in 1939 and concluding in 1964 with the narrators of the riots in Dhaka and Calcutta, the narrative traces its occurrences. Because it depicts how community extremists lived off of spreading rumors, which fueled wrath and set off bloodshed, Amitav Ghosh's story is very current and pertinent. From the Mahabharata era all the way into the modern day, those in authority have been able to cling to power by using and religious conflicts. Histories may note that a conflict occurred and a certain amount of lives were lost, but they avoid delving into the

minds of those whose lives have been shattered by global bloodshed. The narrator was had to face the harsh truth by the horrific riot that the people quickly forgot about them: The riots had gone from public consciousness by the end of January 1964, when they no longer appeared in newspapers or the collective imagination of "responsible opinion." They had also faded from history books and archives. Silence had engulfed them as they had faded from consciousness into the caldera of a volcano. Class 230

The novel's narrator remains anonymous throughout. As a consequence of his trauma, the narrator feels inadequate, and this represents the impact of the violence that has shaped our past. In fact, history has become a tool to fictionalize the emotional pain that individuals felt throughout these historical upheavals. The narrator recalls events from his past and attempts to piece them together to determine what led to his cousin Tridib's death. He irrationally attempts to piece together events from the 1940s, 1980s, and other decades that shattered human existence, saying, "Tridib had given me world to travel in and... eyes to see them with" (TSL 120). The narrator learned precise imagery and precise use of imagination from Tridib, which merged into a perspective of history throughout time. The narrator portrays the innocent people's anguish and their fight for self-awareness. Historical events and their effects on people are reflected in Amitav Ghosh's books. To emphasize the significance of historical events, Ghosh switches between the past and the present. The past, the present, and the future are all interconnected via history.

In "Going Away," the first chapter of the book, the narrator meets all of the main characters. His grandparents and parents make up the narrator's family. Robi, the narrator's uncle Tridib, and Jatin, a UN economist, are the offspring of the narrator's grandmother Mayadebi and her diplomat husband. Despite Tridib's status as an archaeology Ph.D. candidate, the narrator's grandma saw him as a destitute person. His habit of hanging about on street corners made him unpopular. Old Grandma did not approve of males who were a waste of space at tea stands and on street corners. Amin 52 states that Tridib is Ghosh's archetype imagination, the builder of worlds par excellence, and the one who has perfected the ability of reality creation to its greatest,

most sophisticated degree. Despite this, the narrator became fascinated with Tridib and liked being in his company.

The Indo-Pak War, the English War against Hitler's Germany, and the Bengal uprising are all portrayed in the book. The Mayadebi family and the Prices family, who were Indian and English, respectively, became friends despite their religious, racial, and geographical differences. While serving under the British Raj in Calcutta, Mrs. Price's father, Lionel Tresawsen, met Tridib's grandfather,

Chandrashekhar Datta Chaudhuri. The Malaysian mine supervisor Lionel Tresawsen was originally from the settlement of Male in southern Cornwall. Fuji, an island in the middle of the Pacific, was his destination after leaving Southeast Asia. Peru, Bolivia, Ceylon, Calcutta, and finally Barrackpore were his next stops. While in Calcutta, he established a little factory of his own. After developing an interest in spiritualism, he started going to Calcutta to attend Theosophical Society meetings. He got acquaintances with Chandrasekar at one such incident. After he left for England, his daughter wed a guy named Price. May Price and Nick Price were their children. Forever was their bond with the Choudaries. Since the narrator's birth, much of the action has already taken place. A non-chronological account of the events follows. Through love, loss, and friendship, the two families are intertwined. Ila, the cousin of the narrator, gets married to Nick. The story starts in 1939, when India was still a colony, just before the Second World War broke out. At the time, Tridib and his parents were visiting England at the invitation of the Prices for his father's surgery; the narrator himself had not yet been born. That was when May Price was a little girl. The crucial time for understanding postcolonialism, nations, and disturbances, however, is the seventeen years from 1962 to 1979:

They were aware that their whole universe would perish even before hostilities broke out. Media such as books, films, and photos are artifacts of the past that need close examination and preservation. But no one can really understand the anguish felt by those young, bright souls who knew they were doomed to die because some people misunderstood. Jumdar 145

Violence has the same effect in riots as it does in conflict. Recalling the murder of Alan Price, the brother of Mrs. Price, close to Brick Lane during the Second World battle's onset, the author vividly portrays the brutality of battle. English history during the Second World War is captured in the pictures shot by Tridib's father. Pictured above is Snipe, the husband of Mrs. Price, standing in front of an emergency trench that provided protection from the approaching German soldiers. The explosion that killed Don and Alan demolished the home that the buddies shared. Ghosh skillfully blends together the devastation and carnage of war-torn London in the first part of the book with the riots on the subcontinent in the second.

