

Roots, Wounds and Memories- A Look into the Voices of Women in Selected Texts of Amrita Pritam, Saadat Hasan Manto and Shauna Singh Baldwin.

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Abstract

The Partition of India into the sovereign nations of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan in 1947 was the culmination of the British rule in India. The colonizers had decided to leave India but not before putting the final nail in the coffin of our great nation the nail of divide along the lines of religion. This decision of a few leaders of the political parties had led millions of people displaced, killed and separated from their families and torn away from their motherland. Nevertheless, what is to be understood is that the Partition of 1947 was nothing less than a massacre a bloodbath wherein agony, loss, anger, disease, rape, mutilation, inter-communal violence, all raged on for days with little or no relief. These horrific scenarios can either be known from our history books or the partition narratives that were written after India and Pakistan were separated. While there are a lot of narratives on the atrocities and violence of the partition itself, few of them focus exclusively on the women the physical trauma along with oppression and constant humiliation. But, what is to be understood and deciphered is that the body of a woman is itself a site of war. It is the ultimate symbol of chastity.

Key Words: Blood path, agony, anger, oppression

Woman as the preserver

The deeply rooted idea of our patriarchal system often a time has portrayed the woman as the 'preserver of honour'- be it of the family, the society or the entire country. The notion that the woman is a mere 'commodity' was so resonating that unlike popular idea, it was

actually the women who were the most affected during this time be it physically, emotionally or mentally. The anguish of leaving the land they call their own, the brutal physical tortures and most importantly, being a silent spectator to her own self-imposed strategy, to forget everything and accept whatever they had. The abysmal silence of the partition took away a part of the women which she could, rather would, never recover. They forced themselves into an effectual amnesia.

HONOUR, COMMUNALISM AND WOMEN – POORO'S STATE OF BEING

The short novel or novella as it is often referred to, Pinjar, written beautifully by Amrita Pritam elucidates the harrowing experiences of the women during the time of partition. It is a story which focuses on the misfortune of the woman in a scenario where she has no mistakes. The narration is done by the protagonist Pooro, who is abducted by a Muslim man Rashid. The heart-wrenching story of how conflicts between communities and families could affect the life of a woman and her family is what Pinjar is. The novel explains the dominating nature of man and the woman's compulsion to accept and obey the same. The time of partition was so dark and horrifying that the story itself was a depiction of the social reality of the times. It is a portrayal of the dishonour of women where they were simply discarded by her family if she was abducted by somebody before marriage. If by any chance that any person or a group compellingly dishonoured the young woman, then no one accepts her. Let alone the society, even the family does not accept her. After being kidnapped by Rashid, when Pooro escapes her captor and reaches her parents' house her father greets her with the following words –

“Daughter, this fate was ordained for you ; we are helpless. The
Shaikhs will descend on us and destroy everything we have.” (Pritam
18)

Pooro begged her parents to take her to Thailand with them, but her parents replied –

“Who will marry you now? You have lost your religion and your birthright. If we dare to help you, we will be wiped out without a trace of blood left behind to tell our fate. Daughter, it would have been better if you had died at birth! If the Shaikhs find you here, they will kill your father and your brothers. They will kill all of us.” (Pri tam 18)

There was no leniency in the social framework. There was little or no hope for any kind of rehabilitation and all that was left for them was to either accept their fate or to commit suicide. This dialogue culminates the entire theme of gender subjugation – showing the woman at a much inferior place than the man. Her authority to make her own decisions, especially if she is a ‘dishonoured’ woman, does not count at all. The Hindu patriarchal society and its insensitivity to a woman’s feelings is clearly brought out in the open here. The communal tension was so evident at that point in time that there was no consideration for basic humanity. When Rashid abducts Pooro, he clearly states to her, the reason for him doing so.

“..... Did you know that our families, the Shaikhs and the Sahukars, have been a loggerheads for many generations? Your grandfather had advanced us Rs. 500 on compound interest and taken our house as mortgage. We could not redeem the mortgage. He attacked the house and had the entire Shaikh family ejected. We were rendered homeless. That was not all. His agent used foul language towards our womenfolk, and your uncle kept my uncle kept my father’s sister in his house for three nights – with the knowledge of your grandfather! The

Shaikhs were then like a bundle of sugarcane from which all the juice had been squeezed out. They wept bitter tears of blood and bided their time. My grandfather made my uncles swear that they would avenge these insults. When we heard of the plans for your wedding, there was talk of settling old scores. They picked on me; they made me take an oath on the Koran that I would abduct the Sahukar's daughter before she was wed. Allah is my witness that on the very first day I cast my eyes on you, I fell in love with you. It was my love and the prodding of the Shaikh clan that made me do this. But I cannot bear to see you so sad. (Pri tam 15)

After Pooro returned to her captor, Rashid let her know his plans for them. They left for a village named Sakkar which made no difference to Pooro at all. After she had been turned away from the doorsteps of her own house, every and any village looked the same to her. It just did not matter anymore. In the words of Pooro –

“There was no reaction from her – after her parents had turned her away from their door, leaving the ancestral village did not seem so momentous. All said and done, what difference does it make? All villages were alike.” (Pri tam 19)

In the times of the partition, there were also forced conversions from one religion to another. In Pinjar, too, Pooro after her marriage to Rashid gets a new name – a new identity, Hamida. The name was inscribed on her skin in dark green letters. She was no longer Pooro but Hamida. Once, a mentally unstable woman had taken refuge in Hamida's village. She only

wore a salwar and had been raped by some men. When Hamida first encounters the woman, she is seen stealing toys from the toy-seller's basket and running away in frenzy, all the way, laughing hysterically. The woman found refuge in an empty shed in the outskirts of the village. The villagers offered much help in the form of clothing, mattress and food. Later, it was found that she was pregnant and it was Hamida who discovered her dead body and her newly born child still attached to her via the umbilical cord. Rashid and Hamida take in the newly born baby and receive blessings from every woman in the village. Hamida was deeply shook by the incidents and in the evening while she was nursing the baby she thinks to herself.

