



## THE PROTRAYAL OF PARTITION IN INDIA ENGLISH NOVELS 1956 – 2010

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### ABSTRACT

*It is generally agreed upon that the Partition of the Indian Subcontinent was one of the most terrible events that ever took place on the subcontinent. This view is shared by the majority of people. The year 1947 marked the beginning of the subcontinent's vivisection on the basis of communal affiliation, yet it was also the year that saw the Subcontinent gain its freedom. This leaves us asking whether the year 2010 should be remembered for the independence it brought, or for the murders and atrocities that occurred during the forced transfer of a huge number of people in order for them to continue living. Because of this, we are left wondering if the year 2010 should be remembered for the independence it brought, or for these events. Several authors have made an attempt to discuss the issue of the Partition of the Indian Subcontinent in their works. These discussions may be found in various writings.*

**Keywords:** *Partition, India, English, Novels*

### INTRODUCTION

The sheer name of this research study, "The Partition and Its Versions in Indian English Novels," prompts the need for a more comprehensive analysis as well as an explanation of the subject that is being discussed. It was a major historical event that vivisectioned the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, and this event is related with the name "Partition." The event is referred to as "Partition," and this event is associated with "Partition." This introduction features a detailed conversation on the historical background of the subject matter being discussed. The word "version" refers to "an account of something from one point of view," which is why the second half of the title is called "version." When we talk about "research" novels, we're talking about books that have been selected for close reading and analysis. The second sentence in the title, which reads "Indian English Novels," is the most significant part of the title since it describes the subject of the book. The term "Indian writing in English" refers to fictional works written by Indian authors in the English language. The literary term "novel" refers to the type of writing known as "novels," which is also known as "fiction," and it is distinguished by the use of lyrical language that deals with, portrays, and describes fictitious characters, settings, and events. Novels fall under the genre of writing known as "fiction." The political-historical term 'partition' relates to the real historical and political circumstances that led to the vivisection of this enormous country, and the phrase itself alludes to the political-historical context in which the term originated. In order to offer a more realistic analysis of this research study, it is vital to explain the seemingly contradictory ideas of "fiction" and "history." The term "history" originates from the Greek word "historia," which may mean an examination, interview, or interrogation of an eyewitness, in addition to descriptions of such activities. The English word "history" stems from this Greek word. This sentence is the origin of the term "history" in the English language. The study of the past as it pertains to people is referred to as "history," and the word "history" refers to this field of study. To put it another way, it is a term that is used to refer to the sum total of all that

human beings have accomplished in the past. The term "history," on the other hand, is notoriously difficult to pin down in a single, clear description. Depending on the specifics of the books' narratives, novels written on the Partition of India might be included in either the historical fiction, political fiction, or contemporary fiction categories. However, with the publishing of Sir Walter Scott's novels in the nineteenth century, such a "genre" came into existence for the first time. It is not possible to trace the origin of the word "historical novel" in English; however, this "genre" came into existence. Following the passage of time, the canon of global literature became replete with iconic historical works such as *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, and *War and Peace*, amongst many more. Because the works of Indian fiction in English that have been selected for the research study have the potential to be appropriately categorised as either "historical novels" or "political novels," it will be beneficial for the evaluation of the novels that have been chosen to trace the history of Indian fiction with reference to "political fiction." This is because both of these classifications can be applied to the works of Indian fiction in English that have been selected for the research study. M.C. Lemon is of the opinion that history is predominately concerned with the past, that it deals with matters that are not present to us and that we are unable to know "immediately," and that in order for the historian to approach his primary material, he must engage in two distinct mental activities: inferring and proving the knowledge of the past. History deals with matters that are not present to us and that we are unable to know "immediately." Both of these methods fall short of meeting the standards of objectivity and impartiality that are expected to be upheld by the majority of historians. The first method relies on the use of imagination, while the second method necessitates the utilisation of logic. Neither of these techniques is capable of meeting these standards. It creates the appearance that no historian approaches his subject matter in an arbitrary manner because, to borrow a term from White, "the facts do not speak for themselves, but the historian speaks for them." However, the process of fusing events, whether imagined or actual, into an understandable wholeness that is capable of serving as the object of representation is a poetic process. According to Hayden White, novelists may only be dealing with fictitious events, whereas historians are dealing with genuine events. It's possible that novelists are just dealing with events from their own imagination, whereas historians are dealing with actual occurrences. In addition, historians have always conducted their research in an analytical fashion, and they have always been interested in the events that have transpired throughout history. It is necessary to give a story for them in addition to providing explanations for them. Historiographic storytelling is distinct from other forms of storytelling in that it blurs the line between history and fiction and articulates historiographical themes via the use of a narrative format. This is one of the ways in which it sets itself apart. It raises problems about the reliability of history as a source of definitive answers to a variety of issues. In this regard, Jacques Ehrman's assertion, which might be summarised as "history and literature have no existence in and of themselves," can be considered to be quite extreme. We are the ones that elevate them to the level of being the things that we can comprehend. Even though White puts it differently, his viewpoint is that "what distinguishes 'historical' from 'fictional' stories is first and foremost their contents, rather than their form." This is despite the fact that White states it differently. He then continues to provide further detail on the story that is described in the narrative. 'is a mimesis' of the story that was lived in some region of historical reality, and to the degree that it is an exact imitation, it is to be regarded as a true account thereof. 'is a mimesis' of the narrative that was lived in some region of historical fact. is a mimetic representation of the tale that actually occurred in some part of historical reality.

