

Failed Protection: Literature's Criticism on the Partition of India

by

McCaulay Joann Singer-Milnes

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for graduation with Honors in English.

Whitman College
2014

Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis by McCaulay Joann Singer-Milnes has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in English.

Gaurav Majumdar

Whitman College
May 14, 2014

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my adviser, Professor Gaurav Majumdar. This thesis would not have been possible without his constant support and feedback. It was an honor to work with him, and I am grateful to him for always challenging me to refine and press on my arguments throughout the writing process. I would also like to thank Professor Shampa Biswas for serving as my second reader and providing invaluable suggestions, as well as inspiring me to approach literature from different perspectives. I would like to thank my friends for their support, wisdom, and laughter, with a special thank you to Ali Murray who was the ideal thesis buddy and spent countless hours writing next to me at our dining room table. Finally, I would like to thank my moms, who in addition to being sources of never-ending encouragement, taught me to love literature, and for that, I am forever grateful.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iii
Introduction	5
Chapter One: “There are as many versions of India as Indians”: The Postcolonial Subaltern in an Independent India	15
Chapter Two: Migration, Memory, and the Myth of Majority Status	63
Chapter Three: Conclusion: Resisting the Partitioned Self	102
Works Cited	107

Introduction

The term “partition” denotes a clean, calculated division in which “a thing separates one part of space from another” or “the action or process of dividing into shares or portions; distribution among a number” (OED). The definition suggests a logical and mathematical process, despite the more violent root, “partisan,” or spear, indicative of the cutting and splitting necessary “to divide results in multiples of equal portions.” In light of that, the division of India in 1947 into India and Pakistan, known as “the partition” is, in many respects, an imprecise term. The partition was an attempt to find a compromise between a myriad of competing interests and political powers in response to rapid decolonization. A political separation and reconfiguring of national borders guised under a measured term such as “partition,” fails to account for the destruction and chaos that occurred as a result of the political decision a select number of individuals made; a decision that would go on to shape the past, present, and future of multiple nations and the individuals who occupied them. The partition led to widespread fragmentation within both public and private spheres, as people became detached from their shared communities, histories, and memories. India and Pakistan, as nation-states, existed as portions or parts, but the people within them responded to fragments, searching for the lost “whole.” Despite this longing for wholeness, violence associated with hybridity within the nation continued to produce tension between majorities and minorities, only to perpetuate interpersonal, inter-communal, and international violence on a catastrophic scale.

There were four primary architects, Lord Louis Mountbatten, Mohandas K. Gandhi, or Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, behind the decision to partition, though the level of support for the final decision varied among these influential men. The men represented different interests evidenced by their philosophical approaches to decolonization and nation-formation, in addition to the actions they took to either resist or reinforce the colonial presence of the British Raj. Lord Louis Mountbatten was appointed the viceroy of India in 1947 and charged with the responsibility of orchestrating the British Raj's swift exit from India. The British powers emphasized the rapidity of the decision, and subsequent implementation, rather than the quality and predicted consequences. Prime Minister Clement Attlee, believed "the transfer of power must be made as soon as possible—peaceably if possible, with the rights of minorities protected if they could be, but above all quickly, and absolutely" (Morris 1). Though chaos was not an intended outcome, the absence of the time necessary for careful, deliberate attention to detail essentially functioned as such. Unlike those who attempted before him, Mountbatten was commanding in presence and action, and despite his unbending loyalty to a swift timeline, worked with Indian leaders to fulfill Prime Minister Attlee's lofty goals of protection.¹ This protective claim involved a desire to keep India undivided as the primary goal of the negotiations and, in the worst-case scenario, at least facilitate a nonviolent separation.

Gandhi, although powerful in the talks preceding partition, was perhaps most influential in the movements demanding the end of the British Raj and Indian

¹ "The Raj was to end not later than June, 1948, when complete power would be handed to Indian successors" (Morris 1).

independence. His resistance work took the shape of “three major campaigns.” In the 1920s, he organized “the non-co-operation movement,” in the 1930s, “the civil disobedience,” and in the 1940s, his work culminated in “the ‘Quit India’ movement” (Guha 137-138). In addition to the practice of nonviolent means of resistance, the non-co-operation movement, which followed the method of the Swadeshi movement of the early twentieth century, involved boycotting the British Raj’s governmental, educational, and judicial initiatives and policies (Kumar 5). Arguing for home rule in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi articulated his philosophical approach to these movements precipitating independence stating, “real home rule is possible only where passive resistance is the guiding force of the people. Any other rule is foreign rule” (Gandhi 143). The Salt Satyagraha, a march to the sea to protest the Raj’s control of the salt industry, was the cornerstone of the civil disobedience period (Guha 138). These protests led to the ‘Quit India’ movement in which Gandhi called for the British to leave India. Gandhi addressed the All India Congress Committee on August 8, 1942 expressing the ‘Quit India’ resolution. In the speech, in addition to demanding independence and a peaceful relationship between Hindus and Muslims, Gandhi also stated, “Congress is unconcerned as to who will rule when freedom is attained. The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it placed in the entrusted” (Gandhi). This idealistic expression of an unmatched desire for long awaited freedom also contains a sinister foreshadowing of the events to follow. Passion masks the logistical needs of nation-formation. While “the power” may “belong to the people of India,” this assertion not only fails to identify political representatives, but also, in hindsight, does not account for the complexities behind the qualities necessary to be

included in “the people.” Given his influential role in demanding independence, when it came time for discussions with Mountbatten, he served less as a direct political player so much as a source of symbolic support and advice.

Jawaharlal Nehru was the more prominent political representative for the Congress party and some historians claim he was also the individual closest to Mountbatten. Unlike Gandhi and Jinnah, Nehru identified as agnostic, and in many respects, was the “politician” of the group (Morris). On June 3, 1947, Mountbatten “discussed his proposals for the partitioning of Bengal and the Punjab with [Vallabhbhai] Patel and Nehru [...] secur[ing] the consent of those two leaders”;² a controversial decision for its insularity, this meeting upset the Congress party and Gandhi referred to it as “a moral failure” (Inder Singh 229-230). However, this eventual concession to partition in June of 1947 does not accurately represent Nehru’s personal turmoil and early resistance to the proposed plan he received on May 10, 1947 (Tinker).³ Nehru responded to Mountbatten’s plan in a letter, stating, “Indeed [the proposals] produced a devastating effect on me [...] the picture of India that emerged frightened me. In fact, much that we had done so far was undermined and the Cabinet Mission's scheme and subsequent developments were set aside and an entirely new picture presented— a picture of fragmentation and conflict and disorder” (Nehru). Thus, despite Nehru eventually

² Vallabhbhai Patel was considered “second in command to Nehru” and would go on to serve as India’s “Deputy Prime Minister” (Khan 24).

³ Historical accounts of this event on May 10, 1947 vary, and representations of Nehru’s involvement and actions range from statements claiming he was not aware of the new plan, he was in favor of the new plan, he was aware and deeply opposed to the London plan Mountbatten revealed, or he was resigned to partition but opposed to the amendments to the formerly agreed upon plan (Tinker 351).

agreeing to the partition, the decision came at a great cost to his conscience and required he sacrifice his views for the sake of a compromise in which he did not believe.⁴

Nehru would go on to serve as the first Prime Minister of independent India. He remained cautious regarding brewing nationalist sentiments leading up to and after the partition. Articulating this distrust of nationalism in 1953, Nehru stated:

A more insidious form of nationalism is the narrowness of mind that it develops within a country, when a majority thinks itself as the entire nation and its attempt to absorb the minority actually separates them even more. We, in India, have to be particularly careful of this because of our tradition of caste and separatism. We have a tendency to fall into separate groups and to forget the larger unity (Nehru 307).

The relationship between majorities and minorities in nations was not only the asserted motivation for the partition but continued to be a defining issue. The division between India and Pakistan was the result of the desire to create two nations in order to provide separate majority status for both Hindus and Muslims. However, Nehru's resistance to the exclusionary nature of nationalism six years after the violence of the partition suggests that despite the desire to avoid communal conflicts by creating more majorities, tensions stemming from power-dynamics between populations within a nation persist despite national restructuring.⁵

⁴ Nehru preferred a compromise that consisted of "provincial choice" rather than partition (Tinker 353).

⁵ Nehru favored "pluralism" over divisive nationalism, resisting these sentiments prior to the decision to partition (Khan 86). He emphasized the necessity of a united resistance to the British and resented the Muslim league for its emphasis on separatism (Khosla 19). However, his direct resistance to the nationalist factions of the Congress and the Muslim League eventually faded. In an interview in 1960, he identified the waning struggle against partition, stating "we were tired men and we were getting on in years... The plan for partition offered a way out and we took it" (Khan 85).

Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League and proponent of the two-nation theory, worked to provide Muslims in India with a separate nation in order to protect them via majority status. He resisted the Congress Party, viewing them as a group with primarily Hindu interests and called for protection of Muslims through a more divisive plan than the one the Congress party and British colonial powers favored. He addressed the majority and minority tensions between Hindus and Muslims within the political sphere in his Presidential Address to the Muslim League in 1937, asserting that “no settlement with [the] majority community is possible, as no Hindu leader speaking with any authority shows any concern or genuine desire for it” (Jinnah). The absence of compromise functioned as an inevitable effect of the asserted insurmountable differences between Hindus and Muslims. This divisive rhetoric encouraged a mentality of fear, mistrust, and aggression between majority Hindu and minority Muslim populations, overshadowing former commonalities derived from a shared past and the nuances of locality. Jinnah called for action, rather than relying on change to come from a party he believed did not represent Muslim interests.⁶ Addressing the Muslim League in Lahore in 1940, Jinnah escalated the separatist movement, emphasizing the inherently distinct categorical identities aligned with Muslim and Hindu belief systems. He suggested “the real nature of Islam and Hinduism” is that “they are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact different and distinct social orders,” adding “the Hindus and

⁶ “The Congressite Musalmans are making a great mistake when they preach unconditional surrender. It is the height of [a] defeatist mentality to throw ourselves on the mercy and good will of others, and the highest act of perfidy to the Musalman community; and if that policy is adopted, let me tell you, the community will seal its doom and will cease to play its rightful part in the national life of the country and the Government” (Jinnah).

Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures [...] they belong to two different civilizations which are based on conflicting ideas and conceptions” (Jinnah). Jinnah articulated the core principles behind the two-nation theory, suggesting Hindus and Muslims were fundamentally different. Religion became the primary factor influencing all other components of local and global decisions. Pakistan, the compromise, ensured the entanglement between religion and nationalism would persist not only within its borders but India’s as well.

Although the escalation to independence persisted for decades, once the men agreed to partition, the British evacuated the country quickly; they took only seventy-three days to leave after over two hundred years of colonial occupation in India. While celebrations of freedom took place in the major cities, such as New Delhi, chaos and violence erupted elsewhere, especially the Punjab, as conditions of self-conception and daily life were completely redefined. Morris notes, “As the British relentlessly cleared their office desks, India subsided into anarchy. Eleven million people abandoned their homes and moved in hordes across the countryside, hastening to the right side of the new communal frontiers” (Morris 5). Basic corporeal safety became a distant memory, as people took to violence and migration en-mass, fearing all who did not conform to the newly set standards of community—nationalism linked to religion. Despite the joys associated with independence from the colonial power, the event remains a dark period in history as an estimated 200,000 individuals died; the death toll, while catastrophic, does not reflect the millions who lost their homes and the other forms of violence including rampant sexual assault and kidnapping (Morris 6).

Benedict Anderson defines the nation as “an imagined political community—
imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of
even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or
even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”
(Anderson 6). Anderson’s definition of the nation as imaginary remains consistent with
the negotiation process Mountbatten, Gandhi, Nehru, and Jinnah carried out in order to
determine the new conceptions of nationhood. The artificial process behind the decision
to redefine borders becomes a source of unparalleled power. The power derived from
imagining the nation actually surpasses the denotations of the word “imagined” because
in order for the nation to exist, that which is imagined must be enunciated and translated
into action. Therefore, in recognizing the nation, it becomes essential to identify whose
imagination is the source of the commonality. There will be inevitable deviations among
individuals because of this subjective process, but at some point the generalized
conception must shift from subjective imaginings to the widespread, accepted “truth.”
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” addresses the
peripheries and margins within the nation, and thus, while not asserting voice, points to
the location of silence in nationalism. Examining subject formation in a conversation
between Foucault and Deleuze published as “Intellectuals and Power,” Spivak identifies
those she considers “doubly subaltern,” and calls for the consideration of “the margins
(one can just as well say the silent, silenced center) of the circuit marked out by this
epistemic violence, men and women among the illiterate peasantry, Aboriginals, and the
lowest strata of the urban subproletariat” (Spivak 37). Therefore, when considering the
nation as imagined, it becomes equally imperative to consider the “silent, silenced

center,” or those who are excluded from the process but feel its effects. Considering the limited number of individuals who had input regarding the decolonization proceedings, the subaltern status migrated from the periphery to apply to the masses in reference to the political power necessary to influence India’s future.

The role of voice also influences the redefinition of relationships to the imagined nation, as filiations and affiliations became increasingly muddled and intertwined. In Edward Said’s “Introduction: Secular Criticism” to *The World, the Text, and the Critic* he articulates the difference between filiation and affiliation in relation to the critic. Said defines filiation as “the culture to which critics are bound [...] (by birth, nationality, profession)” and affiliation as “a method or system acquired [...] (by social and political conviction, economic and historical circumstances, voluntary effort and willed deliberation) (Said 25). Said then extrapolates on these forms of connections, and aligns filiations with that which is “natural” and affiliations with “culture.” He claims “institutions, associations, and communities whose social existence was not in fact guaranteed by biology” increase connections formerly offered by natural, biological processes, but now exist as “affiliation” (Said 17). By articulating a distinction between the two, he establishes an acquisition process that involves starting with filiations and graduating to affiliations. Basic forms of identification evolve into nuanced forms of belonging, suggesting the filiation to affiliation process is a product of time, and the transition, a singularly directed product of experiences. He further identifies filiations as “involving obedience, fear, love, respect, and instinctual conflict” while “affiliative relationship changes these bonds into what seem to be transpersonal forms—such as guild consciousness, consensus, collegiality, professional respect, class, and the

hegemony of dominant culture” (Said 20). Collectivity replaces individual instinct; however, though assigned and chosen allegiances shift, the distinction between that which is natural and that which is cultural are arguably capable of mixture or at least less rigid separation during certain points in history. By evoking affiliations as distinctly “transpersonal forms,” Said suggests the individual identification with the nation is not a transindividual experience.

The partition challenges this separation between private and public identification as shifting borders and nation-formation resulted from political decisions that then influenced the local and individual. Furthermore, as the “hegemony of dominant culture” split into multiple hegemonies and cultures linked to multiple nations, the individual association to nation became a product of both filiation and affiliation. Thus, rather than the progression from filiation to affiliation, the partition caused certain regressions and combinations redefining the manner in which people conceived of their identities in order to accommodate a desire for majority status within the nation. Those who chose to stay in India, or what became Pakistan, instead of move to align with religious based conceptions of the imagined nations, complicated the alignments with the nation-state by making them a product of choice rather than birth. Furthermore, those who were forced to migrate because of these changes experienced an externally perpetuated form of this confusion of filiation and affiliation.

In 1882, Ernest Renan addressed the defining qualities of a nation in a speech entitled “What is a nation?” which was later translated in 1939. The speech addresses the various commonalities believed to be the defining factors of nationhood. These include

race, language, and religion. Renan resists defining the nation solely according to these categories, approaching his definition with a certain fragile awe, stating:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past and one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, an undivided form (Renan 19).

The nation exists beyond the present. It depends on a connection to the past and a collective investment in the future. Devotion to these two ideological components of the nation, while articulated in and ignoring the period of rampant imperialism, applies to the decolonization process and subsequent decision to partition India. The rapidity with which the decision was made reinforced a perspective fixated on the present needs of a nation but failed to recognize the second component of the “soul or spiritual principle,” namely the bonding power of intersecting, community-based memory. The partition required a separation between past and present because the political sphere positioned categorical identities, specifically religion, as the motivating “desire to live together” which then necessitated a “divided form” before an unified one could exist. This parceling of land and community, provided majority status to individuals who were previously denied it, but did so through forced dislocation and a firm resistance to memory’s ability to connect. Literature addresses the subtler practicalities that become equally, if not more, important in the process of nation-formation.

With different conceptions defining what it means to be a nation amidst the daily realities of seemingly unprecedented violence, literature depicts the claims, both implicit

and explicit, that patriarchy, locally and globally, offers to a population. Assumptions regarding patriarchal protection differ according to individual position within society. Factors related to religion, class, education, location (rural or urban), and gender, affect the presumed protective status of an individual in addition to the fulfillment of said claims. Therefore, majority or minority status becomes significant in creating a sense of a security within the imagined context of the nation and the insular familial unit. The texts I will explore often position protective claims for individuals within the family and nation as distinctly patriarchal, suggesting the participatory capacity of individuals in nation-formation, resistance to violence, and generalized assertion of voice are dependent on all categorical identities but must particularly overcome the “doubly subaltern.” Silence, then, both reinforces and resists protective claims within public and private contexts.

I will analyze how literature portrays these initial claims as well as potential violations, through texts addressing or set during the partition. By working with these texts, I explore the similarities in Indian and Pakistani responses that both precipitate and result from failed protective claims, leading to emotional and physical harm, suggesting that politically dictated irrecoverable differences may be the products of divisive rhetoric rather than fundamental truths. In a time of shifting and blurring distinctions between filiation and affiliation, voice becomes particularly imperative, and though historical and political narratives recognize the failures of the events surrounding partition, literature says what they cannot simply by locating instances of silence without claiming them as singular points of enunciation. Thus, texts create a dialogue with history and produce alternative narratives, ultimately revealing that, despite claims to protection based on

majority status, majority and minority power dynamics shift and persist if silence remains.

