

The Tales from Lost Chronicles: Reconstructing History of Partition in Selected Pakistani Fiction

ABSTRACT

Postmodernist evolution theorizes fluctuating homogeneity of meta-narratives by stabilizing heterogeneity of mini-narratives. Partition of Sub-continent has produced national histories to count the demographic details of the tragic event. New historicists challenge the authenticity of historical narratives through subjective representation. The present study explores how partition event represented in meta-narratives, is reconstructed in mini-narratives. To investigate this, Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice Candy Man is selected as partition fiction. The study is significant to observe that novels on the event of India Pakistan partition have biased possibilities, thus, different perspectives of the event provide multiple yet distinct perspectives of the event from the writer's side opinion. The study aims to show how selected fiction depicts religion, altered history, and politics through shared symbols of coexistence in the subcontinent. There is a gap in the exploration of Indo-Pak novels as a means of displaying integration of shared existence. In the light of New Historicism, I examine the gaps that are present in the Ice Candy Man. From vantage point, this study provides an alternative lens to perceive the uncertainties, and insecurities of unidentified people who experienced the turmoil of partition and remained invisible in the historical documentation. In so doing the study gauges the silence of history in representation of the sacrifices of minorities. The selected fiction is significant to highlight the untold and unknown heroic contribution of Parsee community in the tragic event of Partition.

Keywords: Partition, History, Subjectivity, reconstruction of history

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Introduction

History is generally assumed as objective documentation of facts and figures. Traditional historians also claim to give truthful accounts of history, but the postmodernist turn in the history deconstructed the authenticity of this claim. The new historians observed history as a product of time and space to organize and reshape the historical composition with subjective intrusions. New historicism claims that history is dynamic, not fixed and it is the impossibility of objective analysis. New historicism emerged in the 1970s; it rejects both traditional historicism and the marginalization of literature. It also refutes new criticism notion that literature transcends time and place. Rather, new criticism emphasizes the idea that no literary text is self-sufficient enough that it can stand on its own. In fact, a literary text incorporates a web of social meanings that are operating in time and space. Moreover, new historicists regard literary text as cultural artefacts which portray culture and society.

This theory incorporates the notion that a literary text is an embodiment of author's intention, or it reflects the spirit of age. The idea says that though a literary work operates in time and space; nevertheless, it does not represent the spirit of age. For that matter, new historicism believes that historiography involves the biases or perspectives of the author. One event can be reported in multiple ways just because one author holds different standpoint from another. New historicists believe that history is unstable, dynamic, and interplay of discourses. History is continuously in a state of flux, and multiple discourses are overlapping and competing. Further, it explicates that this discourse wields power for those who are in the charge. The power of the hegemonic class circulates in number of discourses such as discourses of Religion, Feminism, Marxism, Marginal groups and many more. Historical events, according to New Historicism, are stories that are inevitably biased. They are conscious or unconscious standpoints of authors in the landscape of history. The more unaware they are of their biases, the more they are subjective. In this way, history cannot mirror true spirit of the age. History cannot be understood in isolation from these discourses.

The partition history of sub-continent also cannot be taken as objective and fixed in the view of above statement. History is influenced by subjectivity of the historian who cannot escape the social or ideological constraints of his own formation which obstructs his objective representation of historical facts. Present research paper aims to analyze Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* as historical narrative on Indo-Pak partition. The partition of sub-continent in 1947 leads to the emergence of disheveled and distraught experiences of brutality which began new era in the history of sub-continent. The event of partition has produced ample of histories to document the tragic brutality which proceeded with elitist version of antagonism and atrocities. While

recollecting the demographic figures of common masses, this history is ubiquitously engaged in protecting their national heroes and ideologies. In addition to that, novelists, poets, and artists have also portrayed the picture of partition in their own ways. Partition also gives rise to new kind of genre of novel called as partition novel like Kushwant Singh's *A Train to Pakistan*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* etc. The history of partition is written on both sides of the border, but these historical accounts have great differences among them. The present study is significant to examine the reconstruction of history from the perspective of common people who shared endeared relationship in pre-partition community of sub-continent.

