

**Nationalism, Trauma and Memory of Partition, the Issues of Identity and Belonging
in Selected Partition Fictions**

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

The thesis titled “Nationalism, Trauma and Memory of Partition, the Issues of Identity and Belonging in Selected Partition Fictions” submitted by Tasmi Fariha (20163016) of Spring, 2022 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in English on September 28, 2022.

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Ethics Statement

Abstract

This research aims to explore how Partition of India in 1947 and the subsequent sectarianism and forms of fragmentation are represented in selected literary texts. To be more specific, this paper intends to investigate how the division of India on the ground of religion affected the lives of ordinary people in the light of three Partition fictions- “Toba Tek Singh” by Sadat Hasan Manto,” *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh and *Midnight’s Children* by Salman Rushdie. The study is not dismissive of the national and historical accounts of Partition and the events that followed this grand political event. However, it argues that focusing only on the facts and information about these political events is not enough to make sense of the trauma that partition and communal violence gave birth to. Taking into account the fact that partition should be understood from multiple perspectives, this paper, with the help of the three aforementioned primary texts, attempts to investigate what Partition and sectarian violence mean to the ordinary people who lived through it and how it profoundly affected their sense of self and belonging.

Keywords: Nationalism, Partition, multifaceted identities, belonging, secularism, new-historicism.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate the thesis to my parents and teachers.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

There is no denying that Partition of India in 1947 has enduring and profound impacts on the political and social fabrics of both newly-created nations. Official and historical accounts of Partition only provide an objective version of the story. However, this grand political event, which turned the lives of millions of people upside-down, requires to be understood from multiple perspectives. Official reports, documents and newspapers represent facts and information about Partition while the affective aspects of this event go unnoticed. To put it another way, the bewilderment and suffering that ordinary people had to experience because of the violence and dislocation, ruptured sense of self and belonging that followed Partition barely get any room in grand narratives of nation formation. Taking this very issues into account, many authors have written and still write about Partition, with a view to representing different stories about the incident. This study also attempts to make sense of Indian partition as well as subsequent communal violence and fragmentation it gave birth to from the perspectives of people who lived through the event. While doing so, it discovers a gap between the existing historical accounts of partition and the memories thereof.

Before delving deep into the discussion, a brief history of 1947 Partition can help understand the event better. India was under the rule of British Empire nearly for two centuries. However, towards the end of the Second World War, Britain's control over the world weakened. This, coupled with the growing political unrest in India, required a transfer of power and a national Government in India. The process was not simple as there was a demand on part of Muslim League for Muslim self-government. The Muslims and Hindus were regarded as different nations which required separate states. As Gyanendra Pandey (2004) puts it, "the goal of Pakistan (the 'Pure Land') was seen as the 'Muslim' answer to 'Hindu oppression' and 'Hindu capitalism'" (P.27). While the Muslim league demanded for a

new nation Pakistan and the autonomy of Muslim majority areas, the leader of this political party Muhammad Ali Jinnah did not envisage any demographic change as well as dislocation or interchange of people. However, what happened in real was exactly the opposite and unprecedented violence, murder, rape and dislocation took place.

A great deal of literary works deal with the aforementioned issues. Works that narrativize what happened in Punjab during and after Partition highlights the communal riots and slaughtering. *Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Sings and *Ice-Candy Man* by Bapsi Sidhwa are two such examples. On the contrary, the works that deal with Partition in Bengal do not usually provide graphic description of the violence, rather problematize the issues of identity and belonging that arise as a result of migration and dislocation. “Punjab has drawn more research interest due to its acute experience of violence and trauma – characteristics that have become emblematic of the Partition” (Mahbub and Saba, 2018, p.110). This study attempts to revisit Partition and subsequent Partition-like communal violence in the light of “Toba Tek Singh” by Saadat Hasan Manto (1955), *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh (1988) and lastly *Midnight’s Children* by Salman Rushdie (1981). It highlights the notion of nationalism, the trauma and memory of partition and problematizes the issue of identity and belonging amidst the turmoil that Partition brought about. The short story “Toba Tek Singh” uses satire to mock the absurdity of Partition. Manto in his story highlights the bewilderment that Partition brought forth. His story accentuates the fact that common people have zero agency when it comes to decision-making about the state affairs. They had barely anything to do except accepting the option to migrate to India or Pakistan based on their religion. His story shows only the mentally unstable people could resist the decision and receive no punishment for that, although the resistance went in vein. As for *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh highlights the elusive nature of the notion nationalism, questions the arbitrariness of the borders that separate nations, and give birth to the idea of “us” and “them” and the violence

that follows. Moreover, Ghosh in his novel accentuates the discrepancy between public memory and private memory of Partition. Lastly, in *Midnight's Children*, Salman Rushdie shows that human identities are multifaceted. Hence, reducing people's identity only to religion, turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to the other markers of identity such as culture and traditional practices and language, is highly likely lead to a ruptured sense of self which is irrevocable. Last but not the least, Rushdie also questions the concept of India as a secular nation due to the everlasting impact of religion on people's lives.

1.1 Research Methodology and Research Questions

This study is carried out using qualitative research methodology. Two novels and a short story are used as primary texts. These are *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh, *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie and "Toba Tek Singh" by Saadat Hasan Manto. All these are historical fictions that deal with the issues of Indian Partition in 1947 and as well as the events that preceded and followed the Partition. Research articles, internet articles that are relevant to the topic are used as secondary sources. This paper adopts a New Historicist approach since it aims to explore how partition is represented in the literary fictions under discussion. This is where New Historicism goes hand in hand with the study that I have undertaken. To explicate, according to Lois Tyson, the author of *Critical Theory Today*, New Historicism is concerned with how historical events are represented or interpreted in both literary and non-literary discourses. Historical events are not objective "facts to be documented but "texts" to be "read." (Tyson, 2006, 294) and these events can be approached from different perspectives using different theories and events. The literary texts under discussion in this study are set against the backdrop of a historical event that had profound impact on South Asian people. Drawing on the New Historicism theory, the texts will be analyzed not with a view to finding out facts about Partition. Rather, the study will attempt to show what this event means to ordinary people

as well as their experience with it. In order to do this, my study will focus on the questions as follows:

Research Questions:

- I. How are nationalism and partition approached in the literary texts in question?
- II. How are the issues of trauma and memory of partition represented in these texts? Do they tell a different story about partition than the non-literary discourse of history does?
- III. How did the authors of these texts problematize the concept of identity and belonging?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This section designed thematically and provides a review of the existing literature that deals with nationalism, Indian Partition of 1947, trauma, memory and identity.