Even though war killed all four of them, the friendship of four people from diverse backgrounds who lived in the same London home during the war—Alan, Dan, Mike, and Francesca—refused to be spoiled by cultural or political boundaries. The borders were something that Alan and Francesca had attempted to disregard in the 1940s. Alan hurt himself while attempting to sneak her out of Germany. "I have struggled with silence every word I write about these events of 1964," he confesses. This stillness... defies my rationality, my vocabulary... It's not even a presence; it's just a void where nothing can be spoken (TSL 218).

Following the division, the concepts of political freedom and nationalism took on new shades of significance. The leaders of the time exploited the ideology of "nationalism" as a war against outsiders. Subsequently, the word started to be used to exclude individuals from other areas and to vanquish people from other territories. Thamma is a vehicle through which Ghosh investigates concepts of political liberty and nationalism. The narrator's grandma is among the most remarkable characters in the book. An Indian lady from the middle class, she is fearless. It was in British India that she spent her formative years. During the 1971 Pakistani war, the narrator's grandmother exacts psychological retribution by sacrificing blood. In the midst of a rampage of looting, murder, and arson, the government never does anything. They convey congrats for disbanding as the disturbance fades. Regarding the grandma, Auradkar says:

The moral ties of family, nation, duty, and discipline are the only things that can hold her story together as it unfolds: her genteel bourgeois upbringing clashed with her hidden desire to work

for the terrorists; her fight for independence following her widowhood; her forced relocations from Dhaka to Rangoon and Kolkata; and the dispossession of the area she had called home. (35)

Retired headmistress and strict disciplinarian Thamma is the grandma of the narrator. She had an advocate for a grandpa. She thought it was right to murder Englishmen who were born into carnage during battles. The grandma was expanding like a honeycomb in Dhaka. Because of the large number of family branches that lived in her house, many of the residents had lost track of who belonged to

whom. Everyone from the grandmother's parents and grandparents to herself and Mayadebi, as well as her father's older brother Jethmoshai and his family, lived and dined together in what the grandma remembered as a very packed house:

Within a few months of one other, my grandmother's parents passed away when my father was about six years old. After that, my grandma only went back to Dhaka twice, and both times it was to check on the rooms that Mayadebi and she had inherited. Both times, she only stayed in Dhaka for a day before returning to Mandalay; she had intended to see her aunt and uncle, but the home was haunted by sad memories. (TSL 124)

One way in which the 1964 riots are reimagined in The Shadow Lines is via the use of fictional narratives interwoven with real-life events. Through a postcolonial reading of history, The Shadow Lines disseminates a wealth of knowledge. The riot's psychological toll on the populace is a direct cause of the storyline. The ludicrousness of national borders and limits is also brought to light by Ghosh. He can't stop thinking about the religions and groups that have been at the root of the slaughter and violence—both the colonizers and the colonized.

The historical thread connecting all of Amitav Ghosh's works is uncovered via the study of primary and secondary sources. In order to portray the social upheaval that occurs throughout history, Ghosh has revisited India and reorganized facts based on his expertise as an anthropologist and historian.

BAPSI SIDHWA

The great event of partition taught them the consequences of partition. The arrival in a new place disrupted the way people lived, and they sought a fresh start without adequate housing. Furious was the rapid shift in conduct that occurred as a result of division. During the partition, the situation deteriorated further, and once-friendly individuals became hostile. Partition had an impact on every region of Pakistan and India, but it was particularly severe in Punjab and Lahore. More harmful outcomes for the nations result from the abrupt territorial separation, which in turn causes migration, massacres, revenge, murder, and cruelty. A total of almost twelve million individuals crossed the newly drawn border.

In their dogged pursuit of a better paradise, they abandoned their homes and pushed themselves across the border.

Upon arriving in the unknown land, the majority of them were unable to reach their new and unfamiliar destination. Midway through, religious extremists and enraged crowds slaughtered them. Urvashi Butalia's phrases painted a vivid image of migration:

An enormous human convulsion occurred as a result of the political division of India... Twelve million people made the journey from what was then India to what is now Pakistan, dividing the country into two parts: East and West.Although estimates of casualties range from two hundred thousand to two million, the consensus currently is that one million people perished...Men of various religions, and even some men of the same faith, are said to have kidnapped and raped 75,000 women. (3)

As an expression of their love for their homeland, the post-partition era brings unending suffering and hardship to the people.

The Parsees of India were compelled to leave their homeland, which prompted them to seek refuge in other countries out of their own self-interest. A hundred thousand defenseless women were brutally murdered, kidnapped, disfigured, raped, and subjected to physical torture. Instead of trying to return home, the majority of the women who were brutalized by these guys took their

own lives. These mothers rushed into the wells with their babies because they cared more about being pure than about saving their own lives.

