

COMMUNAL CONFLICTS AND WOMEN'S VICTIMIZATION: WOMEN'S
VICTIMIZATION
DEPICTED IN ICE-CANDY-MAN (1989), A WAR HEROINE, I SPEAK (2017)
AND ROHINGYA: THE SOLD DREAM (2017)

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Approval

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Abstract

In almost every communal conflict, women become one of the prime victims. Especially in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, the notion of women's victimization in communal conflict gets strong. Since in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, the idea of nation is associated with mother/woman, the honor of their nations, communities are mainly related to women. Women's roles as mothers of the nation and transmitters of culture symbolize the honor of the ethnic group in those communities. When a woman's honor is tarnished through sexual violence, the ethnic group is also dishonored and weakened. Therefore, men of one ethnic-religious community choose women as a medium to defeat the adversary ethnic-religious community. My thesis claims that in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, women become one of the prime victims in communal conflicts. It also declares that women become victims during the conflicts, and their victimization continues in the post-conflict contexts. In my thesis, women's victimization will be depicted in the context of three communal conflicts: India Partition (1947), Liberation War of Bangladesh (1971), and Rohingya Crisis (2017), respectively. Moreover, my thesis attempts to show the continuation of women's victimization in the communal conflict in the context of the Indian Subcontinent through the depiction of the mentioned communal conflicts.

In addition, my thesis aims to depict women's victimization during and in the post-conflict context of the mentioned communal conflicts, which causes their physical and mental trauma. In my thesis, the narrative of women's victimization during and in the post-conflict context of the mentioned communal conflicts will be depicted in the light of the three primary texts, *Ice-Candy-Man* (1989), *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017), and *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* (2017) respectively. Additionally, my thesis will follow the analytical approach to present

the argument. Besides, several famous theories such as Gender and Nation, Gendered Nature of war, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Betty Freidan's *The Feminine Mystique*, and several secondary sources discussed in the literature review chapter will be used here to make my argument admissible.

Epigraph

“The torture started more than three months ago. The military came in one group each time, with around 80-100 men. When they came, they would not say anything. They did not talk but just took gold and some girls. They would shoot older women. The girls were raped; we saw it. First, they pressed their breasts, and they cut their clothes to search for money. After that, they raped them in front of everyone. They often took the beautiful girls away from the village; we do not know where. Some were released or managed to escape. We do not know what happens to those that manage to survive because they are ashamed and afraid. Maybe some of the girls are here too, but they do not talk about it. They do not want to share their stories because if they get into an argument, people will use the rape to shame them, to use it against them. They are unmarried and poor, and it is difficult to get married after you are raped.”

-Rohingya Woman, 30-year-old, from Buthid Aung Township, 22 October 2017.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In the history of the Indian subcontinent, several communal conflicts take place. Among them, three incidents can be considered noteworthy. The first two incidents took place in the countries of the Indian-Subcontinent. The first one was the “India Partition,” which happened in 1947, wherein India divided into two separate nations: India and Pakistan. The British government promoted its policy of hatred and division, which was mainly between the Hindus and the Muslims. After their departure in 1947, the celebrations of an independent India were short-lived. The British created the divisions, stayed on, and flourished with extremists from both sides, ready to kill anyone from the other side. While the Muslims under Mohammad Ali Jinnah wanted an independent country called Pakistan, the Hindus wanted the Muslims to leave this country and go to Pakistan. Clashes followed, millions fled, and millions more were killed. In that circumstance, different forms of violence towards people took place, such as killing, looting, raping, and kidnapping. At that time, the communal conflicts befell among three ethnic-religious communities’ men (Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs) in which women became one of the prime victims.

The second momentous occurrence was the “Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971”. As an outcome of the War, two separate nations arose (Bangladesh and Pakistan). The borders of modern Bangladesh were set up with the division of Bengal and India in August 1947, when the region turned to be East Pakistan as a piece of the recently framed State of Pakistan following the end of British rule in the region. Declaration of Bangladesh Independence in March 1971 prompted the nine-month-long Bangladesh Liberation War that culminated with East Pakistan arising as the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. During the Independence War of Bangladesh,

the Pakistani armed force and Razakar raped and tormented between 200,000 and 400,000 Bangladeshi women and girls in a methodical mission of genocidal rape. The more significant part of the rape survivors of the Pakistani Army and its partners were Hindu women. Imams and Muslim religious pioneers proclaimed the women as 'war booty' and supported rape and torture. The activists and heads of Islamic parties were additionally denounced to be engaged with the rapes and snatching of women. Women were assaulted in two ways. Initially, Hindu women were raped and killed. Secondly, Bengali Muslim women who were seen to be under Hindu influence were impregnated forcibly to make 'pure' Muslims. As indicated by the researchers, rape was utilized to threaten both the Bengali Muslim majority and the Bengali Hindu minority of Bangladesh. Those rapes caused many pregnancies, births of war children, abortion, infanticide, suicide, and ostracism of the victims from the society, and rejection from the family to accept them. The outrages ended after the acquiescence of the Pakistani military and supporting Razakar civilian armies, which was perceived as one of the significant events of war crimes anyplace.

The third noticeable communal conflict was trailed by the genocide that occurred in 2017 in Myanmar. Although Myanmar is not a country of the Indian subcontinent, it is bordered by Bangladesh and India to its northwest. Additionally, the Indian subcontinent is geographically delineated by the Arakanese in the east. The Rohingya people were a stateless Indo-Aryan ethnic group who dominantly followed Islam and dwell in Rakhine State, Myanmar. The Rohingya population was considered the most oppressed minority in the world. In 2017, above 400,000 Rohingya Muslims experienced extreme brutality in Rakhine State, where the Burmese military executed 'clearance operations' purportedly focusing on insurgents, which was depicted as a

‘textbook example of ethnic cleansing. The United Nations discovered proof of expanding impelling of disdain and religious bigotry by ‘ultra-nationalist Buddhists’ against Rohingyas.

The spiraling political crisis and humanitarian disaster were severe and notable ramifications for women, who made up a considerable part of the uprooted populace. The Rohingya refugee crisis was a tangled situation driven by an assortment of factors identified with ethnic and religious cleavages, just as rivalry over natural resources. As a Muslim minority group in an overwhelmingly Buddhist-majority country, the Rohingya confronted vicious mistreatment and methodical exclusion for a long time. As being denied citizenship, the Rohingya did not have a political voice. Widespread human rights abuses were described in the recent wave of brutality, which started after a minor revolutionary group assaults local authority. Rohingya people experienced retributory military assaults, which incorporated summary executions, enforced disappearances, discretionary captures and detainments, torment, and abuse, forced labor, and sexual abuse of Rohingya women. Albeit the Burmese military forces denied such charges, women became the objectives of opportunistic and orchestrated rapes by security forces of the region. More than 40% of villages were preoccupied with the Rohingya in Arakan State; Myanmar was purged in recent weeks. Consequently, Rohingya people escaped by walking and boats across the Naf River to Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. In addition, as a result of the relocation, the Rohingya women often were to be victimized by sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Again, my thesis claims that in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, women become one of the prime victims in communal conflicts. It also declares that women become victims during the conflicts, and their victimization continues in the post-conflict context. This very notion will be analyzed on the ground of several subjects, including rape, sexual assault, murder, forcefully impregnating, abduction, during the conflicts and trafficking, sold to prostitution,

ostracism from the community, and rejection from the family to accept in the post-conflict context.

In addition, my thesis aims to depict women's victimization during and in the post-conflict context of the mentioned communal conflicts, which causes their physical and mental trauma by violating their rights as humans. Moreover, my thesis attempts to show the continuation of women's victimization in the communal conflict in the context of the Indian Subcontinent through the depiction of the mentioned communal conflicts. Besides, in my thesis, the narrative of women's victimization during and in the post-conflict context of the mentioned communal conflicts will be depicted in the light of the three primary texts, *Ice-Candy-Man* (1989), *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017), and *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* (2017) respectively.

The first novel I have chosen as the primary text of my thesis is Bapsi Sidhwa's (1989)¹ novel *Ice-Candy-Man*. This novel deals with the partition of India and its aftermaths. The political and social disturbance caused by the partition included religious intolerance that prompted mass brutality, murdering, mutilations, rapes, allotment, and hence, the extensive butcher of infants, children, men, and women closed by the removal of numerous refugees; Hindus escaping to India, and Muslims escaping to Pakistan. This novel was depicted from the first-person viewpoint of Lenny Sethi, a Parsee child who encountered the complex and moving political and social consequences followed by the partition of India. In the novel, the author, Bapsi Sidhwa, demonstrates the protagonist, Ayah, and her victimization, who encountered the horror of the communal conflict that changed her life in a moment.

¹ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

The second primary text is *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017)² is the English translation of Neelima Ibrahim's widely acclaimed book, *Ami Birangana Bolchi*. Deftly deciphered by Fayeza Hasanat, it recounts the story of women who had been brutally raped, tormented and held captive by Pakistani soldiers during the liberation war of 1971. When people talk about the liberation war of Bangladesh, they talk about thousands of freedom fighters who have shed their blood for the nation. However, people scarcely talked about the women freedom fighters exposed to sexual maltreatment during the war. This book uncovers a piece of our history that society does not promptly recognize. The book is separated into seven chapters; every chapter recounts the account of different war heroines, their highly traumatic experiences in imprisonment, and their endeavors to get back to everyday life after the war is distinctively introduced.

The third primary text is Mumtaz Moosa Saley's (2017)³ *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* is a convincing novelette highlighting the brutal tragic reality encountered by the Rohingya people in Myanmar. The emotion Saley puts to paper through her protagonist Amina leaves the readers truly throbbing for her; her sister Ayesha and each Rohingya were fiercely treated and tormented. This novelette depicts the striking truth of forgotten Rohingya people that they underwent.

Furthermore, my thesis will follow the analytical approach to analyze the different chapters of the thesis. Moreover, through my thesis, I will present the idea of women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context from a fresh point of view. Besides these, several famous theories such as Gender and Nation, Gendered Nature of war, Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Betty Freidan's *The Feminine Mystique*, and several secondary

² Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

³ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017.

sources discussed in the literature review chapter will be applied to make my argument satisfactory.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Partition of India (1947)

Women's Victimization During Conflict and in Post-Conflict Context

On 1947, 15 August, India accomplished its independence after more than 200 years of British dominance. Nevertheless, when the partition of the Indian subcontinent achieved this freedom into East and West Pakistan and India, the rapture of achieving freedom after years of struggle had been immediately destroyed. To talk about the consequences of partition, Bhalla (2007)⁴ asserts that those whose bodies are entire have hearts that are fragmented; families are destroyed. The wires of human relationships are destroyed, and numerous spirits stay behind in Hindustan while their bodies begin for Pakistan. Ismat Chughtai's statement depicts the actual condition of people during the partition, which addresses the devastating impacts of the partition on the general people. Again, Butalia (1998)⁵ claims that the displaced people's experiences of dislocation and trauma that formed their lives discover a slight appearance in recorded history.

It will be untruthful to declare that women are entirely missing from the history of partition. Nevertheless, they are observed in history books as numbers and objects of study but not as subjects. Consequently, it is vital to participate in a gendered analysis of the partition. Butalia (1998)⁶ asserts that 12 million individuals relocated during partition, and demise counts

⁴ Bala, Ashok. "Rohingya Crisis: Sexual Violence against Women and Adolescent Girls in Myanmar". *Google*, academia.edu, 2018.

⁵ Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Navi Mumbai, Penguin Books India, 1998.

⁶ Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Navi Mumbai, Penguin Books India, 1998, Pg:3

vary between 200,000 and 2,000,000; however, it is regularly settled upon that over a million have lost their lives during the departure. The number of women kidnapped on the two sides of the border remains at around 80,000. Menon and Bhasin (2011)⁷ assert that when people talk about the brutality against women and the victimization of those women during communal conflicts, it is necessary to review those women fall prey to men of the opposite religious communities and are also killed by their own families. Women experience different types of sexual violence such as mutilation and marking of genitalia with religious images, tearing out of the belly, being strutted bare on the streets or places of religious worship, and rape lastly. Each violent demonstration fills in as an allegory that seems to be a marker of women's sexuality involved in an all-male, patriarchal arrangement of gender relations between and within religious or ethnic communities. The savage acts on women's bodies are not focused on them as people; their mutilated, battered, raped bodies are an approach to convey a message to the men of the religious group to which the women belong. At this point, women's bodies turn into a site where one group attempts to demonstrate its religious superiority over the other. Furthermore, Mayer (2000)⁸ asserts that when a nation is perceived as a mother, it becomes feminine within the male/female division. This very idea validates the concept that a nation as a mother/woman is required protection by its male citizens from the outsiders, which permits communal riots. Therefore, it can be said that the partition has mangled the nation, which is imagined as a woman. This symbolic mutilation is found as various forms of violence on a woman's body wherein rape becomes the terminal act of humiliating a woman and the religious community to

⁷ Menon, Ritu & Bhasin, Kamla. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi, Kali for Women, 2011, Pg:41.

⁸ Mayer, Tamar. "Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Setting the Stage." In *Gender Ironies of Nationalism: Sexing the Nation*, edited by Tamar Mayer, London, London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 1-24.

which she belongs. Additionally, Dasgupta (2015)⁹ asserts that violence towards women is a route for men to recover their manliness since she states that partition is coded as a deterioration of the male nationalist to secure the political uprightness of the country, just as the failure of Hindu and Sikh men to protect their women. This notion prompts a highly viscous compensatory execution of manliness. Women are obliged within the disciplinary boundaries of a neo-nationalist talk only if they agree to be objects of oppression.

Again, Menon and Bhasin (2011)¹⁰ claim that since the issue of victimization of women during partition is explored, it should recognize that numerous women are killed by their family members and pressured to commit suicide. Poisoned, strangled, or burnt to death, put to the sword are made evident to them because they believe that demise is desirable over ‘dishonor’; without their men, the main option accessible to them is to end their own lives. In this case, the thought is that for a religious community that firmly relates its national and religious honor to the purity of their women, demise is the undeniable option over rape, religious conversion, or abduction. An animation short film prepared by Singh (2012)¹¹ demonstrates how brutally a father of an 18-year-old girl butchers his daughter only to save her from being raped by the people of the adversary religious group. Since the male members of their community believe that dishonoring their women will dishonor their families, communities, it is better to prompt women

⁹ Dasgupta, Shumona. “The Extraordinary and the Everyday: Locating Violence in Women’s Narratives of the Partition.” *The Indian Partition in Literature and Films: History, Politics, and Aesthetics*, edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Debali Mookerjee-Leonard, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp.46.

¹⁰ Menon, Ritu & Bhasin, Kamla. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India’s Partition*. New Delhi, Kali for Women, 2011.

¹¹ Singh, Paritosh. “1947 - Haunting Dreams: Animation”. *YouTube*, uploaded by Design Programme, Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, 6 Apr. 2012.

to commit voluntary suicide or kill women to save them from being dishonored by the people of the adversary religious group.

Moreover, Butalia (1998)¹² claims that during communal conflicts in 1947, wherein women's bodies become emblematic targets, suicides are viewed as brave demonstrations of religious pride, fortitude, and courage. Women are viewed as martyrs who have relinquished themselves to defend their families' and communities' honor. A well-archived instance of such example originates from Thoa Khosla, Rawalpindi, wherein ninety women commit suicide by dipping into a well to get away from rape and abduction. The stories about these women originate from men, mainly from their family members who have endured. There is consistently a demand that the suicides are fundamental and are committed willfully by those women. This idea is found in one of the documentaries of *BBC One* presented by Rani (2018)¹³ on women's victimization during India's partition demonstrates how people of the Sikh religion, especially women, are poorly tortured by the Muslims, who choose the path of committing suicide by jumping into the well to save their honor.

It cannot be claimed that those women have a superior alternative; they must experience either death, rape, or kidnapping. Nevertheless, it can be claimed that agreeing to die does not mean that they perform the act happily; they just become the victims of the communal conflicts.

¹² Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Navi Mumbai, Penguin Books India, 1998.

¹³ Rani, Anita. "What Happened to the women? My Family, Partition and Me: India 1947". *YouTube*, uploaded by BBC One, 8 Mar. 2018

Besides, Morton (2012)¹⁴ claims that the problem of abducted women is to such an extent that the government of India and Pakistan build up the Inter Dominion Agreement¹⁵ for the recuperation of abducted women from the two sides of the border. The belief behind the recuperation act was not just to bring the abducted women back home, however, to assure that the women have come back to their menfolk. Morton (2012)¹⁶ further asserts that although the recuperation procedure may appear to be a noble purpose that neutralizes the abduction and victimization of women, it is likewise involved in the preservation of national borders and talks of ethnic purity. Because not recuperating the abducted women would mean contagion of her community since they were essentially whisked away considering the demands of the religious community and patriarchal state that they belong to. Thus, when a woman is raped or abducted, at this point, her sexuality is not conceivable or worthy. In Butalia's (1998)¹⁷ words:

How can motherhood be so debased? How can families, the community, the nation? In fact, how can men permit this situation to proceed? The women must be brought back, they must also be purified, and they must be moved into the family and the community they belong to. (Butalia 190)

¹⁴ Morton, Stephen. "Violence, Gender and Partition in the Narration of the South Asian Nation." *In The Other India: Narratives of Terror, Communalism and Violence*, edited by Om Prakash Dwivedi, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars, 2012, pp. 40-50.

¹⁵ The government of India and Pakistan built up the Inter Dominion Agreement in November 1947 for the recuperation of abducted women from the two sides of the border.

¹⁶ Morton, Stephen. "Violence, Gender and Partition in the Narration of the South Asian Nation." *In The Other India: Narratives of Terror, Communalism and Violence*, edited by Om Prakash Dwivedi, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars, 2012, pp. 40-50.