“.... What wretch could have lusted after the charred body of the mad woman – she asked herself. Did she consent to the act or was she raped? Did the man realise what he was perpetrating on a lunatic woman? Did he know what would happen to the seed he had planted in the vagrant's womb? The poor woman was not even aware of the fact that she was going to give birth to a boy. How did she suffer the pains of labour? Did no midwife compassion for her? Her shrieks must have been lost in the loneliness of the dark night; she must have wrestled with the gusts of wind and writhed in agony on the cold, hard ground! But nature's laws are immutable. The child ignored its mother's agony and came out into the world. And its mother perished in the final process of giving it birth.” (Pri tam 38)

Hamida had once rescued a girl from the refugee encampment in the neighbouring village. She was bound to go to India. But the situation was heavily unsafe for all women there. At

sunset, a band of thugs would get in, pick out a woman to ravish them for that night and returned them to the encampment in the morning. Hamida had found her hiding in the sugarcane field, hiding from her ravishers. Pooro's dilemma is repeated when Lajo (Puro's sister-in-law) is abducted by Muslims and kept in captivity in her own house. Ramchand seeks Pooro's help to bring back his sister, Lajo. Pooro convinces Rashid to help Lajo return back to her home. Puro depicts immense strength and composure to help Lajo, escape the clutches of her abductors at night.

In the entirety of the novel, Pooro/Hamida had never been treated badly by Rashid who always revered and liked her for who she was. He never was one to impose his authority on and this shows a clear paradoxical situation in the patriarchal society of India and Pakistan, where the treatment of a woman is a mere mindset and not something innate. But the women with whom the protagonist has crossed paths throughout the novella, clearly depicts that the twin blades of patriarchy and war had reduced them to being nothing more than objects or rather abjects who bore the brunt of the war if not directly then, indirectly and to an extent that a normal person will probably not be able to fathom in their wildest of dreams.

DEPICTION OF THE WOMEN AS MERE CHATTEL AND BURDEN TO THE FAMILY

In the novel Pinjar, in the initial chapters we see a clear commodification of women. Pooro was a mere girl of fourteen when her marriage was fixed to Ram Chand, a young man in the neighbouring village of Rattoval. Her parents were determined to '*lighten themselves of the burden of a daughter*'. When she attained the age of fifteen, Pooro was forbidden to move freely outside the house. There was fear of the groom catching a glimpse of his bride and also-

“There was another reason to be cautious- the Muslims had become aggressive. Hindu girls never ventured out except in broad daylight of the afternoon.” (Pri tam 8)

Even though, Pooro/Hamida had never been treated badly post her marriage, the women around her had a lot to endure. Kammo, a little girl of twelve, who was constantly mistreated by her aunt after she was deserted by her father following the death of her mother, wherein he remarried and moved to the city. Pooro felt for the little girl who constantly wore the same set of clothes regardless of the season. Relating Pooro’s situation to the girl, Pritam writes –

“People often say that when a person’s mother dies, even a real father becomes a stepfather. It was Hamida’s ill luck that her real father had become a stepfather before becoming a widower, and her real mother had, without being a widow, become like a stepmother.” (Pri tam 28)

Another woman, who drew Hamida’s attention towards her was Taro, a *‘young, sallow-faced girl’* who lived next door to her. The girl’s *‘large, melancholic eyes which she lowered every time she saw Hamida’* led Hamida to believe that the girl wanted to be of acquaintance as they had a lot in common with each other. When she inquired further, she came to know that the girl had been married two years ago and was frequently ill. Everyone claimed that she had been possessed by an evil spirit or by an unknown disease. Whenever Taro was due to return to her husband, she would have fainting fits and each time she returned from her in-laws, she would be thinner than before. One day, when Hamida got an opportunity to talk to Taro, she

discovered the fact that her husband was already married when she got married to him, but because the previous wife was a low-caste woman, the parents did not approve. They wanted to get a daughter-in-law of their own caste. No one cared about Taro and her feelings; the in-laws say –

“....We feed and clothe the girl. We give her money to spend. What has she to grumble about?” (Pri tam 32)

Taro have had to work as a prostitute for the two years she had been married for “ *a mess of pottage and a few rags*” and was very sure that she did not want to return to her husband’s house. Taro’s mother alleges that her son, Taro’s brother had picked up strange ideas in his head while he was studying in Lahore and has inculcated the same in his sister due to which her life is full of woes and misery. Taro’s mother reinstates the fact that –“Once we give our daughters, our lips are sealed. It’s upto her husband to treat her as he likes. It is a man’s privilege.” and by reiterating these lines she had put the stamp of being helpless to help her daughter out of the situation that she was in. When Taro starts stating her anguish again, her mother scolds her and says –

“Don’t say such stupid things when you return to your husband’s home. It does not matter how he behaves. Allah is always there to see whatever is going on. Allah was witness to your marriage.” (Pri tam 34)

Hamida had broken down after witnessing Taro’s pitiful condition, but she couldn’t say anything.

These incidents clearly show how the women were treated as mere chattel – a commodity that can be bought and sold, a mere furniture that is to adorn your home and the complete neglect of the mental, physical and emotional state of the woman.

POSITION OF POORO/HAMIDA IN THE SOCIETY

1. AS A DAUGHTER

Pooro, was the eldest of her six siblings. She belonged to the village of Sahukars. When her parents returned from Thailand, they fixed Pooro's marriage to a well to do family in the neighbouring village of Rattoval. Pooro was just a girl of fourteen when her marriage was fixed to Ram Chand. In truth, Pooro had always been loved and cared for in her family before her marriage. She was a homely girl, who cared for her family and friends and was a delight to be around. As her wedding day neared, her mother began getting emotional and sang songs of separation and happiness for her daughter – wishing upon her eldest all the love and marital bliss one could ever have imagined.