Every decent person and human rights advocate of the time felt guilt for the era's heinous acts of brutality and bloodshed. Two thousand homes, businesses, and other structures were destroyed by the communalists of both nations. The topic of partition has been extensively covered in literature.

On each side of the Radcliffe Line, literary men chose the horrors of division and the Holocaust. The divide and its related themes have been explored by several authors in this genre. Many of the writings addressing the topic of Partition originated in the North and North-West regions of the nation,

reflecting the fact that these regions were directly impacted by the division. Partition, its causes, and the aftermath of its atrocities were all vividly portrayed by the authors.

Writings on the topic of partition and its related topics, including as the politics of partition and its effects, span two substantial literary genres. Both types of novels include events leading up to and including partition; one kind focuses on the riots that occurred before division and continues through partition, while the other type covers events that occurred after partition, including political upheavals. There was a great deal of impartial and vivid writing on the subject by writers in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Marahti, and a host of other languages. It was easy to remember as most authors were there during the split and the agitations depicted in their books. Salman Rushdie explores the division from an Indian point of view in his book Midnight's Children. Under the umbrella of "partition," magical realism is the primary emphasis. The political events surrounding partition are the central premise of Khushwant Singh's book Train to Pakistan.

In her writings, Bapsi Sidhwa constantly revels in the divide from the Parsee viewpoint Cracking India

or Ice-Candy-Man, The Pakistani Bride andThe Crow Eaters.

The tragic events of the partition days are depicted in the book Ice-Candy-Man, when community attitudes and prejudiced views against one other quickly replaced the moral principles of patriotism and nationality. An authoritative and unparalleled account of the 1947 partition of India, this book justifiably takes the top spot. Sidhwa has masterfully depicted the era's turmoil in this book, which follows a newly split yet autonomous country through its citizens' growing anguish, agony, and wrath. Unprecedented devastation, skewed absurdity, and societal sensitivities were outcomes of the emotions caused by wrath. During the partition, Sidhwa stood for the social instability and worry that all of the divided people felt.

Sidhwa does not identify as a Muslim or Hindu; she is a member of the Parsee community. She depicts the political topics in the Indo-Pak globe in a neutral and objective manner. Based on Lenny's perspective as an eight-year-old girl, Sidhwa illustrates the partition. Since their arrival, the Parsee community has coexisted well with the rest of the nation. The Parsees' non-involvement in national politics is the most important factor in their harmonious coexistence on this continent.

Lenny, Sidhwa's fictional character, personifies the girl from the minority group.

The dissolution of the pre-partition community milieu is reflected in her character drawings. Thanks to her religious upbringing and her parents' social standing, Lenny has been shielded from the harsh realities of being a member of the Parsee minority. Lenny is unfamiliar with partition. Therefore, she was not a part of the disaster—the partition. But she is a keen observer who recounts every event that transpired in her immediate vicinity. By skillfully balancing joy and sorrow, Sidhwa has brought attention to the frailties of human existence.

Ice-Candy-Man is somewhat autobiographical as it is told through the eyes of a kid narrator, Lenny, who was eight years old during the partition in Lahore while Sidhwa resided there. Novelist Sidhwa deftly crafts the tale of a girl who is both prepared to confront the brutality,

anguish, and sorrow that utterly crushed her and also prepared to shift her perspective towards the present world. The fatal disease polio struck both Sidhwa and Lenny.

Because she is so young, her compassion for the terrible occurrences is severely constrained on several occasions. In an altruistic moment, she wondered whether the world would bleed as grownups divide India. Despite criticism that Sidhwa made Lenny too smart for her age, the narrative's historical and political events are seen via Lenny's youthful perspective. In the minds of the writer were firmly imprinted the memories of the Indo-Pakistani split. She conveys her thoughts and the harrowing recollections of the division via her storytelling. Randhir Pratap Singh in Bapsi Sidhwa in Partition Revisited, Sidhwa recalls:

The disturbances had subsided when a crew of looters, mistaking our home for an abandoned one, rode up on carts and broke into it. When they saw my mom and us all there, they were surprised. "What the fuck do you think you're doing?" our Muslim chef said at that moment. It is the home of Parsees. And they said, "We believed it was a Hindu home." And then they disappeared. This sight lingered in my imagination, therefore I chose to compose a narrative about partition. (37)

The historical and political context of the division, as well as Sidhwa's work on the subject, are not unique. The Parsees are never one to go against the grain; in fact, they like to go with the flow. They remained put and built prosperous companies because they are faithful to the land. In the same interview, Sidhwa reflects on her history and says:

...as a little girl, I was escorted by my gardener to see my private instructor. A corpse fell out of the gardener's gunny bag as he moved it down the road. He was a young, handsome, and muscular guy. He seemed to have had his midriff slashed, but there was no blood—just a wound. I was compelled to create a narrative about partition because of the feelings and pictures that were swirling around in my head. (37-38)

The Indian subcontinent is home to some very skilled agitators who have made it their mission to transform the legitimate and imagined grievances of marginalized groups into massive, intricate forms of discrimination. Unfortunately, others have taken advantage of it for their own partisan gain.