Reconstructing History Through Partition Fiction

The reinforcement of the notion of decentralization has given rise to the production of mini-narratives by associating truth as relative. Instead of depending over the limited purview of meta-narratives New Historicism deviates from homogeneity to explore heterogeneity of meta-narrative. It "projects a vision of history as an endless skein of cloth smocked in a complex overall pattern by the needle and thread of power. You need only pull the thread at one place to find it connected to another" (Porter 1988, 765). While differentiating the traditional historicism to new historicism Greenblatt states, ". . . the traditional historical approach to literature . . . finds history to lie outside the texts, to function in effect as the object to which signs in the text point" (Greenblatt 1998, viii). Abrams agrees with Greenblatt's view when he says, "the view that history, not the author, shapes a literary work and forges its meaning is indeed the crucial feature in the shift from traditional historical criticism both to the New Historicism and to the New Politicalism" (Abrams 1999, 365). Charis Baldick's remark in *Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms* is noteworthy:

New historicism is a term applied to a trend in American academic literary texts and at the same time the 'textual' nature of history. As a part of a wider reaction against purely formal or linguistic critical approaches; new historicists, led by Stephen Greenblatt, drew new connections between literary and non-literary texts, breaking down the familiar distinction between a text and its historical 'background' as conceived in established historical forms of criticism (2005, 171).

History cannot be accessed except in its textual form and this canon of textuality of history and historicity of text pulls down the line of demarcation between literary and non-literary text. As Renu Paul Ukkan (2004) remarks "New Historicism involves a parallel reading or juxtaposition of the literary and then on literary text of the same historical period. Both are given equal importance and allowed to work as sources of information and interrogation with each other" (2004, 22-23). As an historicist, Alun Munslow also

perceives history as a subjective construction, like Guha and subaltern studies group, Muslow also accentuates over the heterogeneous nature of history, as he puts it: "the post-modern challenge extends the remit of history to include the historian's pre-narrative and pre-figurative assumptions and how we weave those assumptions into forms or strategies of narrative explanation" (2001, 24). However, in opposition to this, Richard Evans emphasizes the veracity of history by defining it as an objective study of past events. With reference to Deborah Lipstadt's misrepresentation of historical facts Evan argues that history can be relocated and recollected. Nonetheless, this case study is an instance that such historians might have lived in past and shaped the history as they desired. To trace the truth that is falsified or misrepresented, New-Historicism devises a model for reading and re-reading the historical and narrative texts to find inter-textual alliances. Through the lens of New Historicism, a text is re-analyzed whether literary or non-literary to ascribe its significance in its socio-cultural conditions which departs when isolated from context:

...for the views and practices of the New Historicism differ markedly from those of former scholars who had adverted to social and intellectual history as 'background' against which to set work of literature as a independent entity, or had viewed literature as a reflection of the world view characteristic of the period" (Abrams 1999,183).

The complexity of the connection between text and its context opens new alliances between history and fiction.

The critical practice of New Historicism is a mode of "literary" history whose "literariness" lies in bringing imaginative operations closer to the surface of nonliterary texts and briefly describes some of the practice's leading literary features and strategies. (Laden 2004, 1)

Ongoing debates over the establishment of connectivity between two different disciplines of history and literary world oscillates between text and its context. Structuralism and formalism focused on the authenticity of the text by isolating it from its context however, after 1970s the context is perceived as inevitable to read the text. A New Historicist reads a literary piece in historical frame by investigating both how the author's times affected the work and how the work reflects the author's times, in turn recognizing that current cultural contexts color that critic's conclusions. This impression of historicity of the text and context opens an innovative mode of textual study. While framing the author's knowledge of the subject New Historians critically perceives author's engagement in constructing his subjective history. The objective and demographic figures presented in historical chronicles are reconstructed with the amalgamation of subjective insights.