In addition to engaging in this dialogue, literature also has the potential to subvert the dominant historical narratives that define collective public memory utilizing educational and political systems. This domination results in a form of imposed repression stemming from either the withholding of information, often the case in the political sphere, or the manipulation of information, possible through the education system. Thus, literature, in interacting with historical events such as the partition, collapses the possible division between Althusser's Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatus. Althusser positions education as the new primary tool of the Ideological State Apparatus (replacing the Church). Therefore, Althusser implicitly links history, an essential component of the education system, to the power and repressive capacity inherent to this State Apparatus. Literature critiques history by offering alternative narratives surrounding the accepted facts. Despite the fictional qualities that would appear to limit this challenge to the widely held association between objectivity and history, literature, by resisting objectivity, critiques other subjective forms of canonizing, recalling, and communicating the past. Thus, literature intersecting with history insists upon a similar repressive impulse, of arguably equal force and consequence, between both forms of Althusser's State Apparatuses.

Literature's ability to convey a sense of the local and private experience in isolation without positioning itself as the voice of the subaltern allows it to convey subjective experiences that challenge the oppressive memory of the elite ruling classes. The insistence on multiplicity in experience and account challenges those who enforce an

unrepresentative historical record. Therefore, literature also suggests that the “elite ruling classes” who use repressive forces to maintain the status quo keeping them in power, achieve a mental violence through the manipulation of a public memory for the nation that is then taught and internalized by individuals. Thus, the effects of the partition extend beyond the more immediate corporal violence and loss through migration, suggesting trauma persists through a subtle repression perpetuating over-determination.

While these aesthetic responses to history have the potential to function in a similar repressive manner to historical narratives by lapsing into speaking for the subaltern, this protest does not function as appropriation or exploitation of trauma because the critiques emphasize the existences of alternatives rather than making claims to providing “the alternative.” Form conveys a sensation of pain while not directly reproducing the trauma of partition. There is a sense of loss and absent “wholeness” within the form, which conveys sensations and impressions associated with fragmentation and lacks perpetuated by longing for a “whole,” but the subjectivity of the individual experience with trauma remains intact. Thus, the texts, in interacting with, rather than reproducing, the partition, convey pain without insisting on uniformity, as such, critiquing the historical and political narratives that perpetuate an objective façade through denial of trauma or enforced common experience in recalling trauma, both conveying an impulse to seal a “singular” past to influence a silenced memory.

The first chapter will focus on texts addressing the partition from an Indian context and will include analysis of Anita Desai’s *Clear Light of Day*; *The Weary Generations*, an Urdu novel by Abdullah Hussein; and Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*. The second chapter will address texts from a Pakistani perspective. This

chapter will include Intizar Husain's *Basti*, Saadat Hasan Manto's *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*, and Sara Suleri Goodyear's *Meatless Days*. The third chapter will serve as a conclusion and demonstrate the manner in which the partition continues to haunt India and Pakistan, as well as, literature as contributor to nuanced and variant memory. Together these chapters will demonstrate the discrepancy between claims to protection and the actions that accompany them within the public and, more private, domestic spheres of nation and family. Patriarchal hierarchies often govern both the nation and family, and therefore, dominant male figures make claims to protect those within their domestic domain. However, just as the partition was offered as a form of protection through the creation of majority status for multiple populations based on singular forms of categorical identities, these promises at both levels of the domestic often perpetuate oppressive hierarchies and power-dynamics, thus, limiting agency and mobility of individuals unable to participate in, or benefit from, the protection process.

“There are as many versions of India as Indians”: The Postcolonial Subaltern in an Independent India

Indian independence is perhaps more accurately described as the independence of India; only the nation in its most imagined form experienced this release from oppressive colonial controls. Independence, while a source of hope due to the possibility of a new beginning for the nation and its people, was primarily an act of political freedom, allowing individuals with previously established power to reap benefits not available to all. Despite the freedom associated with the British Raj’s removal from India, and the end of direct colonial oppression, the effects of this oppression did not vanish with the colonizers. Therefore, it becomes important to identify other, more subversive, forms of suppression within the nation-state, which often manifested themselves in more local, private contexts, such as the family. Subjugation exists as long as subjects and power dynamics persist in a society. Furthermore, when this mixture of power, oppression, and the individual remains, claims to protection do as well. Though many, particularly Muslims in favor of Pakistan, viewed India as the home of majority power, especially in relation to the Hindu majority, India also represented the myriad of manners in which majority-minority tensions can arise beyond a religious context.⁷

⁷ A sense of underrepresentation within the Congress party contributed to this feeling of isolation as a religious minority. However, this was not an early, or immediate, development during colonialism, as “the alienation of Muslims from the Congress had obviously not united them or made them supporters of the League by 1939,” a date many historians cite as representative of a cohesive, decided Muslim unification (Inder Singh 44). On March 23, 1940, Jinnah voiced the “Pakistan resolution” (Inder Singh 56). He identified the “geographically contiguous units [...] demarcated by regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute Independent States in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign” (Jinnah). This discrepancy between majority population and the absence of sovereignty produced this sense of marginalization for Muslim minorities in India.

Literature representing the partition from a mainly Indian perspective depicts the suppressive nuances within India surrounding the partition. These instances of oppression often occur within the family, suggesting that when silence for an individual, or group, does not exist on a national scale, it may be present on a private, confined level. Pakistan was not the only location for problems associated with minority status, and “the two-nation theory brought the problem of minorities into greater prominence than ever before, and partition, instead of offering a solution made it even more difficult and complicated” (Khosla 219). Problems associated with the absence of voice suggest issues of gender and generational differences serve as the foundations for unbalanced power within the familial unit. Thus, while family members may observe the same filiations, they still differ according to interpretation, eventual affiliations, and level of agency available to them based on other sources of oppression. Thus, just as borders do not guarantee a communal collectivity, bloodlines, though encouraging assumptions of homogeneity, do not naturally translate to the peace that actually stems from a respect for difference.

In addition to discord within the same externally observed categorical identifications, India remained a nation marked by mixture. The creation of Pakistan did not mean the complete alignment of Muslim and Hindu populations according to the new nation-states representative of their supposedly collective and faith-based interests. In considering the borders that would divide India, the fact that “no matter where the lines of demarcation were drawn, there would be Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs on either side of it,” remained an irresolvable issue (Khosla 219). Thus, externally asserted claims to protect individuals subject to various minority statuses, whether nationally or on smaller scales, became means to exert control and reinforce divisions among groups based on

categorical identities. Gandhi, delivering a speech in November, 1947, called for tolerance and coexistence within India, using rhetoric that simultaneously recognized hybridity and reinforced tensions between the majority Hindu and minority Muslim populations:

India belongs both to Hindus and Muslims. You may blame the Muslim League for what has happened and say that the two-nation theory is at the root of all this evil and that it was the Muslim League that sowed the seed of this poison; nevertheless I say that we would be betraying the Hindu religion if we did evil because others had done it. [...] It is the basic creed of the Congress that India is the home of Muslims no less than of Hindus (Gandhi).

Though he articulates a message of coexistence from his position of power, Gandhi does so from the perspective of Hinduism, and thus, given the increasing association between nationalism and religion, enunciates his call for tolerance from a place that is inherently divisive. Though intention and message remain significant, given the political origins of the partition, the categorically polarizing context of the message was possibly more alienating than inclusive.

Thus, in addition to locating the silent center, or peripheries, it is equally necessary to locate those with a voice amidst the more pervasive silence. Voice is often characteristic of the dominant patriarchs either within the family or nation, or both, and used to assert claims to protect those in the silent peripheries. The claim to protection, however, can further suppress the subaltern, as those with a voice make claims to a possession of greater knowledge, using it to silence others by articulating their needs or

conditions. Protection, as a form of oppression, exists despite majority or minority status within the nation, thus indicating similar power-dynamics on smaller scales. While India may have gained independence, many Indians remained part of various silenced majorities, and literature, while not protecting through replacement of voice, depicts these supposed vestiges of a colonial past, and thus, assists in locating these less-considered instances of marginalization within the greater context of the inter-national and inter-communal violence associated with the partition.

Anita Desai's novel, *Clear Light of Day*, sets the internal dynamics of the Das family against the backdrop of not only pre and post-partition India, but the greater national debate regarding the tension between modernity and tradition as well. Discord dominates the text as individuals united by bloodlines, and the filiations that accompany birth, oscillate between various displays of majority status, voice, and power. The text uses dissonance to challenge partition as solution and India as distinctly "postcolonial." Individuals within the same family—supposedly united by fundamental belief systems according to the politicians observing the two-nation theory—disagree on essential issues. Furthermore, there is no substituted source of unity, as siblings and members of the same generation approach issues affecting the private and public with varying perspectives, thus offering often-incompatible solutions. The text resists the myth of unity surrounding partition, as inevitable hybridity overshadows and complicates even the most fundamental of similarities. In addition, the silence associated with colonial oppression persists, especially within the private familial unit. The suppression minorities endure exists within the nation as subaltern status is relegated and deflected from the colonized to specific subjects within the redefined nation-state. Thus, the text suggests

the promised political changes as well as the connotations of independence, were perhaps unfulfilled assertions, as individuals remained oppressed and unprotected.

Patriarchy is often the source of protective claims; however, the politics surrounding the partition disturbed the emphasis on family over the more generalized categorical community causing some men to privilege protection of their “kind” over their kin. The preferences regarding the paramount level of patriarchal protection underwent a shift that occasionally caused disagreements between generations. In *Clear Light of Day*, nostalgia surrounds the hierarchical and patriarchal familial structure, as men from the older generation believe their offspring are not correctly adhering to duties reserved for male family members. Bim’s uncle laments these shifts, recalling days past when his sisters were “begging for protection,” a practice that “if it was only a custom [...] we [the men] at least meant it,” unlike his own sons who refuse to work because they find it “degrading to speak to [...] clients because they are Punjabis, from Pakistan, and don’t belong to the old families of Delhi” (Desai 33). Protection is a tradition, positioning it as an idealized relic of the past. The past refers to an era prior to the partition, suggesting ritual, protection, and the family superseded the causes associated with the nation when colonialism may have prevented national belonging. Bim’s cousins prioritize the façade of loyalty to India over their economic responsibilities as male providers within the family. Furthermore, their loyalty is not only nationally insular, but specified even further to “the old families of Delhi.” Their allegiance contains a hint of irony as they claim to preference protection of the family, when they ignore their own in practice. In both past and present situations, there is the suggestion that men may not actually

fulfill their duties associated with entrenched patriarchy, but their intentions relate to different forms of the domestic.

The younger generation, at least rhetorically, privileges national over familial filiations. In *The Politics of Home*, Rosemary Marangoly George argues “the discourses that construct ‘home’ in the contexts of colonialism and postcolonialism suggest that ultimately both affiliations and filiations are learned, created, recalled and/or forgotten in everyday history (George 17). Bim’s uncle both supports and contradicts this theory of common artificiality between filiations and affiliations. He constructs the patriarchal duties in a manner that, while admitting their artificiality stemming from the performative aspect inherent to the claims, also suggests the intention behind the performance is the result of natural filiations. The disagreement regarding loyalty to the family over the community suggests filiations necessitate artificiality because in times of strife these connections demand choice, and thus, cannot remain natural sources of agreement or alignment. Despite the connective filiations stemming from their shared biology, the men prove the fragility of presumed filial connection, and sameness, when politics emphasize artificial deviations, creating borders between people in addition to nations. The father who spent the majority of his life in a colonial, pre-partition era, values the family (arguably the location of voice when the nation would not afford him that power); his sons value the microcosm of the nation over the even smaller domestic space of the family.

Within the Das family, father and son disagree over the need to fear the constructed “Other;” however, unlike the previous father-son dynamic, the younger generation chooses affiliation over filiation, failing to understand the source of his

father's claims to protect him from the unrest leading up to the partition. Thus, the text suggests that age, and more particularly, the dynamic between tradition and modernity as it relates to generations, disrupts uniformity in thought or action. Though generally absent from the home, the Das family patriarch fulfills his traditional and stereotypical claims to protect his family because of an afforded, both economically and politically, knowledge regarding the brewing divisions between religious factions within Delhi, and India as a whole. When Raja, his son, wants to pursue a degree in Islamic studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, his father prohibits it. He admonishes Raja for his naiveté, insisting, "if you, a Hindu boy, are caught in Jamia Millia, the centre of Islamic studies—as you call it—you will be torn to bits, you will be burnt alive" (Desai 52). Raja's father presents this surprising information in an unforgiving tone. The threat of violence and the repercussions of Raja's association with Muslims despite his Hindu filiation are essentially non-negotiable. Furthermore, the qualification "as you call it," points to Raja's denial of the connection between his Hindu filiation and "the centre of Islamic studies" as incompatible; thus, his father, who believes the divide between religious groups exists, uses this sardonic and distancing qualifier to undermine Raja's trust in individuals aligning with categorical identities other than his own. Steadfast protective gestures only result from the threat of the public intervening with the private.

Although reinforcing violence based on alignment with categorical identities, Raja's father is not without justification in his desire to protect his son by prohibiting his education at the university. In the months following the decision to partition "New Delhi was in chaos, with constant murdering and rioting [...], throngs of refugees arriving, local people living under the daily threat of death, armed gangs roaming the streets and

thousands waiting in the camps at Purana Qila and Humayan's Tomb to be taken to Pakistan" (Khan 143). In addition to causing this chaotic environment, fear of and violence against "the Other" (within the Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu filiations) served as the reactions to the destruction. The cycle of chaotic cause and effect reinforced previous prejudices and motivated individuals to form new ones. Ironically, and unfortunately, Raja's desire to receive an education in Islamic studies at a university affiliated with Islam, would lead to the spread of education and awareness—the antidote to the hatred of those presumed fundamentally incompatible. Thus, the desire to protect this son functions only within the short term, as it reinforces the larger societal issues that will continue to place individuals' security at risk, rather than working to fix the systemic issues alongside his son, sacrificing short term safety for long term understanding.

Raja, though confined and protected from the threats present in the external world, is not safe in the domestic sphere, either. He contracts tuberculosis and the disease deprives him of his ability to leave the home, rendering him dependent on other members of the family to protect him within this supposedly safer, private environment. The illness, and its physically debilitating repercussions, also silence Raja as protector. Lamenting his confinement, he cries "a dirty towel? A tea-cup," cursing the domestic objects standing between him and "the streets—fighting the mobs—saving Hyder Ali and Benazir" (Desai 59). The specific means of contracting tuberculosis exist within the home and are non-threatening or benign. However, through the ritualistic, daily act of drinking tea or using an unclean towel, Raja contracts a disease that "dethrones" him, limiting him to the home from which they came. Rosemary Marangoly George suggests, "homes are not neutral places," and thus "imagining a home is as political an act as it is

imagining a nation. Establishing either is a display of hegemonic power” (George 6). However, unlike the patriarchal hegemony with which Raja is most familiar, his illness causes a restricting, or perhaps, unveiling of the domestic power structure. When he loses the ability to protect the home, he no longer imagines it, rendering him an entrenched dependent.

As he becomes more ingrained in the physical home through a limitation in mobility, and thus, loses access to the more public spaces that preference the liberation of the male, he comes into contact with the anti-neutrality of the home as space. He no longer protects the home, and thus, cannot exert vocal or physical dominance over it through claims to power via public space. In the essay “Places on the Move: South Asian Migrations through a Spatial Lens,” Bruslé and Varrel note the absence of neutrality in space, arguing “the abstract space described by Lefebvre, that is the dominant one, rules the lives of the common people, who are meant to be ‘silent users,’ who are deprived of the capacity to resist and act” (Bruslé and Varrel 6).⁸ Raja, having previously enjoyed the agency associated with mobility in the public domestic sphere of the nation, resists the incurred, forced “silence” associated with his confinement to the private domestic sphere of the home. Thus, the text suggests similarities between exertion of power within the nation and the home, as dependence in its more overt forms detracts from agency, but

⁸ This dominant, “abstract space relates negatively to that which perceives and underpins it—namely, the historical and religio-political spheres. [...] It functions positively vis-à-vis its own implications: technology, applied sciences, and knowledge bound to power. [...] It sets itself up as the space of power, which will (or at any rate may) eventually lead to its own dissolution on account of conflicts (contradictions) arising within it. What we seem to have, then, is an apparent subject, an impersonal pseudo-subject, the abstract ‘one’ of modern social space, and – hidden within it, concealed by illusory transparency – the real ‘subject’, namely state political power” (Lefebvre 50-51). Therefore, the state political apparatus surpasses the individual in this abstract space, suppressing those who fail to attain mobility or influence within the confines of this subject status.

that same dependence (on the home to support and the nation to sanctify power) is necessary to have a voice.

Raja assumes subaltern status within the home, as his sister, Bim, has the power to silence him, reversing assumed power-dynamics associated with gender. Raja attempts to quell her doubts and frustration regarding her role in the family, only to have her order “Don’t talk” (Desai 67). Bim silences Raja, allocating, albeit temporally, the subaltern status to her brother. Pierre Marcherey claims “what is important in a work is what is does not say [...] a method might be built on it, with the task of measuring silences, whether acknowledged or unacknowledged” (Spivak 81). Sister actively silences brother, exerting power over him, as a means of caretaking and protection. She has a level of agency in the private space that while potentially available in the public, does not come with the same external limitations based on gender. In addition, because this exchange occurs while Raja is ill and confined to the home, it illustrates the physical ramifications of the subaltern status. An externally attributed vulnerability translates to the need for protection. The claims to protection lead to the structuring of an entire system that oppresses women, limiting mobility to supposedly ensure safety. Raja, by falling ill, demonstrates the discrepancy between externally imposed protection and internally necessitated protection. However, the expression of both exists in the same manner: a life within the home. Thus, the text comments on the power within the domestic and the absurdity of body as limiting factor.

