

Beyond Humanity: Revisiting the Ethics of Body Politics and Violence Against Women in Partition Literature

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Abstract

The literary, historical, political and cultural stories of the partition which have been created by writers demonstrate that women, regardless of their cultural and religious backgrounds, were the worst affected by the recently recognized India-Pakistan border in 1947. The time period saw numerous forms of violence against women, regardless of any feeling of community. It has been a negative tradition to target all pious things for abusing, and revenging. Women have been regarded as a soft corner for all human beings. The bodies of women have been recognised as a notable tool for abusing and misbehaving. kidnapping stripping, making naked, rapping, deforming, cutting of breasts, engraving with religious symbols, and finally killing of women on the name of creed were witnessed in a great number which was the consequence of partition. The research work intends to give a complete analysis of the values and symbols of women's breasts by drawing on the ideas of Judith Butler and Michel Foucault on power politics. Many literary, cultural, historical, religious, and political texts have used the period as their backdrop. The rhetoric of mother India was framed out of chaos and violence particularly against women and generally against the mass. As a result, it is considered as a movement having wounded breasts as a metaphor for border crossing and as a terrible testament to the history of Partition, endangering the stability of the country. The world witnessed the worst partition in the history of the world. The paper attempts to examine the Partition massacre by focusing on and comprehending female corpses with scratched breasts as abject who break the bounds of normative society and show its flaws in light of Julia Kristen's abjection theory. The values, ethical considerations, political ploys, and communal sensibility presented in this piece may be seen as a terrible repudiation of a brutal decolonization process and as an occultist for feminist resistance. The misery and sadness of maimed women's bodies are used as an illustration of the dialectic between history and the body by authors like Bapsi Sidhwa, Bhishm Sahani, and Khushwant Singh. There is the development of breaches of women's rights.

Keywords- Maimed Breasts, Misbehaviour, Atrocities, Rape, Kidnapping, Partition, Violation, Cultural diversity, Religion, Literary History, Politics, Gender roles, Subjugation, Violence, Community

The present study examines the novel *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa. It focuses on the rhythmic expression of nationalism and communal disharmony excised during 1947. Authors writing about the partition sensibilities demonstrate how women from all racial and religious origins were primarily impacted by the newly constructed barrier between two countries in 1947. The highlights particularly the sexist assaults against women that have occurred on this historic occasion. According to a study has only recently focused on the predicament of women refugees during the 1947 partition which present a very horrific concerns about the refugees and other people who migrated thinking their reliogon and community par excellence. Women were kidnapped and subjected to numerous rapes, mutilation and forced Marriages or conversions by men from other communities—are matched by the treatment of the women kidnapped in national hands. Unquestionably, the patriarchal communalism dialectics' takeover of women's bodies is a direct cause of sexual crimes against girls and women. Women are portrayed in the novel as sexual objects and cultural symbols that support racial and sexual violence.

Ice Candy Man awaits his sisters at the railway stop in Lahore during Partition Communal Disputes. He yells, "Everyone's dead!" after the train leaves Gurdaspur carrying the bodies and breast sacks of mutilated Muslim women. All of them are Muslims. There are no young women among the dead. There are only two gunny bags filled with female breasts. The mutilated breasts can be considered, in nationalistic terms, a declaration that the enemy's community is intended to be removed, but not the so-called "six" according to Menon and Bhasin: "If they amputate their breasts at once they disagree with a woman, and they deny her as a wife and mom" (44). Ranna, the protagonist of this tale, also recalls the events surrounding the Sikhs' abduction and assault of countless women, including his mother and sisters, as well as his escape and arrival in Lahore.