They hoped to get out of their sticky financial situations by turning a quick profit or selling their businesses for a premium. Pakistan came into being as a result of the widespread fear that minorities would be persecuted. The Lahore Parsees were not anti-anyone, thus they weren't foolish enough to sow discord in any society. They were too afraid to leap into politics for fear of being shaped into chutney, or little bits, so they refrained from actively participating in it.

Concerned about the potential threats posed by all these settlements, the Parsee community remained distrustful. They were well aware that they are a minority group and that they do not have the resources to engage in open hostilities with any part of society.

Colonel Bharucha, the fictional president of the Parsees, has cautioned his people to exercise extreme caution in light of the current crisis and to refrain from taking a firm stance against any of the three main groups. No matter what party or community they support, they should maintain a reasonable stance. It doesn't matter whether they're wary of Hindus, Muslims, or Sikhs; they all seem to be plotting against them. It was not easy for the Parsee community to be admitted into a nation until initial standards for living with other groups were established. They aspired to coexist peacefully with all groups, particularly the judgment community and the one tasked with governing the nation upon separation. The Parsee community's ideology or judgment greatly aided their survival, property protection, and long-held aspirations. Sidhwa recalls the traditional tale of the Parsees' 8th-century journey from Iran to India, a land of cultural riches, harmony, and peace.

As the Zoroastrians flee Islamic conquest, an Indian princess sent a courier to bring them news. In their view, the Indian subcontinent is both homogeneous and diverse. A glass of milk is their emblem. The Parsee's response is to sweeten it. Here, the ancient rulers communicated by

drawing a comparison between the dissolving of sugar in milk and the merging of two countries or communities.

Similarly, the Parsee community was welcomed by the Indian prince and established a presence in India. The Parsees had little impact on peace and only a small number of them became involved in Indian politics. The politics and social life of India remained untouchable. Some important personalities, including Mumbai's Dadabhai Naoroji and Karachi's Rustum Sidhwa, were involved in the Indian independence struggle and Indian politics, therefore there are a few outliers. However, the Parsee community as a whole was unhappy with their involvement in Indian politics.

In the aftermath of their Second World War triumph, the British rejoiced at the Jashan Prayer gathering. At the meeting, the assembled Parsees voiced their views on national politics. Following their discussion and idea sharing, they were invited to participate in political protests alongside politicians, which may lead to a march to prison. Those in charge urged Parsees to take advantage of the free services offered.

The idea that people should participate in political agitation, march to prison, and take advantage of the free board and lodging available to class prisoners spread like wildfire. The head of Lahore's Parsee community, Colonel Bharucha, is a doctor by trade. He rejected an invitation to participate in the protest march and urged his people not to do so in the sake of power. "Hindus, Muslims, and even Sikhs will be vying for control, and you dweebs will be twisted into chutney if you try to meddle!" the number 36.

The meeting went on as planned, with Colonel Bharucha urging the Parsee community to stay out of independence movements and political unrest. According to him, they would support whomever is in charge of Lahore:

Whoever wants to reign can! Faiths: Christian, Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim! The laws of their nation will govern us.We should be unconcerned so long as we stay out of it. Everything will be OK as long as we continue to honor our rulers' traditions. After thirteen centuries of protection,

Ahura Mazda has promised to continue that duty for another thirteen centuries....The courteous utterance of "Hear hears!" Congregants, carried away by inflated senses of self-worth and British adages, would rather not be grounded. (39)

The president of Karachi, Colonel Bharucha, has often addressed his community members with advice. If the split were to occur and Muslims were to control Lahore, would he recommend that we relocate to Bombay?

"As long as we live quietly and don't threaten anybody, we will all prosper right here," he said with great composure. "There's no need to move anywhere; we should remain where we are" (40). Through this debate between persons of Parsee community, the author Sidhwa highlighted the implicit anxiety of the Parsee community, a vulnerable minority worried by the identity loss together with other groups such as Indian Hindus or Pakistani Muslims.