Bim does not always maintain this level of authority and voice. Her name, assuming symbolic significance, “timber,” indicates her role as backbone of this domestic structure and the constancy and authority to be the hegemonic power within this specific

context; however, she internalizes certain components of patriarchal claims to protection, suppressing the possibility for agency. Bim possesses the inherent intelligence necessary to run the family business, but because of her gender, the men in her family silence her opportunity to gain the skills necessary to effectively do so. This withholding of skills based on patriarchal notions of protection, and the desire to keep Bim in the domestic sphere, is a further point of contention when the men refute their responsibilities, leaving her in charge without official acknowledgement. Bim expresses her frustration with Raja regarding this hypocritical division between word and reality, as he write[s] sentimental letters and say[s] how he cares” but when it comes to the daily requirements of running the family business she exasperatedly asks, “where is Raja? [...] Raja isn’t there—ever, never” (Desai 154-155). Raja physically alienates himself from his expected familial duties, choosing migration rather than stasis. In this case, moving away is not a response to a violation in a protective claim but the catalyst for one. While Raja may remain the name associated with the family business, his absence leaves a gaping hole within the structure of the family and business. Bim recognizes the issues associated with this, but remains indebted to the imposed restrictions associated with being a woman.

In this instance, Bim’s silence or voice remains dependent on Raja. His name and presence either legitimize her capacity to assume control, or continue to position her as the illegitimate second choice incapable of action. Even if he never addresses the power-dynamic, the inherent hierarchy to the ingrained patriarchal system functions as Bim’s inner monologue. Morris, in her introduction to Spivak’s “Can the Subaltern Speak?” identifies the manner in which “Spivak showed us how and to what extent historical circumstances and ideological structures conspire to efface the possibility of being heard

(something related to but not identical to silence) for those who are variously located as the other of imperial masculinity and the state” (Morris 7). Thus, though this tension stemming from “imperial masculinity” exists within the insular family, it operates in a similar manner to that of the state. By accepting the failed status quo, Bim illustrates the manners in which she internalized the traditional familial hierarchy. Bim delegitimizes her own authority, as Tara cannot believe Sharma, the business manager, would be resistant to working with her, only to have Bim correct her, “He may be [accepting]—but I’m not. I don’t understand the insurance business. Father never bothered to teach me” (Desai 155). Her resistance is not sourced in the present, but rather, a relic of unfulfilled teaching opportunities.⁹ Bim remains confined to the domestic sphere and resistant to certain roles because she adopts this mode of oppression until it manifests itself as personal suppression. She enacts her father’s wishes by failing to fully participate in this economic sphere. She remains uncomfortable with her own capacity for voice.

The mobility reserved for men takes on a physical representation as Bim and Tara try on trousers and assume a freedom not previously experienced. The simple gesture of putting on pants allows for performance as male, and thus, feelings of independence and possibility, rather than persistent hesitance. The pants convey a level of security that causes dependence to fade. The two girls attain a heightened sense of power with each new pant-clad moment:

⁹ These unfulfilled teaching opportunities maintain the gendered hierarchy within the family. By depriving Bim of the training necessary to run the business, her father ensures (intentionality unknown) the public sphere remains at least partially elusive by reinforcing its inextricable association with patriarchy. This divisiveness resonates with the colonial techniques used to suppress the Indian population. According to Page, “The system of control which the Imperial power built up in India reflected the nature of the imperial presence. For a few thousand Europeans to rule the vast subcontinent [...] it was necessary to categorize and to classify; to organize Indian society, albeit largely on its own terms so that the Imperial system was subsumed and validated by Indian society at large” (Page 263). Thus, individuals within the nation and family utilize internalized oppression to maintain the status quo ensuring the current hierarchy allowing them to maintain the capacity to be “heard.”

Suddenly they saw why they were so different from their brother, so inferior and negligible in comparison: it was because they did not wear trousers. [...] Now they thrust their hands into their pockets and felt even more superior—what a sense of possession, of confidence it gave one to have pockets, to shove ones fists into them, as if in simply owning pockets one owned riche, owned independence (Desai 132).

The pants take on significance beyond the symbolic. The two girls characterize their lives by their “trouserlessness,” a state that suggests a lack that leads to feelings of inferiority. Although they attribute the persistent lack to the pants themselves, they fail to directly recognize the correlation between the pants, masculinity, and power. The tone is self-assured and the diction has a gendered connotation associated with male dominance. As they “thrust” and “shove” their actions demand “ownership.” There is a sexual impulse to the deployment of “thrust” and “shove” which coincides with the insertion of their hands into their pockets, suggesting that they are mimicking the male assertion of power through identification with the phallus.¹⁰ The evocation of associations of trousers with political power, “riche” and “independence,” shows that through this gendered performance, the girls are attempting to enter the political sphere generally prohibited to them.

Ownership is reserved for the males with trousers, those who remain unencumbered by undesired, but nevertheless forced, “protection.” The relationship

¹⁰ The aggressive and sexualized diction accompanying the girls’ assertion of power takes on new meaning when considering the sexual violence perpetrated against women during the partition. Atrocities against women became increasingly frequent and “rape was the unspoken fear at the back of many minds by the summer of 1947. [...] The women themselves now became mere shell-like repositories of the new national identities when attacks on them-or threat of attacks – were used to prise families from their homes, to punish, mark out and terrify” (Khan 133). Therefore, pants (and masculine dominance) become sources of protection as well as violation.

between ownership and independence evokes the decision to partition, positioning the four male architects of independence as possessing this intangible commodity and the power it entails. Though Tara and Bim are members of an elite class, they deviate from the expectations George associates with economic privilege when she claims “entitlement is more than class privilege—it is an assurance that comes (or should come) with wealth, education, and the possession of power allotted to domesticated womanhood in patriarchal societies” (George 133). Though the girls exist within a world of economic privilege and have the wealth and education for “possession of power,” they remain without trousers, and thus, this exchange suggests, they persist in society’s peripheries. The entitlement may be more than class privilege but it is not enough to surpass their subaltern status. Hierarchies of voice closely linked to patriarchy within society remain, as even attempts to grant widespread freedom from oppressive forces, like colonial powers, functions as a reinforcement of male hegemony.

When political rhetoric fails to protect and the threat of external, widespread violence becomes an increasingly present reality, certain traditional structures strengthen in a nostalgic grasp to control the chaotic present by reproducing components of the oppressive, but now “superior” past. The nostalgic based responses often result in those who are less equipped for power and control to assume it in name because they reflect the qualities of the idealized father. As the family continues to dissolve and disperse, they look to Baba to assume control as the remaining male figure in the home. The contradictory denotations of Baba’s name reflect the manners in which the family both relies on and subjugates him. Baba can refer to “father” or “a respectful form of address for an older man” but can also mean “a baby, or child” (OED). Baba occupies both states

of “father” and “child” depending on the familial structure and the patriarchal needs of the present.

Desai does not explicitly describe Baba’s developmental disability until the third chapter, making for confusing moments in which expectations of Baba do not correlate with his abilities without explanation. Originally, the family expects nothing from Baba, and they consider him to be “without vitality or will,” a symptom of his parents giving everything “to the other, earlier children,” leaving Baba to fulfill the role of “burden” (Desai 103-104). The negative qualities the family ascribes to Baba, or the lack, suggest he is not inheritor. The association between inheritance and ethereal traits such as “vitality” and “will,” indicates the belief that familial connection goes beyond commonality in physical characteristics. They, in many respects, assume Baba will remain in a childlike state and treat him as such because they ascribe to him the absence of adult—or patriarchal—characteristics. Cindy LaCom argues this infantilization and deprivation of identity is the product of colonialism:

The colonized are only able to “become men,” to establish a national identity in the historical moment of decolonization, through the reification of a new category of monsters—the disabled, the deformed, the mad. To that end, disability designates a docile body upon which nationalist tensions can be arbitrated and against which a rationalist ideology can pull ‘a collection of disparate peoples into a self-identified nation’ (LaCom 141).

Former colonial subjects enact methods of suppression in order to assert their own dominance. Unity finds its foundation in oppression. The assertion of majority power

over the weaker, somehow “lacking,” minority, creates an “us versus them” dynamic, which allows the stronger, more powerful, and more focal “us” to unite as superior. Thus, despite decolonization, the dynamics of oppression and suppression persist; the subaltern, and those who suppress them, however, assume different forms.

Aunt Mira, a woman of limited means, experiences a subaltern status similar to Baba, suggesting gender serves as another foundation in which to assert masculine domination in a “postcolonial” nation. Aunt Mira functions as the exception to this standard approach to Baba, as “she even played with Baba, teaching him games no one else had tried to play with him, thinking him too hopelessly backward” (Desai 105). Aunt Mira, a discounted member of society and a widow of a lower caste, in challenging Baba, treats him with a level of respect generally externally unreserved for people in both of their positions. This respect equates to a larger protective impulse than the one the family provides. Similar to Bim’s father’s refusal to teach her the skills necessary to run an insurance business, a desire to “protect” masks the systematic failure to attribute full personhood to an individual or group of people based on assumptions. Subaltern recognizes subaltern, positioning women, especially those from rural, less economically privileged backgrounds, on the same level of external oppression as those deemed disabled. This connection between disability, gender, and economic status and subalternity recalls Raja’s experience with oppression and confinement due to diminishing physicality. Therefore, the text suggests there is a correlation between the body and agency when considering the postcolonial subaltern.

However, eventually, the text suggests Baba’s masculinity overshadows his subaltern status when the family desires it. The family’s expectations for Baba reach a

different extreme in reference to the business, as they require a level of participation and authority that his maleness presumably denotes, but he cannot provide. Bim subtly pleads with Baba to go to the office, asking leading questions such as “Won’t you go today, Baba” adding “stay if you find it interesting,” his reply consisting of a “smile[...] at the bare tiles” (Desai 10). His silence speaks to the discrepancy between Bim’s needs and Baba’s ability to provide. She must ask because she needs him to fulfill the role of fatherly, “Baba.” Without Raja, Baba is technically next in line to title of familial patriarch, making him responsible for certain economic provisions, despite the family’s treatment of him as child, “baba.” The temporal shifts in the narrative reflect the transient nature of the definition associated with Baba’s name, he is both child and father depending on the context. Yet, he never controls this context, rendering him the product of his family’s projections, and ultimately, robbing him of the ability to speak or be heard.

While in reference to a minor plot point, the line “From this point on, the story line got snarled; rather, it grew into several different strands,” shapes the formal and thematic impulse of *The Weary Generations*. Abdullah Hussein does not valorize or condemn individuals and groups as wholes, rather showing their “snarled” realities, weaving innocence with violence. Categorical identifiers, while pertinent, do not determine enunciation of the “strands.” History becomes mythology, family fluid, and nation the product of the imagination, as claims to protection fail and transcend assumed normative boundaries. No group or individual is exempt from the contradictions in history. Unlike, Desai’s *Clear Light of Day*, the text is mainly anti-urban elite and more male-centric, reversing exploration of both class and gender as they relate to protection,

security, and silence in its various forms. The text juxtaposes the individuals' experiences with India's history, emphasizing the experiential deviations due to discrepancies in class, location, and gender. *Clear Light of Day* catalogues the insular, private experience of one family as they intersect with certain national movements, and thus, their experience with the trauma of the nation remains generally limited. *The Weary Generations*, in depicting "several different strands" is a sprawling narrative that frequently intersects with that of the nation. Therefore, while *Clear Light of Day* demonstrates the problematic nature of claims to protection within the family, *The Weary Generations*, in addition to depicting private instances of oppression, also suggests the nation, as public "patriarch," fails to protect despite the connotations of Independence suggesting it would fulfill these claims.

The "silent, silenced center" assumes different forms in the text, but is particularly prevalent in the interactions between vestiges of the state apparatus, namely the police, and individuals from rural communities. Those in charge of protecting members of the nation are often at odds with those who they must protect; the text identifies certain incompatibilities between interests, and even rules, within communities and those of the state. Therefore, isolated instances demonstrate the divide between government and individuals, and in depicting them, the text suggests the partition was not in the best interests of the collective, but rather, those who previously had control. Therefore, as communities initially band together to resist their superficial "protectors," and the institutions of oppressive power they represent, not only does community surpass loyalty to nation, but subaltern factors considered limiting become sources of power because of the insularity as well. Thus, the text demonstrates the political need for inter-communal

violence by illustrating the manner in which a united community can resist sources of authority.

State-based brutality often elicits silence; however, the silence that stems from physical harm does not always align power with the man holding the *lathi*. The police investigate the source of a stolen cow, and as they arrest certain individuals, they lay “them down on their stomachs and beat them blue with a foot-wide leather strap on their bare backs,” but the accused men endure the violence and “nobody said a word, and no witnesses came forward to tell of the crime” (Hussein 74). The men enduring the physical attack display both resolve and resignation. There is no tonal surprise or disbelief to denote this instance of brutality as unprecedented. The description is monotone, as silent as the men themselves, enduring the beating without question. However, despite the absence of formal incredulity or indignation, which might suggest passive acceptance, by not speaking, the men display a level of resistance. When the norm is a police force with intent to harm, language, or lack thereof, becomes the source of power. Silence as a weapon against institutional violence increases in potency when “no witnesses come forward.” The community serves as the source of protection. This interaction between individuals and the police conjure notions of Althusser’s “Repressive State Apparatus” that relies on violence to assert and maintain authority. However, the individuals resist the repression via superficially mimetic actions. Thus, the text demonstrates the “spatial metaphor” that allows for simultaneous visibility and invisibility, in which “something, makes some thing visible” while illustrating “that the upper floors could not ‘stay up’ (in the air) alone, if they did not rest precisely on their base” (Althusser 6). Therefore, the “base,” or the individuals who use silence as a form of protection, undermines the elite

through the conditions they demand, indicating the interdependence of the presumed one-way repressive relationship.

Individuals facing threat of police brutality also rely on selective silence in order to exert maximum power with limited, oppressed means. When the police confront Mahinder Singh regarding the same stolen cow, his explanations are frantic and almost stream-of-consciousness in his attempt to prove his false innocence. Physical intervention cuts his energetic and overtly vocal testimony short:

The policeman felled him with a blow of his lathi [...] unlike his brothers who had borne the pain in silence, Mahinder Singh began to make a racket. Every few minutes the head constable would give assign to the beaters to stop and ask the boy to tell the truth. Each time he would be answered with oaths of the most foul kind from the mouth of Mahinder Singh (Hussein 75).

While the policeman uses violence in the name of societal protection, Mahinder deviates from the others by remaining vocal instead of choosing silence. Initially, his rhetorical presence appears to be an admission of weakness, perhaps even guilt, as he succumbs to the pain of each blow. However, in this case, the “racket” has a subversive quality similar to that of the collective silence. He replaces the truth the police seek with a greater truth, a “foulness” that exposes their judicial failure as crime. By withholding information, he uses the political elite’s tools against them. In addition to the auditory denotations associated with “racket,” the violence suggests “hard blow, punch” (OED). Each word functions as a blow of resistance to the forces attempting to subdue Mahinder. To assert voice is to assert presence of self and demand recognition.

Occasionally, judicial vestiges of the nation-state are invested in maintaining silence in order to cover up more systemic issues. Denial, through silence or revision of reality (a silence by omission), deflects claims to protection by negating the source of unease. The text demonstrates a mimetic version of the national avoidance of divisive religious contention when the police provide a story that differs from witness accounts. A group of women, “all of them Hindu and Sikh” witness an act of violence that involves crude castration and murder, and as they stumble with “terror peeped out of their eyes” they exert “low moans arising from a deep pain: ‘They finished him. The Muslas finished him’” (Hussein 173). The women exhibit evidence of a guttural, experiential pain that barely elicits a response beyond that of the physical. The trauma leads to a reliance on third person, comprehensive classification. All of the women are “Hindu and Sikh” not “Hindu *or* Sikh,” suggesting classification in opposition to an alternative. In this case, they are defined against “the Muslas,” another instance of generalized grouping based on uncertain individual affiliations.¹¹ Their limited enunciation results in reinforced categorical identities, and thus, religious divides.

The police reinforce these divides as well; however, the definitions adhere to their interests of preserving the image of the state, rather than in defining one group, “us,” in opposition to, “them.” The official description of both crime and motivation suggests:

‘the reality was different, it wasn’t the Muslas, a cow was slaughtered and the militant Hindus flared up and killed Hari Chand when he went to try to

¹¹ While this unity was initially beneficial for communities in order to resist colonial oppression, especially during Indian resistance movements prior to World War I, “After the introduction of the Reforms, however, and particularly after the subsidence of the Khilafat and non-co-operation movements, communal unity gave way to communal antagonism [which eventually] affected the chances of political agreement between the two communities at the all-India level” (73). Thus, it is necessary to consider the scale of communities in question as well as other filiative similarities beyond that of location. They are defined in opposition to the threatening “Other,” and in this case those who threaten the community, the colonial powers, but as the focus shifts so does the notion of “the Other.”

calm them.’ All this had happened in ‘some other village’ whence the body was brought back and dumped on his doorstep. Why was he circumcised? Because he was considered a ‘sympathizer’ of the Muslas (Hussein 174).

While the situation’s historical reality remains elusive, the police craft a narrative designed to quell religious fissures, rather than reveal “the truth.” The police, by telling a “story,” further suggest their account lends itself to fiction with a specific agenda for silence. Unlike, “the Muslas” who reserve a categorical identity of their own without nuances, police divide the Hindus between those who are “militant” and those who are not. This distancing move allows the police to place blame on a subset of the religious majority, and thus, avoid the political and communal ramifications of wholesale condemnation. Spatial distance also indicates a desire to preemptively stave off forms of retaliation, as the police relegate the act of violence to a separate, unnamed village. Their final act of silencing occurs when they define Hari Chand as a “sympathizer,” leaving him in a definitional purgatory, and less likely to serve as a martyr. Justice functions as a subjective political tool rather than impartial enforcer of order.

