



Study of Historicity in the Bapsi Sidhwa's ice candy man

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Abstract

Bapsi Sidhwa, the world-renowned Pakistani Parsi, has now earned an enviable place among the literary circles for herself. She has shown that, far from being a conspicuous place for her creative mind, her minority status as a member of a small Parsi community in Pakistan gives it plenty to appreciate its creativity. During his time talking about "Candy Ice Man," Bapsi Sidhwa had a first-hand experience of the partition in the book *Ice Candy Man*, in which he tells the dramatized actual partition tale. Bapsi Sidhwa discussed fictionalisation in an interview with Mayank Austen Soofi. "Although I frequently do not know where the facts stop and fantasy start, the doctor recommended that I shouldn't be saddled with a school, because of childhood polio. Fortunately I had no light teachings, I fabricated biographical aspects in the former section of *Cracking India*. Lenny may not be my alter ego."

Key Words: Bartered, Cataclysm, Diaspora, Fundamentalism, Postcolonial Perspectives, Subaltern eyes, Partition Trauma, Violence.

Introduction

Bapsi Sidhwa, a Pakistani writer from Parsi currently living in the United States, may now be regarded as a renowned commonwealth fiction name. Born in 1938 into a Parsi business family in Karachi (India undivided), Bapsi Sidhwa was educated in Lahore. In her right leg, she developed polio. Because of this, her youth passed more with her home workers than the local youngsters. She moved with her marriage to Bombay, but after just five years she returned to Pakistan. Bapsi Sidhwa wrote in Pakistan to fill the intellectual vacuum of her life, after her second marriage to Noshir Sidhwa. Four books and one adaptation may fit this slot. *Water* is the print version of Deepa Mehta's *Water*, which is the four books of the movies *Crow Eater* (1978), *The Bride* (1984), *Ice Candy Man* (1988) and *An American Brat* (1999). She settled with her spouse in Houston, USA. Sidhwa was Pakistan's first English writer to gain worldwide recognition. There was no particular tradition of both women's writing and



English literature when Sidhwa began writing. She has been recognized as the pioneer in both areas. As R.K. Dhawan and Novy Kapadiya stated, she was astonished to write before she became a writer. As she said to David Montenegro, she "never thought humanely of the writer but rather as some incarnated force that produces novels mechanically." Just after she encountered an Afghan lady on an airplane inadvertently and she identified herself as an author, Sidhwa understood that authors are very much flesh and blood people. She was motivated by this Afghan lady to write. Sidhwa authored a brief article that was published later. When she was invited to Northern Pakistan, a turning moment in Sidhwa's life occurred. Here she heard about a young Punjabi girl transported over the Indus River to be married to a tribal of Kohistan. For whatever reason, the girl hurried away from there. Her husband sought her out and killed her with other tribals in his region. Back in Lahore, Sidhwa was continually hunted by the killing of the innocent girl, the bride. She wants to make this girl's tale known to the world. She thought of writing a short tale but her experiences were so vivid and fascinating that it turned out to be her first book.

Bapsi sidhwa's partition beliefs:

The article plainly states that Muslims and Pakistan suffered during the partition. Jinnah was unjustified by the British Government and Nehru was supported. Here, the writer expresses his personal conviction in the divide. The author likened Nehru to Jinnah. She dislikes Nehru in contrast and supports Jinnah. The writer portrays Nehru as the sweetheart of Lady Mountbatten. Writer aims to show that the British and Nehru took advantage of Jinnah's good nature and personality in the allocation of territories at the time of the division and did injustice to him. The Partition had a manifold impact on the life of the subcontinent; it signalled the breakdown of the bonds of love and peaceful existence as well as the failure of the inter-community networks to resist the bloodshed. It had an intense impact on the relationship of various classes, to see Partition mainly as a matter of religious or communal conflict is to ignore the working of power dynamics in the subcontinent and the material forces shaping all the history in general. The violence also represents a crisis at the level of man and woman relationship. Throughout the history, the violence done to women is the natural corollary of any religious, political or cultural conflict. As a Pakistani nationalist writer, Sidhwa has tried to expose the politics of the dominant western or Indian tradition of thought that arraign the trio- the Muslim community, the Muslim League and Jinnah- for the



troubled waters of the history of the subcontinent. Sidhwa tries to correct this prejudice or bias of the historians towards her country, by pointing out the constructed nature of the history of the sub-continent devised by the dominant power structures.