2.1 Different types of nationalisms in different contexts:

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Community* (2006) is considered as one of the texts that gives significant insights into the concept of nationalism. In this critical work, Anderson addresses the fact that even though nationalism has become an inseparable part of human existence and can be likened to other forms of identities like gender, race or ethnicity, the concept of nationalism still remains elusive and is yet to be defined. However, his aim is not to provide definitions of nation, nationality and nationalism in this book. Rather, taking into account the profound impact that the concept of nationalism has on human lives in modern world, Anderson in *Imagined Community* comes up with an interpretation of the problems that the discourse of nationalism gives birth to. He also attempts to elucidate how this concept translated into history and how the meanings of nation changed over the course of time. Moreover, he discusses when and how nationalism came into existence in Europe, America and the colonized world as well as how the concept of nation and nationalism were fundamentally different in these places.

In Anderson's words, "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact are imagined (Anderson, 2006:6) and where people assume a "deep, horizontal comradeship," (ibid: 07) with other individuals of the territory can be considered as nations. Differently put, Anderson thinks of nation as an imagined community. This community is limited since it has to have a fixed territory. At the same time it is sovereign because the nation can assert its power in every corner of that territory. This communities are imagined since it is not possible for the members of a nation to know most of their

fellow members. Yet, they will connect with one another through various cultural artefacts. For example, they speak the language, sing the same national anthem and the like. Four things are essential in the formation of a nation- Map, citizens, solidarity and sovereignty, which are always subject to change.

Anderson (2006) also sheds light on people's tendency to sacrifice themselves and kill others when it comes to creating their nation or helping it sustain without the invention of people who belong to other nations. He contends that deaths play a significant role in the history and formation of a nation. While talking about nationalism, political leaders and nationalists almost never forget to mention the people who fought for the nation and embraced death. It is inculcated in ordinary people's psyche that having strong emotional attachment towards one's own nation is something inherent. They are manipulated to think it is their moral obligation to die for the nation if necessary.

According to Anderson, nationalism in Europe has its roots in the 18th century. It came into existence immediately after the renaissance period in Europe and then over the course of time it became a universally recognized political institution in the 19th century. It took the very place that religion used to have at that time in Europe. Moreover, contesting and disregarding the divine rights of the contemporary dynasties also played a crucial role in the case of European nationalism. This contestation came from the ordinary people. The fall of Latin as a divine language and its replacement by vernaculars was of help in this regard. To put it differently, the emergence of European nationalism, to a significant extent, can be attributed to what Anderson referred to as print capitalism. To explicate, publication and circulation of newspapers and other literary works such as novels written in vernaculars or the language of common people instead of Latin, which was the language of a selected few elites in the society, helped create another community of common people who shared the same aspirations. However, even though this series of

events took the power from the dynasties to control and exploit the people, in effect, the same was now done by the political elites or leaders. Interestingly, although the idea of nationalism was developed by Europeans, nationalist movements started way before in America than those did in Europe. To illustrate this claim, Anderson gives reference to the insurrection of black slaves led by Toussaint L'Ouverture in the island of Haiti and the subsequent formation of the second sovereign nation in the Americas in 1791.

Anderson again acknowledges the role of print-capitalism that gave birth to the national consciousness in the creole communities in Americas. Print spread in New Spain or Latin America way before it did in Europe, but for almost two centuries it was controlled by the dynasties or the church. This print-capitalism developed communities of customers over the course of time. However, with reference to J.G Herder, a German philosopher, Anderson emphasizes on the role of language when it comes to tracing the roots of European nationalism. To be more specific, it is difficult to connect with other people if there is no common language to interact. The 19th century philosophers, grammarians and lexicographers developed language, which in turn, shaped European nationalism. As for nationalism in South Asia, Southeast Asia and other places colonized by Europe, Anderson claims that nationalism in those parts of the world borrowed European model of nationalism. To explicate, in the colonized worlds, bilingual intelligentsias play an important role in importing the European models of nationalism. As they used to speak the language of the colonizers and their mother tongue simultaneously, it was easier for them to transfer European ideas of nationalism to the native people (Anderson, 2006).

However, since the model of nationalism is said to be borrowed from Europe, nationalism in essence is supposed to be similar in nature in Europe and its colonies such as Asia and Africa. For a long time nationalism had been considered as one of the most “magnificent gifts” of Europe to the rest of the world (Chatterjee 1993, 4). Partha

Chatterjee in his essay “Whose Imagined Community” questions this claim. He refutes Anderson’s idea that “Nations were not the determinate products of given sociological conditions such as language or race or religion; they had been, in Europe and everywhere else in the world, imagined into existence.” (p.4). But the reality in South Asia begs to differ. Nationalism in the subcontinent is what Chatterjee considers to be anti-colonial. The concept of nationalism may be taken from Europe, but in practice, according to Chatterjee, it is not a caricature of the same. To elucidate his point, Chatterjee divides its institutions and practices into two domains- material (outside) and spiritual (inner) domains. (p. 6). The material or outer domain consists of material, economic affairs as well as technological aspects where the West might have the upper hand. However, it is the inner circle which “bares the essential mark of our identity” (ibid) is where the Western colonizers have barely any intervention. This spiritual or inner domain is sovereign. This is where the imagination of the South Asian nation takes place and gives birth to the distinctive south Asian identity as well as various practices which are not an imitation of the West. In this spiritual territory there is a room left for the colonized individuals to imagine and form their own community and these finds expression in various social issues and cultural artefacts. To put it in Chatterjee’s (1993) terms, the state was colonized, but the nation was not.