As the threat of inter-denominational violence increases, the police exchange their policy of “light categorization” as a means of avoiding larger issues, to complete reduction of individuals based on religious affiliations. They adhere to what Spivak defines as “the ethnocentric Subject [...] establishing itself by selectively defining an Other” (Spivak 87). However, in addition to defining themselves according to an “Other,” they perpetuate the process within the nation by encouraging a system of defining self according to categories to which others do not adhere. When the police

arrest a fisherman involved in the Amritsar massacre by historical coincidence, they mistake him for a subversive power, asking him for information and “whether [he] was a Muslim or a Hindu, or Sikh or Christian,” to which he replies, “I don’t know. I am only a fisherman” (Hussein 199).¹² The vast overestimation and insistence on categorization suggests a shift in approach to subdual. The need to define the fisherman according to religious affiliation indicates a mistaken belief that this one component of self will provide insight into motivations, and thus, will allow the police to maintain order. The absurdity of this situation becomes humorous, despite the violence that necessitates its existence. The fisherman defines himself according to his livelihood and poses no threat. He insists on remaining vocal, and maintains his ability to speak because his tradition does not fit within the modern modes of suppression. Both identity forms are equally lacking in their depth and nuance, but the imposed externality of one leads to humor while the other is just a simple fact of life, devoid of need for explanation. The text, therefore demonstrates that while influencing communal dynamics, these tensions are artificially perpetuated and dependent on the State’s needs.

Exchanges in patriarchal figures due to violations of protective claims result in complicated inter-family dynamics and a restructuring that conflates filiations and affiliations, suggesting their artificiality. The police arrest Niaz Beg for making guns, and Ayaz assumes the role of patriarchal figure in Naim’s life. This exchange in paternal associations extends beyond interpersonal relationships as Naim must relocate and adapt. The move is not apolitical; Naim moves to Calcutta, physically divorcing himself from

¹² Amritsar represented “one of the worse failures of the civil authorities.” On April 12, 1919, “Brigadier-General Dyer [...] poured 1,650 rounds into a mob in Amritsar, killing 600-700 and wounding over 1,000; he [...] ceased firing only when the ammunition was exhausted. The episode [became] the classic example of barbarous and excessive use of force” (Moon 80).

the association with his father's assumed political motivations as suspected terrorist in the eyes of law enforcement officials. Ayaz does not let Naim forget his sacrifice, and attempts to remind him of his familial ties when they do return to the Roshan Mal: "Our family has been destroyed by such [political] things. I took you away—educated you—put my life's ambition in you" (Hussein 40). Removal and relocation operate as forced migration in the name of "protection." However, this migration does not mean a clean separation from former location. Bruslé and Varrel suggest, "one has to envisage migrants' daily lives within a web of places that may be scattered over several continents. They do not belong to where they *are* but are part of broader global networks of social and spatial relations" (Bruslé and Varrel 4). Naim remains connected to his home, but others do not recognize this association once he leaves.¹³ The rural to urban shift has connotations of imposed progress, and a separation from natural, or even "biologically" relevant tendencies, yet the attributed family value for subversion remains. Ironically, these resistances as familial qualities remain externally perpetuated, considering Niaz's motivations are insistently innocent. In addition, the vicarious nature of Ayaz's attachment to Naim makes him both an object expected to return on the investment, but also an extension of self who must act accordingly. In this manner, Naim's potential for independence is inconceivable until he separates himself from his two "fathers," who silence him through attributed inheritance or imposed expectation.

Naim remains isolated from the communal signifiers associated with his home, rendering him a transient between filiation and affiliation, lacking a sense of belonging associated with space. The men of the community gather at Mahinder Singh's place,

¹³ This recalls the widespread, forced migration that occurred after the partition as individuals struggled to reach the "appropriate" side of the border. Their connection to the former spaces of residence remained, though the nation-state did not recognize this sustained "presence."

dressed up and drinking, ready for a night of ascension into manhood via low-level crime. As a result of Naim's upbringing external to Roshan Mal, the ritual is a foreign concept, allowing the explanation "Juginder's getting his turban tonight," to remain an insufficient clarification because he does not have the communal language necessary for implicit understanding (Hussein 72). Thus, foreignness, even within India, becomes a source of silence. This small instance reflects the linguistic fragmentation and isolation, Benedict Anderson argues was a contributing factor to the conception of the nation: "the fatal diversity of the human language [among other influential factors] created the possibility of a new form of imagined community, which in its basic morphology set the stage for the modern nation" (Anderson 46). A common language, not unique because of its overarching, governing categorization, but because of the communal connotations, indicates belonging. Thus, the community operates as an example of the factors that dictate nation formation. Mahinder Singh's response to Naim's request for symbolic clarification perpetuates, rather than limits, the silence surrounding cultural literacy, by merely adding, "you wouldn't understand [...] this is the world of tigers" (Hussein 74). The syntactical moves in this response makes the "the world" itself a point of exclusion, rather than Naim's status as non-tiger. The insularity is passive making its inaccessibility an inherent quality, rather than a limitation Mahinder imposes. Naim's silence, then, is a systemic one, another consequence of the patriarchal exchange that was supposed to protect him through increased access to opportunities, rather than limiting his mobility within his community of origin.

As the lines between the elite and the general population paradoxically fade and grow stronger, approaches to political power in reference to independence create two

different camps: those who want to exercise control with violent means and those who see resistance as only possibly successful through a lack of physicality, or non-cooperation. Alignment within the text relies on the aforementioned social and political mobility. Naim's education and class, both resulting from his time in major cities, make him resistant to methods he considers animalistic:

We cannot win by adopting the ways of the beast, because it is not just the landowners, but those who own the landowners. And they have big guns. We have only one option and that is to get a million people together and show that we can defeat them by having the population on our side (Hussein).

Ownership is power; property equates to voice, which in turn, provides certain individuals with the ability to instigate silence through economic, political, and physical force. Naim's position becomes one of calculated response, in assuming the people's resources, in terms of potential for violence, do not match that of the Raj, he views the appropriate response as one that deviates from normative expectations of resistance. If the people in power dictate the standards of resistance, they monopolize these methods. Naim's approach, recalling Gandhi's non-co-operation movement and civil disobedience, demands non-violent protest, deviating from the more violent, direct responses of individuals who endured the more extreme forms of subjugation. Caste influences perspective, as one man challenges Naim's response with his experiences, claiming "In my village we ate with other people's dogs. That was the schedule of our caste. You have seen a year or two of war and boast about it. In my twenty-five years every single day was a war to stay alive with respect" (Hussein). The economically inclined Naim fights

the colonial power's war, but lacks more direct experience with the intentional effort to survive with dignity. This "local war" is persistent but does not lead to public status as hero. Thus, the man's skepticism regarding Naim's advocating of non-co-operation stems from experience with the futility of challenging one's conditions without violence. Their interaction suggests there is an internal subaltern dynamic, wherein discrepancies in class and economic mobility oppress.

Just as approaches to resistance vary, the motivations behind the methods are dependent on economic status and previous experience with silence. The relationship between class and political involvement is particularly prevalent within Azra and Naim's marriage. The movement for independence intensifies the urban-rural divide exemplified within their marriage. The trial of General Dyer after the Amritsar massacre becomes an opportunity for Azra to increase her public presence and image. Although she was initially motivated by a passion similar to that of Naim, "by the very nature of the way she perceived such things" her commitment based on conviction was "to be transitory." Once she has her "photograph [...] displayed prominently in the newspapers as being the only woman member of the Congress inquiry committee," she succumbs to "the excitement and 'glamour,'" which quickly fade (Hussein 201). Azra, a member of the political and economic elite in Delhi, does not have the past experience that would give her the insight into all she will gain from independence and lose from the partition. While the possibility of relocation to Pakistan remains a distant notion, power and comfort reassure and reinforce Azra. Her status as the only woman on the Congressional committee is noteworthy, but her approach to the position remains rather vapid and self-serving considering its context. Her callous enthusiasm for the "glamour" is an indirect

form of further silencing the victims. Unable to imagine certain atrocities, Azra suppresses reality with her privileged denial.

Silence and failures in protective claims have physical and psychological ramifications, resulting in the metaphors of cracks and holes indicative of personal and systemic lacks. These words connect individual pain to that of the partition of nation. The physical similarities suggest that while the novel does not establish the family as direct allegory for nation, individuals intersect with the nation through communal “lacks.” This “lack” represents a pervasive weariness, a gradual reduction in voice, and by association, resistance. If resistance becomes a form of masculine assertion and vocal claim for power, gaol represents the gradual reduction in physical capacity to respond to injustice. When Naim leaves gaol, symbols of his masculinity suffer, as he cannot achieve an erection. This discrepancy between desire and physical self, allows a simple occurrence meant to connect to instead bring “back to him the extent of his loss,” and although his “strength in time” returns to him, he is not able to recover “his vitality of spirit” and “he spoke less and less” (Hussein 232). The tone reflects Naim’s lack of spirit, as it is dull and methodical, even flaccid. The reduction in vitality directly corresponds to his ability to speak—as he grows silent so does his desire to live. Furthermore, the gendered representation of the reduction in his physicality suggests he is losing an inherently patriarchal power. His ability to bring life fades with his own. When Azra leaves Naim, she experiences a form of nostalgia when she cannot “imagine his features,” yearning for his “presence” but finding herself “surrounded by holes” (Hussein 265). The inability to “imagine” connects back to this idea of a “lack,” as well as the correspondence between individual and nation. She is surrounded by “holes” because she lacks connection. Just as

the inability to imagine a nation, leads to its non-existence, by failing to project the image of her husband's face, she remains detached from him.

Silence can be externally perceived as either a source of powerful distance or debilitating alienation. By choosing silence, the individual allows for people to use the self as a canvas, inhabiting other's projections without protest, correction, or revision. Thus, even when people interpret the silence as a positive quality such as holiness, the power remains dependent on the individual replacing agency with dependence. Naim demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of silence when he migrates to Pakistan, assuming a muted state indicative of his waning vitality. Rather than maintain his vocal pursuit of non-violence, Naim retreats within himself as he leaves India: "he had not spoken to anyone in all this time. People had made attempts to talk to him in the first day or two, but getting no response, had given up, dismissing him as half-wit, while some women, considering him a man of God, deferred to him" (Hussein 314). By choosing silence, Naim also chooses to succumb to a premature mortality. He only survives through the care of others—those who view him as a man of God, simultaneously projecting their faith and reserving their pity for him. There is no intention behind the silence. He does not withhold his words as a source of power or protection; he fails to speak, thus, submitting to the subaltern status after partition despite national claims to postcolonialism.

In Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* the nation and history exist through re-imagining, allowing the private, familial, and public, national, spheres to intersect. Saleem Sinai, as narrator and India's twin, intersects with history and retrospectively positions his experience alongside India and Pakistan's history, resulting in an imagined

coupling of the private and public narratives of individual and nation. This union allows the text to comment on the imagination behind nation-formation and the subjectivity of history, as dependent of the individual who has the power to construct a narrative based on his or her dominant framing perspective. Subjectivity merges with the supposedly objective as well; Timothy Brennan, in his text *Salman Rushdie and the Third World*, identifies the manner in which *Midnight's Children*, “systematically sets out in discursive fashion all the key historical roadmarkers of the Indian postwar period, inserting them into the narrative like newspaper reports or like textbook lessons in modern Indian history” (Brennan 83). In this manner, Rushdie creates a temporal collage, allowing the individual to surpass the ability to “mirror” the nation, rather weaving together a complex balance of enduring, affecting, and suffering between self and nation. Silence and articulation serve as points of strength and suppression throughout varying stages of the text’s depiction of India’s colonial and postcolonial history. Protective claims are more overt in the family, and individuals adopt methods of protest generally reserved for the Independence movement, allowing nation and family to reflect one another through this simultaneous reimagining process within the text. Thus, language contains an inherent power, as to influence meaning is to influence history and nation. Rushdie relies on form to criticize the nation-state as well as its historical record. The narrative favors hybridity, using mixture to convey the disorienting and chaotic effects of the partition, as well as its intrinsic absurdity. By linking the nation and the individual through birth, the primary filiation, Rushdie demonstrates the manner in which nation, history, and politics cannot exist in isolation, and how each decision has a connective, chain reaction affecting even the most private contexts.

Silence as a form of protest exists within the family and on a national level. The subaltern resists oppression using the quality that characterizes them as such. Thus, silence has the possibility of serving as a tool for resistance to the situation it creates. Moments of political history seep into the narrative, including references to certain aspects of Gandhi's non-co-operation movement:

Leaflet newspaper mosque and wall are crying: *Hartal!* Which is to say, literally speaking, a day of mourning, of stillness, of silence. But this is India in the heyday of the Mahatma, when even language obeys the instructions of Gandhiji, and the word has acquired, under his influences, new resonances. [...] Gandhi has decreed that the whole of India shall, on that day, come to a halt. To mourn, in peace, the continuing presence of the British (Rushdie 31).

The personified leaflets and physical structures do the “crying,” or serve as the sources of enunciation. Despite remaining inanimate, the posters are vocal in their evocation of “*hartal*,” which, in addition to mourning, necessitates the physical action of closing shops. This suggests an action amidst the silence—an intentional, and loud, response to forced silence through controlled economic stagnation. Gandhi's power stems from an ability to manipulate meaning, providing a word with new connotations despite the same appearance in form. Thus, the word “*hartal*” mimics the reconstitution of the act of silence for the purposes of Independence, rather than maintaining the colonial status quo. Gandhi redefines the manners of protection while existing within the institutional framework the British Raj enforces. Despite the reconstituted resistance methods, Rushdie presents the new associations with “*hartal*” as fragments, suggesting the form

reflects India's status under the "continuing" influence of Britain as colonial oppressor. Rushdie's decision to combine casual and more formal language, especially the juxtaposition of "heyday" and "the Mahatma," also serves as a possible critique of Gandhi's power, suggesting no individual, no matter the intention, should have that degree of influence.

Within the family, silence becomes the chosen weapon in a war derived from a disagreement over the patriarchal claims to protection and a perceived failure to uphold them. Reverend Mother uses silence to challenge her husband, but her resistance is often selfish and detrimental to the family's long-term well being. Aadam Aziz and his wife, known as "Reverend Mother" disagree over the appropriateness of hiding Nadir Khan in their basement, each one's opinion influenced by allegiances, either to politics or notions of propriety. In the midst of an argument on the subject, Aadam demands "Be silent, woman" only to be met with a power far stronger than his commands. Reverend Mother does exactly as she is told and "silence descended" creating a pervasive odor "like a rotting goose-egg," with the potential to "over-power [...] everything else" and "possess [...] the earth" (Rushdie 55-56). The synesthetic quality of Reverend Mother's vow of silence indicates its uncanny power. Furthermore, it operates as a localized version of "hartal" in the sense that she adheres to the dominant patriarch's commands, but perverts them in such a way that she subverts the codes intended to suppress her status. Despite the status as doubly subaltern, a woman and colonial subject, she finds agency within an active, personified, stinking silence. With the ability to "possess [...] the earth," her modes of resistance take on violent connotations indicative of a desire for power through

ownership. She conquers the men in the Aziz family by attacking their dynastic indicator, waging an olfactory war.

Although Reverend Mother's "war of silence" utilizes a seemingly non-violent method to achieve her resistance to Aadam Aziz's decision to protect a poet and politician over his daughters' reputations, her tactics also violate paternal claims to protection. Allegedly invading her daughters' dreams in order to monitor their thoughts and behavior, she discovers Mumtaz is in love with the basement dweller Nadir Khan, but she "resolved to do nothing, to keep her silence intact, and let Aadam Aziz discover just how badly his modern ideas were ruining his children" (Rushdie 59). Pride and stubborn commitment to the cause of protecting her daughters, ironically results in her failure to uphold the claims to protection she accuses Aadam of violating. Tradition and modernity collide in extremes. Reverend Mother's rigid devotion to manners of the past is equally detrimental to these traditional "family values" as Aadam's commitment to progress, modernity, and the future. Both individuals occupy a silent present because of allegiances to distanced temporality.

The text also addresses the source of "holes," or lacks, that create vulnerabilities often impossible to protect. Upon returning to Kashmir after attending medical school abroad, Aadam Aziz hits his nose while praying, and as a result, "resolved never again to kiss the earth for any god or man"; his "decision, however, made a hole in him, a vacancy in a vital inner chamber, leaving him vulnerable to women and history" (Rushdie 4). A devotee of modernity and the future, Aadam divorces himself from sources of the irrational and rational, religion and politics, a process the personified land forces upon him. He loses faith in all its possible sources, and in doing so, attempts to distance

himself from the past in which he believed. This act of temporal hubris leaves him vulnerable because he can never separate himself from the past. It constantly informs his present and future perceptions. He works to silence his past, and in doing so, becomes susceptible to history. The hole that remains is a space for nostalgia, a constant source of longing. This hole indicates a life of fragments yearning for “wholeness.” Rushdie establishes a connection between Aziz and the nation, as they both insist on progress at the expense of repressing the past. This selective memory allows the past to haunt the present, as repression works to the detriment of those who deny its inevitable presence.

The family’s curse becomes a cracked existence marred by various holes indicative of collective vulnerabilities that often coincide with those of the nation. Saleem inherits this fragmented self, and it assumes a more physical manifestation: “I have begun to crack all over like an old jug—that my poor body, singular, unlovely, buffeted by too much history, [...] has started coming apart at the seams. In short, I am literally disintegrating” (Rushdie 36). Initially a seemingly grotesque description of the aging process, an exaggerated accumulation of time within the frame of a single body, the description suggests the physical “cracking” allows familial history to intersect with national history. Aadam’s catalytic and cataclysmic denial of history seeps into those who occupy his paternal lineage, causing present decay. The association between Saleem’s simultaneous cracking and disintegration enhances his tie to history by mirroring the partition. The imagined crack separating India from Pakistan results in disunion similar to the gradual fragmentation of Saleem’s self. Although years apart, Saleem reflects the tension between imagining and reality because he feels and experiences the effects of his personal partition, but the source, the cracks themselves,

remain invisible. The land remains whole, but the political, imagined borders serve as fissures, causing widespread destruction, decay, and fragmentation. The connection suggests that those who participated in the process of nation formation were perhaps equally susceptible to, and in denial of, history and the past. Furthermore, the persistence of these cracks decades after the partition, point to an enduring effect on both India and Pakistan, as well as the individuals within the nations.