All of Pooro's ordeals began the day she was abducted by Rashid near the *okra* fields. She fell unconscious when Rashid carried her away on horseback and after she regained consciousness, she realised the enormity of the event that had just taken place. She, a Hindu, had been kidnapped by Rashid, a Muslim. Though she was grateful for the fact that Rashid had not marred her honour or said any harsh words to her, she wanted to go back. Her entreats were paid no heed, so she escaped after being a captive for about a fortnight.

Upon her arrival at her parent's house in Chatto, she is 'surprisingly' rejected by her own parents. Their rejection arises from the fact that the 'Sheikhs' would destroy them if they took

her back. Pooro loses all hope when her mother says – *“Who will marry you now? You have lost your religion and your birthright.”* (Pri tam 18)

It seemed to Pooro that everything that she had ever believed in while she was on her way here was a lie – her hope to live again was shattered into a million pieces. She was now bereft of hope and fear for she had her life taken away from her in that very instant. That very day, Pooro had been orphaned – not by her own will but by the cruel joke of destiny.

Though Pooro did not contact them again, she was often reminded of her parents, her sisters and his newly born baby brother. On the first day of Baisakh when the Hindus sing, dance and make merry, Pooro's mind goes back to the little boy who would be celebrating his first Baisakh that day. He would have been given his first sip of water today and kinsmen would have come bearing gifts and blessings for the little one. Pooro wondered if her mother remembered her.

2. AS A WIFE

After the cruel banishment by her parents, Pooro went back to Rashid. After a few days, they were married by a Maulvi in the presence of two or three other men. They left Chatto and decided to settle in a village called Sakkar. Pooro always felt *'like a stray calf in a strange herd of cows.'* On the day of her marriage, she was given a new name Hamida, which was later tattooed on her skin in dark green letters. Since that time, she was just Hamida, not Pooro.

Hamida is found to be expecting her first child soon after. She is extremely loved and cared for by her husband who often helped out in the household chores. Rashid knew of his wife's hatred for him but still he tried his best to make her comfortable and happy. Hamida rarely

went out of her house so Rashid would ask her to go out and take in some fresh air for the sake of the child.

After Hamida gave birth to her son, Javed, she had looked at Rashid with eyes that had no emotions left in them. They seemed to say – “What more do you want of me? I have given you my person and I have given you a son. I have nothing more to give.” (Pri tam 25)

She had felt nothing for Rashid till the birth of her boy. She felt nothing for the little life that she had just bore, for a little while too. Here we find out that Rashid had used force to take her – sexually. Out of a severe conflict of love and hate, new feelings of love arose in Hamida's heart - love for her son and for her husband, Rashid. Whenever she heard stories of other women like Taro, she felt as if she was in 'a haven of refuge'. She wanted to forget all that Rashid had done to her and love him like a wife loves her husband. She wanted to only remember that he was the father of her child and her husband – the rest, simply did not matter.

When Rashid and Hamida took in the new born baby of the mad woman – people raised questions as to the child's religion. Rashid was given dark looks by the people whenever he passed them but he ignored them. He knew of his wife's affection towards the baby whom she had been breast feeding for six months and raising it as if he were her own. When the Hindu elders of the village sent for Rashid, Hamida became worried for his life for it was because of her insistence that they had kept the boy. Rashid tried his hardest but he had to relent to the demands of the Hindu elders. But after a few days, the baby was given back to them as he was growing sick and pale in the care of the water-carrier's woman.

Hamida took Rashid's help in rescuing her sister-in-law who was captured by a Muslim man. She had been requested by Ram Chand, the person she was deemed to get married to. Rashid, immediately agreed upon the task. After the herculean task was done, Rashid had thought of the possibility that maybe Hamida would like to go back to her home in India, but Hamida refused and stated her home was now in Pakistan. She was now a Muslim, wife of a Muslim and mother to two wonderful boys, whom she could not or rather, would not leave.

Hamida was never mistreated by Rashid on any occasion as seen in the text, rather she was always cared for and loved by him. Though there was a bitter beginning to their relationship which had its roots in communalism and family feuds, their story had an ending that even Hamida would never have anticipated.

PARTITION AND THE SUBALTERNATISED: THE PARTITION NARRATIVES BY MANTO

As Gayatri Spivak characterizes Subaltern in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" as somebody who has been stifled and quieted for a long time and he isn't given the privilege to introduce himself or his personality before the world all alone, however he is constantly represented. In this procedure of being represented the individual is distorted and is not comprehended for his actual self, his capacities are covered up and all the more frequently his incapacities which he may or may not have are uncovered by the delegate. This agent might be anybody; the job of the oppressor is constantly played by somebody who is solid either politically or physiologically. The idea of subalternising what's more, it might be connected as per the setting the exchange is held. Fundamentally, Spivak has spoken about the subalternisation of the stifled classes of society and ladies as these were the two classes

that were most certainly not permitted to represent themselves and they were constantly represented, which distorted them and thus exacerbated their condition in the general public.

Saadat Hasan Manto is praised as the ace story teller of the century and his short stories are called showstoppers due to reality that they disentangle in such a significant number of layers and urge the peruser to pick them up over and over again for profound examination and each time furnish the peruser with another knowledge. His accounts are significantly based on the topic of Partition of the Indian subcontinent and the repercussions that individuals had to endure because of it. It is not as though Manto had taken up individuals from just the standard of society but has also likewise introduced individuals from various different backgrounds and has spoken in the interest of them as these individuals couldn't represent themselves. Manto has composed tales about women in which as opposed to romanticizing the beauty of ladies he has depicted the unfeeling and ruthless blows of conditions goading the excellence of these ladies and changing over them into monstrous. He only here and there composes of ladies with outstanding excellence however he continually portrays the characteristic and basic magnificence of a lady given essentially with a tiny focal point and when he recounts to the tale of these ladies he talks with a Feminist mouthpiece in his hand. Manto it appears to have had assumed upon the liability of representing the ladies who were on the biggest scale exploited amid the season of Partition. While Spivak discusses a distortion occurring amid the intercession of a representative between the gathering of people/peruser and the Subaltern, Manto is by all accounts changing this thought full three hundred and sixty degrees in light of the fact that as intently Manto had watched and considered segment and had composed with such truth and detail that it ends up troublesome for a peruser to consider it a distortion. He shares the distress of a lady experiencing the injury of snatching, assault and constrained