2.2 Partition remembered and represented by ordinary people:

In the book *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*, Urvashi Butalia offers insights into looking at the 1947 Partition from multiple perspectives. She intended to explore the “multilayered histories” (Butalia, 1998, 94) of Partition. Facts are undoubtedly important, but how people remember and represent those facts is of equal importance- this encapsulates the main idea of the book. Butalia contends that conventional historical accounts, that only discuss the political events that culminated into

the Partition of India, are not enough to understand the reality of the event. Rather, the “human dimensions” of the event should be taken into account as well (p.7). Differently put, the individual and collective memories of how people lived through the partition, their trauma and agony, complicity and suffering, displacement and dislocation, rape and abduction etc. issues are equally important to have a better understanding of Partition that took place on the line of religious differences, and the events that preceded and followed it.

To look at the 1947 Partition from the perspectives of ordinary people, Butalia took testimonies of them over a long period of time, particularly the survivors of Rawalpindi massacre that took place in March 1947. Butalia narrativizes those testimonies in her book. Unfortunately the stories and voices of the people who had to live through the partition barely have any room in the written history of Partition. These stories are remembered, told and retold only at the family and community level of the survivors. However, acknowledging the fact that working with memories is not unproblematic as memories are never “pure and unmediated” (p.10), Butalia makes it clear that she does not intend to place the oral history against the existing historical documents. Rather, she discusses in depth as to why these stories of the survivors should also be incorporated in the history of Partition.

Given the political upheavals, riots and massacres that took place frequently in post-partition era, Butalia believes that Partition is not merely a single political event that belongs to a remote past. In fact, the division that partition gave birth to on the ground of religion is ever-present in peoples’ lives. Communal hatred and ‘us’ and ‘them’ binary are engrained even in second and third generations of the survivors. For example, in 1984 after Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards, ordinary Sikh people had to encounter violence and death only because they belong to the Sikh community. Again in

1989, hundreds of Muslims were killed by militant Hindus, which is solely because of the prejudice people have towards any religion other than their own. These events, according to many of the survivors Butalia interviewed, were like partition again. Butalia did not provide a concrete answer regarding what led to the persisting communal hatred and violence among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. However, as per one of her interviewees Bir Bahadur Singh, the seed of the communal divide were there since pre-partition times. He recounts how Hindus and Sikhs would mistreat their Muslim neighbors in subtle ways on a day-to-day basis. In his words, "If we had been willing to drink from the same cups, we would have remained united" (p.230). Ironically, even though Bir Bahadur and other Sikhs identified with Hindus and were living in India, after the incident in 1984, Sikhs felt a sense of alienation as they were being treated as terrorists in their own country.

Butalia extensively talks about the bewilderment that ordinary people encountered due to the decision of dividing India. On one hand, officials who were associated with the decision making could take a sigh of relief once the decision of Partition was made. On the other hand, mass people were clueless about where they would go and what would happen to their jobs, pensions, bank loans and jobs and lands. Although committees were formed to deal with various aspects of partition, none of them took into account the turmoil that common people had to go through. People did their best to survive and start their lives afresh in a new homeland. However, in the process of doing so, there developed a rift in their sense of identity and belonging. To illustrate, when Butalia asked the participants where they are from, many of them replied if she was asking about where they are now or where they used to live earlier.

Butalia in her book shared stories of people which prove that it was not only religion that made people migrate. Rather, there are other factors that came into play. The story of

Abdus Shudul, who had been serving at a lower position at the Indian army during the time of Partition, can serve as an example in this regard. Given the option to choose India or Pakistan, Abdus Shudul decided to stay in India even after being a Muslim since there he can stay with his family. The concept of nation or country did not hold much significance in his case.

The gendered aspect of partition violence is also evident in *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Using the testimony of Bir Bahadur Singh, Butalia describes how the honor of religious communities was reduced to the female body time and again. Bahadur shares his story of how his father murdered his sister Maan Kaur and other women of the family to save them from being abducted and raped by Muslims. Surprisingly, far from acknowledging that by brutally killing the women, they are turning into criminals themselves, Bahadur considers the Sikhs as victims and these women as martyrs who sacrificed themselves to save the Sikh identity from disgrace. In post-partition times, Shikh survivors, created their own version of the partition by selectively remembering and valorizing the sacrifice of women and turning a blind eye to the rape and abduction that were inevitable at that time.

In her book, Butalia does not argue as to which political party, either Muslim League or Congress or even the British, served as a catalyst for the divide. She wanted to explore the long-term consequences and ramifications of partition on ordinary people. She contends that the existing historical narratives provide rather an objective view of the Partition. However, by revisiting partition Butalia comes to the conclusion that Partition yielded different experiences for different people. To put it another way, loss, violence, division etc. occurred at a great degree, yet these are not the only aspects that characterize the history of Partition. Butalia incorporates in her book the instances of how people

extended their help and friendship to each other regardless of their religious differences and how partition also opened up new opportunities for some people.

2.3 The Interplay among trauma, memory and identity

The concept of cultural trauma goes hand in hand with the experience people had with Indian Partition as well the horrendous Partition-like events that followed it. Alexander et al. (2004) in their book *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, illustrate the idea of cultural trauma and the undeniable impacts it has on people's memory and identity.

At the outset of the first chapter titled "Toward a Theory of Collective Trauma" Alexander contends that, when the members of a particular group or community go through a horrific event that forever remains in their memory, irrecoverably destroys their group consciousness and leaves them in a topsy-turvy situation when it comes to their future identity and sense of self, that very event and people's reaction to it can be regarded as cultural trauma. Differently put, people get traumatized when there is an unpleasantly abrupt change in their environment. With reference to Arthur Neal, the author of the book *National Trauma and Collective Memory*, Alexander sheds light on how national traumas come into being. According to Neal, it is an event that has the power to traumatize, is disruptive in nature and brings about radical changes within a very short period of time. Neal also claims that the sudden disruption yields opportunities for change and innovation. For example, as Neal illustrates, enduring changes were made in America after the Civil War, The Great Depression and the World War II. However, Alexander in this chapter also incorporated Kai Erikson's differentiation between individual trauma and collective trauma:

By individual trauma I mean a blow to the psyche that breaks through one's defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively. By

collective trauma, on the other hand, I mean a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality. The collective trauma works its way slowly and even insidiously into the awareness of those who suffer from it, so it does not have the quality of suddenness normally associated with “trauma.” But it is a form of shock all the same, a gradual realization that the community no longer exists as an effective source of support and that an important part of the self has disappeared . “We” no longer exist as a connected pair or as linked cells in a larger communal body. (Erikson 1976, 153–54, qtd. in Alexander et al. 2004, 4)

However, Alexander makes it clear that each and every disruptive event within a society that does not give birth to cultural trauma. For example, when educational, economic and governmental institutions fail to ensure the well-being of the civilians, these cannot necessarily be considered as trauma. A crisis has to be cultural to give birth to collective trauma. After a traumatic event that profoundly affects a collectivity, there emerges the need to redefine or reconstruct the collective identity. This requires remembering the collective past because “Identities are continuously constructed and secured not only by facing the present and future but also by reconstructing the collectivity’s earlier life (Ibid, 22).