¹⁷ Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Navi Mumbai, Penguin Books India, 1998, Pg:190.

Furthermore, Debali Mookerjea-Leonard (2015)¹⁸ claims that one of the complicated things encountered was that many women were pregnant or had borne children of their abductors when they were saved. When these women were recuperated, they had to desert those blended blood children to be acknowledged back into their families. Numerous women denied being recuperated and demanded to remain with their abductors. One of the main reasons for such choice was the consciousness that their presently modified social status would involve their unacceptability and ostracism from the community on their return. Again, many women who opposed recuperation were firmly removed by the state and introduced where they should be, with male kinfolk of their religions. They were not even asked whether they wanted to return to their own families or wanted to stay with their abductors, wherein they had a new family with their newborn child. Mookerjea-Leonard (2015)¹⁹ extends her thought and asserts that those women did not have a voice. They were not allowed to decide as citizens because they were treated just as objects, bodies to be recuperated and returned to their proprietors.

Therefore, it can be said that women during partition and in the post-partition context are rarely observed as subjects; instead, they are considered objects since a community's concepts of virtue and pride are arranged based on the concepts of their sexuality and bodies.

¹⁸ Mookerjea-Leonard, Debali. "Quarantined: Women and the Partition." *The Indian Partition in Literature and Films: History, Politics, and Aesthetics*, edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Debali Mookerjea-Leonard, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 11-51.

¹⁹ Mookerjea-Leonard, Debali. "Quarantined: Women and the Partition." *The Indian Partition in Literature and Films: History, Politics, and Aesthetics*, edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Debali Mookerjea-Leonard, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 11-51.

Liberation War of Bangladesh (1971)

Women's Victimization During Conflict and in Post-Conflict Context

Throughout history, war has been gendered, and its implications and ramifications for women and men contrast as far as the sex-based nature of the different wounds and deaths caused to female and male bodies. The immediate consequence and ultimate legacy of war additionally play out diversely for the genders. Women are viewed as transporters of a culture whose bodies are symbols of the nations to be safeguarded by men, are particularly powerless in circumstances of conflict, where their identities as women go under danger.

Harrington (2006)²⁰ refers to that the basic strategy of rape as a method for embarrassing the foe and breaking their soul makes women into weapons of war. Rape turns into an apparatus of hereditary imperialism and ethnic purifying when impregnated women bear the adversary's children, and it has likewise been a component of genocide, as in the instances of a few countries. Harrington (2006)²¹ further asserts that the reality of sexual violence as laid out by the guerrilla fighters approves the claim that during East Pakistan's struggle for Independence in 1971, the West Pakistani Army used rape as a weapon of war to disgrace and annihilate the East Pakistani women, which was like strategies utilized across the subcontinent during the Partition of British India in 1947. In East Pakistan, Bengali Muslims targeted Bengali Hindus just as West Pakistani Muslims and Bengali Muslims additionally attacked each other. Perpetrators showed up in numerous forms and under numerous pretenses; Pakistani, Bengali, and Bihari.

²⁰ Harrington, Louise. "Women and Resistance in West Bengal and Bangladesh: 1967–1971". *University of Alberta Press, Canada*, 2006.

²¹ Harrington, Louise. "Women and Resistance in West Bengal and Bangladesh: 1967–1971". *University of Alberta Press, Canada*, 2006.

Nonetheless, there was a common component that tied them within a standard structure. Driven by the spirit of nationalism and nation-building, these men carried out horrendous violations that affect them even today. Pakistani soldiers and their Bihari allies raped and murdered Bengali women to save a nation; Bengali men also raped and executed in the desire to make another nation. Sexual brutality was anything but an irregular demonstration in 1971.

Saikia (2004)²² states that the state made these men freedom fighters gave them the power to execute their will with violence if need be. The rhetoric of war and views of Pakistanis and Biharis as the ‘foe’ moved Bengali men to submit horrific demonstrations and vice versa. These regularly transformed into sexual brutality against women to threaten and constrain the entire communities into dread and submission. Sometimes the attack on women seemed to have been inspired by the political aim of losing the ‘other’ community. Nevertheless, some appeared to have been criminal conduct, taking advantage of the turmoil of war and the breakdown of law and order and included men assaulting women of their ‘own’ group. For instance, Lt. Gen. Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi (1998)²³ writes, “Of late, there had been reports of rape, and surprisingly West Pakistanis were not being saved; on 12 April, two West Pakistani women were raped, and an endeavor was made on two others.” (Niazi 282-83).

Once again, Ibrahim (2017)²⁴ refers to seven true accounts of Bengali women who had been held hostage in barracks by the Pakistan army, all except one had been kidnapped by civilians; four by Bengalis, one by Biharis, and one were indistinct, and five of them already had

²² Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

²³ Niazi, Amir Abdullah Khan. *The Betrayal of East Pakistan*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, Pg:282-283.

²⁴ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

been raped before being gone to the armed personnel who had proceeded with their torture. Moreover, the rape of several women was prompted by a desire to obliterate the ‘other’ community. At this point, Saikia’s (2004)²⁵ claims can be cited here. Saikia (2004)²⁶ refers to a Bengali Muktijoddha who told that he and five other muktijoddhas had assaulted a young Bihari girl, a neighbor, in April 1971, with the thought that “I want to assault and obliterate this girl. I want to annihilate the Biharis; they are our adversaries.” (qtd. in Saikia 285)²⁷.

Once again, Bose (2011)²⁸ asserts that since the Pakistani army endorsed a method of rape, subsequently, between 200,000 and 400,000 women were raped and made sex slaves in Pakistani military camps. The methodical utilization of sexual violence by the West Pakistanis sought to obliterate and displaced the Bengali populace while building up a viewpoint of predominance over the women and men of East Pakistani society. Bose (2011)²⁹ further affirms that the method behind the rapes and different forms of sexual violence was to execute, damage, and in some cases persuasively impregnated women to bear the offspring of what was often articulated as the next generation of Pakistanis. This strategy incorporated both racial and religious ideological rationale. When the West Pakistanis understood that the conflict was not going to end after the methodical campaign of focusing on the elites, the Pakistani military and

²⁵ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

²⁶ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

²⁷ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

²⁸ Bose, Sarmila. “The question of genocide and the quest for justice in the 1971 war”. *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol.13, no. 4, 2011, pp. 393-419.

²⁹ Bose, Sarmila. “The question of genocide and the quest for justice in the 1971 war”. *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol.13, no. 4, 2011, pp. 393-419.

their militias shifted course and effectively focused on the female Bengali populace. The approach was driven by the expectations of mentally breaking the people of Bengali society. At this point, Sharlach's (2000)³⁰ thought can be alluded to. Sharlach (2000)³¹ claims that women in their roles as mothers of the nation and transmitters of culture represent the honor of ethnic groups in such communities. When a woman's honor is defamed through rape, the ethnic group is likewise disgraced.

Malik (1972)³² affirms that the rape of Bengali women would supposedly counter the feminine culture of the Bengal, to have the option to withstand Indian impacts. The utilization of sexual violence against Bengali women and children by the military was, subsequently, one of power, control, and predominance as one Pakistani soldier remarks, "we are going; however, we are leaving our seeds behind. Ruth Seifert (2016)³³ Specifies that for the West Pakistanis, rape in the conflict of freedom mirrored the patriarchal militaristic approaches that in focusing on women, they could neutralize the conveyors of Bengali culture and hence their removal through death, suicide, or forceful impregnation. For the Pakistani military, the methodology was to annihilate the women who were viewed as the janitor of Bengali culture and life, and, in this manner, Seifert (2016)³⁴ refers to rape as an instrument of war is a material, culture-obliterating act with tactical reasoning. The reason for assaulting Bengali women in the conflict by the

³⁰ Sharlach, Lisa. "Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda". *New Political Science*, vol. 22, no.1, 2000, pp. 89-102.

³¹ Sharlach, Lisa. "Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda". *New Political Science*, vol. 22, no.1, 2000, pp. 89-102.

³² Malik, Amita. *The Year of the Vulture*. New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1972.

³³ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

³⁴ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

Pakistani elite was that Pakistani people wanted to sexually control the existences of Bengali women so that they could ‘engrave’ Pakistani ‘racial characteristics’ onto Bengali society and consequently supporting a perpetual and enduring memory of Pakistan in Bangladesh.

Once again, Saikia (2004)³⁵ claims that another ideological element that shaped the activities and rationale of the Pakistani military regimen was religion. In addition, on the radicalized rationale, the military tried to utilize rape and sexual violence to filter the Bangladeshi peoples from Hindu control. Various religious figures alongside the Pakistani military promoted rape and sexual violence by advancing the contention that the protection from West Pakistan was a type of dereliction supporting ‘Hindu India’s political and militaristic agenda against the Islamic republic. This opposition against Pakistan put the Bengali Muslim people outside of the overlay of Islam and. Thus, they were not protected and were opened to ravage and plunder by the Pakistani Army and its Islamic partners. Firdousi Priyabhaani, one of the primary women who experienced the extreme brutality of West Pakistani soldiers, depicted, “There were four or five people who raped me altogether... They continued yelling at me, ‘You are a Hindu. You are an informer’. After that, they gang-raped me; they took me to a bunker.” (qtd. in Saikia 133–134)³⁶.

Again, the Pakistani soldiers raped Bengali women to intend that those pregnant Bengali women would be the ‘New Muslim guardians’ who would give birth to the next generation of Pakistanis that would have allegiance to Islam and Pakistan. Saikia (2004)³⁷ specifies that the

³⁵ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

³⁶ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

³⁷ Saikia, Yasmin. “Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh.” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

female body turned into the site in which Islamic identity and politics were to be ascribed in that circumstance. This very idea had a double operation to, first, made Non-Muslim Muslims. Second, to impose the idea that being a Muslim in the subcontinent required loyalties to the Pakistani state, which was the legitimate voice of Islam. Saikia (2004)³⁸ expands her thought by saying that the West Pakistani regimen further fortified its Islamic authenticity through the voices of Islamic Bengali political parties who backed the West Pakistani accounts and went against Bengali freedom. Besides, these parties stayed quiet in the marking of their companion Bengalis as non-Muslims, which authenticated the rape and sexual violence imposed by the West Pakistani regimen.

Once again, Seifert (2016)³⁹ refers to that focusing on women in all social, political, and financial situations with the coordinated approach of exacting long-term trauma on the mind of the Bengali people. This idea is especially notable in traditionalist societies where women's purity is attached to men's honor and nobility. Moreover, the demonstration of rape sought to support an account of predominance over the people while weakening the Bengali male with expectations of changing the ethnic and religious loyalties towards West Pakistan. One of the West Pakistani approaches in the methodical utilization of sexual maltreatment and rape was to pressurize women impregnated by the militias and soldiers to keep their infants and prohibited them from performing abortions. Seifert (2016)⁴⁰ extends his thought by declaring that the rationale which mirrors the above thought is that first, it is religiously restricted to perform

³⁸ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

³⁹ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

⁴⁰ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

abortions; second, the pregnancies refine the Bengali race; and third, the Pakistani Army would engrave a suffering blemish on Bengali society through the womb of the women. In this way, the rape and constrained impregnation of Bengali women not just traumatized the women mentally and physically; it additionally renounced the womb toward the West Pakistani occupation and pressurized the Bengali community to live with the post-independence trauma.

In addition, Mukherjee (2003)⁴¹ asserts that for women and children who had been sexually assaulted and raped, the challenges intensified when attempting to reappear into society and reunite with families who viewed rape and children without marriage as a shame. After the conflict, the new Bangladeshi state granted these women the title of 'Birangana,' war heroine, and introduced different socioeconomic projects to reintegrate them and restore them into society. The government put forth an underlying attempt to manage the trauma of sexual violence corporately by designating victims of the sexual violence as Birangana or war heroines for their sacrifice for safeguarding their country. This endeavor to change the talk, mindsets, and culture encompassing the female victims of sexual violence. Likewise, this methodology promoted the moderate Bengali context to manage sexual violence by implanting another aggregate memory encompassing their horrendous encounters. While still apparent as victims, the Biranganas would be viewed as heroes instead of disrespected people because of their exploitation. The Biranganas talk continued for a few years after the end of the war; nevertheless, the predicament of many women who were raped and sexually exploited had been an overlooked issue since. The Biranganas whom Sheikh Mujib called his 'Daughters' following

⁴¹ Mukherjee, Nayanika. "Gendered Embodiments: Mapping the Body-Politics of the Raped Woman of the nation in Bangladesh". *South Asian Women in the Diaspora*, edited by Nirmal Puwar and Parvati Raghuram, New York, New York: Berg, 2002, pp. 157-177.

the war would be confined and defamed in their local communities. Again, Takai (2011)⁴² refers to the rhetoric arising out of the state, pressurized women to abandon their infants as the state saw them as “bastard children” who were not gladly received in Bangladesh and made a strategy that pressurized women to either get abortions or give their ‘war babies’ up for adoption in different countries. Takai (2011)⁴³ further states that in many cases, the absence of institutional help for many women brought about these women being blamed for disrespect driving numerous Biranganas to commit suicide or escape to West Pakistan to begin a new life.

Moreover, Sharlach (2000)⁴⁴ ascribes this to the connotation of women as emblems of honor in their role as ‘mothers of the nation and transmitters of culture’ in specific communities that defame rape victims/survivors doubly for having disgraced both themselves and the community. Sharlach (2000)⁴⁵ further asserts that the actual rape is succeeded by a ‘Second rape,’ the banishment of the women from those communities and their own families, where they become undesirable. Additionally, the actions are taken, and the Birangana label, in general, was meant to respect the disrespected women and assisted them with recovering acknowledgment in a moderate, Muslim-majority society where a woman’s worth lay in her righteousness and modesty. Nevertheless, this reason appeared to have been vanquished, as the label served to recognize the women being referred to and disengage them from society. Many victimized

⁴² Takai, Alexandra. *Rape and Forced Pregnancy as Genocide before the Bangladesh Tribunal*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004.

⁴³ Takai, Alexandra. *Rape and Forced Pregnancy as Genocide before the Bangladesh Tribunal*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004.

⁴⁴ Sharlach, Lisa. “Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda”. *New Political Science*, vol. 22, no.1, 2000, pp. 89-102.

⁴⁵ Sharlach, Lisa. “Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda”. *New Political Science*, vol. 22, no.1, 2000, pp. 89-102.

women refused to acknowledge the title because of the fear of being vilified, and the individuals who would utilize it attained the compassion of specific citizenry; however, they endured the scorn of most others. Many women were dismissed by their families, including unmarried women by their parents, husbands, in-laws on account of wedded women. Mukherjee (2003)⁴⁶ claims that some people even perverted the word 'Birangana' to articulate it 'Barangana' meant 'whore' in Bengali. Those women were not given state honor or regarded straightforwardly, something else, and generally, they could not live with their heads held high. In her book, Ibrahim (2017)⁴⁷ highlights the narratives of a few Biranganas who experienced an identity crisis after being recovered and liberated after the war. Additionally, others who contacted their families were not reclaimed by them and were instead left at the rehabilitation centers to fight for themselves.

Therefore, it can be said that despite the majesty in the title of the Birangana, society is unwilling to acknowledge, not to mention praise towards the women behind the designation. In a word, the Bangladeshi war heroine is practically imperceptible in society as a source of shame to her family, community, and country.

⁴⁶ Mukherjee, Nayanika. "Gendered Embodiments: Mapping the Body-Politics of the Raped Woman of the nation in Bangladesh". *South Asian Women in the Diaspora*, edited by Nirmal Puwar and Parvati Raghuram, New York, New York: Berg, 2002, pp. 157-177.

⁴⁷ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

The Rohingya Crisis (2017)

Women's Victimization During Conflict and in Post-Conflict Context

Since August 25, 2017, Myanmar's security forces committed widespread physical tortures, sexual assault against Rohingya women and girls as part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Killings, raping, discretionary arrests, and mass arson of homes by Burmese security forces in hundreds of prevalently Rohingya villages had been constrained, and more than 700,000 Rohingya escaped to adjoining Bangladesh. Rohingya women, men, and children arrived in Bangladesh in pathetic condition; hungry, depleted, raped, bullet, or burn wounds. The humanitarian crisis brought about by Myanmar security forces' atrocities against the Rohingya had been faltering in both scale and speed.

Dunlop (2014)⁴⁸ specifies that the Rohingya is a transcendently Muslim community. They are a borderland people living fundamentally in northern Arakan State with bona fide historical roots. Despite being peace-loving and law-abiding, they are not endured in Burma. They are abused and aggrieved beyond one's comprehension for their ethnicity, religion, and South-Asian appearance instead of the Southeast Asian appearance of predominant Bamar (Burman) individuals. This situation exists because the government of Myanmar does not perceive Rohingyas as the citizens of Myanmar, consequently wants to repulse Rohingyas from Myanmar. The United Nations indicates them as the world's most oppressed minority.

⁴⁸ Dunlop, Nic. "Camps Bring Further Danger to Rohingya Muslims Fleeing Potential Genocide in Burma". *Google, Newsweek*, 26 Oct. 2014.

Considering their origin, culture, and their present geographical area, Dunlop (2014)⁴⁹ further asserts that the Rohingya people blend more in with Indian individuals than with the Burmese. Being an ethnic blend of native Indo-Aryan, Bengalis, Persians, Moghuls, Turks, and Pathans, they develop particular ethnic attributes in recent hundreds of years and build up culture and language unique to the region and not quite the same as others.