prostitution as one of the male characters in the story or some of the time he includes himself in the story under the name of Saadat Hasan Manto himself. Manto through his short stories traverses from an earlier time and limits from getting into the future as the time range or the spread of a short story must be kept constrained. He only from time to time depicts the past of a specific character and when he does he does it in a concise way and regularly through the considerations of another character or as is done traditionally through the storyteller. In Manto's short stories relating to the time of and after Partition, the sexual orientation stops to adjust to the physiological viewpoints.

The women in Manto's stories were Subalternised doubly, initially by the man centric society because of which they were treated as objects of ownership and these articles were at the time of Partition plundered and looted by the men of different networks to concretise their vengeance on the principal network. Besides these women were under imperialism and subsequently needed to rely upon their male partners in everything that they did. These women, since they didn't have a place with the exclusive class of the colonized India or were not at all identified with the English officers of the colonized India they had to endure incredible hardships.

TRAUMA AND SILENCE IN MANTO'S 'OPEN IT'

Manto's short stories picture the shocks of gendered brutality amid the Partition. His one of the prominent short stories 'Open it', initially written in Urdu as 'Khol Do', handles the mercilessness head on with its end result, leaving the peruser flabbergasted. The story starts with Sirajuddin awakening from his cognizance on the railroad stage of Mughalpura after the horrendous adventure from Amritsar to Lahore. When he gets himself alone, the picture of his

significant other who was on the skirt of death with tore open stomach flashes before him. The recollections of voyage come into his brain as clippings or sections of a film and Manto writes –

“A succession of images raced through his mind. Attack... Fire...
Escape... Railway station... Night... Sakina... He rose abruptly and began
searching through the milling crowd in the refugee camp. He spent
hours looking, all the time shouting his daughter's name Sakina...
Sakina...but she was nowhere to be found.” (Manto,)

It is additionally the method for recounting to this story, from the earliest starting point to finish there are the main meager depictions about the setting of the story. Sakina's mom who was worried for her adult seventeen years of age little girl told Sirajuddin to take Sakina away while passing on. Consumed in considerations, his hand contacts Sakina's dupatta and all of a sudden understood that she is no place. She was lost while escaping to Pakistan; just her dupatta remained which he gathered while it rested off. Dupatta, in the social setting, is looked as an emblem of women's izzat (respect) and resting off dupatta from her shoulder predicts her infringement. With expectation to meet her, Sirajuddin advances the gathering of eight young fellows who are completing a 'intense assignment' of bringing back the women who stayed on the opposite side, and one day, razakaars caught this dazzling magnificence yet hid from Sirajuddin, giving affirmation of finding her. Manto's utilization of the quip in the portrayal of these volunteer's altruism unexpectedly alludes to brutality underneath this graciousness when the same deliverers transformed into despots. In the wake of getting away from Hindu agitators, she falls prey to Muslim volunteers who got an expert on her body. She was exposed to progressive assault by her "friends in need" who break the won conviction

and trust that network men are defenders. The men hailed as "saviors" discovered her in the wake of "seeking and taking a chance with" their lives, ended up being aggressors who ab(used) her and left her oblivious. The co-religionists who daimed to carry on of the feeling of respect and goodness diminished to savagery by getting to be culprits of inhumanness. Savagery by co-religionist never considered the discussable issue, and this man centric belief system shared by both the countrystate and ethnicity which looks upon women as a shared belonging. A few days after the fact, Sakina's snatched body found close to the railroad tracks and hospitalized. Sirajjudin goes to see her girl and the story closes with the most stunning bit of writing. The specialist took a look at the prostrate body and felt for the pulse. At that point he said to him: "Open it.' The young woman on the stretcher moved somewhat. Her hands grabbed for the line which kept her shalwar tied round her abdomen. With excruciating gradualness, she loosened it, pulled the piece of clothing down and opened her thighs. The repeated assault makes her so habituated to this word she opens her pant strings on hearing a doctor saying 'open it' where he implied opening the window. She was traumatized to the point that she lost the feeling of language and Khol do (open it) conveys the main importance to surrender herself to be abused.

She had become used to the rape and torture that she responds to nothing with the exception of this single word and, the injury had made her a dormant machine. This response on hearing a male voice focuses at persistent and callous eagerness which made her battered creature and approves her viciousness and broken mind as she overlooked everything separated from that.

Receptive to cold remorselessness, she reacts naturally and unknowingly to the main "word" which demonstrates her being alive. Seeing her alive, the dad's shout of over euphoria is unexpected and pitiful when he cries out – "She is alive. My daughter is alive." (Manto)

Sirajuddin in his unconstrained happiness becomes oblivious to what had been exacted upon her. She imparts savagery through her reaction and her quietness which can't be spoken in words. Brutality and ground-breaking political talk assumes a conspicuous role in the loss of voice. Manto featured her condition of quiet; she was never indicated articulating anything notwithstanding when she was situated by volunteers. Her silence expresses more intensely than words about her physical, mental and emotional state by voicing her injury and uncovering the craziness of the two nation theory.