In the second chapter of *Cultural Trauma and Collective Memory*, titled “Psychological Trauma and Cultural Trauma,” Neil J. Smelser provides a definition of cultural trauma. According to Smelser, “A cultural trauma refers to an invasive and overwhelming event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredients of a culture or the culture as a whole.” (Alexander et al, 2004, 38). He considers the Protestant Reformation as cultural trauma. Moreover, in the colonial

societies Western values overpowering the native ones in the 19th and 20th century also serves as an example of cultural trauma that affects the collectivity in those places.

In the third chapter titled “Cultural Trauma Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity,” With reference to Cathy Caruth, Eyerman contends that, national or cultural trauma does not necessarily have to be experienced in person. Such experiences are passed down on people by various mediums such as, newspaper, radio, television etc. However, such mediums provides selective representations of the traumatic events. To be more specific, reinterpreting the past, selective remembering and forgetting is done by people whom sociologist Max Weber refers to as “carrier groups” (ibid, 11). These carrier groups consist of people who have some authority over the mass-media as well as the discursive knowledge to select and discard memories about the traumatic past to fit the agendas of people in powerful positions of the society. Individual memory is barely taken into account in this collective remembering of the past.

Chapter 3: “Toba Tek Singh”

3.1 Trauma of dislocation and a rupture in identity in “Toba Tek Singh”

Like most of the short stories of Sadat Hasan Manto, “Toba Tek Singh” deal with the issue of Indian Partition. This story of Manto is journalistic in nature. That is, the story reports or documents facts that take place in particular places. Despite this, Manto skillfully represents what barely occupy a place in the grand narratives of Partition—understanding the horror of partition from the perspective of the common people who were victims of this event. Manto addresses the trauma of dislocation and migration and the rupture in one’s identity that these issues give birth to.

“Toba Tek Singh” is set in the post-partition period and deals with the issue of relocation and its aftermath, which is certainly not pleasant. Unlike many other partition stories of Manto, “Toba Tek Singh” does not incorporate any graphic description of the violence that accompanied as well as followed the formation of two new nations. It rather parodies the decision to divide India as absurd and points towards the immense impact of this grand event on the psyche of people who had zero agency when it comes to decision making in state affairs. The story takes place in a mental asylum in Lahore. It revolves around the madmen’s reaction on Indian Partition and the subsequent migration that were made inevitable for them. In “Toba Tek Singh,” Manto shows how Partition is not merely about Geopolitical issues. Rather there is more to it. It will not be wrong to say that Manto uses the asylum as a microcosm of India and the reaction of the madmen represents that of the common people bewildered by the decision of dividing India. One fine day the inmates in the asylum are told that India was divided into two separate countries on the line of religion—India and Pakistan. A decision is made that not only the civilians and convicts but the inmates would also be exchanged across the borders of newly formed India and Pakistan based on their religious identities. This decision made by the bureaucratic people creates chaos in the

asylum. The madmen were utterly perplexed and madness was the only response that can be expected from them. As Alter (1994) succinctly puts it, “As the characters in Manto's stories confront the ruthless inhumanity of Hindu-Muslim violence murder, rape and mutilation-their only conceivable response is madness (p. 91). Although “Toba Tek Singh” does not represent this violent aspects of Partition, as the story unfolds and various characters are seen to respond differently to the decision of Partition and subsequent exchange, it becomes clear that the madness in the asylum is emblematic of the response and experience of the people whose lives were turned upside down on almost every level due to partition and for whom embracing the new citizenship, home and identity, abruptly leaving behind the old ones is traumatic and far from simple and natural.

Through the story “Toba Tek Singh,” Manto attempts to capture the absurdity of the decision of Partition. The mental asylum in Lahore becomes a symbolic site of Partition. The inmates there cannot understand the necessity of dividing India into two nations. Moreover, since they have little knowledge about what is going on in the outside world, they make various speculations as to how these newly formed nations will be. For example, one of the lunatics asks his friend what Pakistan is and the friend replies Pakistan is a place in India where razors are manufactured. Another inmate assumes that People in India are devilish (Naqvi, 2007). Although such speculations may seem bizarre, these points towards the fact that since civilians have no access to the decision making concerning the birth of two different nations, it was so normal for the them to be unable to make sense of the entire idea of Partition and assume different things about the event.

The issue of belonging, location and identity are also problematized in the story. The madmen could not figure out whether “they were in Pakistan or India, and if they were in Pakistan, then how was it possible that only a short while ago they had been in India when they had not moved from the asylum at all?” (Naqvi, 2007, p.15). Such bewilderment

regarding location is further accentuated by what the protagonist Bishan Singh does. The India-Pakistan issue leaves him utterly disoriented and he climbs a tree saying that he will not live in India, nor will he live in Pakistan. Instead of dealing with the confusion about location, he prefers to live on the tree. Not only Bishan Singh, but other inmates are also reluctant to leave the place they are already living in and the attempt to move them across the newly formed borders is followed by a chaos. Different inmates have different reasons for this reluctance and confusion about belonging to a particular place. Two Anglo-Indian inmates in the European ward concerned about what will happen to them as British has left India can be an example of this. They wondered whether the European ward will cease to exist in the asylum now that India has reclaimed its freedom from the European rule. Not only that, they were worried about the food that they could be given. The possibility of being given, in their words, “bloody Indian Chapati” (ibid, p.16) instead of English bread, troubles them since they are not accustomed to having Indian food. This particular instance along with the one where a Sikh lunatic shows his unwillingness to go to India as he does not know Indian language can be considered a metonymic representation of how the importance of other markers of culture and identity such as language, food and the like were overshadowed by religion when it comes to nation-formation during Partition. The disorientation such practice gives birth to in civilian’s lives can be regarded as cultural trauma. Since, to draw on Smelser, “A cultural trauma refers to an invasive and overwhelming event that is believed to undermine or overwhelm one or several essential ingredients of a culture or the culture as a whole.” (Alexander et al, 2004, 38). Shifting identities are also an aftermath of Partition. It became inevitable for people to redefine their identity to their lives anew in a new place. Abruptly leaving behind their old attachments and identities creates a rupture in their sense of self, which is also one of the characteristics of cultural trauma. As mentioned earlier in the literature review, “cultural trauma refers to a dramatic loss of identity and meaning, a tear in