Jinnah's description of character by Bapsi sidhwa:

Jinnah is ranked as a constitutional man by Sidhwa. "His education at the Old Bailey and experience in the English courtrooms has confidently placed his misguided expectations in the high standards of honest judgement." The writer claims Jinnah has been attacked by UK and Indian academics in films on Gandhi and Mountbatten's life and in books. "Jinnah, who had been known to the Hindu-Muslim Unity Ambassador for many years, is suddenly presented as a monster. In support of Jinnah, the writer makes explicit remarks by Lenny, the novel's narrator. There are several examples throughout the book, when Jinnah is defended by the writer. Sidhwa cites Jinnah's speech as a secular nation, declaring Pakistan. She originally saw the book as a vindication of Jinnah. "And in Ice Candy Man, I simply felt in a little sense that a lot of Indian and British authors had done a very serious disservice to Jinnah and Pakistanis. They have dehumanised him and made him a symbol of the kind of individual who created the division of India, where he was, in fact, the only constitutional guy to sway people simply by words.

Literature being the bearer of cultural significance is essential in order to fully understand a particular time period in history along with historical documents. History is assumed to be the upholder of factual accounts of past events and is marked with objectivity. But there is not a possible way for historians represent the objective and unbiased report of events. They generally pick and choose the facts they want to present and assign meanings behind those chosen facts. While artists and writers are considered to be more alive to what happens around them. Indeed, they respond much actively to the contemporary situation.

A lot of literature has been written on the Partition of the sub-continent. The dominant trend of fiction at that time was realism. The fiction writers were more actively responding to the riot-ridden contemporary situations. However, many of the writers projected Partition by presenting carnage scenes of bloody partition, and focused much of the demented hatred between Muslims and Hindus. Historians generally agree that literature represented Partition better. For example, Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, in their book *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy on South Asian History*, enunciate that "The colossal



human tragedy of the partition and its upholding consequence has been better conveyed by the more sensitive originating artists and writers---for instance in Saadat Hasan Manto's short stories and Ritwik Ghatak's Film ---than by historians".

Many writers, both Pakistani and Indian, have written on partition in their literary works. Most prominent among them are Saadat Hasan Manto, Khushwant Singh, Malgonkar, Bapsi Sidhwa, Anita Desai and Amitav Ghosh. Saadat Hasan Manto (1948) in *Siyah Hashye* (Black Borders) presents the unbiased and realistic picture of Partition, because his narrative transcends religious and communal differences. He is not concerned with people's religion, their beliefs and rituals. Instead, he looks upon them only as human beings. Khushwant Singh's (2012) *Train to Pakistan* untangles the violence that erupted during the time of Partition. Manohar Malgonkar's (1965) *A bend in the Ganges*, explores the revolutionary violence, that broke out in the colony that was employed by the colonised nation as a political strategy to achieve their political goals of freedom.

Ice – Candy Man

Sidhwa's *Cracking India*/Ice book *Candy Man* is classified as one of the most genuine and remarkable novels in the Indian subcontinent, according to reviewers and writers. Lenny, the kid narrator is a lame 8-year-old Parsi girl with her parents who live a lavish life in Lahore in the period of fighting for independence that results in partition. Her physical handicap made her introverted and a sharp observer in her own environment. Her travels are restricted to her God-Mother, Warris Road, where she resides, and Jail Road. She feels lonely and also unhappy because because of her handicap she is unable to explore the world. She has been treated and bedridden for days. Col. Bharucha, after a month, her surgeon allows her to take a walk outside her home. Shanta cares after her routine, her Ayah. Shanta, Lenny's 18-year-old Hindu Ayah has a magnificent physique and captivated fans. Lenny tells Ayah about it as a brunette and small chocolate lady who is "eighteen years old, round and dull" In the garden or in the zoo, or somewhere, every evening, 75 Ayah brings Lenny out to make her fresh. This is where the attraction of "ayah" is seen by Lenny and enjoyed working with her admirers - the Hotel Cook, the Gardner, Sharbat Khan, etc. Even the beggars, religious men, elderly men and many young men adore her womanly elegance. But of all, the Ice Candy Man is the most enthusiastic. He is a Muslim street seller who has a range of responsibilities for readers. He is sometimes an Ice Candy vendor, sometimes a bird vendor, sometimes a



heavenly connection to God. Lenny's knowledge of politics and the present scenario is very impressive.

Conclusion

Bapsi Sidhwa as a Parsi writer brings out the drawbacks and foibles of her community as well as the dominant community. Her novel *Ice-Candy-Man* can be seen as giving voice to the Parsi Community that is marginalised and silenced community in the Partition discourse as well as the history of the two postcolonial nation states. *Ice Candy Man* offers us an idea of chaos during partition on the Indian subcontinent. It distills the love-hate connection between the Hindus and Muslims via Lenny, an exceptionally bright eight years old Parsi girl, awareness and perspective. It highlights the problem of Parsi's loyalty to the masters of politics and Parsi-view Pakistan's of the party. In addition to challenging English and Indian interpretations of the subcontinent's history, Bapsi Sidhwa has produced a different version of history based on the prevailing Pakistani viewpoint. Bapsi Sidhwa has really brought to life the spiritual, emotional, and actual consequences of the partition of India via *Cracking India*.

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