Again, Bala (2018)⁵⁰ claims that the Rohingya refugee problem is a significant issue straightforwardly influencing Bangladesh, Myanmar, and the Rohingya people. The Rohingya refugees' issue is set off because, as per the Myanmar government, the Rohingya are just Bengalis and do not have the right to be Burmese residents. The Myanmar government likes to call them 'Residents of Rakhine state.' Additionally, the military regime even declines to call them 'Residents of Myanmar' to deny their right to live anywhere in the country. Bala (2018)⁵¹ investigates the historical backdrop of Rohingya people and the torment they experience in Myanmar in various phrases. His research highlights that historically, the Rohingya people had been driven out of Rakhine in enormous numbers on six significant events: 1784, 1942, 1978, 1992, 2016, and 2017. Burmese army general Ne Win and his Revolutionary Council and Socialist Program Party made various policies to stifle and expel the Rohingya out of the country by prohibiting all Rohingya socio-cultural associations and movements. Ne Win's regime dispatched 'Dragon Operation' in 1978, which caused enormous political and financial casualties. In 1982, General Ne win announced Rohingya as stateless people by detailing the

⁴⁹ Dunlop, Nic. "Camps Bring Further Danger to Rohingya Muslims Fleeing Potential Genocide in Burma". *Google*, Newsweek, 26 Oct. 2014.

⁵⁰ Bala, Ashok. "Rohingya Crisis: Sexual Violence against Women and Adolescent Girls in Myanmar". *Google*, academia.edu, 2018.

⁵¹ Bala, Ashok. "Rohingya Crisis: Sexual Violence against Women and Adolescent Girls in Myanmar". *Google*, academia.edu, 2018.

1982 Myanmar Citizenship Law. As indicated by this law, there are three categories of citizenship status: (1) Full Citizenship, (2) Associate Citizenship, and (3) naturalized Citizenship. Nevertheless, an enormous number of Rohingya do not fall under any of these classifications of citizenship status. They are not qualified to have Burmese nationality because of section (2) and section (3) of the 1982 Myanmar Citizenship Law. The Rohingya refugee crisis burst onto the world stage on August 25, 2017, when Rohingya women, children, and men started flooding into Bangladesh from Rakhine State in adjoining Myanmar. They carry with them horrendous narratives of barbarities, going from their homes and villages being burned to the ground to mothers, daughters, wives, and husbands being dragged out of their homes, and women and girls were raped and killed. Bala (2018)⁵² further claims, “the United Nations calls this abomination as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing in their native Myanmar” (3).

Furthermore, Beech (2017)⁵³ asserts that rape and sexual assault forced labor and dislodging; armed violence, physical torment; and statelessness are significant issues in creating trauma among Rohingya people. Additionally, rape comprises the leading source of trauma for women and adolescent girls. In war or ethnic cleansing, rape is utilized as a weapon, an attack on women to embarrass and endeavor to annihilate another religious/ethnic group. In Myanmar, during ethnic cleansing, which was directed to the Rohingya community, rape of Rohingya women was supported as part of a campaign of fear. Rohingya women experienced various forms of violence such as sexual abuse, forced nudity, and gang rapes during typical village ‘spot checks’ made by the Burmese police and military. Furthermore, Myanmar’s security forces

⁵² Bala, Ashok. “Rohingya Crisis: Sexual Violence against Women and Adolescent Girls in Myanmar”. *Google*, academia.edu, 2018, Pg:3.

⁵³ Beech, Hannah. “‘I’m struggling to Survive’: For Rohingya Women, Abuse Continues in Camps”. *Google*, The New York Times, 2017.

utilized ruthless gang rapes in terms of women to scare and harm as a part of their continuing attack on the Rohingya populace. Beech (2017)⁵⁴ further specifies that human rights groups charge the Tatmadaw⁵⁵ for the regular attack on Rohingya girls and women. The clearance operations that started in August 2017 happened regarding a long history of victimization and exploitation of ethnic Rohingya by Myanmar's government, including sexual exploitation of Rohingya women and girls.

In addition, Stewart (2018)⁵⁶ specifies that Rohingya women and girls had been raped on different occasions by Burmese soldiers both during the August attacks, additionally during prior operations or visits to their villages before the ARSA⁵⁷ attacks. The longstanding sexual exploitation and different types of sexual violence had been used against Rohingya women. Since August 2017, the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF)⁵⁸ has helped 3500 Rohingya women who had been sexually assaulted. Again, several sources show that around 6 to 7% of Rohingya women looked for medical care after sexual violence. If applied to these figures to the Rohingya women, 58,700 Rohingya women and girls were exposed to sexual violence.

⁵⁴ Beech, Hannah. "‘I’m struggling to Survive’: For Rohingya Women, Abuse Continues in Camps". *Google*, The New York Times, 2017.

⁵⁵ The Tatmadaw is the official name of the armed forces of Myanmar. It is administered by the Army, the Navy, and the Air force. Auxiliary services include the Myanmar Police Force and the People's Militia Units. The Tatmadaw has widely accused by international organizations of human rights offenses including ethnic cleaning, torture, sexual assault and massacre of civilians.

⁵⁶ Stewart, Christa. "Opinion: With rape and violence rife, where is justice for Rohingya women". *Google*, WION, 13 Mar. 2018.

⁵⁷ The Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) formerly known as Harakah al-Yaqin (faith movement in English) is a Rohingya insurgent group active in northern Rakhine State, Myanmar. Myanmar's Anti-Terrorism Central Committee pronounced ARSA a terrorist group on 25 August 2017 as per the country's counter-terrorism law. ARSA has been accused by Myanmar's government of being associated with and sponsored by foreign Islamists, despite there being no firm evidence proving such claims. ARSA subsequently delivered a statement on 28 August 2017, calling government charges against it "baseless" and asserting that its main intention is to protect the privileges of Rohingyas.

⁵⁸ The United Nations Population Fund (UNPF), formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, is an UN organization pointed toward improving reproductive and, mental health worldwide. Its work incorporates developing national healthcare strategies and protocols, increasing access to birth control and leading campaigns against child marriage, gender-based violence, obstetric fistula and female genital mutilation.

Moreover, Nordby (2018)⁵⁹ surveys Rohingya women refugees. Her research highlights that Rohingya women were taken to a nearby building and sexually assaulted regularly. They frequently were kept, physically tortured, and raped for the entire night and freed in the morning. The following day, the perpetrators came again and took another group of women and returned them at dawn. Some as young as eight years old, girls were raped in front of their parents or siblings. Once again, the women who were raped and physically tortured endured a scale of physical wounds, including death.

Besides, Gelineau (2017)⁶⁰ specifies that the Burmese security forces' apparent counterinsurgency operation since August killed numerous Rohingya children and women. When Burmese forces presented in any Rohingya family, they kept the children trapped and tormented those until their mothers consented to have intercourse with Burmese forces. Sometimes, they killed children if their mothers denied engaging in sexual relations. The Burmese security forces executed numerous Rohingya women, girls, and their children after the gang rape, which was the most traumatic part of the assaults. Notably, the killing of spouses and children, including infants and toddlers, was a more unfortunate and traumatic occurrence.

Once again, Ekin (2017)⁶¹ surveys of Rohingya women refugees in Bangladesh and her research show that many Rohingya women and girls reaching Bangladesh are pregnant, which may have been viewed as a marker of expanded conflict-related sexual violence and exploitation. Aid workers scour the world's biggest refugee camp for pregnant Rohingya raped victims, with a rush of births expected nine months after Myanmar forces released a frenzy of sexual violence

⁵⁹ Nordby, Linda. "Gender-based violence in the refugee camps in Cox Bazar-A case study of Rohingya women's and girls' exposure to gender-based violence". *Semantic Scholar*, 2018.

⁶⁰ Gelineau, Kristen. "Rohingya Methodically Raped by Myanmar's Armed Forces". *Google, Capital Gazette*, 2017.

⁶¹ Ekin, Annette. "Rohingya refugees share stories of sexual violence". *Google, Aljazeera*, 2017.

against Rohingya women and girls from the Muslim minority. In Rohingya refugee camps, 48,000 women will give birth nine months after Myanmar forces released ‘a frenzy of sexual violence’.

Additionally, Etmanski (2018)⁶² claims that the rape of Rohingya women by Myanmar security forces had been vast and methodical. The military’s brutal demonstrations of violence had left endless Rohingya women and girls fiercely hurt and traumatized. However, Aung San Suu Kyi had been fraudulent in protecting savage force declining the rape stories as ‘fake rape.’ She could have saved numerous lives and the annihilation of the Rohingyas, yet was uncharacteristically quiet and unwilling to help them.

The Rohingya refugees are traumatized. The mental trauma and humiliation of victimized Rohingya women were found to increase; rapes were frequently committed by Burmese security forces and Buddhist vigilantes in public spaces, in front of families and communities. Besides, mothers were gang-raped in front of their young children, were frequently seriously wounded, and, in specific examples, murdered. Furthermore, because of the rapes, women and young girls became pregnant and gave birth to those children were supplemental issues of the Rohingya crisis. Etmanski (2018)⁶³ further specifies that numerous Rohingya women who were sexually mistreated survivors have been found mentally traumatized after being raped by various perpetrators or in different situations while escaping. The social disgrace and shame related to rape in Rohingya society mean numerous survivors are not eager to talk about their experiences,

⁶² Etmanski, Theresa. “(Re) Imagining ‘Justice’: Documentation of Sexual Violence against Rohingya Women and Girls in Myanmar”. *UVicspace, University of Victoria*, 2018.

⁶³ Etmanski, Theresa. “(Re) Imagining ‘Justice’: Documentation of Sexual Violence against Rohingya Women and Girls in Myanmar”. *UVicspace, University of Victoria*, 2018.

not to mention looking for help, especially unmarried girls who dread being dismissed by potential husbands. In traditional Rohingya Muslim society, rape carries disgrace to families. Any subsequent pregnancies are seen as massing considerably more shame on families. Subsequently, numerous survivors are made to endure twice, first from the trauma of sexual violence and again from the ostracism of a traditionalist society that relinquishes them when they most need support. Additionally, the outcomes of sexual violence may incorporate physical wounds, health complications including sexually transferred diseases, accidental pregnancies which may cause mental harm and denouncement, phycological problems such as phobia, mental trauma, and social consequences like confinement and shame.

Again, Begum and Ellis-Petersen (2018)⁶⁴ mention that since Rohingya's people are confronting the pressure of ethnic purging in their country and due to their weakness, they are simpler to be trafficked. Traffickers generally exploit the women since they are frail, helpless, and in a precarious condition. In this manner, they are simpler to turn into the prey of sexual persecution. Begum and Ellis-Petersen (2018)⁶⁵ further claim that a humanitarian crisis builds the demand for sexual services, which prompts an escalation in Rohingya women trafficking and forced prostitution. The Rohingya crisis has not created a sex industry. Nevertheless, it has expanded the supply of women and children, forcing the cost of prostitution down and keeping demand as strong as always.

⁶⁴ Begum, Thaslima, and Hannah Ellis-Petersen. "Gang raped and set on fire: ICC pushes to investigate Myanmar Rohingya atrocities". *Google*, The Guardian, 2018.

⁶⁵ Begum, Thaslima, and Hannah Ellis-Petersen. "Gang raped and set on fire: ICC pushes to investigate Myanmar Rohingya atrocities". *Google*, The Guardian, 2018.

Besides, Begum & Ellis-Petersen (2018)⁶⁶ declare that many Rohingya women and girls have been presented with extreme sexual violence before and during flight. The lack of income-generating exercises expands the danger of abusing women and adolescent girls. Therefore, Rohingya women are in danger of trafficking for business sexual purposes, forced marriages, survival sex, and forced labor. Moreover, Pittaway (2008)⁶⁷ and Farzana (2017)⁶⁸ conduct research on the aspect of Rohingya women trafficking in different countries. They claim that coordinated trafficking of Rohingya women is happening in the refugee camps. They broaden their thought by saying that Rohingya women and girls who take part in survival sex, prostitution, become victims of trafficking or are presented to domestic violence, rape, and sexual exploitation should be perceived as persons who are enduring in a system where they are segregated and debilitated due to their gender.

Moreover, Wahab and Khair (2020)⁶⁹ specifies that on account of smuggled Rohingya women refugees in various countries like Bangladesh, Malaysia, Thailand, and several countries, there are two circumstances in which personal community security of Rohingyas has been undermined. Firstly, sometimes, the enforcement organizations sell Rohingya women to smuggling agents at the borders. Secondly, the traffickers associated with the smuggling agents

⁶⁶ Begum, Thaslima, and Hannah Ellis-Petersen. "Gang raped and set on fire: ICC pushes to investigate Myanmar Rohingya atrocities". *Google*, The Guardian, 2018.

⁶⁷ Pittway, Eileen. "The Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh: A Failure of the international protection Regimes". *Protracted Displacement in Asia: No Place to call home*, edited by Howard Adelman, Hampshire, Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008, pp. 95-115.

⁶⁸ Farzana, Kazi Fahmida. *Memories of Burmese Rohingya Refugees: Contested Identity and Belonging*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

⁶⁹ Wahab, Andika Ab, and Aizat Khair. "Smuggling of Rohingyas from Myanmar to Malaysia: A Threat to Human Security". *Akademika*, vol. 90, no. 3, 2020, pp. 27-37.

physically torture and sexually abuse the smuggled Rohingya women in the way of their landing in different countries.

Therefore, it can be said that Rohingya people are the most mistreated community in the 21st-century world. Rohingya are stateless in their land. Myanmar government declines Rohingya as a resident of Myanmar. Myanmar's security forces use rape, gang rape, and different types of sexual violence during their campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya women to frighten Rohingya people. Rohingya women and girls are additionally subject, alongside men and boys, to killings, removals from their homes, and different types of oppression. Moreover, Rohingya women narrate seeing their children, husband, and neighbors murdered in front of them. Besides, many Rohingya women, as rape survivors escaping Myanmar, frequently stroll for days in profound anguish from wounds sustained from physical/sexual violence.

In this chapter, I have reviewed those secondary sources that highlight the ideas that my research questions present. Furthermore, in the analysis chapter, I will refer to those secondary sources to make the answers to the research questions credible and satisfactory. Thus, I will make a connection between the secondary sources and my research questions.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

Since my research area is women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, in my thesis, I will have a fresh look at this issue. Women's victimization in communal conflict is a common research area that has been already researched and analyzed by many scholars. However, in my thesis, I will present this idea from a new point of view. In addition, my thesis claims that in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, women become one of the prime victims in communal conflicts. It also claims that women become victims during the conflicts, and their victimization continues in the post-conflict context. This very subject will be analyzed on the ground of several subjects, including rape, sexual assault, murder, forcefully impregnating, abduction during the conflicts and trafficking sold to prostitution, ostracism from the community, rejection from the family to accept in the post-conflict context. Moreover, my thesis attempts to show the continuation of women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context of communal conflict in the context of the Indian Subcontinent.

Furthermore, after analyzing the literature review section, I have found that most of the research has been conducted in a particular context of a particular communal conflict. Some of the works have been carried on women's victimization during the partition of India (1947), some have been guided on women's victimization in the Liberation War of Bangladesh (1971), and few recent research has been directed on Rohingya women's victimization (2017). In my research, I will demonstrate the continuation of women's victimization in three communal conflicts which take place in the countries of the Indian subcontinent. However, I did not find

any work done on the idea of the continuation of women's victimization in these three communal conflicts that took place in the countries of the Indian subcontinent.

In addition, my thesis will demonstrate the continuation of women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context in the Indian Subcontinent. For portraying the continuation of women's victimization, my thesis will draw a connection between three communal conflicts and the life incidents of the female characters of three primary texts. Besides, in my thesis, I will demonstrate how women become one of the prime victims in communal conflicts in the context of the Indian Subcontinent and how they experience similar types of violence during and in a post-conflict context of mentioned three communal conflicts.

Again, I have chosen three primary texts for my thesis, and they are *Ice-Candy-Man* (1989), *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017), and *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* (2017), respectively. Several kinds of researches have been conducted on the first two texts, *Ice-Candy-Man* (1989) and *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017); however, the last primary text which I have chosen in the context of the Rohingya crisis is *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* (2017) which is a recent novelette on Rohingya crisis, and hardly any works have been done on it. Once again, through my research, I will demonstrate the similarity among the incidents in the lives of the female characters of the primary texts. In addition, through the analysis of the primary texts, I will depict the continuation of women's victimization in three communal conflicts.

These notions mentioned earlier will help my thesis give a fresh perspective on women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict contexts since my research differs from the existing works. Again, by demonstrating the similarity among incidents in the three communal conflicts, my research will prove that these three communal conflicts are the continuation of

women's victimization. Thus, my research will present a new thought on the notion of women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context in the Indian Subcontinent.

To present this thought from a fresh perspective, I will critically analyze the three mentioned communal conflicts in light of the three mentioned primary texts, secondary sources discussed in the literature review chapter, and several theories. In my thesis, critical analysis will be utilized to present the argument. Since my thesis will focus on the women issue, the feminist theory will be applied here. Besides, I will also apply several ideologies of 'Nationalism,' which will help reflect on the connection between nation and women, how they are interconnected with each other is followed by communal conflicts and the gendered nature of war. Additionally, the three primary texts will be critically investigated on the ground of feminist and nationalist viewpoints. The theories under feminism and nationalism will be applied in my research to make my argument satisfactory are depicted below.

Theories:

Gender and Nation:

Yuval-Davis (1989)⁷⁰ gives a notable hypothesis investigating the connection between nationalism and gender. Drawing from various geological and political encounters, they summarize different manners in which women can and participate in the ethnic and national process and are identified with state practices. Yuval-Davis (1989)⁷¹ claims that women are:

1. biological reproducers of individuals of ethnic collectivities;
2. reproducers of the boundaries of the ethnic/national groups;

⁷⁰ Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Women-Nation-State*. Edited by Floya Anthias, London, Macmillan Publishers, 1989.

⁷¹ Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Women-Nation-State*. Edited by Floya Anthias, London, Macmillan Publishers, 1989.

3. members in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and transmitters of its culture;
4. signifiers of ethnic/national contrasts;
5. members in national, monetary, political, and military struggles.