Sakina's quietude tends to her outrage and the reason behind it, patriarchal foundation, furthermore, the Partition. Her quietness hushes the reader leaving them an observer of the sickening truth of former period of time. What the Body Remembers by Shauna Singh Baldwin transmits a similar frightfulness when Roop sees the mangled groups of women at the railroad station. She expresses in disgust :

"Is this India we fought for God-chosen or Godforsaken? She is like a woman raped so many times she has lost all count of the trespassers across her body." (Baldwin, p 422)

The paternal model that "all women are our daughters or sisters or mothers" is a huge male-centric code in India, which is intended to check safe the profound quality of men having a place in the secular state. In any case, the code is curious for its untold refinement made by the network patriarchs. All women are our daughters or sisters or mothers turns into all

Hindu/Muslim/Sikh women are our daughters or sisters or mothers" contingent upon their individual networks. This gives an ethical check limited just to the network circles. The brutality that occurred amid the division clarifies this modified idea, which was constrained to the concerned networks and amid the mobs, the idea did not engage women who had a place with the 'other' network. It was either the code was overlooked or it was briefly loose for the reason of vengeance. The account of the story Open It clears up this doubt through the horrifying demonstrations of the social specialists. For them there was no code like all women are our girls or moms or sisters/every single Muslim woman are our daughters or mothers or sisters. The truth of the matter is that they didn't have any code at all. They didn't have any sort of dread in intersection the limit lines of their religious morals or the country's morals. These men just turn out to be individuals with religious morals or the country's morals. These men just turn out to be individuals with false religiosity and fraudulent inclination included with debased musings. Sakina, for them, was never a 'Sister' figure, she was only a female with femininity, who was hapless and helpless, prepared to be vanquished and raised the banner of manliness. Her helplessness is so much abused that her whole framework acts in just a single way and just to one order. The remainder of her is dead and what lives is minimal in excess of a cadaver appearing physical developments.

COLD MEAT OR COLD HEART ? – LOOKING INTO RELIGION AND JINGOISM

Patriotism is a marvel that exists on the possibility of enthusiasm and frenzy itself. Without a little push towards franticness, initiated by solid patriot feeling, mass assembly isn't a possibility. The excitement of the majority to actively create national significance and characters, occur through the excitement of the crowd attitude of individuals; individuals who have confidence in that envisioned network that has been fed to the majority on numerous

occasions and repeatedly. The partition of India and Pakistan released a scene of brutality and violence that may be unmatched in the course of history. Since the sexual urges of living creatures are the most inescapable and unavoidable want of every human, the idea of sexuality essentially 'sexual violence' should be considered, comprehended and thought about upon.

Sigmund Freud comments that the inclination to incur and get torment amid intercourse is the most well-known everything being equal, and attributed it-as such a great amount of else to fragmented/abnormal mental improvement in early youth. In *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, the British physician Havelock Ellis (1859-1939) contended for the absence of a reasonable qualification between parts of 'sadism' and 'masochism', and, also, confined sadomasochism to the 'circle of eroticism' along these lines separating from it from maltreatment and cold-bloodedness. 'Thanda Gosht' or 'Cold Meat' is another solid declaration that obscures the line between patriotism and jingoistic frenzy. The characters of the general population, amid parcel, had been spellbound to plain "dangerous resistances", either Hindu or Muslim; India or Pakistan. Ishwar Singh speaks to all the individuals who, for the sake of enthusiasm, occupied with savageness and outrageous frenzy. After a few long stretches of plundering and executing, Ishwar returns home to his young spouse Kulwant, just unfit to make love to her. He admits his endeavor to assault a young lady in the wake of executing all her group of six. At the point when he is at long last prepared to attack her it dawns upon him that she is only a dead body; like cold meat. This snapshot of close necrophiliac assault turns into the epiphanic minute that leads to his impotency and later his obliteration. The briskness of the carcass is compared by his seething manly warmth, which makes the scene significantly progressively hard-hitting. Kulwant contacts the cold hands of

Ishwar. Ishwar isn't just damaged by the experience however he additionally neglects to accommodate to the repulsiveness of the experience –“She was dead... I had carried a dead body... a heap of cold flesh.... Jani, give me your hand.”

While narrating his lust for the girl, whom he mistook to be unconscious, Ishwar Singh says –

“Kalwantjani, I couldn't even begin to describe to you how beautiful she was... I could have slashed her throat but I didn't...I said to myself...Ishwar, you gorge yourself on Kalwant Kaur every day... how about a mouthful of this luscious fruit!

I thought she had gone into a faint, so I carried her over my shoulder all the way to the canal which runs outside the city... then I laid her down on the grass, behind some bushes and..first I thought I would shuffle her a bit... but then I decided to trump her right away.” (Manto 54)

The hero who is generally a vicious man, loses his whole capacity to sexually respond to his aroused partner and is by all accounts totally dishevelled because of the twisted society around. Starting ideal from the foreplay to the eccentric homicide of Ishwar Singh, we see Kulwant taking over with power and attempting to fulfill herself. She demands complete authority of her partner's sexual life and her infuriation at his inability to perform ultimately leads her to kill him. Manto does, therefore, put forth a very gory depiction of the real life atrocities that the women faced during the time of the Partition. The women, who were seemingly normal women, have been put into the narrative and given a voice through the compelling tales woven by Manto.

COLONIZATION, BUT INTIMATE.

In the words of critic Ania Loomba, who links patriarchy and dominance from the perspective of the Indian context, she says that ' patriarchal relations provide a model for colonial domination' (p. 161) and thus the two ideas not only give each other their shape but also are intricately and essentially connected. She also is of the opinion that though India always had a tradition of patriarchal constraints and limitations over women, the idea of dominance and oppression might have originated from the inferiority complex which was experienced by the men during the British Raj. The social frustration of men intensified the patriarchal tradition in India.

By looking at this theory, we can discuss the violence against women in the colonial as well as post colonial space which is aptly illustrated in Shauna Singh Baldwin's novel ' What the Body Remembers'.