In comparison to other groups in undivided India, the Parsees constitute a relatively tiny group. One of the reasons they wanted to leave their motherland during division was because of this. The Parsees chose Bombay not because they felt comfortable in India, but because their tribe was numerically stronger there. Nevertheless, this community's migration to Bombay is minimal. Because they have refrained from meddling in Indian politics, the Parsees have stayed in metropolitan centers in Pakistan and India, where they have worked to maintain their distinctive identity.

With a subtle blend of comedy and satire, Sidhwa quietly conveys the Parsees' deepest anxieties over India's independence and division. The fact that the Parsee community has successfully navigated the challenges of coexisting with Pakistan's majority population and avoided expulsion from the country is a testament to their achievement. The Parsees escaped identity politics because, unlike the Hindu and Sikh communities, they did not have minority complex. They stayed uninjured and flourished even under the Muslim Mogahl authority simply because they continued to conduct their lives discreetly. They aspired to enrich the lives of others since they were intelligent and cultured. Neither did they ever pose a danger to anybody, and they never meddled in national politics. Parsees took no side in the power struggle between the Hindu,

Muslim, and Sikh groups. The racial psychology of the Parsee community is the source of the narrator's neutral attitude, Lenny. It was remarkable how well-behaved even the Parsee youngsters were. Their elders gave them hints on how impartial they should be. Lenny and her brother Adi, who were Parsee, followed their seniors' lead and let out a throaty lament, either "Jai Hind! Jai Hind!" or "Pakistan Zindabad!"—the choice being based on the leader's inclination or dedication. When the division was in progress, this strategy of the Parsee society proved to be quite advantageous to them. While other minority groups, like as the Sikhs and Hindus, were forcibly removed from their homelands and endured unspeakable horrors at the hands of the dominant Muslim population, the Parsees lived in peace with them.

Instead of mending fences with Muslims, the Sikhs of Lahore persisted in their long-standing bigotry and failed miserably at forming any kind of alliance. As a consequence of their shared fear complex, they verbally abused one another. There was a palpable feeling of impending doom for their group as they faced the threat of erasure. Similar to how Master Tara Singh, the protagonist of the book The Sikh Soldier-Saint, unleashed a vicious and vicious onslaught on the Muslims of Lahore, the Sikhs of Lahore exhibited an aggressive demeanor and were even more hostile as a result of their fear complex. The Muslims' swine will get Pakistan, I tell you what! All the way to the end, we will fight! "They will see who leaves Lahore when we show them!" pages 133–134).

The intensity and passion shown in Mr. Tara Singh's statement reveal his deep-seated animosity against Muslims. His fury was heightened upon beholding the Muslim League flag flying at Lahore's Assembly Hall. He then made accusations while ripping the Muslim League banner to shreds. The

Sikhs' hostility against the Muslims was intolerable. Sikhs' vocalizations like this will likely exacerbate the tensions and animosity already present between Sikhs and Muslims. The Sikh population of Punjab province was ensnared in the conquests that occurred after the British withdrew from India. The Punjab province, which is now in Pakistan, was formerly home to

about 4.5 million Sikhs. As a result of these occurrences and the fanaticism that existed in both societies, the ordinary people of both groups adopted new, more extreme beliefs.

The protagonist of this story, Ice-Candy-Man, exemplifies this kind of diversity. He was a peaceful, reasonable guy who enjoyed mingling with the Hindus in his community. He tripped and fell, stabbing random people and setting homes on fire. The sight of the train, which carried the corpses of Muslims, filled him with terror. The board was devoid of any female representation, despite the presence of several bags containing female breasts. The sight of the community members' lifeless corpses drove him wild, and he eventually lost control of his actions. Hateful rhetoric will simply make minority members feel even more threatened and furious. After hearing the extremist Sikhs' statement, the outraged Muslims swore they would have a holy celebration using the blood of Hindus and Sikhs as a sacrifice. In contrast to the Parsees, the Sikhs did not resolve their disagreements via diplomatic consortship with the Muslim League. They were expelled from Pakistan because Sikhs failed miserably in managing or categorizing their differences.

Three main groups exhibit a pattern of mutual respect and cooperation in the work of author Sidhwa. All of India's faiths, their harmony, and the country's overall integrity are things that Sidhwa deeply values. She has many friends and lovers all throughout India who share her admiration for Hinduism. In the midst of the chaos of partition, people of all faiths rallied around her. Among these fans are Yusuf, Ice-Candy-Man, Sher Singh, Moti, Hari, Massuer, and many more.

The author gradually exposes the rural regions' composite culture as the plot progresses by describing how "relationships with the Hindus are bound by strong ties" (56). These groups relied on one another for a variety of reasons. The Muslim community of Pir Pindo celebrated Baisakhi.

Before the partition, there was peace among India's many faiths, and this festival is a symbol of that. The fact that people of many faiths and backgrounds could come together for what was essentially a Hindu event demonstrates how accepting society can be. They coexist peacefully.