The men in the family are not the only ones who endure fragmentation; the women divide and create holes to protect themselves, perpetuating the familial trait. In order to survive her marriage and remain a dutiful wife, “bringing her gift of assiduity to bear” Amina decides “to train herself to love” her second husband. The conscious decision to love her husband piece by piece necessitates intention and practice, serving as an unintentional homage to her parent’s past. It is a diligent process that requires “divid[ing] him, mentally, into every single one of his component parts, physical as well as behavioral, [...] in short, she fell under the spell of the perforated sheet of her own parents” (Rushdie 73). Amina takes a synecdochic approach to love, methodically cataloguing each piece of her husband until the parts equate to a whole. This fragmentary process makes their marriage a singular, individual action, silencing her husband. Her observations are private, but the process itself suppresses both individuals. She filters her husband through her perceptions and suppresses her own desires, deflecting by distraction. The presence of ellipses reflects the family’s trademark gaps continuing to influence the present, perpetuating systemic and habitual fragmentation, without the possibility of protection from this inheritance. This process of fragmenting in order to love and create a sense of belonging, also points to the process of redefining the

individual's relation to India and Pakistan after the partition, raising the question of whether it is possible to connect after such instances of imposed partitioning.

Paternal forms of protection vary according to biological relation, quasi-fatherhood, and exchange of patriarchs through marriage. Aadam's relationship with Naseem begins, and in many manners, remains fragmentary because of an initial form of patriarchal protection. Naseem's father maintains a high sense of propriety and strives to maintain her modesty in a town of "many good-for-nothings," requiring she have layers of protection that include "three muscle bound women" and a perforated sheet (Rushdie 19). While the women guarding Naseem appear to be her main source of protection; the perforated sheet is the source of her modesty. By reducing Naseem to segments available for isolated, individual viewing, her father ensures she cannot be violated by making her less whole. Ironically, his form of protection produces a form of vulnerability closely tied to silence. She cannot be fully perceived or influence others' perceptions of her self, and thus, is completely available for interpretation and fantasy. By remaining almost entirely private, she becomes the property of the public that can imagine without an attempt at whole understanding. In this manner, patriarchal protection creates a partitioned self.

Aadam falls in love with Naseem in this manner because he has the power to imaginatively connect her various fragments into an illusionary whole; thus, she exists as a collection of his perceptions. Therefore, when they are married, her silence becomes an even greater and paradoxical tool of resistance because she has always been a product of his imagination, though the subversive consequences were not always present. Her father, then, in attempting to protect her with the "hole" in the sheet, creates the void similar to that of Aadam's susceptibility to women and history. She becomes dependent on men and

religion, while also failing to allow patriarchal codes to interfere with her faith. When Aadam creates “a badly-fitting collage” of Naseem, he allows “the phantasm of a partitioned woman [...] to haunt him,” while she remains “headless because he had never seen her face” (Rushdie 22). Naseem exists in relation to Aadam only through physical pieces and imagined connections of said components. He must interpret his perceptions as whole, but this process ensures she will remain partitioned. He mistakes a synecdochic process for a metonymic one. Just as conceptions of “Pakistan” and “India” during negotiations regarding the partition remained a subjective collection of individual perceptions, Naseem exists through the male gaze; thus, there is corrosive conflict when Naseem in reality, does not correspond to the collective imaginings, similar to the violence surrounding the partition when individuals within the newly formed nations did not conceive of “Pakistan” or “India” in the same manner. Furthermore, without a “face” Naseem remains silent. The use of the word “partitioned” connects woman to nation and comments on the process of partitioning as a form of protection. Assumed to be an inevitable necessity in order to preserve cohesion among Muslims and Hindus by separating them, the form of supposed protection becomes far more detrimental than the actual threat that necessitated it. Actions based on protective claims, both within the patriarchal family and nation, are often more violent than the perceived violations.

Midnight's Children challenges notions of communal protection as divisions in categorical identity result in persecution of innocent individuals who differ from the dominant belief system within a locality. The communal fragmentation often occurs because larger power structures perpetuate divisive mentalities. Those who perpetuate persecution based on differences and those who endure them adhere to more

stereotypical, colonial power dynamics of silence and voice. Communalism as the organization of individuals based on shared beliefs, specifically religion, replaces the notion of community as union based on locality, mirroring the shifts occurring on the national level. Lifafa Das, a Hindu in a Muslim majority local, endures a verbal onslaught as “boys in their school whites” yell “Hindu! Hindu! Hindu,” joined by “the Bengali [contributing]...Mother raper! Violator of our daughter!” and a woman who starts a chorus of “Rapist,” a chant the children take up “Ra-pist! Ra-pist! Ra-ray-ray-pist!” without really knowing what they are saying” (Rushdie 83). In addition to Lafif’s silent response to this verbal attack, silence operates in conjunction with understanding in this scene. The children do not understand the meaning of the singsong chant they voice, but they possess the power to speak by performing discrimination originating in the adult world. The form conveys the rallying cry as one associated with nationalistic pride through the portrayal of the “ra” “ra” quality of the chant. Mob mentality overcomes the need for knowledge or understanding in order to achieve power. The scene also addresses the discrepancies between perception and realities of innocence and guilt in relation to protection and violation. Lifafa is innocent, but the community in failing to recognize this, and uniting in rhetorical violence against him, does not maintain the same status. They, in the name of communal protection of their women and children, are violating such claims. Furthermore, the adults implicate the next generation in these “speakable” acts that should remain unsaid. Thus, they pollute the children’s state of innocence rather than the lone Hindu to whom they assign guilt. The point of enunciation becomes the source of division and corruption in the community.

Given Saleem's intimate connection with the nation, the text addresses the relationship between various institutions of power and silence. Although silence serves as a form of resistance, it is also the source of systemic oppression. Saleem cannot separate himself from the three major forms of institutionalized oppression because he is so closely linked to India:

Thanks to the occult tyrannies of those blandly saluting clocks I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country. For the next three decades, there was to be no escape. Soothsayers had prophesied me, newspaper celebrated my arrival, politicians ratified my authenticity. I was left entirely without a say in the matter (Rushdie 3).

Time demands a permanent relationship between the self and history, which at least superficially, only differs from the reality of all people because of Saleem's awareness of the past's ability to perpetually shape the present and future. Saleem as narrator with a borderline narcissistic tendency to assume the unavoidable connect between himself and history, positions himself as unique because of this forced link to history and time. However, all individuals are equally susceptible to the past, though they may deny the connection. Saleem, deviates in the extremes of this relationship, and because his fate is "chained" to that of his "country," his connection to history becomes more complicated. His lack of agency transcends the inability to isolate his past from his present. His life takes on a sense of multiplicity because he does not have one destiny but "destinies." Thus, Saleem, in interacting with national systems of assumed, though often falsely so, protection (religion, media, government) operates as local, individual, and nation, global.

He, as individual, remains more overtly passive because he must be “ratified.” The power of self-recognition is deflected to “politicos” who also formally sanction the legitimacy of the nation. The form relies on passive construction to imitate Saleem’s passivity in the face of these institutions and his lack of “say.” Saleem, although more overtly connected to religion, media, and government, represents the manners in which these institutions coalesce to suppress populations.

Rushdie relies on form to communicate the inherent presence of multiplicity in nearly all aspects of life—nation, family, and individual. Saleem embodies this hybridity, assuming temporal conditions of the nation and generations before him. As the partition approaches, Saleem begins to list the many aspects of his “inheritance”:

Driven by Padma and ticktock, I move on, acquiring Mahatma Gandhi and his hartal, [...] and I’m gulping down Dyer, moustache and all; my grandfather is saved by his nose and a bruise appears on his chest, never to fade, so that he and I find in its ceaseless throbbing the answer to the question, Indian or Kashmiri? Stained by the bruise of Heidelberg’s bag’s clasp, we throw our lot in with India; but the alieness of blue eyes remains (Rushdie 119).

The tone is rushed and continually pressing on despite semi-colon marked attempts to pause and gain an understanding of the complexities of such an inheritance, or past that did not directly include, but shapes him. Rushdie, in creating this mix of urgency and density, reflects the talks leading up to the partition, while also critiquing the rapidity of the political conclusion reached by the four deciders. Despite the overwhelming mass of Saleem’s inheritance, a persistent sense of longing remains. This desire for more despite

the accumulating collection spurring his ethereal self to barrel through history suggests a lack, or a familial “hole” handed down from generation to generation. He remains susceptible to women and history (“Padma” and “ticktock” serve as the impetuses for his birth). While as an individual he assumes the patriarchal and familial susceptibility, these serve as symptoms of a larger deficit—a sense of belonging within the nation. By remembering history, and thus not possessing the convenient capacity to deny, Saleem cannot separate himself from the past without external intervention. Thus, the first person plural denotes the resignation that will define the family’s un-belonging. They remain both physically distanced, “blue eyes” suggest otherness, and emotionally distanced from the nation. Therefore, while Saleem is intimately connected with India, suggesting a strange mix of majority and minority status, he remains isolated, disconnected, and alienated.

The pace increases as Saleem continues to absorb and inhabit the past, as his presence and present grow closer. The product of the public, “nation,” and private, “family,” Saleem shoulders the fate of both spheres, and in doing so, realizes that “to understand just one life, you have to swallow the world” (Rushdie 121). Rushdie, in connecting the act of “swallowing,” or consumption, with understanding, positions the physical and cerebral as inextricably essential components of one another. The world does not know borders, divisions, and separations; these imagined constructs serve as covers for the collective history continuing to govern the world, persisting despite attempts to suggest its nonexistence. Saleem does not only “swallow” India, despite his intimate connection with the nation and his family’s decision to “throw [their] lot” in

with it, he recognizes the vast past persistently influencing the nation, and by association, his, present.

Saleem's inner "All India Radio" hosting the "Midnight's Children Conference" is a testament against purity; he thinks in mixture, representing India as nation demanding collectivity within a single, confined set of borders despite the sheer multitude of those who must be incorporated. Silence instigates this assumption of mixture. Relegated to "one whole day" without speaking, Saleem, like the "prophet Musa or Moses hear[s] disembodied commandments" and functions as "a radio receiver" manipulating these voices by "turn[ing] the volume down or up [...or] select[ing] individual voices [...]" even, by an effort or will, switch off [his] newly-discovered ear" (Rushdie 186). The discovery of his "birthright" suggests a postcolonial shift. Voices born of silence, mirror the transition from the colonial subject's subaltern status to the hybridity of voices in the postcolonial nation. Oppression demands external homogeneity, but the willed objectivity indicative of colonialism does not diminish internal multiplicity in thought and voice that defines the reality of both individual and nation. Saleem, in developing the ability to manipulate the volume of the voices within the enforced silence, gestures to the persistence of varying forms of oppressive forces within the newly independent nation of India. Just as those born at midnight, Saleem and Shiva, possess greater "powers," and only a select few influenced the decision to partition, the thousand other midnight children, or millions of Indians, left with varying degrees of agency also remain.

Though once known as the Brass Monkey, a girl who burned shoes and turned to Christianity to keep her status as the "bad" child intact, upon leaving India for Pakistan, Jamila Singer undergoes a shift in character that involves transforming into the symbol of

the new nation; this change requires the formerly brazen child to favor a different kind of voice, that when coupled with religious fundamentalism, operates as a form of silence. Saleem describes the Brass Monkey's transformation, blaming both nation and religion for it:

Observing the Monkey, who was a crucial year younger than me, fall under the insidious spell of that God-ridden country; the Monkey, once so rebellious and wild, adopting expressions of demureness and submission which must, first, have seemed false even to her; the Monkey learning how to cook and keep the house, how to buy spices in the market; [...] the Monkey, revealing the streak of puritan fanaticism which she had hinted at when she asked for a nun's outfit (Rushdie 334).

Rushdie likens religious fundamentalism to the constraints placed on women in the traditional, restrained domestic setting. As the Brass Monkey becomes a woman, she not only loses her childhood, she also forgoes her recklessness and rebellious spirit. However, this transformation is not only the product of the transition to adulthood, it is the result of the literal transition, or migration, from India to Pakistan. While she "falls under the insidious spell of the God-ridden country" pointing to a loss of agency, the Brass Monkey experiences this change as she becomes a member of the majority population. Furthermore, Saleem associates this fundamentalism with loaded language such as "spell," "demureness," and "submission." The male perspective, and more importantly, the male perspective tethered to India, defines the changes as negative or ones that connote a shift to passivity. Thus, Saleem, who is no longer in the majority because of the alienation he feels within Pakistan, and the resistance he has to the

nationalism it perpetuates, defines the Brass Monkey. This definition points to persistent incompatibilities between the son of India and daughter of Pakistan, and the power dynamics—rather than the inherent, fundamental differences—that lead to such inconsistencies and disagreements between the two nations.

The Brass Monkey's conversion in Pakistan results from the discovery of her singing voice, creating a complicated dynamic between enunciation and silence. Upon discovering her talent, the Brass Monkey becomes Jamila Singer, and "Pakistan fell in love with a fifteen-year-old girl whom it only ever glimpsed through a gold-and-white perforated sheet" (Rushdie). Despite representing the voice of Pakistan, Jamila remains covered and protected by a delicate, ornate "sheet," enforcing her modesty. The sheet, a symptom of the patriarchal need to protect the nation's symbol of purity and recalling Naseem's endured external "protection," renders Jamila both unique and anonymously ubiquitous. Her voice becomes a detached metonym replacing the self. Teresa Heffernan connects this anonymity with the repression of sexuality, suggesting that, "the umma or nation realizes solidarity only when sexual difference is hidden away behind a veil" which leads to the creation of "'the fiction that the umma was unified because it was homogenous.' The blank sheet or veil, pure and white, that stands in place of Jamila's body reflects back the unity of the nation" (Heffernan 483). This supposed "unity of nation" through replacement mimics Jamila's voice as that of the nation. Unlike Saleem, who serves as the vessel for the voices of *Midnight's Children*, producing them through inhabiting them, Jamila is the singular voice. Thus, the text suggests Pakistan, in striving for purity, necessitates a belief in homogeneity perpetuated through assertions of singularities (religion, voice, and other majorities), while India attempts to contain

multiplicities within a single nation. Furthermore, the perforated sheet, supposedly protecting Jamila from the male gaze, is in fact, the product of the male gaze; it allows society to project desires onto a blank canvas, rendering Jamila the product of a collective imagination, like Pakistan. Furthermore, when Aadam Aziz imagines Naseem as whole through visions of her fragmented self, the tension between tradition and modernity gestures to the suppression of the colonial subject. Thus, this textual repetition of the perforated sheet, demands a connection between colonialism and Pakistan. This singularity in source does not demand uniformity in projection or interpretation. Thus, despite being the representative symbol of the majority in Pakistan, she remains tied to the status of the subaltern.

In addition to exchanging roles within the family, Saleem and Jamila shift positions within the national hierarchy when Jamila becomes the singular voice and Saleem can no longer communicate with *Midnight's Children* in Pakistan. Within the family, siblings occupy different positions related to the majority, and the ability to articulate the values of the nation respond accordingly. Upon arriving in Pakistan, Saleem “discover[s] that somehow the existence of a frontier ‘jammed’ his thought-transmissions” rendering him “exiled [...] from [his] home” and “his truest birthright: the gift of the midnight children” (Rushdie 325). Pakistan severs Saleem’s connection to those who remain in India. Despite his intimate association with India, as its “twin,” the “Land of the Pure” so strongly resists mixture, that he assumes a new state of isolation once he crosses the border between the two nations. Thus, the novel comments on Pakistan’s denial and repression of history. By insisting on purity, Pakistan as nation suppresses its shared past with India, prohibiting these “vocal” connections, or

remembrances, of those on the other side of the border. Therefore, while Jamila flourishes, despite, or perhaps because of this society of repression, reconstructing the self to adhere to the standards of purity Pakistan reveres, Saleem assumes the state of exile, placing him in the status of “minority” despite his filiations that keep him within the national majority. Purity requires denial because history remains despite acts of repression. The text criticizes the assumption that a new border would reset history, creating pureness. Timothy Brennan notes the differences between nationalism and exile, representative of Jamila and Saleem’s divisive experiences in Pakistan, suggestion “the division between exile and nationalism [...] presents itself as one not only between individual and group, but between loser and winner, between a mood of rejection and a mood of celebration” (Brennan 23). Thus, the shift within the family hierarchy reflects the experience of the individual in exile versus the individual favored by nationalism.

However, while the nation of Pakistan reduces Jamila’s capacity for complexities, she, as individual, maintains components indicative of her past, allowing even minor revisions to her devoutness to suggest the persistence of nuance within a personal, private context. Saleem identifies a commonality between the Brass Monkey and the newly formed Jamila Singer: “she loved bread. Chapatis, parathas, tandoori nans. Yes, but. Well then: was yeast preferred? It was” (Rushdie 361). A vestige of her Indian and Christian self, bread represents the inability to completely change despite revisions to name and symbolic representation. Just as the partition caused restructuring and renaming, while the land remained the same, Jamila undergoes a similar transformation that has the appearance of a whole scale shift that, upon closer examination, remains partial. Her

persistent penchant for bread subverts external expectations regarding her character, thus, resisting complete metamorphosis and the absolutes that would accompany it.