When taken into consideration in this fashion, historical fiction boasts a stronger potential than other kinds of literature to convey knowledge about its era that cannot be accessed by any other methods. This is because historical fiction is written from the perspective of characters who lived during that time. Because of this, the

intersection of history and fiction has experienced a substantial transition, and the two may, if not entirely substitute one another, at the very least complement one another. A large number of authors made considerable use of history by inserting social, cultural, and political happenings that interested them into the fictitious frame of history. This was done by a large number of authors. This shift in perspective, in addition to the success and popularity of historical (meta) fiction, was largely responsible for the emergence of this style. Alterations that were made to the historical milieu played a crucial role in determining the result as well. The world went through a time of unprecedented and rapid change during the final few decades of the 19th century and at the turn of the century that followed it. The Great French Revolution, which has been called the meanest, cruellest, and deadliest in the history of humanity<sup>8</sup>, the revolution in Russia and China, the rise and fall of fascism, and the two World Wars all stimulated the imagination of writers, which led to the creation of a rich body of historical fiction.<sup>8</sup> The Great French Revolution has been called the meanest, cruellest, and deadliest in the history of humanity. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, a well-known novelist who is well-known for his remark on this trend, writes:

Literature that is not the breath of modern society, that does not dare to express the pains and concerns of that society, and that does not warn in time against serious moral and social dangers- this type of literature loses the faith of its own people because it does not accurately reflect present society...

Because the author is, without a doubt, a product of his environment, it is inevitable that he will reflect on his own time in his writings. Even the most highly impossible fiction bears the imprint of the era in which it was written. According to the philosophy of Lucian Goldman, "at every given instant, social and historical reality always presents itself as an extraordinarily complex mixes not of structures but of the process of structurations and demolition... The fact that Lucian Goldman's comment was used as evidence demonstrates that the relationship between literature and society is intricately intertwined. As a result, the research of literature may be regarded as one of the standard instruments for examining social or historical phenomena. Since a writer of historical fiction is just as much a historian as a novelist, the novel that has been chosen for my research study will thus present a variety of perspectives on the partition of India.

This intellectual and literary gestation began in the 1930s with the triumvirate of the old masters, R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, and Raja Rao, who contributed to Indian fiction in English through their rich corpus of writings including short stories and novels. It took almost five decades for the Indian novel to be written in English after this intellectual and literary gestation began. The pre-Independence Indian novelists, besides them, who have made use of history in their novels in one way or another include K.S. Venkatramani (*Kandan the Patriot*, 1932), A.S.P. Ayyar (*Baladitya*, 1930 and *Three Men of Destiny*, 1939), Bhabani Bhattacharya (*So Many Hungers*, *Shadow From Ladakh.*, 1966), Kamala Markandaya (*Nectar in a Sieve*, 1954) and many others. They were quickly followed by G.V. Desani (*All About H. Hatterr*, 1948), Manohar Malgonkar (*A Bend in the Ganges*, 1956; *Distant Drums*, 1960; *Combat of Shadows*, 1962), Khushwant Singh (*A Train to Pakistan*, 1956), and Bhagvan S. Gidwani (*The Sword of Tipu Sultan*). These authors attempted to capture Indian reality in their own unique way and have narrated historical events from their Indian perspective.