the social fabric, affecting a group of people that has achieved some degree of cohesion.” (Alexander et al, 2004, 61). The urgency to appropriate or recreate identities is shown in a comical way in “Toba Tek Singh.” Being aware of Partition and the exchange of the inmates from the asylum, a Muslim lunatic from Chiniot named Muhammed Ali claims all of a sudden that he is Muhammed Ali Zinnah, the leader of Pakistan. This particular man used to bathe fifteen times a day but after assuming a new identity he gives up this habit altogether. Another Sikh lunatic follows his example and claims to be Master Tara Singh, the Sikh leader during the partition as well as national independence.

In a subtle yet apparent manner, the contrast between national memory and private memory is also depicted in “Toba Tek Singh.” Throughout the course of the story it is noticed that the protagonist Bishan Singh, who does not even remember his name or identity, keeps asking about a village Toba Tek Singh. He claims to belong to this village and wanted to know if it is in India or Pakistan. Unfortunately, no one in the asylum gives him a satisfactory answer since the village, if it exists in real, could be renamed or even uprooted. Toba Tek Singh now exists in the memory of Bishan Singh. His concern about Toba Tek Singh can be translated as what Parui (2015) considers as an “existential effort to retain a sense of identity that is tied to a location that is home, one that transforms to an emotional entanglement of space and time in the remembering mind (P.63). As already stated in this study, such private memories hardly have any room in the grand narratives of nation-formation. To explicate, in the process of constructing a nation the erasure of individual memory, trauma that arises from the loss of home, identity or sense of self etc. are inevitable. Yet, national narratives barely include traces of them. These grand narratives portray nations as sovereign territories or communities formed with people who share similar sentiments about a nation or a sense of “deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson, 2006, p.7). But in “Toba Tek Singh, it is apparent that, the inmates does not care less about religious differences

in India, nor do they seem to embrace the idea of creating nations based on religious identities.

To encapsulate, it can be said that, in the short story “Toba Tek Singh,” in a seemingly totalitarian regime, where the ordinary people do not have any accessibility in making decision for the nation, human agency can only be asserted through madness, as mad people are not expected to differentiate between rational and irrational. Otherwise, it is decided by the higher authority that the only rational response to Partition migration or dislocation is to accept it and reshape lives and identities accordingly. Ironically, such rationality is in stark contrast with the turmoil that ordinary people go through in the times of national crises, which Manto proves in “Toba Tek Singh” using satire.

Chapter 4 *The Shadow Lines*

On the face of it, *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh does not seem to deal with the Indian Partition in 1947 and its aftermath. This critically acclaimed novel by Ghosh written in a non-linear and stream of consciousness manner can ostensibly be seen as a recollection of events the unnamed narrator experienced in Calcutta, Dhaka and London and which left indelible marks on his psyche. Nevertheless, if one delves deep into the narrative and takes a deeper look, the novel is far more than a mere remembering of the past incidents. In *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh brings up the issue of nationalism, identity and belonging in a subtle but apparent way. Differently put, he points towards the arbitrariness and meaninglessness of the lines drawn to separate nations, communities and individuals and the tumult that these lines give birth to- be it on a collective or individual level. The novel does not illustrate the 1947 Partition itself, rather it talks about different kinds of sectarian violence and fragmentations that continued to take place even after many years of Partition. According to Ghosh himself, the violence and riots in 1984, following Indira Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards invoked his memories of his childhood when he encountered similar kinds of situations and gave him the impetus to come up with this novel. His motive was not to provide a fictive representation of the events that took place, rather the long-lasting impacts thereof on the lives of people who had to encounter them. Ghosh in *The Shadow Lines* also sheds light on the disparities between the national narratives regarding the birth of the nation states and the lived experiences and the memories of the people who were the ultimate sufferers of in the process of nation-making. This analysis focuses on how, by juxtaposing facts with fictions, Amitav Ghosh questions and explores the idea of nationalism and the creation of border lines as well as demonstrates the enduring impacts of these events on common people who were forced to migrate, call new places their home and redefine their identities.

4.1 Enigma of nationalism, identity and belonging in *The Shadow Lines*

As for nationalism, *The Shadow Lines* does not provide any definition of the concept. Rather the novel through the characterizations, addresses the fact that nationalism is too elusive a notion and can mean different things to different Individuals. Ghosh throws light on nationalism through the character of Tha'mma to a significant extent. According to her, what the birth of a nation requires the most is bloodshed. She thinks of war as religion when it comes to forming a nation. In her words, "hundreds of years, and years and years of war and bloodshed" is the prerequisite to make a country (Ghosh, 77-78). This view is accentuated when Tha'mma opines that narrator's cousin Ila, who was born and brought up in London, has no right to claim that country as her own. At one point of expressing her contempt for Ila for she does not abide by the culture and tradition of India and wants to fit in London to do what she pleases, Tha'mma says Ila does not belong to London since she made no sacrifice or bloodshed for the country. The reason behind such perspective may have roots in the fact that Tha'mma was born and brought up in British India and watched movements to free India from the colonizers. In fact she herself wanted to contribute to it by joining a particular militant group that intended to fight against the British. As per Tha'mma, freedom cannot be achieved without sacrificing blood. Another example of this is when Tha'mma wants to donate her jewelry to fund the India-Pakistan war in 1965, few months after her nephew Tridib was brutally slaughtered in front of her eyes in Dhaka by a Muslim mob. Tha'mma once seemed to embrace the religious diversity in India as she says, "only blood sacrifices create community because they enable "people [to] forget they were born this or that, Muslim or Hindu, Bengali or Punjabi" (Ghosh, 78). At that time the only "other" or enemy for Tha'mma were the British people who seized the freedom of India. It can be said that Tha'mma's notion of nationalism was anti-colonial in nature. She used to dream of a harmonious relationship among Indian people, irrespective of their religious affiliations,