Culture in pre-partition India is valued despite the fact that people of various religions and cultures coexist peacefully. The little narrator, Lenny, is always upbeat despite the presence of a German soldier in her nightmare. He rode his bike with her. Right up until her mom wakes her up, she's dreaming. What does she say?

I remember another dreadful dream I had when I was a kid. In a warehouse, children lie. With a watchful eye, Mother and Ayah go around. A casual but professional vibe permeates the space. As men in uniform discretely amputate a child's limbs, my godmother sits by my bed, cracking a loving smile. They are dismembering me as she rubs my head. (22)

The nightmare of Lenny is a reflection of her days that visualized the division of India. At the time of the terrible disaster known as partition, nobody is very worried. They failed to recognize the tragic tragedy's impact, despite its widespread nature. The zoo is the site of yet another nightmare for Lenny: My daydreams turn into terrifying nightmares if he roars, which happens rarely at night. In these nightmares, the ravenous lion crosses Lawrence Road to Birdwood Road, prowls from the back of the house to the bedroom door, and then, with one bare-fanged leap, crashes through and sinks his fangs into my stomach. My gut feels like it's about to burst. (23-24)

Partition is not the novel's central concern, but it builds to a climax during the days when the people of Lahore are warned about it. In a religion-centered culture, bifurcations are natural and unavoidable; the work guides readers through several ways of bifurcation and even alludes to the horrific days of the Partition. Ideological portrayals of the Parsee community's many forms of religion shape and define their subaltern status. So, The Crow Eaters is the first book in Sidhwa's ongoing Partition fiction series. In the minds of those living during the colonial era, the Partition of India and the subsequent establishment of two independent states loom large.

In Muslim-dominated regions, the idea of Pakistan was deeply ingrained in people's thinking. The common people of India were thrust into the compelling and powerful reality of their leaders' vision of a new nation. The concept of Pakistan was already present in people's thoughts. Politicians at all levels seeded the concept of Pakistan in their brains. They couldn't help but

bring up the country's future and the imminent threat of split even in their most informal discussions.

When Freddy asks Gopal Krishnan about his son's life, Krishnan alludes to the Partition of India and the World War in a roundabout way. "Your son is afflicted with a completely incurable disease," he declares. After the great battle and the chaos that will stain the Punjabi soil scarlet with blood, the remedy will be found (175). The powerful conflict is a portent of WWI, while the chaos is a reference to the Partition riots that would transform Lahore into a city marred by bloodshed.

In the story, the Parsee community is thrust into a nation-building process during the pre-Partition days, which is seen from an ideological perspective. Furthermore, it assumes that the Parsee people had a part in the fight for independence.

Because they were an imagined community, the Parsees were able to develop both their individual and identities. Narrative discourse and the process of self-formation are inseparable. The work is classified as a historical novel since it explores the development of identity at a time of independence fight. Not because it follows the life of a specific person, but because it depicts a nation at a turning point when its divides are most obvious—that is why the book is a historical fiction. There can be no history devoid of divides. They were deepened by the colonial powers.

With India's partition into two nations, the narrative implies, colonial control comes to an end. The creation of Indian citizens' subjectivity begins with the end of colonial control. As the nation of India takes shape, so does the subjectivity of its citizens. Freddy warns of the imminent threat of Partition and suggests staying in Lahore, but there is also reluctance and opposition. In response to their tyrannical situation, the protagonists in Sidhwa's other works primarily use the ideological weapons of defiance and rejection.

Conclusion

In the tapestry of literary explorations into the Partition of India, the works of Amitav Ghosh and Bapsi Sidhwa stand out for their profound narrative depth and cultural insight. This comparative analysis has journeyed through the tumultuous terrains etched within their stories, revealing how they weave the personal with the political, the individual with the historical. Ghosh, with his intricate narrative fabric, blurs the temporal and spatial lines, presenting a world where memory, identity, and history interlace, offering a vista into the impacts of colonial legacies and the convolutions of nationalism. His characters, caught in the throes of violence and imperialistic endeavors, narrate not just their tales but echo the collective human experience of displacement and desire for belonging. Sidhwa, through the prism of her feminist and Parsi gaze, renders the Partition not merely as a divide of land but as a cataclysm that dismembered the social and moral fabric of the subcontinent, with a particular emphasis on the plight and resilience of women. Her narrative, rich in cultural authenticity and emotional veracity, scrutinizes the patriarchal edifices and dogmas that intensified the Partition's havoc.