Furthermore, it is Saleem who ultimately insists on the inherent division between “son of India” and “daughter of Pakistan” when he confesses his forbidden love. Saleem “confess[es] his love” for his sister, and in doing so, “abandon[s] all notions of purity,” trying to convince her that “they [are] not truly brother and sister; the blood in his veins was not the blood in hers” (Rushdie 371). While the text suggests that in order for Saleem to express his forbidden love for Jamila, he must “abandon all notions of purity,” he actually accepts and relies on the divisions purity creates, and thus, purity itself, despite the moral connotations of his confession. By denying their familial relation because of the absence of shared bloodlines, Saleem imposes the same divide on individuals as politicians did on India and Pakistan during the partition. His insistence on their union based on love and choice, denies their shared past that represents a different, but equally important unity. Ironically, however, Jamila’s refusal of Saleem’s love has a similar effect and perpetuates purity as well. When Jamila resists the possibility of union with Saleem, Pakistan resists reunion with India. Thus, both siblings illustrate a common repression of a shared past that would allow for unity in the present either through choice or birth. They were once members of the same fundamental union, but borders and divisions separate them, though purity, through either reclamation of a past state or insistence on progress, remains elusive.

Despite, assumed protective claims granted by the representatives of India as newly independent nation-state, these three texts suggest violations present during the colonial occupation persist in equally detrimental forms after the partition. These

intrusions on individual agency reproduce the conditions of the colonial subject in a subtler manner. However, despite the deviation in overt presence, hierarchies, and thus the power-dynamics that demand oppression and suppression of others in order to maintain the status quo remain issues plaguing all levels of society. The texts, then, suggest the subaltern is not merely a colonial condition. Furthermore, through engaging with the presence of silence, violence, and repression, they challenge the postcolonial condition. While India gained independence, means of inequality and subjugation did not disappear with the British Raj. This left individuals to fight to be heard in nations that emphasized the newly acquired status of freedom, though its full accessibility was reserved for only certain members of the population.

Migration, Memory, and the Myth of Majority Status

On August 11, 1947, Mohammad Ali Jinnah gave a presidential address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, outlining his hopes for the nation only days away from sovereignty, acknowledging the inevitability of the decision to partition India. He spoke to the presence of varying degrees of support for partition as solution to the debates regarding the future of an independent India, stating:

I know there are people who do not quite agree with the division of India and the partition of the Punjab and Bengal. Much has been said against it, but now that it has been accepted, it is the duty of every one of us to loyally abide by it [...] One can quite understand the feeling that exists between the two communities wherever one community is in majority and the other is in minority. [...] A division had to take place. On both sides, in Hindustan and Pakistan, there are sections of people who may not agree with it, who may not like it, but in my judgement there was no other solution and I am sure future history will record its verdict in favour of it (Jinnah).

Framing Pakistan as the solution to Muslims' persistent and unavoidable minority status set against the Hindu majority in India, Jinnah's speech mixes hope with the inevitability of partition. Pakistan allowed Muslims to transition from minority to majority on a national scale, and in doing so, offered both explicit and implicit protective claims for those previously excluded because of filiations, specifically Islam. The denotations of

Pakistan were not always this clear, however, and during the movement for independence divisive rhetoric aligning individuals with religions and potential nations lacked objectivity or common interpretation. Yasmin Khan articulates the multiplicity in conceptions despite shared minority or majority statuses, noting “Partition for many South Asians was far more complicated and was the beginning of a process of their construction as new national citizens, rather than simply the end point of nationalist struggles. The words ‘Pakistan,’ ‘swaraj,’ and ‘Partition’ have acquired concrete meanings in the intervening sixty years. In contrast, ‘freedom’ was not clearly defined in 1947” (Khan 5). Therefore, though Pakistan was politically conceived in 1947, a common definition of nation and nationality did not accompany it beyond the externally (and often convoluted, ill-defined, and unexpressed) imposed borders marking geographical division. Multiplicity in understandings of Pakistan existed on both public and private levels.

Intizar Husain’s novel *Basti*, Saadat Hasan Manto’s collection of short stories *Mottled Dawn*, and Sara Suleri Goodyear’s memoir *Meatless Days*, rely on form to create varying levels of intimacy in discussing Pakistan as nation and home. In doing so, the texts suggest that despite the assumed power that comes with gaining majority status, violations of national and familial claims to protection persisted because the bases of such claims were never fully established, and the events of the partition disrupted, rather than clarified them. These instances of failed protection, whether directly addressed or merely alluded to, point to an incomplete partition. History and memory did not restart, remaining intimately intertwined with space, communities, relationships, and conceptions of the nation prior to Pakistan. Thus, the texts suggest individual migration spurred by re-

affiliation and nation-formation does not negate the public or private past, nor does the offered solution undermine the presence of patriarchy and the effects of violations to individual security within the context of the family or nation. Patriarchal conventions remain, and thus, patriarchal claims to protection and failures to uphold these claims persist despite reassigned national identity. Furthermore, this shift in national identity perpetuates moments of heightened violence and violation, drawing attention to minority status rather than simply providing a solution by redefining minority as majority.

Intizar Husain's novel *Basti* merges historical moments illustrating the delicate relationship between the past, present, and future. The text contains many artificially imposed chapters, page breaks, and shifts in temporality. The arbitrary, and often disconcerting, nature of these divisions allows the form to comment on the partition. The division separating India from Pakistan as an imagined, political act, did not separate people from the memories of their home and relationships, thus, lives remained connected and histories, shared. As the form mixes past with present, the text suggests India and Pakistan, though politically divided, maintained an inescapable connection through a shared history, a shared people, and a shared dependence as they are defined in opposition to one another. Though communities, or "*basti*,"¹⁴ split according to the rhetoric perpetuated by both the colonial power and Indian political elite, as land was carved up without nuance, the preexisting, longstanding interpersonal relationships, or at least the memories of them, did not disappear overnight.¹⁵ *Basti* also addresses the

¹⁴ *Basti* originally referred to a district in Uttar Pradesh and is now used to describe neighborhoods, occasionally assuming the connotation of informal settlement.

¹⁵ Conceptions of physical borders were limited and "the real line would not be presented to the public until two days after the new states had come into existence, on 17 August, and would be hurriedly marked on maps using censuses of 'minority' and 'majority' populations. The border would be devised from a

individual's relationship to violence and history, which the novel's protagonist, Zakir, alludes to when he says, "Nothing is happening outside. Everything is happening inside me. Everything that has already happened" (Husain 190). There are no isolated historical moments. While the partition resulted in atrocities many viewed as entirely unprecedented, the text suggests the continual intersection between past and present prevents such claims. Temporality inhabits the individual, contributing to interdependent paradoxes dominating the text: isolation and interconnection, confusion and clarity, history and modernity, public and private, fragments and wholeness, India and Pakistan. Therefore, the text implies that in addition to the protection of the individual from violations, there must be preservation of memory and history from the act of partitioning and forgetting.

The novel begins with reflections on the past, establishing the foundation for repetitions, which suggests violence and destruction function according to temporality rather than historical exceptions. The narrator intervenes to comment on a series of questions and replies pertaining to the origin and predicted time of "Doomsday," noting the prominence of the word "when," stating, "After one 'when' a second 'when,' after a second 'when' a third 'when.' A strange maze of 'whens'! The 'whens that had passed away, the 'whens' that were yet to come. [...] The world seemed to be an endless chain of 'whens.' When and when and when—" (Husain 7). The repetition of "when" initially suggests a clear relationship between causes and effects; one event leads to the next. However, the effects are not isolated from one another, and each 'when' acquires meaning through accretive repetition. Therefore, each present moment is a product of an

distance; the land, villages and communities to be divided were not visited or inspected by the imperial map-maker, the British judge, Cyril Radcliffe" (Khan 3).

accumulated past. The form, by both repeating “when” and including the final dash, suggests this process is continuous, and thus, no moment is exempt from history’s influence. This successive, interconnected history relates to instances of violence and political unrest, as the partition does not serve as the first or last instance of internal conflict for either India or Pakistan. Furthermore, a page break interrupts the series of “when” thoughts, leaving the dash without an “effect” or an “end.”

The break is not the only source of fragmented inner monologue as the public impedes and interrupts private thoughts. The page break mirrors the disruption caused by “the sound of slogans being shouted outside” as it “suddenly penetrated the room and scattered memories in all directions” causing “the thread of imagination [to] abruptly snap” (Husain 7). The form severs the process of memory and imagination, requiring presence within the immediate present. The political demonstrations require a similar vigilant attentiveness, not found in theoretical musings because they demand “presence” and interrupt reflections on the chain of “whens.” Therefore, the text suggests there is a tension between history in the past and the creation of history in the present as it becomes difficult to consider both at the same time, yet they are intimately connected. The notion that the disruption of imagination itself is a byproduct of political action suggests the nation stands to crumble as a result of this action. The successive “whens” continue, but the awareness of past fades. In addition, this interruption works against the individual, suggesting only specific members of the nation were allowed to merge imaginings, politics, and nation-formation, while others lost the possibility for subjective musings to impeding, external unrest.

The form of the novel resists linear narratives, instead splicing together recollections of the events surrounding the Indian Rebellion of 1857, with Independence and the partition in 1947, and the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971. The persistence of the past is not confined to national history as personal history works in conjunction with these public moments and is subject to a similar convoluted, unending interaction between all forms of temporality. Rebellion repeats and violence accompanies it, allowing various “presents” to intersect and function as past or future when juxtaposed against other periods. Zakir, while embracing the intersections of public history, remains uncomfortable with his personal history, leading to frequent moments of temporal denial. He articulates this discomfort, stating, “Other people’s history can be read comfortably. But my own history? I’m on the run from my own history, and catching my breath in the present. Escapist. But the merciless present pushes back again toward our history” (Husain 68). His past cannot exist separate from the present because it actively informs present action and perception on both private and public scales. The tone reflects this tension between resistance and resignation to history. The acceptance of the comfort associated with other people’s history is whole and simple, written with the same ease it suggests the reader experiences in distanced interactions with history. As Zakir shifts from reflections on impersonal to personal history, the form becomes more fragmented. It remains energetic and uncertain, conveying the metaphorical associations of escape. There is motion with direction dictated by the need for relief. The escapist strives for insularity— a singular word surrounded by two distinct periods, an eternal present, but this remains a futile pursuit. The “merciless present” does not act alone, and the dangers of forgetting this overshadow momentary escape. Therefore, his individual experience

serves as a commentary on the ease with which people experience indirect moments of public history. While the removal makes it more comfortable, this comfort should not be mistaken for isolation. Just as the text weaves together the history of India and Pakistan, conflating moments of violence and political movements from various historical periods until they become difficult to distinguish, the public history, and specifically that of the nation, cannot be privately distanced from the individual.

This awareness regarding the persistence of the past relates to the text's discussion of the relationship between trauma and memory. An anxiety regarding the denial of trauma due to forgetting or even replacing continues throughout the novel, as individual response to history influences the process that forms it. Therefore, memory stands to diminish and reduce the partition, a source of widespread trauma, allowing for such atrocities to occur in other forms. By juxtaposing various political movements that resulted in different degrees of violence, the text comments on the dangers of nostalgia. Zakir's father, Abba Jin, recalls the political movements of his youth stating, "If there was noise, it was before the rally. Then a speaker came on stage, and at once the people sat down respectfully. What a cultured time it was;" Zakir initially criticizes his father for remaining fixated on "the time of the Khilafat movement. But while he was forming the thought, it seemed that he too was following Abba Jan, moving into a past time. What a cultured time it was" (Husain 21). Nostalgia has an intoxicating effect as memories pervade the thoughts of individuals who did not possess them originally. Memory has an almost osmotic capacity. The subjectivity inherent to this remembering can result in the exclusion of more negative components of the past. The Khilafat movement, though in many respects a successful instance of cooperation between religious groups and political

representatives against colonial power, had its own violent consequences.¹⁶ Thus, the discrepancy between certain historical facts and memory show the selectivity of the process of remembering. Zakir's adoption of Abba Jan's nostalgia demonstrates the tendency to consider the past as purer. The partition stands to undergo the same process if the tragedy overshadows the ability to remember it.

Forgetting coupled with indifference becomes the standard form of self-preservation, as the partition leads to a partitioning of memory so individuals can maintain routine despite frequent violent, politically charged interruptions. Abba Jan witnesses the evolution of political involvement and its intimate connection with memory:

The discussion was first ideological, then personal, then insulting, then abusive, and then it came to blows. [...] In everybody's eyes a single terror, as if something was indeed about to happen. Then they went their several ways and forgot that anything had happened at all. As though nothing had happened, as though nothing could happen. So much anxiety, so much indifference!' (Husain 31).

The text suggests forgetting becomes an essential form of protection in post-partition Pakistan and India. Ironically, though, this process of denial leads to the repetitive pattern of ideology escalating to violence, producing more traumas in need of repression.

Anxiety and fear become paradoxical sources of unity and separation; they reinforce

¹⁶ "During the summer of 1921 the movement achieved its greatest triumphs: the successful completion of the fund drive by the Congress, a widespread boycott of foreign cloth, and a dramatic increase in the number of volunteer willing to face arrest and imprisonment for the cause. A series of setbacks, however, dimmed the prospects for civil disobedience: a disagreement between Gandhi on the one hand and the Ali brothers and Abdul Bari on the other on the escalation of rhetoric, ugly riots in several places, and a bloody outbreak among the Muslim population in Malabar, all of which seriously damaged the Hindu-Muslim entente and the noncooperators' ability to pressure the government" (Minault 113).

recognizable commonalities between people, but only exist because of increasingly internalized forms of divisive rhetoric, which are then projected outward to create more public and global effects. Although the current situation addresses the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, the process resonates with historical accounts of the partition. The vague references to “nothing could happen” are vague enough that this generalized reassuring diction could apply during any period of uncertainty. When people are together and forced to confront the differences they perpetuate with both rhetoric and action, terror is immediate, but when they separate, the differences are less pressing, and protection more readily available through subjective memory.

Physical spaces, specifically cities, become important components of remembering trauma as well as obstacles to creating a lasting, collective history. War and violence of varying magnitudes disturb the spaces that represent these actions. In addition to the more obvious destructive violence resulting from the partition, migration as a form of protection from these acts prevents memory through physical markers by separating the individual from home. However, while denying certain components of memory associated with place, migration also intensifies space by creating vast networks of connection and association between physically separate spaces. Bruslé and Varrel assert, “Space is a continuum where life trajectories and individual, as well as collective strategies, literally take place, in the sense that people’s lives, along with the circulation of ideas and artifacts, contribute to modifying or to creating places and migratory spaces. Movement is inherent to place-making” (Bruslé and Varrel 4). Therefore, though migration physically acts as a division between self and former home, as Bruslé and Varrel suggest, movement is essential to the creation and imagining of space. Migration

strengthens networks of connection between places defining both locations (place left behind and destination) in the process. Thus, this theory of spatial relation undermines the asserted divisiveness of the partition, enhancing spatial connections because of physical migration. However, these more imagined relations between space, while resisting the borders of the partition, do not diminish the sense of loss endured by those forced to physically leave their homes. While migration may complicate notions of space, it also requires individual loss.

The text addresses the role between destruction and memory, articulating, “if a city is destroyed, the sufferings of those who lived there are forgotten at the same time. The tragedy of this war-stricken time is that our sufferings don’t manage to turn into memories. The buildings, the places which hold our sorrows in trust, are reduced to nothingness in a moment by a single bomb” (Husain 130). Both migration and physical demolition silence sufferings, and as a result, silence individuals who endure such tragedies. The physical reminders do not remain for future generations, prohibiting the possibility for the collective memory that Zakir experiences through the nostalgic imagination he shares with his Abba Jan. Furthermore, Pakistan as a new nation continuing to endure decay without rebuilding, lacks the ability to consolidate a more permanent historical record of suffering. There are fleeting connections here between the public and private as place and person meet through memory that does not last, making repetition more likely. Therefore, there is a vicious cycle between past, present, and future, as people continue to suffer places remain fragile and susceptible to complete annihilation, and nation internalizes the pain but does not have the stability to learn from it.

Conversations dealing with subjects on a micro-scale easily shift into metaphorical representations of macro issues affecting Pakistan. Migration and subsequent return provide insight into this relationship between physical space and memory, when present conditions do not match past conceptions. Discussion of the declining local hangout, aptly name “the Imperial,” devolves into a conversation about the transient condition of nations when Anisha returns after studying in London, noting ““When I left, the Imperial was really at its peak. Who could have imagined then that such a fate would overtake it?”” in response Zakir adds, ““that’s the trouble with peaks. [...] when the decline starts, it can’t be stopped halfway.” Anisha interrupts his metaphorical associations replying, ““you’ve started talking about the decline of nations. I was talking about the Imperial”” (Husain 91). Their conversation highlights a few different aspects of the persistence of certain “lacks” and declines in a supposedly post-era (post-partition, postcolonial). The pace with which Zakir is able to digress from discussion of local establishment to symbolic representation of the decline of a nation demonstrates the frequency with which the past seeps into the present. The imagination connects events as lapses in repression occur combining the “pre” with the “post,” suggesting the nation and individual are subject to the same integrated process. Anisha, having left Pakistan to study in London, represents a different aspect of the migration experience. Moving functions as an act of protection; it is the removal of the self from the direct violence. However, the separation presents its own issues. The changes to the Imperial surprise Anisha and she resists the discussion of these changes on a national scale. Her ability to distinguish between the global and local is more refined because of a physical and metaphorical distance from the source of change and decay. She attempts to

distinguish the national experience from the personal experience, but the divide does not exist without active repression.