They slaughter all Muslims. Putting fire in the middle of communities and mosques, plundering and displaying Muslim women naked in the street—rape and mutualise them. [...] There is an awful hunger, the bodies pulled up in curves. Ranna was assumed dead by the rioters, taken in a lorry full of dead bodies to the Mosque, the spectator of" guys who were copulated with mourners—old and young women. He noticed a naked woman hanging her head down from a ceiling fan, the pale Kashmiri skin damaged with violet and slashes. [...] jerky males set fire to their lengthy air. He saw kids taken from their moms, struck down walls and savagely raped and killed their hurling mothers.

This made-up passage mimics a real list of crimes committed against women during the partition riots by Menon and Bhasin, including stripping, flaunting nakedness, slander, breast tattooing, branding, and use of the patriotic cries "Pakistan, Zindabad!" and "Hindustan, Zindabad!" Since the terrible historical incident, writers and artists of both sexes have written about the kidnapping, murder, and carriage transportation of women's bodies.

The novel presents sensibilities which were emotionally uncontrollable. The bodies of women were treated like commodities for revenge and humiliations. They had to witness the bags with maimed breasts. Ayah becomes the victim of Ice Candy Man's most heinous abuse despite the fact that he is allegedly in love with her. This cruelty inspired him to commit acts of violence against Hindu and Sikh women. By enslaving her sexually, compelling her to convert to Islam, and forcing her to marry him, he satisfies his thirst for vengeance. His admiration for Ayah is turned into animosity towards Hindus because he can only see her as a body. He no longer feels like himself. He is captured by her group so he might exact fanatical retribution for his injured pride. After this occurrence, Ayah (when she has a name, she is usually called "nanny") loses any sense of who she is; she is reduced to a Hindu lady who needs to be punished for the atrocities carried out by her society. Her name is always referred to as "nanny." According to Scarry, when it comes to empathy, the distinction between experiencing sorrow oneself and witnessing another person's suffering is one between apodictic certainty and profound uncertainty;

"one hears about another person's pain, but forgets that the trauma that happens inside the person's body may seem to have the distant character of some profound subterranean fact [...] it may seem as distant as the inability to see another person in pain [...] it may seem as distant as the inability to see another person in pain" (1).

According to her, pain is so isolating that when we are experiencing it, we have entire faith in ourselves, but when we see someone else experiencing it, we are seriously dubious. Ice Candy Man cannot feel sympathy for his sweetheart's suffering because he dehumanised her by transforming her into a monolithic Hindu idol. It's also important to note that Ice Candy Man does not become a predator because he feels sorry for the hurt ladies or the suffering they must have through; rather, it's because the violated bodies constitute an insult to his manhood.

Because the male recipients of the message conveyed by the mutilated women's bodies were considered the victims of the community conflict activities, women are not portrayed as victims of the slaughter in Ice Candy Man's national discourse. This line illustrates how the female body is used in patriarchal culture as a social product to be used and discarded as a tool of nationalism and retaliation. Because the deformed women's bodies were seen as messages between tribes, he doesn't see Ayah as a person, but rather as a message that needed to be returned. This contradictory occurrence could only happen because he viewed the damaged bodies from a patriarchal perspective, that is, as violent action against women assumes semiotic value rather than corporeal value. Women's bodies act as signals rather than the crime scene, so men reproduce the carnage in every town.

As Roy writes, women become "with wins against the adversary, written, recorded and glorified in their bodies", (72) the worst victims of civic struggles. "Women's sexuality signifies 'manhood'; its violation is a subject of such shame and disgrace that it must be avenged," Menon and Bhasin added. Nevertheless, with the brutal logic of all such violence, the ultimate consequences are women" (43). The violation highlights the role of women as objects in men's conceptions of their honour because women's bodies are solely seen as beneficiaries of a man's honour. Simply put, Ice Candy Man's masculinity was violated in this unfortunate situation.