As Abrams states:

New historicists acknowledge that they themselves, like all authors, are 'subjectivities' that have been shaped and informed by the circumstances and discourses specific to their era, hence that their own critical writings in great part construct, rather than discover ready-made, the textual meanings they describe and the literary and cultural histories they narrate. To mitigate the risk that they will unquestionably appropriate texts that were written in the past, they stress that the course of history between the past and present is not coherent, but exhibits discontinuities, breaks, and ruptures; by doing so, they hope to 'distance' and 'estrangle' an earlier text and so sharpen their ability to detect its differences from their present ideological assumptions. Some historicists present their readings of text written in the past as (in their favoured metaphor) 'negotiation' between past and present. (Abrams 1999, 186)

The New Historicists have drawn upon Foucauldian theory of discursive nature of literature which is a cultural construct; nonetheless, complete harmony in society is misleading because constant but repressed struggles keep on running parallel between powerful and powerless in the society. In literature, the suppressive and marginalized voices against central power structure and stricture is heard implicitly, meaning thereby, text does not display the dominant and overt history, however hidden history or histories are intertwined in literature. Edward Said reflects the same progeny of power structures in history, it is reflected in the following statement: "India had a massive influence on British life, in commerce and trade, industry and politics, ideology and war, culture and the life of imagination" (Said 1978, 160). The words "Indian" and "native" coalesced Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs in one umbrella term and differentiated them from the English. The sub-continent was turned in to a diabolical region in August 1947, when British announced the division into India and Pakistan.

The country, Pakistan is gained based on *Two-Nation Theory*. Because in pre-partition subcontinent Muslims and Hindus differences were primarily raised through religious discourse. The subcontinent turned into a diabolical region in August 1947, when British announced the division into India and Pakistan. This division was primarily triggered through religious differences of two different nations who share similar culture and traditions. The repercussions of the divide were horrible due to massive and violent migration of the people across new borders which led to mutilated murders, violent rapes, bestiality and so on. This tragic event stirred the creative imagination of many writers who weaved the fabric of tragic tales to highlight the tremendous atrocities remained silent or forgotten. Bapsi Sidhwa, through her eight-year narrator Lenny attempts to present objectively the peace and harmony in pre-partition sub-continent, appalling displacements and

mayhem during partition and the chaos and aberrance of post-partition. Sidhwa demonstrates religious and social contrasts are misleadingly made and deliberately raised. Through Lenny's point of view, Sidhwa demonstrates how religious contrasts were intentionally misused on the eve of Partition.

Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Iqbal, Tara Singh, Mountbatten are the names I hear.

And I become aware of religious differences.

It is sudden. One day everybody is themselves- and the next day they are Hindus, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. We are Parsee. (1988, 93-94)

Train massacres are not shown, but Sidhwa describes one briefly through the eyes of Ice-candy-man: "A train from Gurdaspur has just come in... Everyone in it is dead. Butchered. They are all Muslims" (1988, 149). Not everybody was in the support of Partition and the opposite side of the story is intentionally kept covered up by history specialists who support this extraordinary Partition. Sidhwa's historical narrative in the course of development discloses the political strategies of the native leaders to "divide and rule" (Malik 2008, 90). These politicians in a comforted room were dividing the cities as they were playing cards and the common people though Muslims, Sikhs or Hindus were killing each other for these cities. The politicians were ready for rule bestowed to them by British, who are selfish and take sides with Muslims or Hindus for their own benefits to rule over India (Aziz 1967, 93). A Hindu critic also points out that real intimacy for Muslims was replaced by cold dislike due to partition (Aziz 1967, 29). Bapsi Sidhwa has also rightly incorporated the historical colonial ideas of the British to show that how India "needed Western political, cultural and moral energies for its regeneration" (Malik 2008, 90) as Mr. Rogers says, "If we quit India today, old chap you'll bloody fall at each other's throats!" (Sidhwa 1988, 64).