culture and traditions. Thamma advising the female students to learn to cook dishes from every region of India can serve as an example of her tolerant attitude towards the diverse people in India. However, such attitude of Tha'mma is shaken after Tridib's death and she starts considering Muslims as rivals from whom the Hindus must save themselves. In her words, "we have to kill them before they kill us," she screams, "we have to wipe them out," and when the narrator asks her why, she tells him: "For your sake; for your freedom" (Ghosh, 237). From the aforementioned examples, it will not be wrong to say that Tha'mma's notion of nationalism and the formation of nation-state is similar to that of Anderson. That is, death plays a significant role in ensuring the freedom and sovereignty of a nation or community (Anderson, 2006).

Tha'mmaa's visit to Dhaka creates in her a sense of rupture in her identity. To elucidate, at the airport Tha'mma is given a form to fill up where she is required to mention her birthplace. Tha'mma gets bewildered as to where she truly belongs- Dhaka or Calcutta. Susmita Roye's analysis of Tha'mma's experience quoted in Chanda (2015) succinctly articulates the trauma about identity, belonging that Partition gave birth to, and a rupture in one's psyche for having to choose between political right and emotional attachment:

She is confounded by the enigma of her mismatched place of origin and citizenship, by the absence of any bold line or trench or something marking the border and by the amazing experience of landing at an airport, identical to the one she has left behind in her country. She is hurt to see how her lack of political right over birthplace ignores her emotional claim over it. Her odyssey from her 'invented country' to 'home' is neither a proper nor a happy homecoming." (Chanda, 2015, p.108. quoted in Roye, 2011).

It can be said that, Tha'mma's affective and political aspects of belonging are at war with each other in this regard. To be more specific, an individual can belong to any particular community or group in many different ways. On one hand belonging is natural and has to do with emotional attachment. On the other hand, belonging is politicized, that is, the notion of belonging can be constructed by various political projects or agendas (Yuval-Davis, 2006).

4.2 Arbitrariness of the borders

The elusive or arbitrary nature of the borders drawn to create separate nations is often highlighted in *The Shadow Lines*. This arbitrariness of borders is discussed in this paper in the light of two examples from the novel- first, Tha'mma's reaction after finding out that there are no tangible borders to separate the nations, second, Jethamoshai's perspective on dividing nations by creating borders. To begin with, in order to put an end to the family feud that Tha'mma's father and uncle started by dividing their familial house into two parts, Jethamoshai (uncle), who still lives in that house located in Dhaka, Tha'mma decides to bring him to Calcutta with her. On her journey by plane to Dhaka, Tha'mma was expecting to see some concrete or tangible dividers between East Pakistan and West Bengal as these are now different countries after 1947 Partition. To her utter surprise, she finds none and expresses her thoughts to the narrator's father who accompanied her: "But if there aren't any trenches or anything, how are people to know? I mean, where's the difference then?" Also, "what was it all for then- Partition and all the killing and everything-if there isn't something in between?" (Ghosh, 151). Narrator's father replies that the partition or divide can be seen at the airports and initiated by passports. This particular instance from the novel highlights the arbitrariness of the borders, the creation of which has always given birth to a great deal of violence and fragmentation among people and inculcated in them a strong sense of enmity towards individuals who belong to other nations and have different religions.

As for the second instance that points towards the arbitrariness, it lies in the reason for which Jethamoshai is reluctant to move to Calcutta. According to him, separating nations with borders in order to bring freedom and sovereignty is nothing but futile, since there is no guarantee that more borders will not be brought into existence. In his words:

I know everything, I understand everything. Once you start moving you never stop. That's what I told my sons when they took the trains. I said: I don't believe in India-Shindia. It is all very well, you are going away now, but suppose when you get here they decide to draw another line somewhere? What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have you anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I will die here. (p.215).

What Jethamoshai says regarding the borders makes sense if the division of Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh in 1971 are taken into account. It turned out that religion was not enough to form a single nation and maintain its harmony. Eventually, Pakistan got divided into two nations on the premise of linguistic differences and the economic disparity that East Pakistan had to encounter.

4.3 The discrepancy between private memories and public memories represented in The Shadow Lines:

One of the crucial events in the novel is the narrator's search for the reason behind Tridib's death. Over the course of his seventeen-year long search, the narrator happens to discover the disparity between the public narratives or memories of Partition and its aftermath and the private memories of people who had to bear the brunt of this political incidents. The character Tridib seems to have profound and enduring impact on the narrator. Tridib was his uncle who was a historian and who, through his intriguing stories, instilled in the narrator an interest in histories and geographies. In other words, the narrator's perception

of the world is immensely shaped by that of Tridib. He was very close to Tridib since childhood, hence, could not come to terms with his sudden death. In 1964, when the narrator was barely eight year old, he, along with Tridib, his love interest May, the narrator and his cousin Robi accompanied Tha'mma on the way to bring Jethamoshai with them to Calcutta. On their way back, they encountered a Muslim mob which brutally killed Tridib, Jethamoshai and rickshaw-puller Khalil. Although the narrator witnessed the incident, he could barely remember anything as he was only eight years old then. Even after growing up, he gets no satisfactory answer about Tridib's death from the people around him. After fifteen years of this incident, a debate with his friend over the riots in Dhaka, Khulna and Calcutta makes the narrator look for the newspapers of that time. To his surprise, he discovers that the newspapers did not even incorporate any news about the contemporary riots between Muslims and Hindus. Since the narrator himself encounters a riot in Calcutta when he was in school and he vividly remembers it as an adult, he can easily understand this exclusionary practice of the newspapers. Incidents like the slaughter of Tridib, Jethamoshai, and Khalil and the stories of people whose lives were devastated by the communal violences had no room in the papers. In fact, these were referred to as mere disturbances. Newspapers only came up with reports and stories about how the "Normalcy had been restored" after the riots. Ironically, the scenario presented in the newspapers is in stark contrast to what happened in reality. Getting back to normal was far from easy for people who had lost their families and homes due to the political upheaval in mid-1960. In a subtle yet apparent way, Ghosh's novel highlights the fact that memories that are carefully excluded from the national narratives, remain forever alive in the minds of those who experienced them.