To give expression to writers' sensitivity to history and to situate their books in the background of historical events that influenced the fate of man, a new type of Indian fiction in English evolved, and its subjects included historical events as well as personal imagined events and people. These authors have combined historical truth

and fiction in their writing. The novels that were chosen to participate in this research study almost all fall under this group. The novels are: -

- 1) Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan (1956)
- 2) Attia Hosain's Sunlight on a Broken Column (1961)
- 3) Manju Kapoor's Difficult Daughters (1998)
- 4) Manohar Malgonkar's A Bend in the Ganges (1964)
- 5) Chaman Nahal's Azadi (1975)
- 6) Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines (1988)

## **PARTITION OF INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT**

The Partition of the Indian Subcontinent is widely regarded as one of the most tragic occurrences to ever take place on the subcontinent. We are left wondering whether the year 1947 should be remembered for the Subcontinent's independence or for the massacres and atrocities that occurred during the forcible movement of large masses of people for the purpose of ensuring their continued existence. The year 1947 saw both the independence of the Subcontinent and its vivisection on the basis of communal affiliation. By portraying partition with the following phrases, Urvashi Butalia successfully moves her reader.

One of the most significant upheavals in human history was brought on by the political partitioning of India..... twelve million people went between the newly shortened India and the two wings, East and West, of the recently formed Pakistan...Estimates of the number of fatalities range from 200,000 to two million, although it is now generally recognised that somewhere around a million people lost their lives...It is estimated that 75,000 women have been kidnapped and sexually assaulted by men who practised a religion that was different from their own (and even occasionally by men who practised their own faith).(Butalia, Number 3)

In their writings, a number of authors have made an effort to address the topic of the partition of the Indian and subcontinental territories. Variations in the representation of historical events, changes in the approaches to the truth, and differences in the focus and attitude of the author are all entirely normal; yet, this does not mean that there are no variations in any of these aspects. An author's disposition and personality are shaped by factors such as their culture, society, milieu, religion, social standing, position, and circumstance, among other things. An author is a product of the society in which they live. Even the same occurrence or set of circumstances might be interpreted differently depending on the author. The purpose of this research paper is to analyse Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan and Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice Candy Man in comparison to one another. Both authors have garnered international acclaim for the manner in which they have addressed the topic of division in their respective works of fiction. In the current piece of writing, both the parallels and the differences between various approaches to the same topic are discussed.

### **Historiography of the Partition**

The year 1947 left behind a legacy that is more significant on the subcontinent than it has ever been before. The subcontinent has never been able to fully heal from the impact of the trauma created by the Partition of India and Pakistan. This has prevented the subcontinent from reaching its full potential. The fact that this is not reflected in the writing of its history, which is a reality that many people regret as a result of, is a reason