The male characters in the book, no matter their affiliation or relativity to the female characters, continually subdue the women. The girls are not given a voice since their childhood, the Sikh traditions are remoulded and reinterpreted as per the wishes of the patriarchy. The obvious oxymoronic situation occurs when the Sikh Gurus who teach and preach gender equality but the reality is starkly different than what is preached. The role of a woman is reiterated through Satya's mother's words –

“A man is pleased, you can see it afterwards. But, a woman is merely cracked open for seeding like the earth before the force of the

plough. If she is fertile, good for the farmer, if not, bad for her.”

(Baldwin 12)

The women in *What the Body Remembers* are thoroughly deprived of their opinions, rights and even agency – through and through being victimised by their own families, communities and religious affiliations. The atrocities of colonization with the natives being silenced by the oppressors is reiterated and re-enacted in a space of intimacy. The women are more often than not, ‘traded’ from fathers to husbands, raped, brutalized, abducted, killed and dismembered to save the honour of the *quom*.

The complicated telling of Singh Baldwin’s novel weaves a fabric of all the issues faced by women at that time – female identity, polygamy, patriarchal constraints, male dominance and inter-religious violence. The narrative that is set in erstwhile and present day Punjab, narrates the story of Roop, a young wife who follows her husband to Rawalpindi, taking the position of being his second wife, along with the much older and experienced Satya. Right from the beginning it is made to be clear that the narrative will be focusing on the inferior position of women in the Indian society. The society was such that the women were passed on as chattels from the fathers to the husbands because it was only through marriage that a woman could ‘hope’ to achieve or rather receive social status. But that was too, dependent highly on their fertility – the exact case of Roop and Satya in *What the Body Remembers*.

The arrival of Roop into the household, which was the very evident decision taken by her husband, Satya views the former as a threat to her position as the mistress of the house. Ashamed of her own barrenness and extreme insecurity, Satya becomes horrendous towards

Roop. Despite her being a dutiful and loving wife, she is still called barren. Although she is much more efficient than her husband in public dealings and managing the entire business and the household to herself- she is still shunned by her husband and the society. She is set aside because of her inability to produce a heir to her husband – a patriarchal ‘role’ set up for the control of women by the patriarchal society. Satya fails to conform to the set standards of the society, despite her relentless devotion towards her husband. She cannot converse in English during her public appearances and thus she is shunned. Her conversations with her husband indicate her innate suspicion and she cannot even share her feelings of joy at her husband’s posting as Executive Engineer of the Irrigation Department at Khanewal. She says –

“This posting and your new position are another bone that the British can throw before Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru, hoping to appease the non-cooperators and all the self-rule agitators, justify the blood spilled and the pain endured by the protestors.” (Baldwin 208)

Satya never surrenders her individuality, although she is accepting of her husband’s decision. She cannot lower her gaze before her husband which shows her indomitable spirit and though she is expected to be very docile and submissive, she is defiant. Her existence and sorrow are not given any due consideration. When Roop enters the household, she asks Sardarji – *“I still have life to give, why do you throw me away?”* To which Sardarji (her husband replies) – *“I do not throw you away, I tell you! You will have all izzat, all respect, you will be looked after.”* (Baldwin 242)

Satya is not afraid to shout out in pain – in a world where a woman is expected to be docile as a deer and mute as a mule. Roop thinks to herself –

“How is it no one has taught Satya to say ‘Hanji, achchaji, yes-ji?’ and to speak softly, always softly? How generous is my new husband! How kind indeed to keep a woman who rages so, when he could throw her out on the street with nowhere to go.” (Baldwin 243)

For this injustice meted out to her, Roop becomes a medium to take revenge for Satya. She dominates Roop and treats her like a servant. She even demands that Roop’s children should be given to her. In order to placate Satya, Sardarji compels Roop to agree. Roop, at first chooses to be silent. She accepts her destiny when her newborn baby is given to Satya. She recognises that she is a mere tool for the household name to carry on – and that is the only job she is expected to do. No one understands her agony except Mani Mai, who consoles her and encourages to stand up for herself. When Satya refuses her husband to take Roop to Ramleela, she revolts and stops eating food. When she reveals everything to her father, she realises that she has no value even for her own father. Soon, things are settled to the extent that Sardarji decides to live with Roop and her children in Lahore and not with Satya at Rawalpindi. Roop gets back her identity but Satya gets blamed for everything and thus ostracised from her own home and village. Such is the hypocrisy of the patriarchal society that the woman is blamed for everything that has happened in her marital life, always said that she is born to endure everything. As Simone de Beauvoir comments in her book *The Second Sex* – “Men do not marry for themselves, whatever they may say; they marry as much or more; for their posterity, their family.” (P. 454) Satya, is anguished at the fact that despite all that she has done for her husband, she is treated like old furniture who is easily replaced by new one. Satya embraces her infection of tuberculosis and dies in Sardarji’s arms,

remaining strong till her very last breath. Though her husband is aware of the fact that he has wronged her, he cannot do anything about it. Roop, however, takes on Satya's spirit.

"She should remember Satya's contempt, how Satya took first baby Pavan, then little Timcu, how she put the evil eye on Pavan so she and Roop could only see one another in mirrors, how it is Satya's fault pavan sees her mother as a man might see her, from the corner of her eye, how she made Roop fear poison, and then, how she asked to breathe on the little boy-baby Roop thought was not to be taken."

(Baldwin 335)

Roop emerges a new woman and her transformative potential also brings about a whole new meaning to her life – fighting for her rights and fulfilling all her duties, just like Satya would have done. She makes her own path and yet, maintains honour and her individuality through and through.