Women were trapped in a narrative in which sexual assault was a type of shame comparable to social death and made the victim yearn for her own physical death due to the deeply ingrained concept of purity that reinforced nationalist rhetoric regarding women's purity and defilement, according to Menon and Bhasin's writing, "the notions of shame and honour are so deeply internalised" (46). Martín-Lucas was of the opinion, "In the Indian subcontinent, violations in conflict situations have taken place massively since the first war of division between Pakistan and India in 1947 [...] according to a common patriarchal assumption that women's bodies are a repository of the men's honour" (54). Women were kidnapped from their houses during the communal turmoil during the partition, many of them were assaulted, and occasionally women committed mass suicide in their entire family. Women committed suicide because they believed that in order to preserve their family's honour and avoid sexual rape, they had to stay virgins.

The narrative appreciates the child Ranna that "the women of his household are going to pour kerosene and burn themselves, rather than confront the brutality of the mob" (210). Nandy claims that Indian women represent the country and construct Mother India's speech, making them the guardians of men's respect for their bodies. Rape entails violating traditions because they are viewed as the recipients of the nation. As Pandey says: "a woman's rape is similar to the violations of the community she belongs to." (105). Their familial sacrifices to preserve the reputation of the Community exposed them to yet another form of violence. However, those who were dead and still unable to stop rapping must be referred to as "dead women." They were brutalised against their families as well. Most often, their families disowned them and sent them to recovery camps, which the young narrator Lenny perceived as prisons in her conversation with Hamida; "Why were you in jail?" Finally, I inquire: "It isn't a jail, Lenny's baby... It is a camp for fallen women" [...] "Are you a fallen woman?" "Hello, my fate!" (226) groans Hamida, slapping her forehead. It shakes on its heels, and it sounds insane, sucks and expels the air between its teeth." Hamida re-incarnates the woman's function, a lady with children, but her family is unwilling to return home because of her abduction and rape. As Menon and Bhasin said, "The conviction that protecting the honour of a woman is necessary for sustaining the honour of the man and the community was so powerful and broad that a whole new system of violence came into being, both by males and their parents and by women and their sisters" (44). Thus, two forms of violence that interact within and between the family and the community have an impact on women. The combination of two forms of violence on one body (the symbolic

site), according to Menon and Basin, is described as “a continuum of violence in which one's relatives had died on one side and males of the other group were violated and brutalised; on the other.”

Along with Ayah's numerous anonymous, mangled bodies, infected organisms that cross boundaries also appear in the story (national in the case of corpses sent in trains from one side to the other, and ethnic in the case of rapes by members of the other community). These women are abducted and raped, turning them into despicable bodies as a sign of social dishonour. “The same patriarchal order which identifies the body as a symbol of the lineage and purity of the community will classify a whole group as unclean and contaminated, once outsiders rape women,” explains Sarkar. Women's bodies are exploited because the 'polluted' body is distinguished and not more helpful to its cultural pureness symbolic characteristics. Godmother clearly explains it in the novel; “They cannot withstand the fact that other men are touching their women” (227).

The needy are “threatening rigid frontiers and causing strong anxieties of dirt, pollution, contamination, and defilement” (Jay, 146). When our imagination disintegrates, and the abject becomes a physical menace when we are propelled into the world of abjection since our identity system, and conception of an order has been broken up. The abject is situated at the edge of two stances. It is “not abandoning or accepting a prohibition, the rule of law, but rejecting them” (15). Identity, systems, and order are threatened by the root of abjection. These scenes rework Kristeva's conception of the oppressed in the context of nationalism, particularly the prostituted and raped body of Ayah, which symbolises the overarching manifestation of oppression and corruption that society and its agents of power, who are a part of the family microcosm, must conceal in order to preserve their core identity.