why many of these individuals bemoan the truth. When it comes to the Partition, for instance, Alok Bhalla contends in the "Introduction" to a collection of Partition tales in English translation that "there is not just a lack of great literature, there is, more seriously, a lack of great history." When it comes to the topic of the Partition, Bhalla is making reference to the fact that "there is not just a lack of great literature." In point of fact, if this is true to any degree at all, it may be owing to the fact that Indian history has focussed more on Independence than on Partition, more on the power of nationalism to unite than on the dividing forces that tore the country apart in 1947. In other words, if this is true to any extent at all, it may be due to the fact that Indian historiography has focused more on Independence than on Partition. The traditional vocabulary of Indian nationalism was upheld in a lot of the writing that was done on Indian history for a very long period. Within the context of this discussion, the significance of national integration as well as the part that great leaders in Congress played was almost always given important places. This particular discourse on Indian history is referred to as the "Nehruvian narrative," and the role of Nehru's own works in the establishment of this discourse cannot be emphasised. It was around this time that the phrase "Nehruvian narrative" came into use. Nehru's works, such as *An Autobiography* and *The Discovery of India*<sup>32</sup>, indicate how he observed Indian history and how he reinterpreted it in order to establish a contemporary secular nationalist discourse for the rising independent state of India. Nehru's writings also demonstrate how he reinterpreted Indian history in order to construct a secular nationalist discourse for the growing independent state of India. These publications shed light on Nehru's perspective of Indian history as well as his reinterpretation of that history. During the first two decades of independence, Nehru's vision was able to prevail thanks to the overwhelming influence he had during those years. Nonetheless, with Nehru's passing and concurrently with the Congress Party's eventual loss of power, there was a growing questioning of this discourse. This was notably the case among historians affiliated with the Subaltern school, which formed in the late 1970s. The gradual loss of political influence experienced by the Congress Party gave rise to the emergence of this school of thought. They looked at the role that subordinate groups played, whether as participants in the nationalist movement or as rebels against it, with the intention of providing a counterpoint to the usual history of nationalism written by elites. The writings of the Italian Marxist Gramsci served as a source of motivation for them. It is essential to emphasise that although while the Subalterns unquestionably offered a constructive critique of Indian nationalism, the fact of the matter is that both elite historiography and subaltern history were geared towards nationalism and independence. This is something that has to be emphasised. This is an important fact that must not be forgotten at any time. The subject of partition was never brought up in any of the stories that were told. The nationalist narrative, for the most part, retold the series of events and occurrences that ended in independence. On the other hand, the elements that contributed to the partition were, for the most part, removed from the tale. In spite of the fact that the Subaltern School attempted, in the words of David Page, to "search for alternative models that focused less on the unity which was imperative in confronting the Raj and more on the diversity which often underlain it," they failed to take into account an essential factor, which was the experiences that women had during the time of the Partition. This was a significant omission on their part. Later on, however, the feminist viewpoint, which gained influence in the 1990s, intended to repair this long-standing void in the recounting of history in India. This purpose was pursued once the feminist viewpoint gained prominence. This emptiness has been present for a considerable amount of time. This new paradigm was mostly pioneered by female authors, who viewed the Partition as a macho narrative in which women were sacrificed, abducted, or retrieved in a war that gave value to community and hierarchy at the expense of individual rights. These authors regarded the Partition as a conflict that gave importance to community and hierarchy at the expense of individual rights. These scholars viewed the Partition as a battle that prioritised the interests of the community and hierarchy over the rights of the individual during a time when individual rights were being violated. The

year 1993 was the first time that their work was brought to the attention of the general public when two articles were published in the magazine Economic and Political Weekly. In these documents, an investigation was conducted on the role that the Indian state played in the process of rescuing women who had been abducted during the Partition. The extreme hardships that women of that era were forced to endure were brought to light in these publications. In certain instances, members of a woman's own family were responsible for her death in order to ensure that she would not be captured by members of the opposing group. In other instances, women were raped and kidnapped, only to have their families cast them out once they were returned to them. In other instances, women made peace with their captors and agreed to start a new life with them, only to have their decisions invalidated by courts established as a result of an agreement between the two new governments. This fresh focus on the role that women played during the violence that happened during the Partition of India as sufferers and victims can rightfully be considered as reflecting a new chapter in the way history is told in India.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To compare and contrast the portrayal of partition across different novels, authors, and periods within the chosen time frame.
2. To assess how these portrayals contribute to shaping readers' understanding of partition and its impact on individuals, families, and society.

### **Hypothesis of the Study:**

The hypothesis will be a tentative statement about what you expect to find. It could be something like: "The portrayal of partition in Indian English novels published between 1956 and 2010 varies in its representation of personal trauma, political conflict, and cultural identity, reflecting the evolving societal perceptions and historical understanding of this event."

### **Methodology of the Study:**

The methodology employed in this research involves a qualitative approach centered around content analysis. This approach is deemed appropriate for delving into the nuanced portrayals of partition in Indian English novels published between 1956 and 2010. The chosen methodology allows for a comprehensive examination of the textual content, themes, and narrative techniques employed by authors to depict this pivotal historical event.