WOMEN – PARTITION AND THEIR PORTRAYAL

I. Satya

The enormity of Satya's presence in the novel can be understood by the simple fact that the novel begins and ends with Satya's soliloquy. She is a woman who is not only a dutiful wife, but who also manages the entire state of affairs for her husband. She is described as 'barren, but still useful.' She loves her husband but refuses to give in like Roop. The author writes, *"Satya cannot deny her love, but she will not flutter her eyelashes like Roop and pretend stupidity and incompetence to win his love."*

Satya, does not understand the English language nor does she like the British influence on her husband. When a joyous Sardarji announces his promotion to Satya, she does not seem too pleased with the prospect and blames the British for using this as a means to appease Gandhi and Nehru. Elsewhere, she argues that she only foresees a better future only when the English leave. Baldwin does not portray Satya in a negative light as she had all the reasons to be vengeful and bitter after her husband's decision to take a new wife. She felt betrayed, wronged and cheated on by Sardarji. She becomes malicious towards her husband's new wife because of her insecurities. Slowly, when she is abandoned by her husband who moves to Lahore with Roop and the children, the extent of her tolerance is tested. She is a gray character who evokes sympathy and adulation despite her character deficiencies and shortcomings. In the 1st stage of her life, when she is about to succumb to the infection of tuberculosis, she is full of guilt and while remembering all her past actions, she says,

“I am not a wife, for my husband has abandoned me. I am not a widow, for he still lives. I am not a mother... I am not a sister, for I have no brother. With no father...And so, I am no one.” (Baldwin 309)

The author writes –

“...where women like her, prickly as cactus, shall not be abandoned and ignored. Surrender to death, tempter of all martyrs..wake to the dignity that comes from refusal, refusal to live without izzat.subtract herself to solve the problem.” (Baldwin. p. 309)

To show the extent to which Satya had decided to go for her husband's love and attention. She just could not withstand the pain and agony that came with the inclusion of Roop in her husband's life. Her ultimate decision, her last move to get her husband to notice her was death - *"Sometimes we choose to die because it is the only way to be both heard and seen."* (p. 460) She knew that after her death, she would become an indispensable part of Sardarji and Roop's lives and that is exactly what happened. Satya's presence permeated through their actions and behaviour.

II. Roop

Roop, a young girl of sixteen, who was married to a man more than twice her age to pay off her father's debts. She is deaf in one ear and often hides the fact so as to not spoil her prospects of getting married. She lives only to marry and to do 'what women are for.' She is an obedient daughter, a dutiful wife – but she is also ambitious. When the prospect of marrying Sardarji came into the purview – she stated *"then what is one more woman in a house where there are fifty people?"* (p.111) She was well aware of the fact that Sardarji had another wife but that did not deter her from marrying him at all. Roop modified her outward appearance and behaviour to appease all those around her – be it her father, her aunts or her husband. She had always suppressed her inner rebel but her breaking point first comes when her daughter and son are taken away from her and given to Satya. The agonising pain that came with the separation of her children from her, was not hers alone. The pain belonged to all those women who were and are the victims of the patriarchal set up – a set up where the children belong to the father and they can do whatever they please with their children ; a set up where the woman who bears them is discarded as if she is of no consequence.

Satya's death brings about a tremendous and incomprehensible change in Roop. To describe this, Baldwin writes –

“Satya will live on in Roop, the way every older woman who uses a younger one is reincarnated in a betrayed young woman's body. Sister and sister they will truly be, the way they could never be while Satya was alive. Roop will be Satya's vessel, bearing Satya's anger, pride and ambition forward from this minute. She will contain her, woman within woman, hold her within. Like the Gurus, they might be one spirit, different bodies... Roop has changed, is more than her haumai, more than Roop. What Satya's body remembered has been felt for one long moment by Roop's and it will simmer, waiting for some day to boil.” (Baldwin, 326)

Roop, who gets caught amidst the violence of the partition, fights back the panic and terror she faces and searches for her family who is dislocated during the rampage of the riots. Her mind, as if speaking for all of mankind, reiterates –

“We are each alone, though a crowd of quom might mill about us, little sister. Always, each woman is alone.....women abducted, mutilated, always by them – never by us. Men etch their anger upon woman-skin, swallow their pride dissolved in women's blood.”
(Baldwin, p 431).

PHYSICAL VICTIMIZATION

The vulnerability of women, which is brought out powerfully by Baldwin in her novel by focusing and blending the personal with the political and the individual with the historical. The separation of these women can be looked at as the separation of India as a country, Sardarji thus being the representation of the British who divided the Hindus and the Muslims in India. The partition took a toll on all of the characters in the novel. Sardarji surrendered his office in Lahore to a Muslim man who was the newly appointed chief accountant to the 'Pakistan Service of Engineers' and left for New Delhi to be with Roop and his children. Lahore had become equivalent to hell for them. Roop travelled first, with her children to New Delhi, along with her maid servant and driver. She feared of dying young *'without ever reaching Delhi, about to be raped, mutilated like the woman whose breasts were cut off, or made to recite the Kalima'* (Baldwin 421) Roop's internal monologue shows her utter disgust and frustration –

“Is this the India we fought for? She is like a woman raped so many times she has lost count of all the trespassers across her body. Who will now rescue and pyre the bodies of my quom? What use now to be Hindu, Sikh, Muslim or Christian, what use the quom, the caste, the compartments that order our lives?” (Baldwin. P 422)

She waited for her husband everyday, witnessing bloodied trains from Lahore. She heard news of several women and girls being raped, several Sikh girls being forced to dance before mosques or naked Muslim women being forced by Sikhs to dance in the compound of the Golden Temple in Amritsar and she could not bear it anymore. She wanted to scream and say

“See me, I am human, though I am only a woman. See me I did what women are for. See me not as a vessel, a play thing, a fantasy, a maid-servant, an ornament, but as Vaheguru made me... If a man does not lay claim to my body, the country will send someone to do so.” (Baldwin. 436)

Only on the eighth day of her wait, she saw her husband emerging from the crowd. Later he says – “ *We must all keep our strength, keep our tears for bigger losses. This is only the beginning.*” (Baldwin. 438). Kusum, Roop’s sister in law who was found with her limbs severed at each joint and her womb ripped out, is another tale of a atrocity by the quom. It was first apprehended by her husband, Jeevan, that the Muslims had done this –

“...we will stamp your kind, your very species from existence...this is a war against your quom....we take the womb so that there can be no Sikhs from it.” (Baldwin. 447)

Later, it was discovered that it was Kusum’s father in law who had done this in order to protect the sanctity of their quom who is heard saying –

“Everyday I had been hearing that the seeds of foreign religion were being planted in Sikh women’s wombs. No, I said: I must do my duty.” (Baldwin. P 455)

Kusum, had apparently, submitted to this willingly for the ‘respect of her community’, representing the millions of women in whose life their priority is to follow their father’s, husband’s or brother’s orders.