Those women's roles mirror the masculinist meaning of femininity and a woman's proper place in the nation.

Furthermore, classical theorists, for instance, Anderson, Gellner minimize gender in the nation foundation, nevertheless, acclaim women's role as a mother. Yuval-Davis (1997)⁷² claims that the ideology of 'woman as mother' or emblematic portrayal of woman's body as the national region uncovered the position of women in national activities. Yuval-Davis (1997)⁷³ also characterizes the nation as a natural expansion of family and kinship relations dependent on 'natural' sexual divisions of labor, in which men secure the women and children. Accordingly, what is generally anticipated from women for the nation is lined up with what is awaited from them in the family, such as caring for others, bearing children, educating, and many other kinds of stuff. Nagel (2001)⁷⁴ claims that women are subjected to nationalist movement and politics, being representative 'mothers in the fatherland' and anticipated to defend the nation's honor and 'their' men.

⁷² Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Gender and Nation*. London, Sage Publications Ltd, 1997.

⁷³ Yuval-Davis, Nira. *Gender and Nation*. London, Sage Publications Ltd, 1997.

⁷⁴ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

Again, Enloe (1990)⁷⁵ contends that nationalism has commonly sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized embarrassment, and masculinized hope. Nagel (2001)⁷⁶ claims that motherland as a woman to be secured by brave male fighters is a general representation. He further mentions that it is subsequently seen that the culture and ideology of domineering masculinity go connected to the culture and ideology of authoritative nationalism. Furthermore, Choudhuri (2000)⁷⁷ asserts that in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, the subject of women and their sacrifice for the nation is woven into prevailing nationalist thought. Mani (1998)⁷⁸ investigates the discussion on women, culture, and Indian society by critically analyzing the portrayal of women and claims that women are neither the subject nor the object, nevertheless, grounded for the discussion of custom and modernity. She likewise specifies that women are seen as symbolic of custom or pitiful or valiant victims.

Besides, Agarwal (1995)⁷⁹ claims that it is seen that religion has a prominent place in the discussion of national identity politics, especially in the context of the Indian subcontinent. He extends his thought by saying that religious nationalism likewise utilizes gendered discourse as a political system. Agarwal (1995)⁸⁰ clarifies how during the ‘Bombay Riots’ in 1992/93, Hindu-

⁷⁵ Enloe, Cynthia. *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*. California, University of California Press, 1990.

⁷⁶ Nagel, Joane. “Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations”. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

⁷⁷ Choudhuri, Maitrayee. “Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State”. *Nation and National Identity in South Asia*, edited by S L Sharma and T K Oommen, New Delhi, Orient Longman, 2000, pp. 113-133.

⁷⁸ Mani, Lata. *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India*. California, Berkeley & Los Angeles University of California Press, 1998.

⁷⁹ Agarwal, Puroshottam. *Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimizing Rape as a Political Weapon in Women and Right-Wing Movements*. London, Zed Books Publishing, 1995.

⁸⁰ Agarwal, Puroshottam. *Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimizing Rape as a Political Weapon in Women and Right-Wing Movements*. London, Zed Books Publishing, 1995.

Muslim riots in India, Hindu men were reproached for not being 'adequately masculine' to secure the Hindu women and secure their national honor. Agarwal (1995)⁸¹ further claims that since religion has a vital role in forming a nation and the origin of communal conflicts in the context of the Indian subcontinent, the rape of women of 'other' religious groups is legitimized by utilizing this language of vindication and dishonor.

Gendered Nature of War:

Denov (2006)⁸² asserts that there has been mounting proof that women and girls experience war uniquely in contrast to men and boys, with women typically confronting greater insecurity, hindrance, and underestimation. In terms of women's role in the war, Denov (2006)⁸³ further claims that women play a vital role; they either support or participate straightforwardly in the war. Sometimes, women include themselves in cadres and military units.

Again, Nagel (2001)⁸⁴ claims that regardless of their fortitude, it is frequently the situation that feminist nationalists are themselves under the thumb of institutionalized patriarchy once national independence is won. Again, Denov (2006)⁸⁵ asserts that it is likewise contended that women and girls are the general victims of wartime sexual crime predominantly due to their

⁸¹ Agarwal, Puroshottam. *Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimizing Rape as a Political Weapon in Women and Right-Wing Movements*. London, Zed Books Publishing, 1995.

⁸² Denov, Myriam S. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Assessing a Human Security Response to War-Affected Girls in Sierra Leone". *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2006, pp. 319-42.

⁸³ Denov, Myriam S. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Assessing a Human Security Response to War-Affected Girls in Sierra Leone". *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2006, pp. 319-42.

⁸⁴ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

⁸⁵ Denov, Myriam S. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Assessing a Human Security Response to War-Affected Girls in Sierra Leone". *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2006, pp. 319-42.

gender, and their bodies are utilized as allegorical and literal sites of battle. This situation results from the male-centric society where women are already being victimized and oppressed significantly in various cases, and war exacerbates the current situation.

Simone de Beauvoir: *The Second Sex* (1972)

Simone de Beauvoir was born in Paris in 1908 to a bourgeois family. Like her popular companion, Jean-Paul Sartre, whom she meets at the École Normale Supérieure, she is an acclaimed French existentialist philosopher who composes fiction and memoirs, philosophy. De Beauvoir passed away on April 14, 1986. In her most compelling book, *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir (1972)⁸⁶ points out that men have characterized women and that if they endeavor to break with this, they risk estranging themselves. Following Hegel, de Beauvoir (1972)⁸⁷ claims that otherness is a fundamental category of human thought. Women are characterized and separated concerning man and not concerning her; she is incidental, the inessential rather than the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute; she is the 'Other.' Simone de Beauvoir interfaces a woman's identity as another and her essential estrangement to her body, particularly her reproductive capacity. She further mentions that childbearing, childbirth, and menstruation are draining physical events that attach women to their bodies and immanence. However, the male is not attached to such inherently physical events (qtd. in Donovan 137)⁸⁸.

⁸⁶ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

⁸⁷ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

⁸⁸ Donovan, Josephine. *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions*. New York, Continuum, 2000.

In the struggle depicted by Sartre that between pour-soi and en-soi, men are projected in the role of the pour-soi (for itself), that is, the consistent interaction of self-acknowledgement, or artistic liberty. In contrast, women are projected in the role of en-soi (in-itself), in which, rather than deciding to participate in authenticating self-acknowledgement, they agree to turn into an object that exists as en-soi (qtd. in Beauvoir 136)⁸⁹. Again, De Beauvoir (1972)⁹⁰ urges women to decline to be the other, to refuse to be a party to the deal. Donovan (2000)⁹¹ further claims that De Beauvoir urges women to reinforce their ‘masculine’ rational faculties and critical forces to exist as a pour soi, a transcendent subject who establishes her future through innovative activities. Nevertheless, Beauvoir (1972)⁹² thoroughly perceives that this moral decision is full of uneasiness, and women’s independent successes contradict her femininity since the ‘true woman’ is required to make herself object, to be the other.

Betty Friedan: *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)

Betty Friedan was born in Peoria, Illinois, in 1921. She graduated from Smith College in 1942 with a B.A. in psychology. In 1958, she reviewed her Smith classmates and found that many of them are, like her, profoundly disappointed with their lives. Betty Friedan transforms her discoveries into a book, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)⁹³, which turns into an immediate and disputable bestseller. It sells more than three million copies, is converted into a few languages, and introduces another cognizance-raising period. Friedan’s (1963)⁹⁴ focal theory is that women

⁸⁹ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972, Pg:136

⁹⁰ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

⁹¹ Donovan, Josephine. *Feminist Theory: The Intellectual Traditions*. New York, Continuum, 2000.

⁹² Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

⁹³ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

⁹⁴ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

endure under a pervasive system of delusions and false values. They are encouraged to discover personal satisfaction, even identity, vicariously through the house members to whom they are anticipated merrily to sacrifice their lives.

Friedan (1963)⁹⁵ calls attention to that while men are urged to discover their identity, her biology characterizes a woman's destiny. Friedan (1963)⁹⁶ contends that the crisis is women's need to develop and find a human identity. Women are confined to education based on their biological roles as mothers, and they are informed that anything outside of this role would disturb the social balance. Friedan (1963)⁹⁷ feels that women are trapped at the fundamental, physiological level since they must discover identity just through their sexual roles.

Friedan (1963)⁹⁸ further claims that this restricted role of wife/mother, whose deceptive glorification by promoters, advertisers, and others are proposed by the book's title, leads inevitably to a sense of illusion or general spiritual discomfort without original, innovative, self-characterizing work. Essentially, at that point, Friedan expands de Beauvoir's writing in a more famous structure by demanding women's need to perform meaningful and satisfying work just like men to accomplish 'self-actualization', which is the highest level in the hierarchy.

The theories mentioned above presented by famous theorists will be applied in the analysis chapters of my thesis to make the analysis credible and satisfactory. Once again, the last section of the research will focus on the findings of the research. This part will demonstrate

⁹⁵ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

⁹⁶ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

⁹⁷ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

⁹⁸ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

whether my research discovers a fresh thought on the idea of women's victimization in communal conflicts in the Indian subcontinent with the assistance of existing theories and secondary sources discussed in the literature review chapter or not. The research conclusion will be drawn by establishing the answers to the research questions with the assistance of primary texts, secondary sources, and theories.

Chapter 4

Women's Victimization Depicted in Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice-Candy-Man* (1989)

Like other literary works on the partition of India, *Ice-candy-man* (1989)⁹⁹ demonstrates the notion of women's victimization during the partition of India and in the post-partition context and shows how the partition followed by communal conflict affects peoples' lives. Through the novel, Bapsi Sidhwa (1989)¹⁰⁰ additionally addresses the notion of women's victimization in the male-centric society. Furthermore, Sidhwa tries to present the idea that a woman who turns into a casualty of molestation is never acknowledged by her community, even by her family where she belongs. In the novel, Sidhwa represented the protagonist, Ayah, as an emblematic figure of the nation as a woman or mother. Consequently, the raping or disgracing of Ayah is proportionate to the disgracing of the motherland. At this point, Nagel's (2001)¹⁰¹ views can be referred to. Nagel claims that women are subjected to nationalist movement and politics, being representative 'mothers in the fatherland' and anticipated to defend the nation's honor and 'their' men. Since women are associated with the nation's notion, it turns into a site of honor, prestige.

In the novel, Sidhwa demonstrated the breakdown between the private and public spheres in the wake of the new national division and the violence followed by division in 1947. Through the novel, Sidhwa depicts that women's bodies are viewed as spaces on which

⁹⁹ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁰⁰ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁰¹ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

religious communities play out their game to fulfill any target. In the context of the Indian subcontinent, religion plays a vital role in the formation of a nation. At this point, Agarwal's (1995)¹⁰² thought can be cited here. He asserts that religion has an important place in the discussion of national identity politics, especially in the context of the Indian subcontinent. He further mentions that religious nationalism likewise utilizes gendered discourse as a political system.

Again, through the novel, Sidhwa shows that the female body is viewed as an object of desire and maternal capacity to an image on which ferocious nationalist desires are established. Additionally, she reflects that the violated female body turns into a space where the notion of nationalism is shaped. At this point, Nagel's (2001)¹⁰³ assertion can be quoted. Nagel points out that the attack on the woman is viewed as a medium to demonstrate the superiority of one community over the other. Thus, a woman's body is treated by the individuals of one community with the meanest attitude.

In Bapsi Sidhwa's (1989)¹⁰⁴ novel, *Ice-Candy-Man*, the emblematic notion of a woman regarding the motherland is a focal message mentioned through allegory. The story represented the rising pressures that emerged because of the partition of India from the eyes of a youthful Parsee young girl, Lenny, who lived in Lahore with her family. Lenny's inquisitive childhood views were focused on understanding sentimental relations that her 'Ayah' developed with an assortment of men of different religions and ethnicities. Ayah was viewed as the object of each

¹⁰² Agarwal, Puroshottam. *Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimizing Rape as a Political Weapon in Women and Right-Wing Movements*. London, Zed Books Publishing, 1995.

¹⁰³ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

¹⁰⁴ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

man's desire since she represented magnificence, benevolence and showed a sharp inclination for friendliness. Everything went well; however, the story's climax happened when violence due to the partitions spread out. One day when a group of Muslim men stroke Lenny's home looking for Hindus, one of Ayah's previous admirers, a youthful Muslim man (Ice-Candy Man), looked for Ayah for abducting her with the assistance of his Muslim companions.

Furthermore, Ayah can be compared to free undivided India under whose shade individuals of all ethnicities and cultures prosper and develop, violated by communal sectarianism in 1947. Additionally, by associating Ayah and her liveliness with unified India, the novel reflects on the excellence of a pure and coordinated India. Moreover, although Ayah was Hindu, she never stressed this matter, which made her a multiethnic person who granted amicable intermixing of all faiths and convictions. In the novel, Sidhwa (1889)¹⁰⁵ narrated that when the Ice-candy man asked Ayah whether she was a Punjabi or not, Ayah carefully reacted by stating, "For the most part." (Sidhwa 29)¹⁰⁶. Additionally, in the novel, Sidhwa (1889)¹⁰⁷ pointed out that the Ice-Candy man asked her why not wearing the salwar kameez since Punjabi women used to wear that. Ayah answered that sari-wearing Goan housemaids¹⁰⁸ acquired more money than nannies who wore salwar kameez, although they were more equipped for the activity. This occurrence uncovers Ayah's opposition to the Ice-candy man's endeavor to separate her identity as Punjabi. Besides, the Ice-candy man's attempt to characterize Ayah by her ethnic identity foreshadows Ayah's kidnapping later. Deepika Bahri (1999)¹⁰⁹ mentions that

¹⁰⁵ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁰⁶ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:102

¹⁰⁷ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁰⁸ Probably, Goan housemaids imply Christian Indian caretakers who belong to the Western Indian province of Goa.

¹⁰⁹ Bahri, Deepika. "Telling Tales: Women and the trauma of partition in Sidhwa's *Cracking India*". *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1999, pp. 217–34.

while national borders are drawn and challenged, Ayah's independence gets classified depending on her religious identity. Her beliefs in multicultural, multireligious solidarity are overlooked. Lastly, her bodily borders are abused, wherein her gender becomes a challenge to dole out retributions. Ayah, who always maintains a good relationship with her admirers who belong to different religions and ethnicities, becomes the victim of bigot religious persecution. This very idea reflects the incident of Ayah's abduction later.

Once again, in the novel, Lenny was presented as a little girl who was polio-stricken. Ayah carried her to different places of Lahore to feel okay in Lahore city. When Lenny and Ayah headed outside, Lenny noticed the communication of Ayah with various individuals, for example, Ice-candy man, Masseur, Sharbat Khan, and many other people. In the novel, Sidhwa represented Ayah as a happy woman who stepped willfully on the streets of Lahore wearing a skinny sari that attracted her followers. In this way, Ayah's body turns into a source of more observation. Lenny shares Ayah's beauty in the following lines:

Ayah is chocolate- brown and short. Everything about her is eighteen years old and round and plump—even her face. Full-blown cheeks, pouting mouth, and smooth forehead curve to form a circle with her head. [...] And, as if her looks were not stunning enough, she has a bouncy rolling walk that agitates the globules of her buttocks under her cheap colorful saris and the half spheres beneath her short sari-blouses. (Sidhwa 3)¹¹⁰

Ayah's body draws the concentration of individuals, and Lenny is intrigued by her cooperation with the men. However, when the partition took place, followed by communal conflicts, the Hindus and Sikhs turned into the adversary of Muslims and vice versa. Hindus and

¹¹⁰ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:106

Sikhs started to butcher the Muslims, physically torturing Muslim women wherein women were intentionally raped. They cut their breasts and vaginas and sent them to each other to announce the triumph of one community over the other and disgraced the adversary group. At this point, Agarwal's (1995)¹¹¹ assertion can be cited. He mentions that since religion has a vital role in forming the nation and the origin of communal conflicts in the context of the Indian subcontinent, the rape of women of 'other' religious groups is legitimized by utilizing this language of vindication and dishonor.

Once again, in the novel, various forms of physical and mental violence towards women are depicted. Among various forms of violence, the primary demonstration of post-partition savagery was presented by Sidhwa (1989)¹¹² in this novel, when Ice-candy-man intruded in the evening at Lenny's home with the news that a train had shown up from Gurdaspur. Rather than the expected relatives, Ice-candy-man clarifies, "Everybody is dead, slaughtered. All of them are Muslims. No young women are among the dead, just two gunny-sacks filled with women's breasts!" (Sidhwa 149)¹¹³. At this point, Menon and Bhasin's (2011)¹¹⁴ assertion can be alluded to. They claim that the cutting of the female breast is one of the most notorious pictures of the communal brutality following the partition of India and Pakistan, which is sterilizing a woman and invalidating her as a wife and mother; not a nurturer if she endures, she stays as a foreboding figure forever.

¹¹¹ Agarwal, Puroshottam. *Surat, Savarkar and Draupadi: Legitimizing Rape as a Political Weapon in Women and Right-Wing Movements*. London, Zed Books Publishing, 1995.

¹¹² Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹¹³ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:149

¹¹⁴ Menon, Ritu & Bhasin, Kamla. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi, Kali for Women, 2011.