Judith Butler provides a comprehensive viewpoint on corporeality in her ground breaking book "Bodies that Matter," which is connected to the social regulatory processes that are typically controlled and defined by the organ: Regarding the restrictions on sexual discourse; “The persistence of the body, shapes, and movements of it, will be entirely material for it. But the effect of power, as the most productive effect of power, will be reconsidered in materiality” (2). On the other hand, Foucault used the idea of governmentality as an explanation for the shift from biopower control, which is essential to the welfare, care, and security of the populace in a given region, to oppressive government power. He also used this idea to explain how governance and forms of government work. Power is also oppressive and deductive in addition to being disciplined and creative. According to Foucault, identity is an established political system with boundaries that are well-defined and mechanisms to control what is allowed to enter it. So long as their symbolic order is in danger, societies have a tendency to reject and control abjection in order to attain their national identity.

According to Kristevan theory, dirty, fuzzy components—like the mutilated breasts, which are typically associated with breastfeeding and milk production—are penetrating the borders of a regulatory society, exposing their susceptibility and corruption. The issue is that since the abominable is more overtly present in community conflict, national and individual identities are constantly at danger. The politics of corporeality have become complex as a result of nationalist discourse. Theoretically, while constantly creating, managing, and disciplining the bodies of regular women, the women's imagination has communicated the nation's abstract concept. During this process, Ayah and Hamida's bodies are also marked in terms of their race, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. There is no doubt that the female body, symbolising the language of nationalism, becomes a transitory object.

Sidhwa, according to Zaida and Zafar, is an area that is contesting the war for triumph by symbolising community abuse on female bodies. The Ayah and Hamida rapes, in particular, illustrate the antagonism between the two groups that deport them and automatically designate them as unclean and uneasy, respectively. However, Ayah's fate is ultimately not sealed. Ayah left the rehabilitation camp for women who died and went back to her family. Thus, the novel uses the Ayah nature, a source of resistance, to have therapeutic conversations about the deplorable. Ice Candy Man is refused by Ayah when he appears to repent and follows her to the frontier where it has been recovered, and what is generally thought of as "polluted" is recalled from a feminist viewpoint. According to Chinking, “the social stigma of rape makes a raped woman unmarried, disrespectful and traumatised for life in society. In other circumstances, women

become unacceptable to their families” (4–5). Even though it goes against the taboo against the fallen lady, Ayah is nevertheless accepted by her family and refuses to get married. The familiar victim, the polluted woman, now has a female organ that rejects a life of penance in favour of asserting its original authority. Sidhwa suggests turning the prescription on its head. This achievement can be seen as a feminist conflict. Butler stated this in his research on resistance and vulnerability, “Butler says that if we also state that the vulnerability to dispossession, poverty, insecurity and harm that constitutes a precarious position in the world itself leads to the opposition, we seem to be reversing this situation” (2016: 12). In addition, “mourning has dis-authorising consequences on the national and sexual grieving matrix,” according to Mr Athanasios. The end of Ayah's storey is an act of removing the loyalty device associated with grievance politics and the discourse formativeness that makes women as mothers stand in the nation's idealised pain.

However, it's important to remember that a lot of women or suppressed people are still on the hunt for justice. Victimised women would be raped, tortured, persuaded and horribly traumatised. They will experience physical harm because they will never accept their family because they are demeaning and angry symbols. Their family reject them every time. Since it deals with the need for restoration and rebirth following personal and societal trauma in 1947, spiritual and human healing continues to be a major component of all efforts for social justice. Through specialised measures for reconciliation, healing can be achieved by implementing human concerns. We must prioritise seeking restitution for the injustice done to these millions of women and their families, but we must pay it more attention. The obstacles women encounter in the creation of the nation-state are highlighted by the treatment of women who seek justice. Through the narrative of common peasants who record the vocabulary of the brutal dishonour of women, speaking at that time by many guys from both communities, Sidhwa decodes the dialectic of culture and body in India. Sidhwa seems to believe, as Butalia suggests, that the custom of sharing memories of the subcontinent's separation will inspire both older and younger generations to revisit its history. Most importantly, it may motivate people to resurrect their “interwoven memories” by exchanging forgotten pieces of their “storey” to finally bridge the increasing gap between conflicting ethnic groups on both sides of the border.

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