The confluence of Ghosh's and Sidhwa's literary perspectives underscores the inherent power of literature to transcend temporal boundaries and act as a medium for reconciliation and understanding. Their stories are poignant reminders of the indelible scars left by partition, etched not only on the landscape but also on the psyches of those who lived through it and the generations that followed. They compel us to reflect on the past with a critical lens, to recognize the nuances of identities, and to appreciate the shared experiences of trauma and survival. By delving into the multiplicities of human emotions and the complexities of socio-political upheaval, Ghosh and Sidhwa not only memorialize a pivotal moment in history but also evoke a sense of collective empathy and a call for enduring peace and humanity.

This research illuminates the symbiotic relationship between literature and history, asserting that the portrayal of Partition in the works of Ghosh and Sidhwa is not merely a recounting of events but an intricate dialogue with the past, a testament to the enduring human spirit. The insights gleaned from

their narratives provide not only an understanding of the Partition but also a reflection on the universality of human experiences, resonating with the contemporary issues of displacement, identity, and harmony. Thus, the conclusion drawn from this comparative study is that the literary examination of violence and national identity in the works of Amitav Ghosh and Bapsi Sidhwa is a profound endeavor to unravel the complexities of human existence against the backdrop of historical partitions and their enduring echoes in our collective memory.

References

1. Das, Sukanta. "Towards an Alternative Identity: Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide." The Atlantic Literary Review 8.4 (2007): 106-13. Print.

2. Chowdhary, Arvind. "Time and Space in The Shadow Lines." Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines: Critical Essays. Ed. Arvind Chowdhary. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 2002. 84-103. Print.

3. Devadoss, Sujata. "The Shadow Lines." Literature Alive 3.1 (1989): 38. Print.

4. Chakraborty, Dipesh. Email. <www.amitavghosh.com>. 16 Dec 2001. Web. 20 June 2013.

5. Rao, Damodar K. and E. Anshumathi. "Banality of Nationalism and the Scourge of Violence in Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines." Kakatiya Journal of English Studies 23. (2003): 196-209. Print.

6. Indu, P. and G. Baskaran. "Suffering an Abstraction in Women: A reading of Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace and Sea of Poppies." Native Visions and Alien Voices: Essays on Commonwealth Literature. Virudhunagar: VHN Senthikumara Nadar College, 2011. 121-30. Print.

7. Prasad, Murari. "Transcending the Postcolonial: Amitav Ghosh's In An Antique Land." The Literary Criterion 42.2 (2007): 51-61. Print.

8. Majumdar, Sharmila Guha. "Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines and In An Antique Land: Some Thematic Considerations." The Commonwealth Review 5.1 (1993-94): 144-53. Print.

9. Bangalnama. "The Silence of Marichjhapi." <bangalnama.wordpress.com/ 2009/07/06/the- silence-of-marichjhapi>. 9 July 2009. Web. 2 Dec. 2013.

10. Chaturvedi, Lata. "The Glass Palace: A Critical Assessment." Multiple contexts and Insights: Studies in Contemporary Literature. Ed. Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla. New Delhi: Sarup and Sons, 2003. 113-20. Print.

11. Tiwari, Shubha. Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Study. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributers, 2003. Print.

12. Chandar, K. M. "Journey to the Antique Land of Poppies: Voyage as Discovery in Amitav Ghosh's

Sea of Poppies." Indian Literature 54.4 (2010): 181-92. Print.

13. Sengupta, Jayita. "Ghosh's The Glass Palace through Post-Colonial Lens." The Quest 16.1 (2002): 26-32. Print.

14. Kapadia, Novy. "Frenzy and Partition: Bapsi Sidhwa, Attia Hosain and Amitav Ghosh." Indian Women Novelists: Set II: Vol. I. Ed. R. K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1993. 75-92. Print.

15. Khatri, Chote Lal. "The Narrative Technique of The Shadow Lines." The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh. Ed. Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam. New Delhi: Ravi Dayal Publisher, 1992. 99-106. Print.

16. Bose, Brinda. Amitav Ghosh: Critical Perspectives. Delhi: Permanent Black, 2005. Print.

17. Rao, Nagesh. "Cosmopolitanism, Class and Gender in The Shadow Lines." South Asian Review

24.1 (2003): 95-115. Print.

18. Hayward, Helen. "Once a Golden Land." Rev. of The Glass Palace. The Times Literary Supplement 5076 (14 July 2000): 21. Print.

19. Das, Prasenjit. "Identity and Subjectivity: A Psychoanalytic Reading of Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh." Concepts and Contexts of Diasporic Literature of India. Ed. K. V. Dominic. New Delhi: Gnosis, 2011. 69-81. Print.

20. Das, Sukanta. "Towards an Alternative Identity: Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide." The Atlantic Literary Review 8.4 (2007): 106-13. Print.