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CONCLUSION

We rarely think about the general population dislodged amid Partition as workers; all things considered, when new fringes are drawn, at times you end up in another nation without leaving your home. Be that as it may, 69 years prior, people—especially women—who moved over those new lines were liable to unbelievable savagery, viciousness as appalling as any looked by other, progressively remote. Savagery that is everything except hidden away from plain view today. Individuals left their homes to settle in the "right" country—Muslims to Pakistan, Hindus to India. These were choices made at the absolute at the last minute, when the fantasy of mainstream presence and decision in the issue had vanished behind dangers and seeing bodies. In any case, they got themselves dubious about where they ought to go, and which land has a place with whom. In the perplexity and the subsequent conflict, it turned out to be certain that there were sections of land and sections of land of farmland, houses, cash, dairy cattle, and in particular, women prepared for taking.

Women comprising half of the population stay at the focal point of defenselessness amid savagery rules, be it public brutality, asylum to different countries, predicament in their own nation, repatriation and notwithstanding amid resettlement. On parcel of India, women turned into the most exceedingly terrible exploited people in the hands of opponent gatherings as they were isolated from their families and much of the time even from religion. Before segment women were bound to the outskirts of homes with practically no dynamic portrayal in political and monetary circles of the country. Be that as it may, they were viewed as vaults of respect of the family just as of the network. Any disrespect to them was looked at to make embarrassment the male individuals in the network and disfavor to the network in the public eye. Subsequently, so as to mortify different networks, women and young ladies

were focused on the loose. Women lost their spouses, kids, moved toward becoming casualties of snatching, assault, attack, coercive change and marriage, marched stripped and were offered as endowments to companions like physical wares. The bosoms of women from different networks were cut, genital were inked with mottos like 'Pakistan Zindabad' or Islamic bow moon by Muslim evildoers and 'Jai Hind' or Hindu trident by partners on Indian side. The moms were attacked before their girls and the other way around. The desolation of seeing the precious ones biting the dust because of lack of healthy sustenance, infection and battle, dread of losing home, effects, nobility and personality destroyed women. There have been various instances of respect slaughtering where spouses executed their wives, and fathers murdered their little girls to counteract their abuse by different networks. The women themselves bounced into wells in gatherings and tossed themselves and their young lady kids in flames to escape kidnapping and assault by the foe. Oneself slaughtering of 96 women of Thoa Khalsa is heartshaking of such rates. Indeed, even Mahatama Gandhi went to state that 'women must figure out how beyond words a hair of their head is harmed'. He applauded the pre-emptive suicides as indications of solidarity and praised the passings of Hindu-Sikh women in a discourse in 1947. The information accessible from various sources uncover that 75,000-85,000 women were snatched on the two sides.

Urvashi Butalia, a feminist historian of the Partition, described the violent treatment of women during the upheaval:

“Some 75,000 women were raped, kidnapped, abducted, forcibly impregnated by men of the ‘other’ religion, thousands of families were split apart, homes burnt down and destroyed, villages abandoned. Refugee camps became part of the landscape of most

major cities in the north, but, a half century later, there is still no memorial, no memory, no recall, except what is guarded, and now rapidly dying, in families and collective memory.” (Butalia, 45)

There were rumors about dismembered bodies, trains loaded with heaps of breasts, screams from mosques and temples. And women weren't only brutalized —they were encouraged to commit suicide, because death was better than being raped by someone of the “wrong” religion. Both communities asked women to kill themselves before they were “sullied”— before their reproductive capacity was given to the enemy. The logic was simple: kill oneself for patriarchy, pro patria.

In patriarchal and primitive social orders, women are quite often observed as the bearers of culture and “respect”. Customary, moderate South Asian culture fetishises women to such a degree, that, while the official line says they are held in high regard and respect, in established truth, they are dealt with essentially as vessels of that respect, and their lives are compelled to be organized around saving that. They are not permitted to do whatever bargains those standards, while men have a lot more liberated rule without a similar weight.

Partition uncovered this profoundly rooted misogyny in the most fierce design. Whenever Muslim, Hindu and Sikh men needed to render retribution for their companions being executed by the other, they intentionally went out hunting down women of different religions to assault and hijack. At the point when towns were faced with irate baying hordes, the women were advised to end it all by hopping in the well for their very own advantage instead of fall in the grasp of the other, heightening extremism on all sides, and this was much of the time communicated in a fight by besmirching women's respect.

Second-and third-age Britons have to a great extent proceeded onward from those occasions. Pressures do erupt once in a while talking about history (particularly on exchange gatherings or even Wikipedia). However, the development of a dish South Asian subculture in Britain over the 90s (to a great extent driven by music and a common media) guaranteed that youthful Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were continually scouring toward one another, striking up kinships and fashioning connections in manners their folks would not have. At college, covert between religious connections are overflowing.

In any case, darker society are lamentably effectively controlled by bigots. The reviving cry that "your women are enduring an onslaught" is utilized even today as a sureshot approach to get instigators aggravated up. Closer to home, the Hindu Forum of Britain as of late asserted in a few paper articles that Hindu and Sikh women were as a rule coercively changed over to Islam without delivering a solitary case the police could examine. The Midlands-based Sikh Awareness Society has been blamed for making comparative cases. Additionally, there are referred to instances of Muslim young ladies being compelled to conceal with a hijab or niqab by their folks, normally with the view that men would somehow or another go after them.

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