Husain also addresses the current sources of repression and silence stemming from more contemporary political movements, and in doing so, demonstrates the manner in which the present becomes the past that informs history. Denial of public situations functions as a refusal to participate in the present. Individuals negate the possibility for enduring memory by relying on an almost proactive repression. The desire to protect the self from external chaos often manifests itself in terms of silence and noise. While sitting in the café, Shiraz, a group of educated middle-class men, including Zakir, associate noise with rebellion and silence with complacency, but struggle to decide if they should exchange protection for action by joining the movement outside or remain secure, but inactive, indoors. The decision to keep “the curtains drawn” and keep the “door [...] shut,” angers Salamat, and he views those who avoid the “noise outside” as “imperialist devil[s]” who “don’t want to hear the voice of the people” which “can no longer be suppressed” (Husain). While occurring in reference to the war in 1971, this relationship between voice and the public connects back to the partition. The actions of the nation-state are less threatening to those with the established capacity to be heard and have the power to hide from the noise. Despite the majority status implied by the creation of Pakistan, power dynamics that either limit or encourage assertion and resistance persist. Salamat likens this silencing to a colonial impulse, suggesting that although the urge to suppress originates within the nation, the effect does not change. Though not politically empowered through government positions, the men have a certain level of socioeconomic mobility and education that allows protests to become dangerous nuisances to be avoided

rather than public necessity or last resorts. The cover-up is a form of protection, and the darkness a means to avoid changes and maintain an insular status quo. This is less a moment of indifference, so much as pure resistance to new forms of trauma and shifts in the current system.

Those demanding changes to the status quo are often young college students who occasionally rely on violent means to achieve their more revolutionary agendas. Youth involvement in political causes illustrates the shifting sources of power and influence during the move for independence and the partition. Nehru advocated for youth participation, calling for “every boy and girl to become a soldier in the cause of the independence of the country. By soldier I mean a disciplined and honest worker who will serve the country and maintain the honour and prestige of the motherland” (Khan 53). Nehru’s word choice becomes indicative of mixed messages presented to young people during the movement for independence. He evokes the notion of “soldier” which connotes militaristic methods despite his subsequent revision of the term. His definition of a “disciplined and honest worker,” however, does not accurately adhere to any association with the term soldier beyond diligence. Thus, there is a call for devotion and the allusion that one must fight to defend and bring “honour” to the “motherland.” Nehru’s evocation of the term “motherland” to describe India also reverses claims to protection by calling for the youth of the nation to protect in order to achieve a nation-state that can return the claims.

College students in the novel illustrate the chaos that stems from energetic revolutionary sentiments and the inevitable collision with forces of the state:

Then back to the College where there was a crowd, there was turmoil [...]. Passing along the verandah, one boy shouted a slogan: "Quit India!" The boys going to classes, the boys coming from classes, paused. Then in an instant a storm of slogans arose: "Quit India!" "Long live the revolution!" "Victory to Mahatma Gandhi!" Then the classroom windows began to break. Then someone shouted, "They're coming!" Pell-mell flight, the emptying verandah, silence, in the silence the distant sound of galloping horses. The mounted police were coming to the College (Husain 37).

The slogans quickly intensify as a single shout leads to a chorus of responses either aligning with the initial loyalties conveyed or responding in protest. Politics invade the everyday, as even a simple act of going to class digresses into a series of shouts declaring allegiance, and physical destruction. However, despite the pervasive presence of the slogans, there is no communal conception regarding their denotations. During the independence movement, individuals had subjective interpretations of slogans and the causes they represented.¹⁷ The repetition of the word "then" recalls the series of "whens," suggesting that each moment, or in this case, slogan, causes escalation in tension, building upon the past. Each "then" indicates a shift in interpretation and meaning. The past accumulates to a fleeting present, and each new moment is swollen with conflict and contention. The protest depends on noise and assertion of voice; however, as soon as the police start to arrive, silence assumes control over the environment. The silence suggests not only a silencing of this assertion of self and national alliances through verbalization,

¹⁷ "For many of these Leaguers, Pakistan became much more than the sum of its parts or the territorial outline of a nation state: it meant personal identification with a cause which was increasingly expressed in black and white terms" (Khan 44).

but also indicates a form of protection. Thus, the silence indicates a break in the possibility for violence, even though it is only temporary.

Father and son relationships illustrate the tension between the past and modernity, as older generations have trouble comprehending the atrocities of the present. In portraying this divide between experience and understanding, the text suggests older generations may have contributed to the instability of the present without understanding the current manifestations of past actions. Abba Jan expresses a desire for Zakir to clarify the current state of affairs stating “son, you’re the one who understands political affairs” while “I only know one thing: I tell you that when masters are cruel and the sons are rebellious, any disaster at all can befall the Lord’s creatures” (Husain 97). He relies on his son, a member of the next generation, to, in many respects, translate for him. The violent and chaotic post-partition climate does not adhere to his expected and known worldview. He is effectively silenced in his detached lack of understanding regarding politically affairs, and in this way depends on his son for protection through this communication of relevant information pertaining to the political present. However, his knowledge reflects the past, which, as the novel’s form suggests, constantly invades the present. Abba Jan speaks in religious parables and aphorisms, heavily based in traditional morality regarding the familial structure.¹⁸ A reliance on aphorism and parable, both forms of cliché, gestures to a belief in an abiding truth; a truth rooted in tradition completely upended and absent during this time defined by uncertainty. This deference to cliché also correlates with the selective memory associated with nostalgia; uncertainty

¹⁸ Many of Gandhi’s critics resented his use of “religious idioms,” which they believed was indicative of his “superstition.” In addition, many of his critics felt this connection between religion and language exemplified the manner in which he “erred grievously in dragging religion into the political domain” (Lal 58).

always existed, the only change stems from acknowledging its presence. Furthermore, his reverence for cliché gestures to the colonial powers using oversimplified language to reduce the capacity for complexity, and thus, suppress resistance through dulled, removed language.

Saadat Hassan Manto's collection of short stories, *Mottled Dawn*, like Husain's *Basti*, relies on multiplicity; however, rather than mixing fragments within a nonlinear narrative, Manto relies on short stories, or "sketches" to demonstrate commonalities in experiences that also remain subjective. His sketches are short, sometimes consisting of only a few lines, but as a collection, the fragments come together to represent the multiplicity in perspectives that make up any historical event. Explicit historical references are less prominent in *Mottled Dawn* than they are in *Basti*, but the individual, private experience remains closely tethered to public history and political decisions. The connections have an unspoken longevity that outlasts the brief glimpses into the individual experience the short stories provide. In *The Pity of Partition* Ayesha Jalal discusses Manto's interest "not in analyzing the causes of partition but in delineating its consequences. By looking at the finer details, all too easily hidden under loosely defined religious categories, he wanted to tease out the human impact of partition" (Jalal 142). There is a distinctly humanistic impulse underlying each sketch. He relies on a narrow scope to move away from direct political commentary, choosing instead to engage in a more intimate analysis of human nature during times of trauma. Partition, for Manto, was "not an aberration to be dismissed as a fleeting collective madness," but rather "an unfolding drama that gave glimpses into the best and worst in humankind" (Jalal 24). His stories reflect this gentle approach to trauma highlighting a

persistent respect for the power of humanity despite the possibility for violence. There are no minorities or majorities in his sketches, only humans who have the ability to simultaneously occupy multiple roles as victim and offender.

The short story “Toba Tek Singh” details the division and transfer of inmates at a lunatic asylum after the partition. The isolated, contained instance of partitioning comments on the greater political act of nation-formation and separation of people based on categorical signifiers. By setting the story in a lunatic asylum and relying on lunatics to function as major characters, Manto gestures to, and relies on irony to reconstruct, former depictions of “the fool.” As Foucault notes in *Madness and Civilization*, the presence of “the fool” or other representations of insanity or unreason, encourages the questioning of reason or the true source of sanity within a work:

In farces and *soties*, the character of the Madman, the Fool, or the Simpleton assumes more and more importance. He is no longer simply a ridiculous and familiar silhouette in the wings: he stands center stage as the guardian of truth—playing here a role which is the complement and converse of that taken by madness in the tales and the satires. If folly leads each man into a blindness where he is lost, the madman, on the contrary, reminds each man of his truth (Foucault 14).

Though commenting on the presence of madness in texts from a distinctly euro-centric lens, Foucault identifies the conventions of genre that Manto uses in order to critique the partition. The individuals in the lunatic asylum assume the roles of classical “Madman” because they question the nature of sanity and location of truth in the post-partition nations. They possess certain sight, or perhaps hindsight, considering they learn of the

partition two years after its occurrence, allowing for reflection that transcends a suggested national “blindness.” Furthermore, by using conventions associated with “farce and soites,” Manto uses satire to comment on the absurdity of the political decision. The crudeness, however, does not stem from the individuals in the asylum, and thus, he relies on genre techniques to question the presence of freedom and reason within the reformed nations, eventually illustrating the more precise threat to society exists at the top of the hierarchy.

The exchanging of inmates occurs as an after thought “a couple of years after the Partition,” requiring “conferences of important officials from the two sides,” though “whether this was a reasonable or unreasonable idea is difficult to say” (Manto 1). The act of separating inmates between India and Pakistan works as a microcosm of the partition. The “conferences of important officials” mimics the meetings between Mountbatten, Gandhi, Nehru, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah.¹⁹ Yet, by representing these conferences in conjunction with the delayed, even forgotten, relocation, the carelessness resulting from the urgency with which politicians determined partition as solution emerges. Politicians forgot the specific people when solutions were based on superficial and incomplete categories of allegiance, depriving individuals of their ability for complexity. When considering this delay in communication of information with Foucault’s argument regarding justification for freedom from confinement, in which he states “liberation is in order when the danger of scandal is past and the honor of families or of the Church can no longer be sullied,” the years between decision and complete

¹⁹ During his first two months in India Mountbatten had 133 recorded interviews with Indian political leaders, conducted always in an atmosphere of candid urgency—if the Indians wished to inherit a peaceful India, they must decide fast how to arrange it. He talked to scores of politicians, but the fate of the country was really decided by four men (Morris 2).

transparency point to a desire to avoid scandal. If these individuals function as reason revealing “Madmen” of the traditional variety, communication of truth at an earlier date could have undermined the political decision. By starting out as imprisoned and considered inferior, the inmates become even further removed from the political discussion, reducing their capacity for influence. Thus, liberation within the context of “Toba Tek Singh” translates to knowledge. Furthermore, by invoking “reason,” Manto frames the subsequent sketch, and historical interpretation, within the context of rationality, leaving the reader to determine who remains “sane.” As Jalal suggests, “Manto’s message is searing but clear: the madness of partition was greater than all the inmates put together” (Jalal 186).

The inmates respond to the announcement of this partition with confusion and questions, highlighting the arbitrary nature of such a division. One Sikh man asks ““why are we being sent to India? We don’t even know the language they speak in that country”” (Manto 2). Without the context of political rhetoric, nationalistic sentiment, and historical pretext, the inmates are not conditioned to accept the proposed solution of partition. The man identifies components of identity and daily life, specifically language, contributing to successful connection in communities and nations. The diversity of language overshadows the tension resolved through nation-formation according to religious filiation. Thus, the text, while not commenting on diversity within a nation, suggests religious contention is perhaps an externally perpetuated division that allows one defining factor to overshadow other commonalities. Separation according to religion

was not new, but it intensified since increased colonial efforts to divide individuals based on belief systems.²⁰

Therefore, the isolation the inmates endure because of their incarceration allows for a response free of certain aspects of “overdetermination.” While, victims of the Repressive State Apparatus because of their incarceration, the shifts in the Ideological State Apparatus remain unknown to them for the same reason. The State, by not affording these individuals the opportunity to engage with systems like education and politics, simultaneously prevents them from internalizing the ideology of the ruling classes. The inmates, despite the enforced confinement at the hands of the Repressive State Apparatus, do not participate in the “reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order,” because they are not constantly exposed to the educational tools that reinforce “the domination of the ruling class” (Althusser 2). Ironically, this freedom from institutional influence directly contradicts their daily existence in an asylum; thus, the text challenges the supposed liberty and self-determination individuals assume to possess in a nation-state. Manto critiques assumptions regarding the nation’s protection of liberties especially for those who enjoy a majority status, by challenging the presence of liberty itself, recalling Althusser’s claim that “school (but also other State institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches ‘know-how,’ but in forms which ensure subjection to the ruling ideology or the mastery of its ‘practice’ (Althusser 3). As such, overdetermination exists to support the ruling class’s ideology, and the only difference between the forces suppressing individuals in an asylum versus those in the

²⁰ “The experience of colonial rule had doubtless stirred up these divisions and added to a sense of separation, especially among elites. Reminders of religious ‘difference’ were built into the brickwork of the colonial state; a Muslim traveller would be directed to the ‘Mohammedan refreshment room’ at a train station and drinking taps on railways platforms were labeled ‘Hindu water’ or ‘Muslim water’” (Khan 19).

nation-state, are the levels of awareness and manners in which the public recognizes the elite's actions working to covertly suppress individual independence.

The inmates are also uncertain regarding the location of Pakistan, and their discussion of the geographical place comments on the imagination process that creates borders and informs perception of space. The artificial process involved in the division of land also suggests the imagination necessary to form majorities. Isolation creates an environment in which public information is generally absent, and thus components of these imagined conceptions of self and nation are absent, suggesting they live in a separated, political silence. The narrative depicts this lack of knowledge, stating:

As to where Pakistan was located, the inmates knew nothing. That was why both the mad and the partially mad were unable to decide whether they were in India or in Pakistan. If they were in India, where on earth was Pakistan? And if they were in Pakistan, then how come that until only the other day it was India? (Manto 2-3).

Contrary to the notion that the location of the self is an almost innate knowledge, Manto dismantles this accepted, unquestioned form of protection and security through knowledge of place. In doing so, he demonstrates the manners in which those in power construct individuals' perceptions of place, especially location of nations. Furthermore, the State, in undermining normative conceptions of space and time, produces the very disorientation it attributes to the insane. The partition diminishes the possibility for consistency between perception of self and understanding of determining factors originating external to the self, encouraging a form of frantic destabilization resembling insanity. However, the inmates' questions are paradoxically absurd in their rationality.

They emphasize the absurdity of the political elite who divided entire populations in a matter of days, assuming homogeneity in one aspect of life would lead to a peaceful, united nation. Mountbatten's desire to reach a quick compromise and end British colonial presence by dividing India, failed to take into account the connection between individuals and the land itself. The inmates' questions also undermine this association between nation and land because they exist in a place without conceptual understanding of its name and affiliations. Their lives persist for years without the knowledge of these newly assigned national identities, showing the fragility of the political decrees for partition despite the violence they produced.

As public information regarding the political condition of Pakistan and India fuses with the private lives of the inmates in the asylum, initial miscomprehension and outright resistance transforms into nationalistic sentiments, further supporting the artificiality of prejudice stemming from fear. While "most of the inmates appeared to be dead set against the entire operation," amidst this inability to comprehend the rationale are the slogans "'Pakistan Zindabad' and 'Pakistan Murdabad', followed by fights" (Manto 9). The uncertainty regarding the form of Pakistan and India intensifies the desire to protect the self from the newly defined "other." There is an almost instinctual response toward loyalty and vigilance against potential violations, despite the simultaneous collective resistance to the logistical impracticality of these divisions. The discrepancy in verbalization and understanding relates back to the move for independence in that "The talismanic word 'Pakistan' was used strategically to rally supporters and the League achieved impressive and emphatic endorsement across India. Yet few knew what this Pakistan would mean, and absolutely nobody knew what its construction would really

cost” (Khan 44). Whether evoking freedom or destruction, the individuals eventually perpetuate a national silencing as they speak without understanding of these nuances in meaning. Furthermore, India and Pakistan already exist when the inmates participate in this “strategic [...] rally,” thus, suggesting their voices are insignificant when it comes to influencing political decisions. They merely parrot the rhetoric of those in power, creating an unstable environment of mistrust and potential for violence, without considering the lasting effects of this instability and divisiveness.

Manto’s sketch “The Return” details multiple forms of failed patriarchal protection, from a father’s unintentional and tragic separation from his daughter to explicit violence against her carried out by a group of anonymous men. The sketch begins with Sirajuddin regaining consciousness in the midst of chaos, and as he tries to piece together fragmented memories “his eyes moved and, suddenly caught the sun. The shock brought him back to the world of living men and women” and to stunted recollections of “Attack ...fire...escape...railway station...night...Sakina” (Manto 11). The ellipses demonstrate the physical effects of trauma. He is not repressing memories, but rather, the violence he endured impedes his physical capacity to consolidate the past. The ellipses operate as blows to the self in addition to context surrounding each detail he manages to remember. The juxtaposition of “the sun” with the violence that leads to his loss of consciousness, comments on the relationship between the natural and the artificial. The sun operates as grounding, orienting force amidst the chaos of the impulse-based and animalistic violence that stems from imposed fear of “the other.” Sirajuddin’s final recollection of “Sakina,” correlates with this connection between the natural and the

artificial. Sakina, his daughter, is an embodiment of a natural filiation, in a period in which they became increasingly externally imposed and unnatural.

As memories begin to return in more complete forms, Sirajuddin recalls being separated from his daughter, Sakina, allowing for reflection on the tension between the private claims to protection and public violations of these claims. After witnessing his wife's death, Sirajuddin tries to protect his daughter and escape the violence. In the process "Sakina's *dupatta* had slipped to the ground" and as he reaches to "pick it up" Sakina tells him to "leave it" (Manto 12). The loss of the *dupatta*, a symbol of modesty and external protection against the equally public male gaze, represents the loss of societal methods of patriarchal protection. Sakina, in asking her father to leave the *dupatta* behind, positions the immediacy of survival over protection of modesty. The situation demands a choice between upholding tradition and the impulses of the moment. Sirajuddin, after regaining consciousness notices "a bulge in his pocket" and realizes "it was Sakina's *dupatta*" but remains uncertain as to her location (Manto 12). The description of the *dupatta* as "a bulge in his pocket" suggests certain masculine and phallic connotations, which in turn, connects the external indicators of female modesty as distinctly male. He clings to a now antiquated method of protecting his daughter that fails during this widespread lapse in patriarchal social convention amidst the violence.