Although Sidhwa does not give the full account of the atrocities done by Muslims on Hindus and Sikhs after partition but she has given us the glimpse of the cruel behaviors of Muslims towards these nations. In the novel Bapsi Sidhwa shows Jinnah saying, "You are free. You are free to go to your temples, your mosque or any other place of worship in the state of Pakistan. ...Pakistan Zindabad!" (Sidhwa 1988, 114). But Muslims become thirsty of blood of Sikhs and Hindus therefore, to avoid such torment many low caste Hindus changed their religion to live in newly born state of Pakistan as minorities as Hari in novel has had his *bodhi* shaved and he has become a Muslim. Ayah on the other hand, as a Hindu is raped by the mob of Muslims and later forced to prostitution like many other women. The analysis of political leadership by Sidhwa is seen as intertwined with her subjectivity when she portrays Gandhi, Jinnah and Nehru. Sidhwa presents the image of Muhammad Ali Jinnah as brilliant and *elegantly handsome* but for Hijari

(2015) he was dangerously thin skinned (20). Iftikhar H. Malik (2008) also presents Muhammad Ali Jinnah, “a young and dynamic legal mind’ as ‘ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity” (Malik 2008, 104) and the same idea is shared by Ziring in his book, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History*. But comparatively, Hijari gives opposite view to this as he mentions that “Jinnah enjoyed a nightly drink, which of course is forbidden in Islam” (Hijari 2015, 20). This explicitly shows that historical perspectives are subjective and dynamic as Narendra Singh Sarela (2009) is also seen to be opposing Jinnah. According to Sarela, partition was the *scheme* of Quaid-e-Azam and he was an Islamic fundamentalist in dyed wool who aimed to divide Muslims and Hindus. Hajari in his book *Midnight's Furies*, presents him as an Indian “This was classic Jinnah—prideful, biting, uncompromising” (Hijari 2015, 21). But at the same time, he also criticizes his own leader as well “India’s dashing first leader, Nehru, and his irascible Pakistani counterpart, Jinnah— would play a central role in creating the rift between their nations” (Hijari 2015, 15). Furthermore, Hijari (2015) highlights the negative aspects of both the personalities as both felt comfortable in their English accent instead of their mother tongue.

Some Indian writers have denied the nationalist approaches in their works and fully admired the personality of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Jaswant Singh authored a book, *Jinnah, India, Independence, and Partition* to redefine the history of partition. He puts the blame of partition on Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, and the Congress instead of Quaid-e-Azam. In bazaar mythology Jinnah is associated to Ravan, the evil presence, who is defeated by Ram, the most mainstream god of Hindu mythology. Few Indian Muslims, like Sheikh Abdullah, M. J. Akbar and Ansar Hussain Khan misrepresented their abhorrence of Jinnah, considering him to be the man who made Pakistan, the wellspring of the wretchedness for the Indian Muslims. Sheikh Abdullah, a companion of Nehru and Mountbatten: ‘The whole subcontinent needed to endure the results of his expanded inner self’ (1993, 47). He faulted the Kashmir issue for the *inflexible attitude of Jinnah*. Sidhwa also depicts how political leaders manoeuvre the ideals, produce feelings of doubt, and suspect in the mind of the common man. In an interview, Bapsi Sidhwa declared that: “part of my title *Ice-Candy-Man* did reflect on *Ice-Candy-Men*, that is manipulative politicians who hold out false candies to people” (Singh 1998, 293). Montenegro (1990) writes, “The main motivation grew out of reading of a good deal of literature on the partition of India and Pakistan what has been written by the British and the Indians. Naturally, they reflect their bias. And they have, I felt after I had researched the books, been unfair to Pakistan” (1990, 518). Likely, as a Pakistani she felt it occupant upon herself to defend Jinnah, the father of Pakistan. She tells David Montenegro:

And I felt, in *Ice Candy Man*, I was just redressing in a small way, a very grievous wrong that has been done to Jinnah and Pakistanis by many Indian and British writers. They have dehumanized him, made him a symbol of the sort of person who brought about the partition of India, a person who was hard-headed and obstinate. Whereas, in reality he was the only constitutional man who didn't sway crowds just by rhetoric and tried to everything by the British standards of constitutional law. (1990, 532)

Ziring, in his book *Pakistan at the crosscurrent* defines Gandhi as a character who had captured the imagination of people far and wide. A person, who had controlled Hindu's sentiments and gained popularity, by showing passive resistance to the British supremacy:

He was acknowledged as the leader of the spreading anti-imperialist struggle. Gandhi also challenged the might of the British-inspired industrial class. Moreover, Gandhi's preaching of non-violence did not prevent his followers from disrupting the colonial economy or closing down India's industrial centers. Labor strikes focused attention on poor working conditions, on long working hours for little pay, and on overbearing management that was indifferent to the plight of their workers. (Ziring 2003, 5-6)

Gandhi's ultimate tactics were mainly focused on isolating Jinnah while representing the voice of working class. Hijari (2015) presents a neutral point of view regarding partition. Gandhi was a punctual man whose day passed with the tick of the clock. He did not waste it. He was an inspiration for the Hindus. Malik (2009) highlights the fact that Gandhi was the one who wanted to retain the United India. He led the non-cooperation movement after World War II. He had gained Hindu sentiments by flaring up the Muslims. His strategies were characterized by extremism. The historical image of Gandhi is challenged when he is observed by eight-year-old Lenny as "an eccentric diet-faddist" who advises women to flush their system with enemas (Roy 2010, 65). His womanish concerns trouble Lenny to define his character as "an improbable mixture of a demon and a clown" (1988, 87). She portrays him as a politician who changes his stances according to the situation as Masseur observes that "He's a politician *yaar*. It's his business to suit his tongue to the moment" (1988, 91). In contrast to this, Sarela points out that many prominent historians view that Gandhi was always opposed to partition till the very end. He had no role in the great division and this is even reflected when Gandhi did not take part in celebrations of Partition in 1947. *Ice Candy man* also expresses doubt in the character of Nehru and his relationship with Mountbatten and his wife: "he's a sly one...he's got Moutbatten eating out of his one hand and the English's wife out of his other what-not... he's the one to watch" (1988, 131). Sidhwa's subjectivity is reflected when she describes

his character as “Jinnah or no Jinnah! Sikh or no Sikh! Right law or wrong law, Nehru will walk off with the lion’s share” (1988, 131).

Sidhwa has portrayed the heartbreaking division of cities and land among Pakistan and India. The number of the uprooted population given by Sidhwa is twelve million, “seven million Muslims and five million Hindus and Sikhs” (1998, 159), but Malik accounts that about eight million people migrated to Pakistan and Five million moved to India from Pakistan (Malik 2008, 130). She truly gives the account of the division of the lands in sub-continent ‘In India the Muslims claimed the Muslim-majority provinces as their homeland’ (Aziz 1967, 18). British favoured Hindus over Muslims in the division of lands and powers. Kashmir, being a Muslim majority state was given to India because its ruler wanted so. Sidhwa says:

The Hindus are being favoured over the Muslims by the remnants of the Raj. Now that its objective to divide India is achieved, the British favored Nehru over Jinnah. Nehru is Kashmiri, they grant him Kashmir. Spurning logic, defying rationale, ignoring the consequence of bequeathing a Muslim state to the Hindus; while Jinnah futilely protests; ‘Statesmen cannot eat their words!’ (Sidhwa 1988, 159)

These lines depict that Sidhwa believes that British favoured Gandhi and ignored Jinnah and at the end of the day just Muslims and Pakistan suffered. This can be accounted as a personal view of Sidhwa as Graeber points out, ‘Bapsi Sidhwa has attempted to give a Pakistani perspective to the partition of India’ (Roy 2010, 64). These views present that from politician to writers everyone has their own subjective views about prominent leaders and historical accounts of Pakistan and India. The views are highly influenced by subjectivity and cultural influences of that time. According to Tyson a literary text is a “cultural artefacts that can tell us something about the interplay of discourses, the web of social meanings, operating in the time and place in which the text was written” (Tyson 2009, 291). Sidhwa tries to be neutral in describing the partition of sub-continent but in doing so she consciously or unconsciously being subjective. She favours Jinnah over Gandhi and Nehru. Thus, history can never be objective as it is always influenced by one’s perceptions and feelings, thereby it is not a presentation of reality, instead it is only interpretation.