Chapter 5 *Midnight's Children*

Published in 1981, *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie can be regarded as a seminal work which many critics have approached from multiple perspectives. A plethora of work has been conducted addressing the narrative style, intertextuality, allegorical representation of history and postcolonial as well as magic realist elements of the novel. However, this study will focus on Rushdie's representation of nationalism and Indian Partition in India in *Midnight's Children*. To be more specific, it will examine how Rushdie has called into question the formation of Indian national identity and India as a secular nation-state. Moreover, Rushdie also takes into account the trauma that nationalism and Partition gave birth to. At the same time, he also addresses the importance of preserving personal stories and memories of these events which are carefully erased from the grand narratives of history.

5.1 Representing the trauma of Partition, multifaceted identities through magic realism in *Midnight's Children*:

Saadat Hasan Manto and Amitav Ghosh used satire and realism respectively to deal with the issues of nationalism and partition. As discussed in previous chapters, they interweaved history and fiction in their works "Toba Tek Singh" and *The Shadow Lines*. Salman Rushdie in *Midnight's Children* does the same but he takes a different approach. He intermingles magic and reality in the novel to shed light on the enduring chaos that follows Partition, common peoples' trauma and bewilderment about their identity and belonging. According to Rushdie, magic realism is the "Comingling of the improbable and the mundane." (Quoted in Bowers 2005, p.3). Magic realism is, to borrow the title of Anne C. Hegerfeldt's book, "Lies that tell the truth" and emphasizes its multi-dimensionality. Magic

realism is one of the prominent features of postmodern literature. It identifies with the postmodern notion which questions the reality and accentuates the co-existence of multiple version of it. It will not be wrong to say that Rushdie challenges the established truth of historical narratives and represents another version of it told from the perspective of a common man.

Magic realism also plays an important role when it comes to narrativizing traumatizing experiences. Many authors have considered magic realism as an effective way to represent the issues of holocaust, colonization, slavery and the like. As discussed before in this study, the term trauma does not merely mean physical wound and psychological disorder. It is now regarded as a cultural issue as well. This includes the bewilderment of dislocation and violence that Partition brought about in people's lives. For the victims, coming to terms with these traumatic experience as well as talking about them is anything but easy. So is the representation of traumatic experiences in literary texts. The following excerpt succinctly puts how magic realism comes to rescue in this regard:

Giving traumatic events a literary representation requires a profound sense of empathy and an act of imagination which is quite useful in establishing an association between trauma, alternative narrative and magical realist writing. Magical realist writing can well be considered one of the most efficient ways of coming to terms with painful experiences and repressed memories. (Abdullah 2020, p.4)

In *Midnight's Children* Rushdie blends magic into reality particularly through the protagonist Saleem Sinai. To be more specific, Rushdie personifies the Partition of India through Saleem's character. Born at the very moment of India's independence, Saleem's fate is inextricably linked to the country. Whatever happens in the country seem to take a toll on Saleem's body. This is apparent when Saleem says, "I shall eventually crumble into six

thousand and thirty million particles of anonymous and necessarily oblivious dust.” (Rushdie, 43). It is not explained in the novel why Saleem is going to embrace such a mysterious and tragic ending of his life. However, since he is said to be “handcuffed to history” and is the living embodiment of India, it can be assumed that the cracks and fragments in his body represent the post-partitioned India which was divided into many parts on the line of religion, language and caste.

Saleem Sinai’s complicated and conflicted identity should be taken into consideration as well. While Saleem is thought of to be a Muslim, as he is brought up by Ahmad Sinai and Amina Sinai, his biological parents are British and Hindu. In that sense he becomes an Anglo-Indian and non-Muslim. Surprisingly, even after not being a biological son of Amina, Saleem’s nose and eyes resemble those of his Amina’s father Adam Aziz who is a Muslim. It will not be wrong to say that Saleem’s identity is essentially multifaceted and it is not possible to identify him as one or the other. Since Saleem is a personification of India, it can be said that his complicated identity is emblematic of the multifarious feature of Indian identity. To put it another way, India is a diverse country with people having different religion, language, culture and tradition. Each of these components shapes the identities of the Indian people. Hence, the attempt to reconstruct their identities only on the basis of religion, setting aside other components, is highly likely to result in a dilemma about one’s own identity and sense of self. This turmoil experienced by people during nation-formation barely gets a place in grand narratives of history which provide rather an objective view of the past. Like Saadat Hasan Manto, Rushdie also takes into account the importance of storytelling from the perspective of Partition victims. In *Midnight’s Children*, the protagonist Saleem Sinai, who works as a manager in a pickle factory as well as is a writer, has the urge to preserve his stories before he dies. India abounds in histories and diversities, and since Saleem is a physical embodiment of India, his stories are important enough to be preserved so

that these do not get lost amidst the carefully selected national narratives highlighting the importance of Indian Partition. In Saleem's words:

My chutneys and kashundies are, after all, connected to my nocturnal scribblings-by day I spend amongst the pickle-vats, by nights within these sheets, I spend my time at the great work of preserving. Memory, as well as fruit, is being saved from the corruption of clocks. (Rushdie, p.44).

The aforementioned excerpt suggests that, in *Midnight's children*, Rushdie acknowledges the fact that memories can be blurred, fragmented even tainted over the course of time. Despite this he argues that memory is an essential tool when it comes to looking at history from subjective and multiple perspectives.