1. Literature Review: The study commences with a comprehensive literature review that encompasses existing scholarship on both the partition of India and Indian English novels. By examining previous research, theories, and perspectives, the study situates itself within the larger scholarly discourse while also identifying gaps and opportunities for contributing fresh insights.
2. Novel Selection: The selection of novels forms a crucial aspect of this research. A curated list of Indian English novels from the chosen time frame is compiled, encompassing both well-established and lesser-known works. The selection process involves careful consideration of factors such as author reputation, literary significance, thematic relevance, and the diversity of perspectives on partition.
3. Content Analysis: The core of the research involves an in-depth content analysis of the selected novels. Each novel is meticulously read and examined to identify themes, characterizations, narrative structures, and emotional portrayals related to the partition. Quotes, passages, and instances that vividly depict the partition experience are excerpted for further analysis.

4. **Data Collection:** The identified excerpts serve as the primary data points for analysis. These textual snapshots capture the varied dimensions of partition as depicted in the novels. The data collected includes both overt and subtle references to historical events, personal experiences, cultural reflections, and socio-political dynamics linked to partition.
5. **Data Analysis:** The collected data is subjected to a rigorous qualitative analysis. Patterns, commonalities, and differences across the novels are examined to uncover how the partition is portrayed in literary narratives. Thematic clusters, emotional resonances, and narrative techniques are scrutinized to discern underlying meanings and implications.

The qualitative findings will be presented through descriptive narratives, thematic summaries, and textual examples that highlight the diverse ways partition is depicted in Indian English novels. The study acknowledges the subjectivity inherent in qualitative analysis and employs techniques such as triangulation and expert consultation to enhance the reliability and validity of the interpretations.

### **Population with Graphical Presentation:**

In this study, the concept of "population" takes on a somewhat different meaning compared to quantitative research. Rather than a traditional population of individuals, the focus is on selecting a specific set of literary works for analysis. The "population" in this context refers to Indian English novels published between 1956 and 2010 that portray the partition of India. The process begins with an initial list of Indian English novels, which includes a diverse range of literary works. From this initial list, inclusion criteria are applied. First, novels published within the specific time frame of 1956 to 2010 are considered. This ensures that the study focuses on works produced in the specified period. Subsequently, novels that prominently address the theme of partition are selected for further evaluation. The relevance of the partition theme is crucial in aligning the novels with the study's objectives. Moreover, considerations such as author reputation, popularity, and critical acclaim are taken into account to ensure a well-rounded selection. After applying these criteria, a final set of novels is identified for in-depth analysis. These selected novels form the core material upon which the content analysis will be conducted.

### **Conclusion**

Partition of the Indian subcontinent was an unprecedented political event in the history of India. The novels about Partition are authentic portrayals of the contemporary political relation because literature consistently records human life. A significant consideration of the Partition novels reveals that the Partition of the Indian subcontinent was an unprecedented political event. It should come as no surprise that the historical event of the horrible tragedy that was the Partition in 1947, which occurred in the wake of independence, is represented in the novel, which is the genre of creative writing that is the most seismographic. An epigrammatic evaluation of the history of the Partition reveals that the Muslim separatist that was influenced by the communal Muslim League's Two Nation Theory and the divide and rule strategy of the British were the primary factors that led to the Partition of India. This becomes evident when one considers the history of the Partition. In the beginning, the Congress was not prepared for any kind of division of India; however, in the end, the leaders were forced to accept it as a "inevitable alternative." Even though Jinnah and his Muslim League are primarily responsible for the humiliation of the Partition, he was not the first man to sow the seeds of separatist tendencies. Even before to 1867, there were Muslim leaders who envisioned a nation that was solely comprised of Muslims. Later on, the tendency of Hindus and Muslims to be antagonistic towards one another on the basis of religion,

as well as the growing dominance of Hindus and Sikhs in politics, administration, education, and economic matters, deepened the emotional chasm that existed between the two groups. Due to the unfortunate fact that the leaders of India were unable to keep the Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims united, India was split up into its current constituent parts in the year 1947. The Partition book, which is a political novel, is a type of historical fiction; yet, it is grounded in realism to its very core, and there is very little room in it for the inclusion of a passionate component. On the other hand, it does not have to be a dull and dry chronicle of political events; rather, it might be an imaginative piece of fiction.

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