Consequently, in the upsetting hour of partition, women's bodies were uninhibitedly abused and underestimated by the men of adversary religious groups on both sides, and this was the way they attempted to show their displeasure and dissatisfaction. At this point, it can be claimed that Bapsi Sidhwa's narration reflects on the concept that during the partition, religious clash followed by communal conflict took place on women's bodies considered as the battlefield. Again, during the communal conflict in 1947, like other Muslims, the Ice-candy man wanted to render retribution upon the woman of the adversary community who rejected his proposal, followed by the abduction of Ayah. At this point, Saikia's (2004)¹¹⁵ claim can be referred to. Saikia (2004)¹¹⁶ specifies that a portion of the attack on women seems to have been inspired by the political aim of losing the 'other' community; nevertheless, some appear to have been criminal conduct, taking advantage of the turmoil of war and the breakdown of law and order. Ice-candy man likewise took advantage of the turmoil to take revenge for his previous anger on the woman of the adversary community who rejected his proposal. Consequently, he abducted Ayah, raped, married her, and finally turned her into a whore by placing her in prostitution. Therefore, it can be claimed that by doing so, the Ice-candy man not only oppresses the adversary community's woman but also takes revenge for his personal affair by taking advantage of the turmoil of the war and the breakdown of law and order.

Furthermore, during the communal conflict in Lahore, a Muslim rabble, which incorporated the Ice-candy man, showed up at Lenny's house, who commanded the family to hand over the Hindu Ayah. Imam Din, the Muslim cook, submitted impiety by misleading the

¹¹⁵ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

¹¹⁶ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

crowd, swearing that Ayah left Lahore. Kavita Daiya (2002)¹¹⁷ claims that Imam Din lies to secure Ayah represents the idea that ethnic identities are frequently morally appropriated and conveyed to hinder political brutality. Again, the crowd likewise ordered the Hindu gardener Hari, who became Muslim now and renamed Himat Ali. In that situation, the Ice-candy man searched out Lenny and fooled her into disclosing to him where Ayah is covering up by confirming Lenny that he would secure her beloved Ayah. Sidhwa (1889)¹¹⁸ mentions, this prompts Lenny, with her “truth-contaminated” tongue, accidentally deceiving Ayah (Sidhwa 184). The rabble frenzied through the house to discover Ayah. Lenny shares the terrible moment in the following lines:

They drag Ayah out. They drag her by her arms stretched tautly, and her bare feet—that want to move backward – are forced forward instead. Her lips are drawn away from her teeth. [...] Her violet sari slips off her shoulder, and her breasts strain at her sari blouse, stretching the cloth so that the white stitching at the seams shows—sleeve tears under her arm. The last thing I noticed was Ayah, her mouth slack and piteously gaping, her disheveled hair flying into her kidnapers’ faces, staring at us as if she wanted to leave behind her wide-open and terrified eyes. (Sidhwa 183-184)¹¹⁹

Once again, because of abduction and rape, Ayah has endured a socially changed position. Ayah, who always communicates and converses with people of different religions and ethnicities, is presently seen as a spoiled being projected out of the social texture of the new

¹¹⁷ Daiya, Kavita. “Honorable Resolutions: Gendered Violence, Ethnicity, and the Nation”. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2002, pp. 219-247.

¹¹⁸ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:184

¹¹⁹ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:183-184

nation. Ray (2000)¹²⁰ asserts that the certainty of rape places a woman with the decision to perpetrate suicide to such an extent that she can be obliged within the nation's account as a legal and unadulterated yet dead resident or decrease to the sexual vulture and afterward endure social demise. Again, Allen (1986)¹²¹ point out that at the time of the partition of India, men can be viewed as sexual oppressors who use rape as equipment of retribution against women of the adversary religion to signify an encroachment on other men's tracts, consequently makes rape a type of discourse between men about an undetectable woman. Furthermore, Bharucha's (1996)¹²² claims can be cited here to extend this idea. Bharucha (1996)¹²³ claims that Ayah's abduction and rape mirror many other women trapped in the mesh between wild male-centric society and inhuman imperialism during the terrible hour of the partition.

Additionally, in the novel, Ayah was found as a humanist who never mainly centered on her Hindu identity. Moreover, she never underestimated her religion and dishonored it; instead, she treated her religious identity as part of her identity. Subsequently, during the terrible hour of partition, when the atrocity for religious 'other' rules in which one is characterized merely as Hindu-Indian or Muslim-Pakistani, at that situation, the individuals who do not stick to such national and ethnic recognition are wiped out. Therefore, Masseur is murdered, and Ayah is abducted and raped. Kaul (2001)¹²⁴ claims that Ayah's abduction uncovers that violence towards

¹²⁰ Ray, Sangeeta. *Engendering India: Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives*. Durham, Duke University Press, 2000.

¹²¹ Allen, Jeffner. *Lesbian Philosophy: Explorations*. Palo Alto, Institute of Lesbian Studies, 1986.

¹²² Bharucha, Nilufer E. "From Behind a Fine Veil: A Feminist Reading of Three Parsi Novels". *Indian Literature*, vol. 39, no. 5, 1996, pp. 132-141.

¹²³ Bharucha, Nilufer E. "From Behind a Fine Veil: A Feminist Reading of Three Parsi Novels". *Indian Literature*, vol. 39, no. 5, 1996, pp. 132-141.

¹²⁴ Kaul, Suvir. "Introduction". *The Partitions of Memory: The afterlife of the division of India*, edited by Suvir Kaul, India, The Indian Economic and Social History Review, 2001, pp.1-29.

women during the ethnic genocide of the partition is the most obvious and curbed indication of the social, cultural, and familial discontinuity that establishes partition. At this point, Veena Das's (2006)¹²⁵ claim can be cited here. Das (2006)¹²⁶ claims that nationalism brings forth its twofold communalism by considering women's bodies as the surfaces on which their content of the nation is expressed. Moreover, Loomba (2015)¹²⁷ asserts that Ayah's once pluralistic identity turns into a weak permeable border that is crossed without her assent during the horrendous hour of partition. Therefore, it can be declared that it is not just Ayah's body that is decreased to an image within the male-centric strategy of communal nationalism during the terrible hour of partition; instead, this viewpoint likewise destroys her composite human identity.

Furthermore, the concept of terrible physical violence towards Ayah is strengthened when the horrendous episode of her life after her abduction is revealed in the novel. At this point, it is fundamental to understand that at the terrible hour of partition, raped bodies consistently have and keep on being viewed as disgraced bodies. At this point, Zhao's (2013)¹²⁸ views can be mentioned. He asserts that a nation is treated as a living soul, which feels disgrace, disrespect, and indignity when the women of its are disregarded, and subsequently, it changes the bodies of its disgraced subjects (women) to disintegrate the national disgrace.

Moreover, after the partition, in terms of both nations, India and Pakistan, the belief and ideology of national honor and pride are reflected through the nation's women's sexual virtue.

¹²⁵ Das, Venna. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006.

¹²⁶ Das, Venna. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006.

¹²⁷ Loomba, Ania. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. New York, Routledge, 2015.

¹²⁸ Zhao, Peiling. "Coping with National Shames through Chinese Women's Bodies: Glorified or Mortified?" *The female face of shame*, edited by Erica L. Johnson and Patricia Moran, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2013, pp. 179-196.

Mitra (2013)¹²⁹ claims that when women of a nation are raped, their tainted bodies get demonstrative of the indignity of their nations. Consequently, realistically, and allegorically the women's bodies are designated as outside of national participation. Therefore, it can be claimed that Ayah's disgrace is set apart through her quietness that is narrated in the novel like all other raped, humiliated women who experience the same violence during and in a post-partition context. Mitra (2013)¹³⁰ extends her thought by saying that this may be the reason for dissolving some occurrences of Ayah's life after her abduction from the novel's narrative. At this point, Hai's (2000)¹³¹ views can be cited here. Hai claims that Sidhwa's content reasserts the very quietness made by official national history, consequently conforming to the nationalist perspective that the stories about raped and abducted female bodies do not suit the strategy of nation-building. Additionally, it can be said that Ayah's quietness mirrors the immense distress that official history shows in terms of recognizing women's victimization as a part of partition atrocities since an affirmation of infringement of women's honor are equivalent to a confirmation of public destruction for the community whose women have been disregarded.

Furthermore, Bahri (1999)¹³² articulately catches the quietness that encompasses rape stories of victimized women during and in the post-partition context. Bahri (1999)¹³³ asserts that the profoundly settled social interdiction against the speaking of this most obtrusive and

¹²⁹ Mitra, Namrata. "Shames Bodies: Partition Violence and Women". *The Female Face of Shame*, edited by Erica L Johnson and Patricia Moran, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2013, pp. 197-211.

¹³⁰ Mitra, Namrata. "Shames Bodies: Partition Violence and Women". *The Female Face of Shame*, edited by Erica L Johnson and Patricia Moran, Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2013, pp. 197-211.

¹³¹ Hai, Ambreen. "Border Work, Border Trouble: Postcolonial Feminism and the Ayah in Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India*". *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2000, pp. 379-426.

¹³² Bahri, Deepika. "Telling Tales: Women and the trauma of partition in Sidhwa's *Cracking India*". *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1999, pp. 217-34.

¹³³ Bahri, Deepika. "Telling Tales: Women and the trauma of partition in Sidhwa's *Cracking India*". *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1999, pp. 217-34.

personally experienced mental trauma makes it doubly unspeakable. It is unspeakable not just because its substance is untranslatable into language; instead, it is genuinely unspeakable because it may not be uttered due to a paranoid fear of a social demise. Bahri's announcement legitimizes why Ayah abdicates to speak. Bahri further (1999)¹³⁴ claims that Ayah refuses to speak because she endures a trauma that is both psychological and psycho-social. Therefore, it can be said that Ayah's quietness reflects upon her assurance to oppose remembering her infringement by declining to recollect and verbalize the horrible traumatic memories that she experiences after her abduction.

Besides, after her abduction, the Ice-candy man placed Ayah at Hira Mandi¹³⁵ as a whore. In this way, the Ice-candy man disregarded Ayah's body and utilized it as a technique for earning money. It may be claimed that the change of Ayah as a whore, which projects her in a docile position, can be considered as an amendment for her challenge to oppose sexual codes of female modesty in unified India before partition. As a result of practicing sexual independence before the abduction, Ayah was penalized as objectified and abused based on her sexual vulture. Additionally, when the government of India and Pakistan organized a rescue mission to rescue the abducted women, Ice-candy man immediately wedded Ayah, and he renamed her as Mumtaz¹³⁶ from Shanta. Her name, along with her identity, was changed from Shanta to Mumtaz

¹³⁴ Bahri, Deepika. "Telling Tales: Women and the trauma of partition in Sidhwa's Cracking India". *International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1999, pp. 217–34.

¹³⁵ Hira Mandi means 'Diamond Market' in terms of Hindu/Urdu. This is the seedy area of the town of Lahore. The word diamond is doublespeak used to allude to the whores.

¹³⁶ Ayah's changed name Mumtaz is acquired from the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan's most adored wife Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan constructs a white marble sepulcher as her last resting place after her demise. This sepulcher is the most mainstream architectural miracle of India named the Taj Mahal situated in the city of Agra. The Taj Mahal is all around viewed as an image of never-ending love. Thus, Ice-candy man further enhances the knavery of his alleged love by renaming Ayah as Mumtaz.

within a short time. Katherine May Stokes (2008)¹³⁷ asserts that when Ice-candy man gives Ayah another name, he semantically marks his brutal resurgence. Therefore, it can be affirmed that this renaming can be considered one of the representative markers of demolition of her past identity.

Moreover, because of consistent violence, at first, by Ayah's abduction and rape followed by her being a prostitute vigorously and gets married to her abductor-rapist alongside her changed religious identity as a Muslim, the notion of Ayah's victimization gets strong here. This idea gets strong when Lenny finally meets Ayah with the assistance of the rescue mission. After seeing Ayah, Lenny utters, "Where have the radiance and the liveliness gone? Can the spirit be extricated from its living body?" (Sidhwa 260)¹³⁸. Lenny's words reflect on the notion that after being violated both physically and mentally, which affects her greatness and agency, Ayah shows up not so much human, rather more object. Again, Lenny further mentions, "Ayah is dressed as a mistress, and her wide-opened eyes seem empty. Ayah is presently a vacant physical shell." (Sidhwa 260)¹³⁹. This exact quotation highlights the idea of how her singularity is depleted out. Lenny's observation recommends that Ayah seems like a ghostly figure. Subramanian (2013)¹⁴⁰ claims that Ayah is dead while living and expulsive regarding the home, labor, and love, Ayah's eyes represent the inexpressible substitute history, the inexpressible like the dead history with their nonappearance.

Furthermore, when Lenny and her family met Ayah with the assistance of the rescue mission, they listened to a few words from Ayah that she expressed. Ayah expresses her wish in

¹³⁷ Stokes, Katherine May. "Sexual Violence and the Authority to Speak the Representation of Rape in Three Contemporary Novels". *Montréal: McGill University*, 2008.

¹³⁸ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:260

¹³⁹ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:260

¹⁴⁰ Subramanian, Shreerekha. *Women Writing Violence: The Novel and Radical Feminist Imaginaries*. New Delhi, SAGE Publications, 2013.

these words, “I want to return to my family. Regardless of Whether they want me or not, I will go.” (Sidhwa 261-62)¹⁴¹. These same lines specify that although Ayah recognizes her changed social position and identity as a sexually debased woman, she prefers to leave Lahore and goes to India, where her family stays.

In this case, Ayah can decide on going to her family. However, as disgraced, violated, and victimized in a post-partition context, many other women cannot even desire to go to their family instead of staying with their abductors. Mookerjea-Leonard (2015)¹⁴² mentions that one of the main reasons for their choice is the consciousness that their presently modified social status will involve their unacceptability and ostracism from the community on their return. Therefore, it can be claimed that a woman will or maybe choose to live with her rapist reflects unequivocally upon the idea of how strongly the patriarchal state stresses controlling women’s sexuality and the extreme measures are taken to direct it.

At last, it can be said that the title *Ice-Candy-Man* can be likened to every resident of the Indian subcontinent since the general characteristic of the Indians is very satisfying and lovable, like sweets. Tragically, this delicate nature appears to vanish from the psyches of the individuals during the horrendous hour of the partition that overlooks their very long-term history of communal harmony. The novel revealed that in her first visit to Pir Pindo, Lenny found that the Muslims made a vow to shield their Sikh brothers and sisters from the approaching threat of communal pressure. However, the amicable connection among communities evaporates with the spreading violence of the partition. In the novel, it is noticed that the Ice-candy man appeared to

¹⁴¹ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:261-62

¹⁴² Mookerjea-Leonard, Debali. “Quarantined: Women and the Partition.” *The Indian Partition in Literature and Films: History, Politics, and Aesthetics*, edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Debali Mookerjea-Leonard, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 11-51.

commend the vista of Lahore burning in the fire of communal mobs and became upset at the demise of the masseur. Additionally, he deceived Lenny in terms of Ayah's abduction by the rabble later.

Furthermore, it can be said that *Ice-Candy-Man* shows the need to reconsider accounts about women during and in the post-partition context. Ayah's abduction and bodily infringement are the consequences of personal envy and anger of her dismissed admirer, Ice-candy man who utilizes the ethnic conflict of the partition to legitimize his harmful activities as a vigorous action of his religious nationalism and masculinity. Moreover, through the novel, Sidhwa tries to uncover the notion that regardless of the states' paternalistic endeavors to recoup and restore the abducted and raped women, these disregarded women turn into a token of the nations' disgrace, which prompts the social death of the exploited gendered subject. Additionally, through her narration, Sidhwa specifies that rape can prompt a second infringement of the victims. Those women who are endured as the victims of sexual brutality, expressing the violence in words that they experience, are difficult due to the twofold dread of recalling trauma and confronting social retribution. Again, this novel reflects on the male-centric nationalist scheme at the terrible hour of partition that utilizes women's bodies as methods for recording power relations between two opposing ethnic-religious groups, which consequently deletes the profundity of the violence that is instituted on the female body.

Besides, through the novel, Sidhwa demonstrated how Lenny grew. Lenny perceived the biological exploitation of women. She began to look at the world with female eyes. Various incidents referenced in the above discussion show how women are naturally mistreated and underestimated by men. This idea gets strong by depicting another incident mentioned by

Sidhwa (1889)¹⁴³ in the novel. In the novel, Sidhwa (1889)¹⁴⁴ mentioned that in the absence of Ayah, another Ayah named Hamida came to Lenny's home to take care of Lenny, who had four children; however, her husband abandoned her. Hamida revealed to Lenny the reason why her husband abandoned her. Hamida mentions, "I am a fallen woman since other men have touched me." (Sidhwa 250)¹⁴⁵. This very narration shows how the men in patriarchal societies abuse and underestimate their women and how their concepts of pride and virtue are arranged based on the concepts of their women's sexuality and bodies. Again, through the novel, Sidhwa attempts to demonstrate how women endure oppression at various levels in this patriarchal society. During partition and in a post-partition context, the occurrences of rape, abduction, mutilation affect the psyche of women. At that time, their homes were broken, and they got traumatized both physically and mentally. Sidhwa also demonstrates the enormous scale of sexual exploitation of women under the pretense of partition, which reflects on the man-centric maltreatment towards females. Therefore, it can be affirmed that the concealment and marginalization of the female body demonstrate men's control and mastery over them.

Once again, it is absolutely an incongruity that Ayah, the embodiment of emblematic nationalistic motherhood, turns into a prize for externalization and misuse during and in a post-partition context. Ayah speaks to a dominant representation of India itself who is split and destroyed in the hands of two contradicting ethnic-religious groups. Ayah exists just because the desire and sensuality of men encompass her and eventually is broken due to their hunger for power. Ayah is split like India, and the nation's pride and identity are disintegrated directly alongside her. At the beginning of the novel, Sidhwa illustrates Ayah as the most desirable;

¹⁴³ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁴⁴ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁴⁵ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:250

however, later, she is exploited under the shade of communal dispute. Ice-candy man's adoration with Ayah, which later transforms into an infuriating fascination, uncovers the idea of the male domination over the female body. Again, the exploitation of the female body and sexual infringement is the aggregate brutalities that traumatize Ayah and many other victimized women both physically and mentally during partition and in a post-partition context. During the terrible hour of partition, women are raped and killed because the men of patriarchal society consider the female bodies as space over which the aggressive games of men of different ethnic-religious communities are performed. Therefore, it can be said that in this manner, like many other women, Ayah becomes one of the prime victims because of communal conflict that takes place during the partition of India, and Ayah's victimization is continued in a post-partition context.