The massacres and large-scale atrocities done during the partition are pictured in Sidhwa’s novel. She is being subjective in portraying only the atrocities done on Muslim groups whereas she ignores what Muslims did to Hindus and Sikhs. Kushwant Singh’s novel *A Train to Pakistan* has however given the account that how Muslims butchered the Hindu and Sikh families. He explains how trains coming from Pakistan were full of dead bodies. However, Sidhwa only details the instance of train full of dead bodies of Muslims coming from Gurdaspur. Malik’s account of history also shows that

both Muslim and non-Muslim women were abducted and raped. According to him, almost 50,000 Muslim women were abducted, and 10,000 non-Muslim women were abducted (Malik 2008, 130). Ziring also argues that “numerous atrocities occurred in the name of divine sanction. Law and order were virtually impossible to maintain” (Ziring 2003, 38).

Bapsi Sidhwa prodigiously relates the historical veracities to the fictional representation of partition turmoil. She articulates sentiments that are lost in recollecting the chronicles of bestiality. Her deliberate attempt of choosing a child narrator for presenting her fiction unbiased helps her writing intentions to deliver maximum public. Through this technique, Sidhwa acutely portrays the political manipulations that have targeted the religious divide to destabilize the region on one hand but also constructed the history of her own Parsee community. This contrived history provides a strong platform to strengthen the affiliation with the Pakistani community. Living as a minority in the newly born state of Pakistan Parsee community seeks its possible survival through Jinnah’s speech of freedom for diverse religious practices. To stabilize geographically, Bapsi Sidhwa deliberately weaves the heroic and constructive figure of Parsee community in the fabric of partition turmoil to articulate the untold and unknown endeavors of this minority.

Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man* is a text of recorded historical events where there are several aspects of society that have been discussed by the author. When the novel begins it clearly renders its focus is Parsee community of the subcontinent. Bapsi Sidhwa has tried to uplift the status of Parsee community by keeping them at the center of the novel because they are unrepresented in literature. As it had no elitist background thereby it remained excluded from any governments’ interest and support. Whilst history is always manipulated by those who are in power, and it shows those powerful communities as the most ‘efficient’ ones. So far as history is recorded by those in power and only, they have the authority to depict the situation of the society, that restricts the nobility and heroism to the elitist group while the voices of other communities are suppressed because they lack resources of power.

India had only one dominant religion Hinduism that encompasses all sets of polytheistic and idolatrous belief systems existed in Indian society and culture while its essentialist pagan foundation was clearly contrasted by the divinity of Islam. This homogeneity of Hinduism usually causes the inarticulation and unrepresentation of heterogenous belief systems. This stance is very important and needs to be considered in a way that history has not only ignored the minority communities and their heterogenous belief systems but also considered them as non-existent. Sidhwa is subverting this notion by portraying the individualism of Parsee community and their historicizing their approach and strategies to deal with the partition. Sidhwa demonstrates how Muslims, Hindus, and even Sikhs as a minority are

engaged in political turbulence. On a critical note, in the part of Hindus, Gandhi called for a peaceful retaliation and civil disobedience against the British government while creating no violence (Hijari, 17). On the other hand, according to Ziring: "despite obvious differences between Hindus and Muslims, Jinnah was not swayed from the belief that, with good faith, Indian leaders of opposed persuasions could guide their followers along a common path of social progress and reform" (2003, 8). Sikhs were seeking refuge in the villages owned by the Muslims (Hajari, 63). All these and many other reconciling services rendered by the people of these communities have found no place in Sidhwa's novel.

Jinnah "elegantly handsome" (Sidhwa 1988, 160) founder of Pakistan is very prodigious to admire in novel for Sidhwa when she introduces his wife as Parsee. This reference diligently ties Parsee with Muslims to reinforce their spatial stability; she introduces her as "astonishingly beautiful. Large eyes, liquid brown, radiating youth, promising intelligence, declaring innocence, shining from an oval marble-firm face.....Daring.....[and] Plucky" (Sidhwa 1988, 160). However, we have no such acknowledgements to the wives of other leaders as Nehru or Tara Singh or any other women who were wives of other prominent figures of partition history, or any women who independently played their roles within the partition scene.