5.2 Questioning the notion of India as a secular nation during post-Partition era:

India was under the British rule nearly for 200 hundred years. Over the course of time, people built resistance against the colonial rule. Partha Chatterjee, as discussed in the literature review in this study, divides the practices and institutions of India during the colonial period in two domains- material or the outer, and spiritual or the inner. The outer domain consists of economic, administrative and technological affairs. Whereas, the inner domain incorporated the "essential marks of our identity" (Chatterjee, 1994, p.6), that is, the religious, cultural or traditional aspects where the colonizers could not intervene. According to Chatterjee, the resistance against the colonizers took place in the inner domain and the nationalism that arose in India was anti-colonial or anti-imperial in nature. This nationalism was all-encompassing, that is, it did not take into account the religious, linguistic or cultural differences of Indian people. They all were unified against the colonizers. Even after India got its independence from the British rule, anti-colonial nationalist Mahatma Gandhi envisaged an India which will be secular. This study does not intend to delve deep into when

and how secularism came into being. However, a brief definition of this notion will provide a better understanding of the discussion ahead. In Simple terms, secularism can be regarded as a tolerant attitude towards people of every religion within a nation-state. Secularism suggests that religion should be a private affair of individuals and should not affect decisions made by the state in any way. D.E. Smith's definition of secular state captures the essence of this notion. According to him, a secular state is the one "which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with the individual as citizen irrespective of his (or her) religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with religion." (qtd. in Pande, p.1124). However, this all-embracing notion of secular nationalism during post-Partition India advocated by Mahatma Gandhi did not come to fruition. Rather, it was proved time and again that religion had profound impact on the people of India, which resulted in Hindu-Muslim riots that preceded and followed the Partition in 1947. This very influence of religion is examined and the so-called secularism in India is questioned in *Midnight's Children*.

In the novel, Saleem Sinai tells the story of his grandfather Adam Aziz, who is a Kashmiri Muslim with a big nose and Kashmiri blue eyes. Adam receives western education and becomes quite skeptical about his religion. He stops praying after getting hurt on his nose on the prayer sheet. Moreover, he also wants his wife to abandon purdah. Although Adam does not stick to religion, he cannot put it aside his religious identity altogether. For example, when Mahatma Gandhi declares a hartal (strike) in order to demonstrate India's dissatisfaction for the enduring presence of British in the country, Adam is reluctant to join the strike. Being a Kashmiri Muslim, he feels the hartal is not his fight. He believes Kashmiris are different. The fact that Kashmiri Muslims are considered minorities in India may have a role to play in this case.

The influence of religion is also evident in Saleem Sinai's family as well, even though they are not practicing Muslims. One example from Saleem's childhood can highlight this point. As a kid, Saleem was admired by his parents and neighbors. Thinking that he didn't deserve all the attention he received, he often used to hide in her mother's washing-chest away from everyone. Once he got engulfed in guilt as he saw his mother naked while hiding in the laundry. Thinking of this as a sin, Saleem wanted to repent and he washed his mouth with soap. He wanted to salvage even after not believing in religion.

Despite India being considered as a secular nation that claims to treat people from every religion equally, Muslims used to receive ill treatment even from the Hindus. Discrimination faced by Muslims even in Pre-Partitioned India can be illustrated through two incidents from *Midnight's Children*. First, after moving to Bombay, Saleem's father Ahmad Sinai starts a warehouse business with his friends. In order to continue their business, they have to pay a certain amount of money to the Hindu rioters. Even after that, their warehouse is set on fire by the rioters. Not only that, the contemporary government of India also wanted Muslims to migrate to Pakistan. In order to do that, the government adopts various ways to force Muslims to move to Pakistan. In the novel, government freezes Ahmed Sinai's properties all of a sudden, leaving no option left for him but to migrate to Pakistan. Anyone who is not Hindu was considered minorities or marginal, who, to borrow Gyanendra Pandey's words, "might be allowed to be a part of the nation but "never quite." (Pandey 1999, p.608). Such discriminatory practice contradicts with the notion of secular India and this is highlighted in *Midnight's Children*.

Conclusion

Taking into account the fact that the official accounts of Partition demonstrates partial truth about this grand political event, this study acknowledges that the history of Partition is multidimensional and can be explained from multiple perspectives. The study is not dismissive of the significance of national or historical documents and reports about partition. It deals with what Butalia (1998) says the “human dimensions” (p.94) of Partition and accentuates the significance of understanding Partition and its enduring consequences from the perspective of those who experienced Partition and Partition-like violence. Using different narrative techniques, Manto, Ghosh and Rushdie skillfully deal with the human dimension of Partition, that is, the interplay among trauma, identity and belonging.

In the short story “Toba Tek Singh” Manto uses the asylum as a microcosm of post-partitioned India and highlights the trauma of dislocation. Manto through this story shows that the only possible reaction that the abrupt decision of partitioning India is Madness. In the light of the story, it can be said that the communities or nations, India and Pakistan, that came into being were imagined by the bureaucratic people. As for common people, they barely supported the decision of Partition. Hence, just like the madmen in the asylum, their attempt to make sense of why the country was divided into two, why and how they are bound to reconstruct their identity and start their lives anew in a different nation, only led to confusion. In the novel *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh shows how the concept of nationalism means different things to different people depending on their lived experiences. Tha'mma's perception of nation formation is in stark contrast of that of Tridib. While Tha'mma, who is born and brought up in colonized India where anti-imperial riots became a commonplace over the course of time, believes in militant nationalism and justifies bloodshed for the sake of creating and saving a nation from forces external to the nation. On the other hand, Tridib does not believe in creating borders and he holds a cosmopolitan attitude, given that fact that he

has travelled many places- be it in person or through the pages of his history books. The confusion Tha'mna experiences when she finds no tangible border accentuates the absurdity of dividing the country into two separate nations. Tha'mma's dilemma as to exactly where she belongs, India or East Pakistan, and whether she should identify herself as an Indian or East Pakistani once again proves that one's identity cannot be defined in a single term, rather there are many facets of it. Lastly, In *Midnight's children*, the multifarious nature of identity is again highlighted. Like "Toba Tek Singh" and *The Shadow Lines*, this seminal novel by Rushdie also sheds light on the fact that forcing people to reconstruct their lives only because they belong to a particular religion is highly likely to create a fragmented sense of self, because they have to leave behind everything that makes up their identities. To encapsulate, it can be said that, Manto, Ghosh and Rushdie problematize the issue of identity by proving that identities cannot be divided into binaries, and since identities cannot be formed overnight, bewilderment or trauma is the only possible reaction of people who were supposed to assume a different identity right after partition. The same goes for their sense of belonging.

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