Chapter 5

Women's Victimization Depicted in Neelima Ibrahim's *A War Heroine, I Speak* (2017)

A War Heroine, I Speak is Neelima Ibrahim's (2017)¹⁴⁶ book demonstrates the struggle and endurance of seven rape victims of the liberation war of Bangladesh. In this book, Ibrahim highlights women's sufferings during the war and in the post-war context that contributes to the ultimate success of the Liberation war of Bangladesh. Here, the author shows that while men are presented the honor of gallantry in the war, women are considered objects of pity and adherence. Many people forget the contribution and sacrifice of those women. Karam (2001)¹⁴⁷ asserts that women structure a fundamental portion of any society, even in conflict.

As a social worker and humanitarian, Neelima Ibrahim believes that the sacrifice of those women should be rewarded. Therefore, she presents her book as a work of inspiration for the empowerment of the raped women. In the book, Ibrahim highlights the persecution directed at women in the liberation war of Bangladesh. Dr. Fayeza Hasanat translated the book into English, published in 2017. She studied at the University of Central Florida, Orlando, USA. Hasanat translated the book into English with the aim that it could attain global exposure. In the translated version of the book, the translator brought significant structural changes; she subdivided the chapters and titled them in a similar way that the Bengali version's spontaneous narratives were narrated. In the book, the author presents the life incidents of seven Biranganas as a series of interviews. Additionally, Ibrahim uses fictional names of those victimized women because she believes that presenting their story publicly with their original identity may affect their social life.

¹⁴⁶ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁴⁷ Karam, Azza. "Women in war and peace-building: The roads traversed, the challenges ahead". *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 3, no.1, 2001, pp. 2-25.

The first chapter of the book in which Ibrahim (2017)¹⁴⁸ introduced Tara Nielsen, a Birangana who migrated to Holland because of being displaced from her own country, independent Bangladesh. Neelima Ibrahim met her at a dinner party in Copenhagen, where she attended the annual board meeting of The International Alliance of Women. After a short introduction, Ibrahim recognized that the woman she was talking with was Tara Banerjee, a Hindu girl from Bangladesh. Ibrahim met her in the operation theatre in the rehabilitation Centre. During the horrendous hour of the liberation war of Bangladesh, Tara was abducted and raped by her fellow countrymen, who handed her over to the Pakistani military for delayed torment. The savage behavior of the Pakistani military towards Tara continued in the military camp till December 16, the day Bangladesh achieved its victory from Pakistan. Saikia (2004)¹⁴⁹ claims that during the horrendous hour of the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971, Bangladeshi women were not just exploited by the Pakistani perpetrators, likewise kidnapped and raped by the Bengali supporters of Pakistani Bengali nationalists. Tara shared the dreadful torture that she experienced in the following lines:

The first man to brutalize me physically in that hospital was a Bengali. I was too weak to fight back and too shocked to absorb the truth that a Bengali man had violated my honor instead of trying to save me. My head was not strong yet, and my body lay powerless, as I was being dishonored by a bestial Bengali man. (Ibrahim 11)¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁴⁹ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

¹⁵⁰ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:11

At this point, Saikia's (2004)¹⁵¹ claim can be considered again. Saikia states that some perpetrators appear to have been criminal conduct, taking advantage of the turmoil of war and the breakdown of law and order, and included men raping women of their 'own' group. Again, Tara was not only sexually violated by Pakistani military men but was violated by her own community's men. This same action made her emotionally so traumatized that Tara left her nation and migrated to Holland, wherein she became a nurse and married a doctor to live a dignified life. Therefore, it can be said that a woman is unsafe to other communities' men. Also, her own community's men can act like monsters and take advantage of the communal conflict.

Additionally, it can be said that few perpetrators look for the chance to take advantage of the communal conflict wherein they plan to take revenge for any previous personal dispute. This notion is also found in Bapsi Sidhwa's (1889)¹⁵² novel, *Ice-Candy Man*, wherein Ice-candy man took revenge on Ayah, whom he proposed. However, Ayah rejected his proposal, which the Ice-candy man could not accept, and waited for the right moment to take revenge. When the communal conflict began among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs during the horrendous hour of partition in 1947, Ice-Candy Man took advantage of that. When the conflict broke down, the Ice-candy man and Muslim men entered the house where Ayah worked. He fooled Lenny into disclosing to him where Ayah was covering up by assuring Lenny that he would secure her beloved Ayah. Moreover, with the assistance of a group of Muslim men, the Ice-candy man discovered Ayah and abducts her. Therefore, it can be said that in the context of communal conflict, women are not safe in any place, to any men, not even within their community.

¹⁵¹ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

¹⁵² Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

The second story of the book is named “Meher Jan Speaks”. In this story, Ibrahim (2017)¹⁵³ talked about a fourteen-year-old girl trapped and raped for nine months in a military camp. As a rape victim followed by the communal conflict, Meher chose to migrate to Pakistan with one of her perpetrators to reinstitute a noble identity. While meeting, Ibrahim, along with other members of the rescue mission, proposed to Meher to stay in Bangladesh; however, she decided to leave the country. That was because, like a mature woman, she anticipated the sufferings and difficulties that she would have to face if she stayed in her motherland. Therefore, she was determined to migrate to Pakistan after being married to a sixty-year-old man who was one of her rapists. Meher expressed her thoughts in the following words:

I was young in age, but my experience had already told me that there would be no peace or happiness for me in the new country; no one would stand by me. No one came to save me the day these brutes abducted me from my own house; in fact, people from my village helped these animals to collect us as one of their sex toys. (Ibrahim 37)¹⁵⁴

Again, as mentioned earlier, the subject is also found in another story of a girl named Chapa described in the sixth story of the book named “Fatema’s Story”. Here, Ibrahim depicted the suffering and victimization of a girl named Chapa. The story depicted the miserable condition and sufferings of Chapa during the war and in the post-war context. Like Tara, Meher, Chapa was also tortured by the Pakistani military. However, she did not get the scope to leave the country. Her father was a rebellious figure who significantly contributed to the Language Movement of 1952 in East Pakistan. Additionally, her elder brother joined the struggle for freedom. However, in the war, she lost her family. Hundreds of Pakistani perpetrators raped her.

¹⁵³ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁵⁴ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:37

Her suffering did not finish here, instead was continued even after the independence. The nation recognized neither her family's sacrifice nor her suffering. Ibrahim (1889)¹⁵⁵ mentions, "Chapa is recognized by such an identity that she is a Hindu girl whom Muslim's rape, and consequently gets ostracized in society." (Ibrahim 121).

Different literary scholars such as Neelima Ibrahim (2017)¹⁵⁶, Nayanika Mookherjee (2002)¹⁵⁷, Yasmin Saikia (2004)¹⁵⁸, Sarmila Bose (2011)¹⁵⁹ talk about the sufferings of the women like Tara, Meher, and Chapa. They claim that women's physical and mental trauma for nine months is followed by the struggle for getting identity in an independent state wherein they are ostracized in their family and society. Consequently, they have only options of either migrate or suicide. They choose to migrate because they search for a new identity in the post-war context. After the war, many Biranganas migrated to many other countries like Pakistan, India, and other countries to reinstate a new identity from the position of debased women. In her book, Neelima Ibrahim (2017)¹⁶⁰ mentions, "thirty rape victims move to Pakistan with their perpetrators. They choose to leave the country because their motherland is not a place for a woman whose body is violated by hundreds of men" (Ibrahim 41). A similar situation is also found in the horrendous hour of the partition of India in 1947. At that time, many women whom other communities' men abducted sometimes refused to go back to their own country and family.

¹⁵⁵ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:121

¹⁵⁶ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁵⁷ Mukherjee, Nayanika. "Gendered Embodiments: Mapping the Body-Politics of the Raped Woman of the nation in Bangladesh". *South Asian Women in the Diaspora*, edited by Nirmal Puwar and Parvati Raghuram, New York, New York: Berg, 2002, pp. 157-177.

¹⁵⁸ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275-87.

¹⁵⁹ Bose, Sarmila. *Dead Reckoning: Memories of the 1971 Bangladesh War*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2011.

¹⁶⁰ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:41

Mookerjea-Leonard (2015)¹⁶¹ asserts that one of the main reasons for such choice is the consciousness that their presently modified social status will involve their unacceptability and ostracism from the community on their return.

Once again, in the post-war context, sexual violence towards women as sex objects is continued. That is because the men of the patriarchal society do not forget the dishonor that women get from the war, and those men like to continue the dishonor in the post-war society. Ibrahim's (2017)¹⁶² stories that she presents in her book, *A War Heroine, I Speak*, strengthen this notion. Her narratives refer to the Bengali women whom the patriarchal society physically and psychologically torture after returning from their war imprisonment. Meintjes's (2011)¹⁶³ assertion can be cited here. Meintjes specifies that in various spaces of Asia and Africa, brave women, fighters, pacificators during the conflict become victimized as first-hand objects in a war-torn society by the men of their community.

The notion, as mentioned earlier, is also found in the seventh story of the book. It talked about Mina; a Birangana blamed and driven away from her home by her husband. That was because her husband believed that the Pakistani perpetrators violated her body. At this point, a similarity is found between Mina's story and Hamida's story from Bapsi Sidhwa's (1889)¹⁶⁴ *Ice-Candy-man*. In the novel, Sidhwa's (1889)¹⁶⁵ mentioned that in the absence of Ayah, another

¹⁶¹ Mookerjea-Leonard, Debali. "Quarantined: Women and the Partition." *The Indian Partition in Literature and Films: History, Politics, and Aesthetics*, edited by Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Debali Mookerjea-Leonard, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 11-51.

¹⁶² Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁶³ Meintjes, Sheila. "Introduction: The Aftermath: Women in Post-War Reconstruction." *Agenda: Empowering Women for Gender Equity*, no. 43, 2000, pp. 4-10.

¹⁶⁴ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

¹⁶⁵ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

Ayah named Hamida came to Lenny's home to take care of Lenny, who had four children; however, her husband abandoned her. Hamida revealed to Lenny the reason why her husband abandoned her. Hamida mentions, "I am a fallen woman since other men have touched me." (Sidhwa 250)¹⁶⁶. This very narration shows how the men in patriarchal societies abuse and underestimate their women and how their concepts of pride and virtue are arranged based on the concepts of their women's sexuality and bodies. Therefore, it can be said that women become vulnerable targets in each tangible conflict, be it socio-political conflict, gendered strife, or ethnic conflict, and it also occurs in terms of the liberation war of Bangladesh.

Again, the sixth story of the book focuses on the survival strategy of Fatema, a victim of the ethnic conflict between the Bengali and Bihari communities during the liberation war of Bangladesh. Fatima was an agile girl who lived in Khulna and belonged to the 'Bihari' community. Saikia (2004)¹⁶⁷ claims that after the partition of 1947, an enormous number of Biharis relocated to East Pakistan. They take the help of Pakistani perpetrators in the 1971 genocide in religious and ethnic associations. Fatema shared the extreme torture that was directed to her by the Bengali Pakistani supporters, and the Pakistani military was described in the following words:

Nasir Ali snatched my little brother from me and thrashed him on the street. I heard Pona crying for help, and then I saw his skull break into pieces. My brother's brain jumped out of his tiny head and felt like a lump of blood on the pavement. Nasir and his team

¹⁶⁶ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989, Pg:250

¹⁶⁷ Saikia, Yasmin. "Beyond the Archive of Silence: Narratives of Violence of the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh." *History Workshop Journal*, no. 58, 2004, pp. 275–87.

dragged me towards their housing estate. [...] Nasir Ali and his father took turns in raping me and then handed me over to other men of their community. (Ibrahim 117)¹⁶⁸

Such an allusion to ethnic-religious conflict between Urdu speaking Bihari and Bengali speaking Bangladeshis is considered one reason that caused the liberation war of Bangladesh. The academicians Yasmin Saikia (2011)¹⁶⁹ and Sarmila Bose (2011)¹⁷⁰ report one sort of counter-stories of Bihari women in their books wherein they depict that Bihari women are additionally exploited and victimized by the Bengali nationalists in post-independence Bangladesh.

Furthermore, the joint force of the Indian army and Bengali nationalists attempt to rescue the abducted women from the Pak military camps after the end of the liberation war. The triumph slogan cannot comfort the minds of those women who spend miserable lives and persevere through barbarian torment for the very long of nine months in those camps. Additionally, their compatriots are not pleased with their fortitude; instead, they are embarrassed about being alive. Through the book, Ibrahim tries to show the worries of the countrymen in a free country concerning their war heroines. In her book, Ibrahim (2017)¹⁷¹ mentions, “On the day of victory, the nation praises the achievements of the male freedom fighters. However, it cleverly contradicts the beneficence of the war heroines as co-warriors.” (Ibrahim 57). At this point,

¹⁶⁸ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:117

¹⁶⁹ Saikia, Yasmin. *Women, War, and the Making of Bangladesh: Remembering 1971*. Durham, Duke University Press, 2011.

¹⁷⁰ Bose, Sarmila. *Dead Reckoning: Memories of the 1971 Bangladesh War*. New York, Columbia University Press, 2011.

¹⁷¹ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:57

Denov's (2006)¹⁷² and Nagel's (2001)¹⁷³ assertions can be alluded to. Denov (2006)¹⁷⁴ mentions that there has been mounting proof that women and girls experience war uniquely in contrast to men and boys, with women typically confronting greater insecurity, hindrance, and underestimation. In terms of women's role in the war, Denov further claims that women play a vital role; they either support or participate straightforwardly in the war. Again, Nagel (2001)¹⁷⁵ claims that regardless of their fortitude, it is frequently the situation that feminist nationalists are themselves under the thumb of institutionalized patriarchy once national independence is won. In addition, Nagel expands his claims by saying that female identity is cleared out from the circle of the nation-building process. In this context, women turn into the receiving end of masculine atrocities. Again, at this point, Choudhuri's (2000)¹⁷⁶ views can be cited. Choudhuri asserts that in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, the subject of women and their sacrifice for the nation is woven into prevailing nationalist thought. Therefore, it can be said that the sacrifices and contributions that the war heroines have, do not get rewarded. Instead, they are viewed as objects of disgrace to their nation and fellow citizens.

¹⁷² Denov, Myriam S. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Assessing a Human Security Response to War-Affected Girls in Sierra Leone". *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2006, pp. 319-42.

¹⁷³ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

¹⁷⁴ Denov, Myriam S. "Wartime Sexual Violence: Assessing a Human Security Response to War-Affected Girls in Sierra Leone". *Security Dialogue*, vol. 37, no. 3, 2006, pp. 319-42.

¹⁷⁵ Nagel, Joane. "Masculinity and Nationalism: Gender and Sexuality in the Making of Nations". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2001, pp. 242-69.

¹⁷⁶ Choudhuri, Maitrayee. "Gender in the Making of the Indian Nation-State". *Nation and National Identity in South Asia*, edited by S L Sharma and T K Oommen, New Delhi, Orient Longman, 2000, pp. 113-133.

The very notion is reflected in the fourth story of the book named “Shefali’s Story,” which describes how Biranganas seem to be banned, quiet, and minimized. Ibrahim (2017)¹⁷⁷ mentions in the story, “their presence in a marriage ceremony is viewed as unpropitious” (Ibrahim 86). Hence, it can be said that such miserable condition of heroic women of the liberation war of Bangladesh demonstrates that the country’s independence brings honor and poise for the male freedom fighters only; it likewise gives a chance to those individuals of having a better life in the post-independence Bangladesh who escape like quitters to save themselves during the terrible hour of war. However, the war heroines get only disgrace from the country. In Ibrahim’s (2017)¹⁷⁸ words, “independence brings no advantage to the Biranganas, who immolates the most.” (Ibrahim 69).

Besides, the third story, named “Rina’s Story,” of the book talks about a woman named Rina who experiences her identity crisis as a Birangana in post-independence Bangladesh. Rina’s story represents the idea that a Bengali woman was believed to be honored if she was treated as a personal orderly to a military official during wartime. Rina being an educated, pretty, and smart woman in the group, turned into the personal sex slave of a Pakistani military official and submitted herself to his greed since she realized that it was wiser to surrender herself to one man’s desire than to be snatched by a group of hungry monsters. In post-independence Bangladesh, Rina got so disgraced that she was assaulted publicly with her new socially imposed identity of a “Bengali whore” by the community’s people, even by a group of little Bengali boys. At this point, to talk about her miserable condition, she referred to Lady Macbeth’s fate. Since she believed that her fate was that of Lady Macbeth’s fate and she mourned, “All the perfumes of

¹⁷⁷ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:86

¹⁷⁸ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:69

Arabia were not enough to cover my crime.” (Ibrahim 60-61)¹⁷⁹. Rina, as Meher Jan, chose to disappear to Pakistan to dispose of this disgrace. When she was convinced to remain back, she announced, “I would rather go to Pakistan and spend the rest of my shame-filled life with these monsters. Handling these animals would be easier than confronting my loved ones.” (Ibrahim 64)¹⁸⁰.

Furthermore, the fifth story of the book is named “Mayna’s Tale.” It talked about an eighteen-year-old young girl who belonged to a typical Bengali family. Mayna was an extrovert in nature, loved sports, had a strong mind, and was actively involved in politics. She dreamt of getting a bachelor’s degree and wished to be a teacher. However, Mayna became a victim and experienced similar occurrences in her life that Tara, Fatima, Meher Jan, Rina, and Mina experienced. Like Tara, Mayna also was assaulted by her own community’s men. Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸¹ mentioned, “Mayna was raped that night by a group of Bengali men of her own country” (Ibrahim 96). Again, like Meher Jan, Mayna was trapped and raped for the nine-long months in the military camp.