According to historians, all the communities were against the British rule because they were being deprived of their rights but all the texts carry a biased approach towards the description of the events. In the novel it is seen that Colonel Bharucha blames the British for the polio disease in India, it shows the perspective of Parsee community on the British rule in India. In *Ice Candy Man* it is stated by Colonel Bharucha: "We must tread carefully...We have served the English faithfully, and earned their trust...So, we have prospered! We must be extra wary, or we'll be neither here nor there" (Sidhwa 1988, 40). The novel implies Sidhwa's critique on community centered attitudes of Muslims and Hindus. As she renders this on the day of celebration of Parsee community through the criticism of Colonel Bharucha and other speakers on Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims that they are brutal, mean and barbaric in nature and they will marginalize Parsees if they have to live with them. As it is stated in the novel:

"If we're stuck with the Hindus, they'll swipe our businesses from under our noses and sell our grandfathers in the bargain. If we are struck with the Muslims they'll convert us by the sword! God help us if we're stuck with the Sikhs!"... "let whoever wishes rule! Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian! We will abide by the rules of their land!". "As long as we present no threat to anybody, we will prosper" says colonel "don't ever try to exercise real power" says the banker. (1998, 37)

Sidhwa has only talked about the troubles and insecurities of the Parsee community like other writers have carried a biased approach while representing their communities in their works. It is very evident in the novel that Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs were very ill-mannered because during all the events they could not maintain a friendly relationship with British People but, on the other hand Parsees had a friendly relationship with them. This point is supported through the meeting at Sethi's at which Mr. and Mrs. Rogers were present and the discussion ran in a very smooth manner. Unlike Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs who always had a heated discussion with British people which always ended up in clash, during Round Table conferences, Lord Wavell plan, Cabinet Mission plan, meetings of Gandhi and Jinnah with several Viceroy's. Parsees are presented in a very positive way because they never had any conflicts with the British rulers as well, as a community Parsees had a positive attitude with others as compared to rest of the communities. Sidhwa acutely presents the evictions and alienation of victimized women of the sub-continent who experienced the violation and abuse of partition. Sidhwa documents that how Muslim women like Hameeda and Hindu women like Ayah have been protected and secured at the time when their families were not ready to accept their existence. She also depicts the mysterious engagements of her mother along with other Parsee women to protect the women during partition turmoil. While presenting such positive devotions of Parsee community, she also highlights the image of Godmother who feels insecure in going to Heera Mandi, where Ayah is taken after her abduction and gets married with Ice Candy Man, however, she tries to convince Ayah to settle with Ice Candy Man permanently. Her persuasion epitomizes the strategy of Parsee community to "run with the hounds and hunt with the hare" (1998, 37). Sidhwa's writing also lacks accuracy when she leaves similar gaps in recollecting the fictive accounts of the unknown and unattended facts. She fails in voicing Hameeda as women, Muslim, wife and as mother. Sidhwa articulates her deteriorating tragedy through Godmother whose narration is devoid of representing emotional and psychological turbulence of Hameeda.

Conclusion

The above debate can be concluded in analyzing Khushwant Singh claim that "*Ice Candy Man* deserves to be ranked amongst the most authentic and best [books] on partition of India". The above discussion refutes this claim by bringing to light the gaps within the novel that have been left unattended by Sidhwa. According to Hijari, the very Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs who have been shown as the initiators of the partition riots, "lived together amicably, and even attending each other's weddings and festivals" (2015, 47). However, the graveness of the idea of losing their identities, families, land,

ancestral belongingness, and many other subjective emotions lead them to fury that resulted in the chaos they created even when they themselves did not want it to happen. However, Sidhwa, while giving a factual account of the partition riots in her novel *Ice Candy Man*, does not associate the negative influence of these riots on the minds, hearts, and souls of the majority communities that stripped every bit of humanity and sanity from them. She also did not endeavour to talk about people, especially women, who were displaced or sent back as to what treatment they would have faced. She merely focused on glorifying the Parsee community throughout the novel.

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