21. Gupta, Pallavi. "Historicizing Memory in The Shadow Lines." Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines. Ed. Novy Kapadia. New Delhi: Asia Book Club, 2001. 274-82. Print.

22. Black, Shameem. "Cosmopolitanism at Home: Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines." The Journal of Commonwealth Literature 41.3 (2006): 45-65. Print.

23. Neb, N. K. "Humanistic Concerns in Amitv Ghosh's The Glass Palace." Cyber Literature 17.1 (2006): 24-30. Print.

24. Majumdar, Kinshuk. "Psychological Domination in The Glass Palace." Littcrit 30.2 (2004): 25-

34. Print.

25. Zaidi, Nishat. "Myth-History Interface in Fiction and Nation: a Reading of Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide." Littcrit 33.2 (2007): 105-20. Print.

26. Khatri, Chote Lal. "The Narrative Technique of The Shadow Lines." The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh. Ed. Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam. New Delhi: Ravi Dayal Publisher, 1992. 99-106. Print.

27. Ramaswamy, Shobha. "Woman as Initiator: Women in Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace." The Quest 21.2 (2007): 95-98. Print.

28. Bayly, C. A. and T. N. Harper. Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia. United Kingdom: Penguin Books, 2004. Print.

29. Kadam, Mansing G. "Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace: A Postcolonial Novel." Littcrit 30.2 (2004): 35-49. Print.

30. Sinha, Nandita. "Perspectives in time: The Narrator as Child in The Shadow Lines

31. Albertazzi, Silvia. Translating India. Bologna: Club, 1993.

32. Anderson, Linda, ed. Plotting Change: Contemporary Women's Fiction. London: Edward Arnold, 1999.

33. Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffins. The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature. London: Routledge, 1989.

34. Bala, Suman. "The Theme of Migration: A Study of Bapsi Sidhwa's An American Brat." Parsi Fiction 2. Ed. Novy Kapadia, Jaydipsinh Dodiya and R.K. Dhawan. New Delhi: Prestige, 2001.

35. Beauvoir, Simone de. The Second Sex. London: Vintage Random House, 1997.

36. Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. London: Routledge, 1994.

37. Bhalla, Alok. Partition Dialogues: Memories of a Lost Home. Oxford: OUP, 2006.

38. Bharucha, Nilufer E. "From Behind A Fine Veil: A Feminist Reading Of Three Parsi Novels."

Indian Literature 39.5 (175), Women's Writing In English New Voices (1996): 132-41.

39. Bharucha, Perin. The Fire Worshippers. Bombay: Strand Books, 1986.

40. Bhatt, Indira. "The Pakistani Bride: From Fantasy to Reality."

41. Bidney, David. "The Concept of Cultural Crisis." American Anthropologist, Vol. 48, No. 4, 1946,

pp. 534–552.

42. Bruschi, Isabella. “Making up with Painful History.” The Partition of India in Bapsi Sidhwa's Work: Bapsi Sidhwa Interviewed by. The Journal of Commonwealth Literature 43.3 2008.

43. Butalia, Urvashi. The Other Side of Silence: Voice from the Partition of India. New Delhi: Penguin, 1998.

44. Cameron, Deborah. The Feminist Critique of Language: A Reader. New York: Rutledge, 1990.

45. Chambers, Claire. "‘The Heart, Stomach and Backbone of Pakistan': Lahore in Novels by Bapsi Sidhwa and Mohsin Hamid." South Asian Diaspora Australia: Springer 6.2. 2014.

46. Dena L. Randolph Cracking India Bapsi Sidhwa Teaching Guide Milkweed Editions, 430 First Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55401. 1995.

47. Dhawan, R.K. and Novy Kapadia. “Entree: The Fiction of Bapsi Sidhwa.” The Novels of Bapsi Sidhwa. Ed. R.K. Dhawan and Novy Kapadia. New Delhi: Prestige, 1996.

48. Gaur, Rashmi. “Treatment of Partition in Ice-Candy-Man.” Bapsi Sidhwa’s Ice-Candy-Man: A Reader’s Companion. Ed. Rashmi Gaur. New Delhi: Asia Book Club, 2004.

49. Hinnells, John R. “Zorastrian and Parsi Studies.” Bulletin of Oriental and African Studies, Vol.65, no.02, 2002.

50. Jacobs, Alexander M. "Who's Who of World Religions: John R. Hinnels, Editor." Digest of Middle East Studies 1.3: 90-92. 1992.

51. Jadeja, Kuldispsinh. D. “Autobiographical Elements in Bapsi Sidhwa’s Ice-Candy-Man.” International Journal of English Language Literature and Humanities, Vol.2, no.10, 397-407. 2015.

52. Jardine, Alice. Gynesis: Configurations of Women and Modernity. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1986.