Additionally, similar to Rina, she was kept as a personal sex slave of a Pakistani military official and fulfilled his every desire. Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸² narrated, “The officer kept her as his booty, his brave harlot” (Ibrahim 100). Moreover, after independence, Mayna was freed from military camp and returned to the family. However, she was ostracized from her community and blamed and driven away from family like Mina. In addition, like Mina and Rina, Mayna was

¹⁷⁹ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:60-61

¹⁸⁰ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:64

¹⁸¹ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:96

¹⁸² Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:100

disgraced and assaulted by her own community's men because of her presently modified social identity as 'Birangana' in the post-war context. The men of her community not only disgraced her but also her family was dishonored because of her. Because of the social disgrace, her family became unhappy about returning to family and blaming her for their miserable condition. In the book, Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸³ mentioned, "Mayna's mother could not take it anymore. She took out her anger on Mayna. Why did you come back? Why didn't you stay out of our lives and rot somewhere in a brothel? At least we would not have to suffer for your sins!" (Ibrahim 104). This very blame hurt Mayna profoundly, and therefore, she decided to leave her family, lived her life alone.

Again, it can be said that the accounts of the rape victims recorded by Neelima Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸⁴ not just address the narratives of victimization of Biranganas at the horrendous hour of the liberation war of Bangladesh, additionally represents their miserable conditions, victimization in the post-independence nation. Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸⁵ mentions in the book, "In post-war Bangladesh, Biranganas despicably view the local culprits get away from their destiny and declare themselves as the rescuers of the country by joining local politics" (Ibrahim 84). In the fifth story of the book named "Mayna's Tale", Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸⁶ dishonorably describes how "the tricky Bengali individuals or Razakars take cover behind the veil of patriots and cross their line to yell the slogan Joy Bangla" (Ibrahim 101). These Razakars oppress the women during the war and are proven harmful to the 'Biranganas' in post-independence Bangladesh. This notion is

¹⁸³ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:104

¹⁸⁴ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

¹⁸⁵ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:84

¹⁸⁶ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:101

proven by one of the incidents of Mayna's life. After Mayna's marriage and the death of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Mayna, her husband Harun, and her family were threatened by the Razakars who wandered around them by pretending themselves the patriots and rescuers of the country in independent Bangladesh. Additionally, these Razakars murdered Mayna's husband, Harun, which transformed Mayna's happy life into a pathetic one within a moment. Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸⁷ narrated:

Mayna found Harun's lifeless body lying in the pool of his blood. Harun was fatally injured by a group of ruffians in Narayanganj, right in front of his own house. Someone had told Harun that there was a brawl outside his house. Harun went there to resolve the scuffle but got attacked the moment he approached those thugs. They stabbed him repeatedly and left the scene. The whole thing was a setup, Mayna's brother had told her. It was a premeditated murder. (Ibrahim 112)

Hence, it can be said that the co-partner of the Pakistani Military Army or Razakars are not only responsible for women's victimization during the liberation war of Bangladesh but also, they are responsible for the continuation of the sufferings of those victimized women in independent Bangladesh by harming them in various ways.

At last, it can be said that in the book, *A War Heroine, I Speak*, Neelima Ibrahim (2017)¹⁸⁸ reveals the unspoken stories of victimized, marginalized women who suffer most during and in the post-war context of the liberation war of Bangladesh. Neelima Ibrahim archives oral accounts into a literary masterpiece through her vivacious depiction of the

¹⁸⁷ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:112

¹⁸⁸ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

experience of the raped victims of the liberation war of Bangladesh. At this point, Chamberlain & Thompson's (2014)¹⁸⁹ claims can be alluded to. They claim that any biography, whether a written autobiography or an oral declaration, is molded not just by the reworking of experience through memory and re-assessment yet besides consistently, at least to some extent, by artistry. In addition, the accounts that Ibrahim depicts in the book demonstrate the fantasies of the war heroines for the acknowledgment of their independent country for which they immolate their youth, celibacy, family, and belongings. Despite the obstacles they ceaselessly face, regardless of the quietness agonizing over their life, a war heroine even now desires, "I will continue to dream that one day they will acknowledge me, not as a victim of the war, rather as a brave hero." (Ibrahim 75)¹⁹⁰.

After considering Ibrahim's portrayal of the 'War heroines' through the viewpoint of contemporary research, it can be claimed that Ibrahim's stories of Biranganas or rape survivors of the liberation war of Bangladesh unquestionably gives a new viewpoint in the progressive studies in gendered violence in the liberation war of Bangladesh. Again, due to sectarian violence and upraise of communalism, the publication of Ibrahim's book endures difficulties. Additionally, Ibrahim struggles a lot to build up the privileges of raped victims in their own country by depicting the inferior voice of women. Besides, Ibrahim is not an outsider. She has been occupied with the recovery process of rape survivors of the liberation war of Bangladesh during and in the post-war context. Regardless of having few shortcomings, Ibrahim's (2017)¹⁹¹ accounts of rape victims of the liberation war of Bangladesh that she depicts in her book, *A War Heroine, I Speak*,

¹⁸⁹ Chamberlain, Mary, & Thompson, Paul. *Narrative and Genre*. London, Routledge, 2014.

¹⁹⁰ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017, Pg:75

¹⁹¹ Ibrahim, Neelima. *A War Heroine, I Speak*. Translated by Fayeza Hasanat, Dhaka, Bangla Academy, 2017.

prove imperative weapons for drawing transnational justice bringing awareness in Bangladesh and the international context. Simultaneously, these accounts give a new point of view to academia to understand the need for feminist narratives to disclose and approve the historical truth concerning war and women's victimization in war.

Chapter 6

Women's Victimization Depicted in Mumtaz Moosa Saley's *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* (2017)

Mumtaz Moosa Saley's (2017)¹⁹² *Rohingya: The Sold Dream* is a fantastic book that gives the readers the idea of the brutal tragic reality experienced by the Rohingya Muslims in the Rakhine state of Myanmar. The emotion Saley places on paper through her main protagonist, Amina, leaves her readers physically throbbing for her, her sister Ayesha and each Rohingya severely treated and tormented. Here, the author demonstrates the sufferings of Rohingya people in such a way that makes the readers wind up soaked in tears as they turn the pages. Through the novelette, the author gives her readers the idea of the vivid reality that these neglected people encountered in Myanmar. After reading the book, the readers will be profoundly moved and grieve for them from the core of their heart and soul. Through her convincing story, *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*, Saley (2017)¹⁹³ tries to give a voice to the voiceless and successfully remaining the readers of the forgotten People of Rohingya.

Amina, the protagonist of the novelette, experienced extreme physical tortures and mental trauma in different phases during the Rohingya's persecution in 2017. Amina lost her parents, beloved, and elder sister, Ayesha, who lost her life because of extreme physical tortures imposed by the Burmese soldiers. Amina was a Rohingya girl who lived with her family in a predominantly Muslim community in northern Arakan State. Since she belonged to the Rohingya Muslim community, her community was not tolerated in Burma despite being peace-loving and

¹⁹² Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017.

¹⁹³ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017.

law-abiding. Consequently, they were oppressed and persecuted. They experienced extreme violence because the dominant Barman people wanted to remove the Rohingya Muslim Community from Myanmar. On August 25, 2017, when the persecution towards Rohingya happened, Myanmar's Burmese security forces committed widespread violence over Rohingya men, women, and children. They used rape against women and young girls as part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Rohingya in Myanmar's Rakhine State. Bala (2018)¹⁹⁴ claims, "The United Nations has called this abomination as a textbook example of ethnic cleansing in their native Myanmar" (3). When the Myanmar soldiers started the atrocities, they started burning the houses of Rohingya people; they also dragged out mothers, daughters, wives, and husbands from their homes, raped the Rohingya women, and killed them. At the time of the violence, Amina also became a victim, lost her parents, and took shelter with her elder sister Ayesha in a Rohingya camp in Arakan.

From different secondary sources are discussed in the literature review chapter, it is found that rape constitutes the leading source of trauma during the Rohingya crisis, particularly for women and adolescent girls. Amina and her sister Ayesha experienced the same form of physical violence. The Burmese Military soldiers not only raped them. Instead, they turned Amina and her sister Ayesha into sex slaves who were being captivated in the camp and sexually assaulted when the Burmese Military soldiers desired. At this point, the subject of 'Birangana' of the Liberation war of Bangladesh can be alluded to. During the war, Bengali women were being captivated by the Pakistani military soldiers and were sexually assaulted as sex slaves.

¹⁹⁴ Bala, Ashok. "Rohingya Crisis: Sexual Violence against Women and Adolescent Girls in Myanmar". *Google, academia.edu*, 2018, Pg:3

Mukherjee (2002)¹⁹⁵ asserts that since the Pakistani army adopts a strategy of rape, between 200,000 and 400,000 women are raped and made sex slaves in Pakistani military camps. Like the incidents that took place during the Liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971 and the partition of India in 1947, the Burman Buddhists military soldiers targeted women and used them as a weapon to weaken and dishonor the people of the minority Muslim religious community.

It can be claimed that in terms of these three communal conflicts, men of one ethnic-religious community use the strategy of sexual violence to destroy and supplant the adversary ethnic-religious community's women. The strategy of using sexual violence is to weaken and dishonor the opponent ethnic-religious community. In the context of the Indian subcontinent, women are considered mothers of the nation and carriers of culture. Consequently, they are associated with the honor of the nation. When a woman's honor is defamed through sexual violation, her community is also humiliated. Sharlach (2000)¹⁹⁶ claims that in the context of the Indian-Subcontinent, women in their roles as mothers of the nation and transmitters of culture symbolize the honor of the ethnic group. When a woman's honor is tarnished through rape, the ethnic group is also dishonored.

Again, it is found from different secondary sources that Rohingya women experience different forms of physical violence such as sexual assault, forced nudity, rape, and gang rape directed by the Burmese police and military. Nordby (2018)¹⁹⁷ surveys Rohingya women

¹⁹⁵ Mukherjee, Nayanika. "Gendered Embodiments: Mapping the Body-Politics of the Raped Woman of the nation in Bangladesh". *South Asian Women in the Diaspora*, edited by Nirmal Puwar and Parvati Raghuram, New York, New York: Berg, 2002, pp. 157-177.

¹⁹⁶ Sharlach, Lisa. "Rape as Genocide: Bangladesh, the Former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda". *New Political Science*, vol. 22, no.1, 2000, pp. 89-102.

¹⁹⁷ Nordby, Linda. "Gender-based violence in the refugee camps in Cox Bazar-A case study of Rohingya women's and girls' exposure to gender-based violence". *Semantic Scholar*, 2018.

refugees. He highlights that Rohingya women are taken to a nearby building and are sexually assaulted regularly. They frequently are kept, physically tortured, and raped for the entire night and freed in the morning. The following day, the perpetrators come again and take another group of women and return them at dawn. Some as young as eight years old, girls are raped in front of their parents or siblings. Once again, the women who are raped and physically tortured endure a scale of physical wounds, including death. Like other Rohingya victimized women, Amina and her sister Ayesha were also raped by the Burmese military soldiers. Amina shares their experiences of being raped in the following words:

A soldier forces me down and forces himself on top of me. I turn my head and my eyes fall upon Ayesha who is being raped. I feel sick and I want to die, hoping the bastards will kill me. They gang rape Ayesha and I in the bus, a never-ending line of soldiers pleasuring themselves on illegal Bengali filth. With each soldier that comes on top of me and penetrates me, my spirit dies a little more and as the tenth or eleventh one pins me down, I realize that fighting back will only prolong the torture. We are dragged back to the camp injured, bleeding and traumatized, and the following night our captors began the cycle afresh. (Saley 14)¹⁹⁸

Again, Amina and Ayesha took shelter in a Rohingya camp in Arakan, wherein the Burmese military soldiers came and sexually assaulted them, tortured them regularly. Amina and Ayesha stayed in the camp as sex slaves, wherein they did not have the power to raise their voices against the torture they experienced. The Burmese military soldiers used them whenever they wanted. The level of torture became so extreme that it might cause death. After being raped

¹⁹⁸ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:14

several times by a Burmese soldier, Ayesha became pregnant. Although she became pregnant because of rape, she desired to give birth to her child. However, when the soldier came to know about the matter, he became angry and brutally tortured Ayesha that caused Ayesha's death. Moreover, killing Ayesha was that the Burmese soldier could not accept that his child's mother would be a Muslim, a Rohingya. In the book, the tortures that Ayesha's rapist directed towards her is described by Amina in these words:

That evening, the guard who rapes Ayesha repeatedly, drags her out of his tent by her hair. He keeps screaming about how it is possible that a revolting Bengali can carry his child. Then he beats her. I run towards him screaming and I begin to hit him. Ayesha is being kicked in the abdomen over and over again. [...] Ayesha lies on the ground motionless. Panic sets in as I realize that Ayesha is not breathing, I cannot find a pulse. She has blood soiling her pants and dampening the earth under her. The eerie sunset is a witness to both the deaths of my sister and the man I dreamt of marrying. Their blood continues to flow and becomes one with the soil. (Saley 27-28)¹⁹⁹

Again, to weaken and dishonor the men of an adversary ethnic-religious community, the men of other ethnic-religious communities target women of that community and use them as a medium to fulfill their demands and desires. Woman as an 'Other' and her body as a battlefield wherein man as the power holder, as the subject, absolute, can fulfill their sexual desire, and when a woman becomes pregnant, it is the perpetrator's wish that the woman will give birth to the baby or not. In case of communal conflicts, a woman has viewed only an object who does not have any feeling, emotion, or opinion to share; she is required to tolerate everything that men

¹⁹⁹ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:27-28.

wish to direct towards them. To strengthen this claim, the idea regarding women's actual condition and status that Simone de Beauvoir (1972)²⁰⁰ presents in her book, *The Second Sex* can be cited here. In the book, Beauvoir (1972)²⁰¹ points out that women are characterized and separated concerning man and not he concerning her; she is incidental, the inessential rather than the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute; she is the 'Other. Beauvoir (1972)²⁰² further claims, "Women's independent successes are in contradiction with her femininity since the true woman is required to make herself object, to be the other" (246). Moreover, the occurrence in Ayesha's life is different from the occurrences in the lives of many Biranganas of the Liberation war of Bangladesh. That is because Ayesha became pregnant by the Burmese soldier who raped her, and the soldier killed her later because he could not accept the fact that a Muslim Rohingya woman was bearing his child in her womb. At the time of the Rohingya crisis, the malice of communal conflict reached such a stage that people of one community could not think of anything but oppressed the people of the adversary religious community. That is why men of one ethnic-religious community can think of viewing the women of other ethnic-religious communities as objects to be used and tortured according to their needs. On the other hand, during the liberation war of Bangladesh, Pakistani military soldiers raped Bengali women to violate them sexually and impregnate Bengali women forcefully. One of the main reasons is that they wanted to make non-Muslim women pure Muslims. Again, in some cases, they forcibly impregnated women to carry the offspring of what was often pronounced as the next generation

²⁰⁰ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

²⁰¹ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

²⁰² Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972, Pg:246

of Pakistanis. At this point, Seifert's (2016)²⁰³ claims can be referred to. Seifert (2016)²⁰⁴ claims that one of the policies of the West Pakistani state in the systematic use of sexual assault and rape is to force women who are impregnated by the militias and soldiers to keep their babies and forbid them from performing abortions. The logic reflects the idea that the pregnancies will purify the Bengali race, and the Pakistani Army will imprint an enduring mark on Bengali society through the womb of the women.

Therefore, it can be said that in the two communal conflicts, women are used as objects to fulfill men's targets and desires differently. One ethnic-religious community's man kills a woman for carrying his child in her womb though he rapes her. On the other hand, another ethnic-religious community's men forcibly impregnate women to carry the offspring of their next generation. After considering these two different occurrences, at this point, Menon and Bhasin's views (2011)²⁰⁵ can be suggested. Menon and Bhasin (2011)²⁰⁶ claim that each violent demonstration fills in as an allegory that seems to be a marker of where women's sexuality involves an all-male, patriarchal arrangement of gender relations between and within religious or ethnic communities. Additionally, they point out that the savage acts on women's bodies do not consider them as people; their mutilated, battered, raped bodies are an approach to convey a threatening message to the men of the religious group women belong to. Here, women's bodies turn into a site where one group attempts to demonstrate its religious superiority over the other.

²⁰³ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

²⁰⁴ Seifert, Ruth. "War and Rape: A Preliminary Analysis". *The Criminology of War*, edited by Ruth Jamieson, New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 307–326.

²⁰⁵ Menon, Ritu & Bhasin, Kamla. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi, Kali for Women, 2011.

²⁰⁶ Menon, Ritu & Bhasin, Kamla. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi, Kali for Women, 2011.

Furthermore, the mental trauma of many Rohingya women is found to increase after experiencing the sexual violence of their beloveds. In this novel, it was found that Amina experienced sexual violence and her sister, Aysha, experienced the same occurrence that caused her death. This unfortunate occurrence caused extreme mental trauma for Amina. She saw her sister be raped and tortured brutally, followed by her tragic death. At this point, Etmanski's (2018)²⁰⁷ views can be considered. He points out that Burmese security forces frequently commit rapes and Buddhist vigilantes in public spaces, in front of families and communities, intensifies humiliation and trauma. Besides, mothers are gang-raped in front of their young children, are frequently seriously wounded, and, in specific examples, murdered. Therefore, it can be said that Rohingya Muslim women not only experience physical torture that often causes their death but also, they experience mental trauma followed by death. Like many other Rohingya Muslim women, Amina, as a victim, experienced physical torture and encountered the physical torment of her elder sister, which was so extreme that it caused her death. Amina's mental trauma because of her physical torture and her sister's death was intensified when she failed to bury her sister's mutilated dead body. Amina expresses her mental trauma in these words:

The tears come harder and faster. I am ready to resign myself to my fate and just accept everything this hellhole throws towards me. I stand up and walk back to my tent in a zombie-like state. The guards come to call me when the time arrives to board the smuggler boats. The man from Thailand has paid a lot of money for my seat on the boat. I

²⁰⁷ Etmanski, Theresa. "(Re) Imagining 'Justice': Documentation of Sexual Violence against Rohingya Women and Girls in Myanmar". *UVicspace, University of Victoria*, 2018.

ask if I can bury Ayesha's body before I leave, but the guard laughs loudly and tells me that pigs don't deserve a send-off. My heart is hurting for Ayesha. (Saley 29)²⁰⁸

Again, it is discussed before that in the context of communal conflict, women are considered as objects or commodities that can be utilized by men of one community to fulfill their interests and to weaken the adversary community's men where those women belong to. This idea of perceiving women as commodities is also reflected in this book several times. This idea gets strong when Amina was trafficked in Thailand. In trafficking to Thailand, Amina, along with other Rohingya women, were humiliated by the traffickers. Amina and other Rohingya women were considered commodities that anyone could use according to their needs. The level of humiliation that Amina and her companions experienced was so inhumane that it highlighted the idea of perceiving women as commodities in reality. In the novelette, several incidents are found that reflect on the idea of perceiving women as commodities, which can be discussed here to make my claim credible. Firstly, when Amina was questioned by the traffickers regarding her qualities, that situation turned Amina into a commodity. Amina demonstrates the humiliating situation in the following lines:

We are lined up and six men come towards us, each one sizing us up and asking us questions. Are you married?

Are you virgin?

Can you dance?

Can you cook?

²⁰⁸ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg: 29.

Can you clean? (Saley 43)²⁰⁹

Amina further narrates:

At that time, I find the questions to be rather random and ridiculous, but I realize later on that they are getting ready to sell us to the highest bidder and this is the information that will assist them. We are a commodity to them, like a car or a handbag, and their aim is to trade us for maximum profit. (Saley 43)²¹⁰

The above statements of Amina are mentioned in the book reflect on the idea of inferiority of women as human beings who are viewed as commodities, objects by the men of patriarchal society. The idea of perceiving women as commodities gets strong in terms of any communal conflict wherein men of one community use women of the adversary community to show their superiority over them. At this point, Simon De Beauvoir's (1972)²¹¹ views regarding the inferiority of women that she presents in her book *The Second Sex* can be referred to again. In the book, she claims that women are incidental, the inessential in contrast with the essential. She is the "Other". De Beauvoir's idea reflects on the notion of the inferiority of women in the patriarchal societies of the Indian subcontinent, wherein women are viewed as commodities. They can be humiliated by men in every way that represents women as objects. Additionally, the communal conflicts that take place in the countries of the Indian subcontinent exaggerate the concept of perceiving women as commodities and women's inferiority in patriarchal societies.

²⁰⁹ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:43

²¹⁰ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:43

²¹¹ Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Howard Madison Parshley, New York, Penguin, 1972.

Once again, among various consequences of communal conflicts is women trafficking in the local area and abroad. Like many other victimized women, Amina also became a victim of trafficking wherein she was sold to some Thai traffickers by the local soldiers. The traffickers brought Amina along with other Rohingya girls to Thailand. After reaching Thailand, Amina and other Rohingya women were treated as slaves by the buyers and brought to places assigned for them. Some girls were taken to brothels; few were sent to some houses as housemaids. After facing the terrible situation waiting for them, the fates of those Rohingya girls turned into a horrible nightmare. Amina was sold to a Thai family as a housemaid. In that house, Amina spent her days like a slave, an animal who stayed there in a cage wherein she had limited access in her life. While staying in that house, Amina experienced physical tortures and was sexually assaulted by the master of that house. She was tortured so brutally that she did not find any difference between the tortures experienced in Myanmar and Thailand. Since Amina served a house as a housemaid in Thailand, she experienced physical torture for not doing the work exactly her mistress required. Amina mentions the physical tortures that she experiences in these words:

Things are thrown at me, and I am hit many times in two weeks. One night her tea is too hot, so she takes the boiling cup and throws it at my feet. The following morning, I forget to put a hand towel in her bathroom, so she drags me across to the bathroom. For a young woman, she is damn strong. (Saley 46)²¹²

Besides, the level of torture went extreme when Amina refused to engage in a physical relationship with the master of the house where she worked. The refusal of Amina put her in a

²¹² Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:46

horror moment that was similar to the torture Amina experienced in Myanmar. Amina demonstrates the painful situation in the following lines:

Suddenly, he comes towards me and pins me against the sink. He lifts my dress and begins to touch me. I beg him to stop, but she slaps me hard and tells me not to make a sound. [...] His eyes are dark and his teeth are clenched as he begins to strike me again and again across my face and my chest, anywhere he can. I fall to the floor in agony. He drags me by my hair, bellowing that I should know my place and that I am here to serve him in any way he orders. (Saley 47)²¹³

At this point, Betty Friedan's (1963)²¹⁴ thought that she presents in her book, *The Feminine Mystique* can be quoted. In her book, Friedan (1963)²¹⁵ talks about women's pre-determined responsibilities imposed on them by the patriarchal society. She claims that women endure a pervasive delusion and false values system. They are encouraged to discover personal satisfaction, even identity, vicariously through the house members to whom they are anticipated merrily to sacrifice their lives. This idea reflects the situation of Amina. As a woman, Amina is bound to fulfill all the demands of the man under whom she works. Her duty is not just limited to the household works; she is also bound to serve her master in every way to keep him satisfied with her works. The patriarchal society determines this duty as the primary duty of a woman bound to fulfill every demand of the man, her ultimate master.

Again, Amina was sexually assaulted by her master and tortured by her mistress without having any fault. Although her master tried to rape her, Amina was accused of having a physical

²¹³ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:47.

²¹⁴ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

²¹⁵ Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. U.S, W.W. Norton & Company, 1963.

relationship with her master. This wrong accusation was imposed on her because her mistress believed that Amina wanted to be pregnant to get freedom. Therefore, she wanted to be involved in a physical relationship with her master. From this belief, Amina's mistress brutally tortured her, which was not explainable in words. Amina depicts the tortures that she experiences in the following lines:

The old lady looks at me and demands to know what happened. Before I can open my mouth to say something, her husband blurts out that I tried to force myself on him and he fought back. [...] She rips my dress off and begins to beat me with a leather whip. With each strike of the whip, a fresh cut is slashed across my flesh and blood gushes out. The pain is unbearable. Again, and again, she beats me until I lay there, drenched in my own blood. She leaves me there naked for all to see. (Saley 48)²¹⁶

Besides, the mistress of Amina not only tortured her but also sold Amina to two Thai men who placed Amina in a brothel. In the brothel, Amina was kept like an animal injected with various drugs to keep in illusion. Here, she was chained like an animal; numerous men used her body every way they demanded. In a word, Amina lived in hell in reality, wherein she was tortured in every moment without having any fault. Amina shares her pathetic condition in the following lines:

When I wake up, I am chained to a bed naked. I freak out and begin to scream. I feel ashamed with my naked body on display for anyone who enters the room to see. Eventually, a man comes in and injects me, and once again, calm descends. [...] After what seems like a week, a lady comes into the room, smiles, and says that I am perfect

²¹⁶ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:48

now. [...] She explains that she owns a brothel, and now she owns me as well. That night, chained to the bed, a man after man walks into the room, climbs on top of my limp body, and has their way with me. I have been sold into sex slavery. (Saley 51)²¹⁷

The above paragraph portrays the miserable condition of Amina, who was viewed as less human but an animal. At this point, the similarity between Amina and the Ayah (Shanta) is the protagonist of Bapsi Sidhwa's (1889)²¹⁸ novel *Ice-Candy-Man* is found. Like Amina, Ayah was also placed to prostitution by the man who demanded her to love him. The man changed Ayah's name from Shanta to Mumtaz²¹⁹ intended to change her religion. Although the ice-candy man demanded that he married Ayah, he kept Ayah in prostitution. He did all these to take revenge on Ayah, who belonged to the adversary ethnic-religious community and refused to accept the Ice-candy man's proposal. Besides, when the communal conflict started in Lahore, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs started to kill one another to show their religious supremacy over one another. At that moment, they chose the adversary community's women as the perfect medium for taking revenge and fulfilling their targets. Ayah became a victim because of her religious identity and refusing the Ice-candy-man's proposal during the communal conflict, which changed her entire life in a moment. In the novel *Ice-Candy Man*, it was found that Ice-candy man placed Ayah at Hira Mandi²²⁰ as a whore. In this way, the Ice-candy man disregarded Ayah's body and utilized

²¹⁷ Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:51

²¹⁸ Sidhwa, Bapsi. *Ice-Candy-Man*. Haryana, Penguin Random House India, 1989.

²¹⁹ Ayah's changed name Mumtaz is acquired from the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan's most adored wife Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan constructs a white marble sepulcher as her last resting place after her demise. This sepulcher is the most mainstream architectural miracle of India named the Taj Mahal situated in the city of Agra. The Taj Mahal is all around viewed as an image of never-ending love. Thus, Ice-candy man further enhances the knavery of his alleged love by renaming Ayah as Mumtaz.

²²⁰ Hira Mandi means 'Diamond Market' in terms of Hindu/Urdu. This is the seedy area of the town of Lahore. The word diamond is doublespeak used to allude to the whores.

it as a mode for earning money. Ayah was penalized as being objectified and abused on account of her sexual vulture after her abduction.

Additionally, after the foundation of two separate nations, India and Pakistan, when the two government-organized rescue missions to rescue the abducted women, Ice-candy man immediately wedded Ayah, renamed her as Mumtaz²²¹ from Shanta. Her name, along with her identity, had been changed within a short time. As a result of the consistent infringement, at first, by Ayah's abduction and rape followed by her being a prostitute vigorously and got married to her abductor-rapist alongside her changed religious identity as being Muslim, Ayah got traumatized both physically and mentally. Like Ayah, Amina became a victim due to communal conflict and encountered extreme violence in different phases of her life. Although Amina, like Ayah, does not perform such an act for which she is penalized, still men of one ethnic-religious community choose her as a medium to demonstrate their superiority and anger over the adversary community where Amina belongs.

At last, it can be said that the earlier discussion proves that like Amina and her sister Ayesha, other Rohingya women as the victims of communal conflict experience similar occurrences in different phases of their lives that Ayah from *Ice-Candy Man* and Biranganas of the liberation war of Bangladesh experience. In the horrendous hour of communal conflict, Amina loses her parents, sister. She also loses her beloved, whom the Burmese soldiers kill. Amina narrates:

²²¹ Ayah's changed name Mumtaz is acquired from the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan's most adored wife Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan constructs a white marble sepulcher as her last resting place after her demise. This sepulcher is the most mainstream architectural miracle of India named the Taj Mahal situated in the city of Agra. The Taj Mahal is all around viewed as an image of never-ending love. Thus, Ice-candy man further enhances the knavery of his alleged love by renaming Ayah as Mumtaz.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, my crush, Noor, runs towards the guard and begins to take swings at the soldier and immediately, relief washes over me. Noor falls to the floor with the blood gushing out of his chest and collecting in a pool on the ground. The dust surroundings make the sunset ominous. Today, my Noor lost his life. (Saley 27-28)²²²

Again, Ayesha loses her life because of extreme physical tortures, although she does not commit any crime. In addition, Amina is not just raped by the Burmese soldiers, also sold to multiple hands wherein she is brutally tortured, humiliated, and sexually assaulted. Hence, it can be claimed that a conflict that changes Amina's life in a moment and puts her into such a state wherein she lives without any feeling, emotion, just like a lifeless doll. Besides, the communal conflict breaks her dream of living a happy life with her family, marrying her lover, and becoming a professional teacher. Again, Amina's miserable condition in the post-conflict context reflects the idea that in the patriarchal societies of the Indian Subcontinent, how valueless a woman's life is. Therefore, it can be said that in a communal conflict, women become only sufferers, one of the prime victims; however, they are not privileged that the men of patriarchal society think of them.

²²² Saley, Mumtaz Moosa. *Rohingya: The Sold Dream*. South Africa, TOSH Publishing, 2017, Pg:27-28

Chapter 7

Conclusion

The earlier discussion demonstrates that during conflict and in the post-conflict context, women are viewed as objects only who can be used to conquer any conflict. Their miserable condition is not just followed by physical violence; sometimes, they are ostracized from their communities and are refused to accept by their families. Additionally, as the result of the rejection from their families, communities, they choose the path of committing suicide, live with the men of adversary communities who abuse them. Sometimes, these women marry their perpetrators. Moreover, frequently their perpetrators sell them to the brothel, wherein those women work as sex slaves. Their identities suddenly get changed. Their transformations from their previous identities to new social identities place their lives in a question: Where do they have a place? The traditional male-centric society makes the subject of oppression towards women a convention to conquer any war. It considers the woman's body as a nation, which is why every community generally attempts to conquer it through their power. Arora and Jha (2016)²²³ point out that women as others whose lives do not make a difference, whose voices are hushed, whose identities are oppressed, and who stay at the fringe of intensity battle and ability identification and keep on being underestimated and uprooted at the expense of self. Once again, my thesis discovers that the adversary community's men oppress women as the victims, and men of their (women's) own community sometimes take advantage of the conflict to fulfill their wishes in terms of abusing the women.

²²³ Arora, Rachna, and Smita Jha. "Women's Body as the site of Encroachment: A Critical Study of Amrita Pritam's Novel *Pinjar*." *Social Science Review*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2016, pp.34-38.

Moreover, it can be claimed that a conflict changes the women's lives in a moment. It does not matter whether the victim is a child, girl, a married woman, or a mother. Women, as the subordinate, cannot escape the horror of the conflict. In addition, although the men in patriarchal society claim that women are privileged in every phase of their lives, in the context of the Indian subcontinent, women are used as mediums to show one ethnic-religious community's superiority and power over the adversary community during any communal conflict. Thus, these women become one of the prime victims during conflict and, in the post-conflict context, are not privileged that the men of patriarchal society think of them.

Once again, my thesis mainly highlights women's victimization during conflict and in the post-conflict context in the context of the Indian subcontinent. In the context of the Indian subcontinent, the idea of nation is highly associated with mother/woman; the honor of the nations or communities is mainly related to their women. Women's roles as mothers of the nation and carriers of culture symbolize the honor of the ethnic group in such communities. When a woman's honor is tarnished through sexual violence, the ethnic group is also dishonored. To save themselves from being more dishonored by their sexually violated women, the men in patriarchal society prefer to leave those women whom the adversary ethnic-religious community's men have abused. Despite not having any fault, those victimized women suffer the rest of their lives and live as a weed that can be uprooted at any moment. In a word, in this situation, those women are considered objects or commodities.

Again, after considering the analysis chapters of my thesis, it can be said that the mentioned three communal conflicts that take place in several countries of the Indian Subcontinent exist in three different periods (in 1947, 1971, and 2017 respectively) wherein women become one of the prime victims. Similar types of violence towards them occur. These

three communal conflicts can be viewed as a continuation of women's oppression and victimization. Although the issue of women's oppression and victimization in communal conflicts in the context of the Indian Subcontinent has been reviewed repeatedly, no measure has been taken against the issue. Instead, every ethnic-religious community uses women as a medium to show its superiority and power over the other. Since in the context of the Indian Subcontinent, women have a significant association with the nation as mothers of the nation and carriers of culture who symbolize the honor of the ethnic group, one ethnic-religious community uses women to weaken and dishonor the adversary community.

Furthermore, after reviewing three selected primary texts, it can be claimed that the female protagonists (Ayah, Seven Biranganas, and Amina) along with other mentioned victimized women of three primary texts experience similar occurrences in different phrases of their lives during conflicts and post-conflict context. Once again, after evaluating different secondary sources discussed in the literature review chapter, it can be declared that like the female protagonists and other mentioned victimized women of three primary texts, many other women experience similar fates as victims of communal conflicts. In addition, it can be affirmed that similar to Ayah, Amina, Ayesha, and seven Biranganas, some women are raped, sexually assaulted. Few are murdered like Ayesha, and many women are forcefully impregnated, same as the Biranganas of the liberation war of Bangladesh during the conflicts. In addition, same as Ayah, Amina, some women are sold to prostitution.

Moreover, like Biranganas, many victimized women are ostracized from the community, rejected from family to accept in the post-conflict context. Thus, in my thesis, I have demonstrated the similarity of the occurrences in the protagonists and other mentioned characters' lives. In addition, here, I have highlighted the notion of the continuation of

oppression towards women and women's victimization in communal conflicts by critically analyzing three different communal conflicts that take place in three different periods. All these subjects have helped establish my claims that in the context of the Indian subcontinent, women become one of the prime victims in communal conflicts. In addition, women become victims during the conflicts, and their victimization continues in the post-conflict context. I did not find any work conducted on these subjects. These notions prove that my thesis has given a fresh look at the issue of women's victimization during conflicts and in the post-conflict context in the context of the Indian subcontinent.

Besides, after reviewing several life stories of several victimized women that are discussed in the literature review chapter and the primary texts, it gets clear how miserably those victimized women suffer and how much torture they experience at both physical and mental level during conflict and in the post-conflict context in the context of Indian Subcontinent. However, numerous women experience similar occurrences at that time; there are many stories that are even more dreadful than the mentioned stories. Those stories are not written on paper; they are only written in the bodies and minds of the victims. The analysis of the thesis will be finished by referencing a notable quotation from the author, Amrita Pritam.

“There are numerous stories, which are not on paper. They are written in the bodies and minds of women” (Amrita Pritam).

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