Sirajuddin enlists the help of a group of young men in order to find his daughter, contributing to the sense of community surrounding these men trying to restore patriarchal order. Categorical identities and the suggested desire to restore the patriarchal means of protecting women united them. When the men do find Sakina, the text portrays them as nothing but kind as they provide her with food and drink, and "one of them [...]"

give[s] her his jacket so that she could cover herself” because she is “ill-at-ease without her dupatta” (Manto 13). The initial acts of kindness suggest a moment of restoration linked to the protection of women. Furthermore these acts of presumed protection occur on an intergenerational level suggesting a degree of hope for the future and reparation of the inter-communal damage. This hope is even suggestive of a pro-partition sentiment given that they are united in their common filiations leading to a moment of compassion. However, Manto undermines this possibility for restoration when the young men inform the father that they “will” find his daughter after they already have. The narrative twist acts as a violation of narrator reliability, just as the young men violate their promise to recover and protect Sakina.

The extent of these violations becomes apparent when Sakina is discovered and brought to a hospital, though her father’s relief acts as a form of blindness when he cannot recognize the trauma Sakina endured, suggesting he cannot comprehend a violation worse than death. The doctor asks him to “open the window,” and this exchange results in Sakina “grop[ing] for the cord which kept her shalwar tied round her waist” and “with painful slowness, she unfasten[ns] it, pull[s] the garment down and open[s] her thighs” to which Sirajuddin cries “she is alive” (Manto 14). The implied sexual violence perpetrated against this young woman is nothing short of horrific and tragic. Jalal discusses Manto’s concern with the psychological ramifications of these violations of women, stating, “He thought it imperative to attend to those injuries that could become fatal if left unattended. Of these none was greater than the wounds inflicted on those fifty thousand raped, abducted and subsequently recovered women (Jalal 144). These wounds surpass the physical. The doctor can do his best to heal her wounds, but her father’s

unawareness regarding the implicit source of her injuries and the significance of her response to the request to “open the window” points to wounds to come.²¹ The physical act speaks for itself, but requires interpretation or else silence in reference to the suggested rape will persist. The body cannot fully convey the horrors of her experience. The father must also recognize them in order to reinstitute protection. Therefore, both Pakistan and India are either born or “reborn” with violence and violations operating as national foundations.

Manto presents a different dynamic of intergenerational protection in his sketch, “The Assignment,” by portraying varying levels of communal and individual trust. Throughout the short story the father’s health deteriorates but his faith in his fellow man does not falter. While noble, his undying belief in the loyalty of those in his community is eventually detrimental and positions trust as a possible source of violations to patriarchal claims of protection. Locational majority and the sense of belonging it inspires can no longer withstand the growing fear accompanying increasing tensions between religious majorities and minorities. Initially, the community reflects this trust, as those in Amritsar believed “the riots could not last long” because they were “a manifestation of temporarily inflamed political passions” (Manto 15). The residents of Amritsar view the communal contention and riots as temporary because they are unprecedented. They assume political passions will fade and the routine of daily life will resume. The collective belief in a coming return to order reflects the more widespread, national sentiments surrounding the partition. Khan addresses this sentiment of exceptionalism, arguing the “lack of legitimacy in the division” and “the wider feeling that good social relationships had been

²¹ “Rape was used as a weapon, as a sport and as a punishment. Armed gangs had started to use rape as a tool of violence [...] It sparked the deepest feelings of revenge, dishonor and shame. Many women were silent about what happened to them” (Khan 133)

ruptured by a settlement forcefully imposed from on high” points to the source of this complacency (Khan 19). While not unfamiliar with religious divides or prejudices, the people enduring partition-related violence were not accustomed to destruction of this magnitude. Thus, the resistance to the legitimacy of a politically motivated division that destroyed interpersonal relationships established long before top down enforcements of fear of the other, contributed to the common understanding that the riots were temporary.

There is no bigger proponent of the return to normal communal interactions in the sketch than the familial patriarch who insists on the family’s security and the fleeting nature of the passing events. His daughter does not share his confidence, but keeps her opinion to herself, which suggests traditional patriarchal structures within the family remain as she defers her worry to the expertise of her father. The father’s word translates to feelings of safety, so when he “declared confidently that there was no cause for anxiety” she feels “reassured” because “he was generally always right” (Manto 16). Thus, the text begins to uncover the source of future deviations in generational perspectives. The present for the young is the past as well, thus, trust does not come as easily to those who have known less of an existence without unrest. Sughra’s father, on the other hand, had a life of colonial restrictions but one without such common instances of inter-communal violence. Therefore, he speaks with assuredness when he resists anxiety. Sughra as a young woman still living at home conforms to the traditional expectations and believes her father, despite the evidence from the present circumstances that contradict his protective reassurance. A shift in the familial order occurs when her father has a stroke. This stroke acts as a physical representation of the dying beliefs of the older

generation and the escalating public chaos that separates modernity from the past, but even physical restrictions do not lessen his belief in community.

The dangers of this undying trust manifest themselves in a direct manner when the children must decide whether or not to open the door for a Sikh man; the story juxtaposes traditional notions of community and increasing fear for those of different religions, and without making explicit judgment shows the reality of a community in which individuals fear “the others” or fight to protect “their own.” During the festival of Id, a man knocks on the door causing a moment of paused panic for the children as they look out the window informing their father “‘It’s a Sikh’” to which he replies “‘Go and open the door. It is Gurmukh Singh’” (Manto 19-20). This short, oversimplified description reduces the man at the door to external signifiers representative of religion, a reductionist component of identity. Furthermore, their description robs the man of his humanity—he is not a Sikh, “it’s a Sikh.” Thus, the dehumanization process occurs in more manners than just physical violence. Language in conjunction with external signifiers deprives individuals of the possibility for public complexity. Their father does not participate in this process, referring to the man by name and expressing faith in his good-willed intentions by asking his children to open the door. However, it is important to note that he is bedridden and never sees the man; he bases his advice on a now irrelevant, dying past.

The ending of the story combines the trust of the past with the distrust and concern for personal security of the present, showing the incompatibility of the two modes. The man at the door turns out to be Gurmukh Singh’s son bringing noodles to the family in fulfillment of “his father’s dying wish,” establishing the context for Manto’s

subsequent revocation of hope (Manto 21). This moment seems to reinforce the notion that the violence and riots in Amritsar are passing and the importance of relinquishing vigilant guard preventing a quicker return to the status quo. Fear becomes the biggest source of potential violence when the man appears to have good intentions. However, Manto subverts expectations once again as when Santokh walks away a group of armed men ask, “have you completed your assignment?” and after a positive response they follow up with “Should we proceed with ours?” to which he responds ““If you like”” (Manto 22). This resolution, or lack thereof, conforms to Manto’s impulse to depict all sources of contention and the general human capacity for evil without explicit blame. The children are not justified in their profiling but they are not incorrect, either. Santokh fulfills his patriarchal duty within his familial structure, but also makes no effort to intervene in larger instances of violations in the community. He attempts to deflect responsibility by not giving the men a “yes” or “no” answer, but he remains complicit in the actions. Disruption of protective claims exists on both private and public scales, as no individual is exempt from the aftermath of the partition. Therefore, while the partition was a political act and the divisive culture originated with the colonial power, Manto suggests the capacity for destruction overwhelms power structures, filiations, or affiliations. It exists within each individual, community, and nation as an almost-autonomous capacity to explode social or personal organization.

As a memoir, Sara Suleri’s *Meatless Days* technically deviates from the texts because of its claims to nonfiction; however, the similarities between the texts whether novel, short story, or memoir suggest, in many respects, literature addressing the partition has certain inherent qualities. Suleri gently intersects familial history with that of the

nation, marking time according to national politics or domestic values. In doing so, she emphasizes the subjectivity of both public and private history. Though the events themselves do not change, memory influences the categorization and relationships formed after they occur. Suleri writes from a unique perspective as a Pakistani woman who did not directly experience the partition. While not undergoing the reassigned filiations through forced migration from India to Pakistan, Sara Suleri, a generation removed from the partition, experiences a different form of migration when she chooses to move to the United States. This mobility suggests shifts in forms of patriarchal protection in the decades following the partition. Shifting from life in the US to life in Pakistan, Suleri reflects on her family history and the connection between self and nation. She creates more explicit connections between family and national history despite the supposed constraints of nonfiction. Thus, the memory component of memoir takes precedence over the objective connotations of nonfiction, allowing the text to operate in a manner similar to the general impulses governing the other texts addressing the relationship between individual and partition.

An underlying desire to understand the experience of her grandmother, Dadi, and in doing so, negotiate conceptions of what it means to be a woman both on an individual and societal level exists throughout the narrative. The definition and conception of gender becomes the product of national and religious context, changing according to her location and filiations. In exploring underlying definitions and connotations of gender, Suleri also addresses majority/minority power-dynamics. Deviations in relationship to gender and the connotations associated with them represent a greater desire to understand her family history, specifically that of Dadi who lived through the partition. Therefore, the text

establishes a subtle connection between understanding gender, family, and historical experience with the legacy of partition and the formation of Pakistan. Roles within the family trump gender as a means of self-conception and definition, as Suleri notes the difficulty of explaining to non-Pakistanis that her “reference is to a place where the concept of woman was not really part of an available vocabulary,” replaced by the process of “conducting precise negotiations with what it means to be a sister or a child or a wife or a other or a servant” (Suleri 1). Her original conception of gender does not exist on its own. It is both complex and dependent on categories. In this sense, she perceives what it means to be a woman as many conceived of nationality during the partition—“not-Indian,” “not-Pakistani,” “not-Hindu,” “not-Muslim.”

Shanaz Khan argues that Suleri criticizes feminist conceptions that fail to “account for the agency of women such as her grandmother,” suggesting instead “women's subjectivities are constituted through their performance of social roles” (S Khan 469). Khan’s interpretation, while correct in identifying Suleri’s desire to expand upon gender as an isolated concept, does not adequately address the tension between “agency” and “performance of social roles.” Though Sara does not view “woman” as a defining quality when growing up, articulating mobility without this limitation of assigned conceptions of gender, she defines herself in opposition to men because of these performed roles. Consciousness remains filtered through a series of others, oppositions, and alternatives. The text establishes the nuances of gendered roles within the family without defining what it means to be a woman, allowing for subjectivity among objective alignment and assignment. This meditation on gender ends with her nearly begrudging conclusion ““with the defiance of a plea, ‘You did not deal with Dadi’” (Suleri 2). By

admitting her unresolved history with Dadi, Sara must acknowledge former renunciations of loyalty and memories fraught with controversy and contention. Repression in conjunction with denial is no longer an option. The diction surrounding this decision to address the memory of Dadi and her position in the family is violent and resistant. Thus, Suleri places the memoir in conjunction with the traumas of public partition by addressing familial sufferings stemming from internalized definitions of the self.

Dadi, having lived through the events of the partition, further solidifies her role as the intermediary between public and private history, memory, and trauma. Suleri's conception of self depends on revisiting the intimate connection between nation and family. The text approaches the partition through Dadi's experience, which lacks the descriptions of trauma dominating the narratives in *Mottled Dawn* and *Basti*. Suleri describes Dadi's response to the partition:

When India was partitioned [...] she moved her thin pure Urdu into the Punjab of Pakistan, and waited for the return of her eldest son, my father. He had gone careening off to a place called Inglestan, or England, fired by one of the several enthusiasms made available by the proliferating talk of independence. Dadi was peeved. [...] she resented independence for the distances it made (Suleri 2).

The separation from her son who chooses England over Pakistan because of a commitment to independence is a greater source of struggle than partition and forced migration. The diction in Suleri's description of her father's choice has a fated quality marked by an unnamable energy. Independence carries Dadi's son away from her. Her concern with this optional migration rather than the forced migration she underwent

positions the unity of the family over the unity of the nation.²² Suleri undermines Dadi's response to the partition by referring to it as "peeved" suggesting she is choosing a mere annoyance over perhaps more appropriate anger. She does not appear to resent the national division between India and Pakistan, but the distance it creates between herself and her son who allows ideological enthusiasm to come between them, and thus, violates a form of patriarchal duty. This ability to resent the optional migration is possibly the product of her "pure Urdu," which provides her with certain comforts available to majorities in power. Her loyalties remain primarily to that of the family structure, and she resists the political act of partitioning because it indirectly divides her family.

Sara often reflects on the legacy of the partition as she feels its effects despite having not been alive to directly experience it. Thus, the text demonstrates the manners in which the partition was not an isolated historical or political incident, but a persistent past haunting the present. She remains uncertain regarding the details, describing how "in 1947 Mountbatten's scissors clipped at the map of India and handed over what Jinnah fastidiously called a moth-eaten Pakistan" adding in parentheses "we had been unrealistically hungry for the whole of the north—and Delhi too, I think" (Suleri 74). The parenthetical, unsure aside qualified by "I think" suggests Suleri repeats without full understanding. She is aware of the history but uncertain regarding its nuances, much like those who advocated for "Pakistan" without fully comprehending the absence of a common definition for the word. Her removal from the past silences her because it

²² Her experience does not correlate with the "norms" of migration during the partition, suggesting she is repressing or refusing to address certain instances of trauma. Morris describes the common experience "as the British relentlessly cleared their homes and moved in hordes across the countryside, hastening to the right side of the new communal frontiers. The roads were crammed with refugees, people clung to the steps of trains, or crowded up on their roofs, and the old gypsy confusion of India, the crowding and the clutter, the always familiar scenes of exhaustion, bewilderment and deprivation, were multiplied a thousand times" (Morris 5). Dadi was one of the eleven million but remains generally silent regarding her experience. Her story, or, at least her asserted sources of frustration and pain, does not match common historical accounts.

influences more through feeling than knowledge. She remains part of the collective “we” without experiencing the events that created the need for unification as Mountbatten’s scissors went to work. The partition is not explicitly the “business of [her] generation,” and this distance intensifies when she states “they tell me nightmare trains had wailed them there” and “they arrived unkempt, but pleased” because “it was what they had asked for, after all” (Suleri 74). She shifts from identification with an unspecified, though nationalistic, “we,” to a generational divide between her “generation” and “they,” those who moved to Pakistan after the partition. Her relationship with Pakistan is more definitive as the passage of time diminishes the chaos of the transition and mass migration.²³ Her comfort with national filiation is secure enough that she identifies with other components of categorization like “generation.” Thus, as time passes, different methods of self-conception become available, although they still operate through creating differences based on an excluded alternative.

Within the family, there are variations in the manners in which individuals catalogue history and mark time revealing idiosyncrasies within the domestic sphere that reflect the subjectivity of history itself. This emphasis on subjectivity points to the arbitrary nature of the decision to partition by challenging the notion of absolute truths in relation to history which is often presented as objective, but in reality is the construction of those individuals enjoying the privileges of majority power who determine the standards of significance. Partition and politics are not the only standards of time. The daughters in the family measure time through “food” which gives them “a way not

²³ Sara, decades removed from the partition, has more explicit national connections to Pakistan. The realignment and renegotiation of nationalistic loyalties was a lengthy process. Even a year after the partition, “questions of citizenship and belonging still hung in the balance and there were numerous people and communities who had grey, uncertain allegiances to India or Pakistan and had slipped between the cracks formed by these neat parameters of nationhood” (Khan 188).

simply of ordering a week or a day but of living inside history, measuring everything [...] against a chronology of cooks,” while their “Papa had his own yardstick [...] with which to measure history and would talk about the Ayub era, or the second martial law, or the Bhutto regime” (Suleri 34). History becomes a product of individual experience and knowledge. Measurements of time do not have to be widely available to the public; the girls mark time according to the reigns of various cooks, suggesting a connection with the domestic sphere, defining their concept of history through their own externally dictated roles as sisters, wives, mothers—influencers of the domestic realm. Their father, however, continues this connection with politics originating with his enthusiasm for the movement for independence. His post-partition life is a succession of various presidents and laws, and his association with the cause of Pakistan dominates his worldview. Thus, while illustrating the subjectivity of history, the text also suggests the gendered limitations associated with political involvement. Though all educated and aware of their father’s preferred method of distinguishing past from present, the girls remain distanced from the male-dominated political arena, and in certain respects, silent. In this sense, the daughters, as women, are excluded from majority, normative forms of history, despite belonging to other majorities in Pakistan.

Politics remains a source of separation between father and daughter because “Papa” often chooses his ideology over his responsibility to his children, continuing his violation of expected patriarchal claims to protection in order to protect and serve the nation, Pakistan. Politics divide families after the partition; issues of the nation surpass issues of the domestic sphere or the needs of his daughters. When it comes to arranging Sara’s marriage, her father is preoccupied with “the Bhutto era,” and spends his time

“scrawling off article after article on the decline of Muslim nationhood” and forgets “to tell [Sara] about all the kindly innuendos that his childhood friend, Dr. Sadik, had begun to make about [her] age and the age of his son” (Suleri 58). Her father becomes so consumed with written critiques of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, namesake of “the Bhutto era,” that he does not perform his patriarchal duties and inform his daughter about her impending plans of marriage.²⁴ By not translating innuendos for Sara, he fails to protect her from the surprises of the adult world. He adheres to the markers of his personal timelines, choosing the distant possibility of influencing national history rather than the definite chance to influence his daughter’s history. Therefore, though not explicitly addressing the partition, there is a legacy of political loyalty surpassing familial filiation, as Sara’s father chooses to protect his nation over his daughter. Thus, the father, by operating as the opposition to the majority power in the nation, fails to uphold his duties as majority power within his family.

Politics and the family merge in the form of Mohammad Ali Jinnah; he becomes the father of both nation and father figure in the Suleri family. Despite the presumed incompatibilities of the metaphorical domestication of leader of the League and first Governor-General of Pakistan, Pip, the Suleri patriarch, worships him in a private and public context. Despite concessions regarding Jinnah’s political missteps after the partition, even Sara cannot bring herself to overtly criticize him because in their house he was “the Quaid” and “in Pip’s impassioned discourse nothing other than the Father,”

²⁴ “Bhutto went even further to institute state-sponsored Islamization. In particular, after his government was challenged in 1977 for allegedly rigging the elections, he sought to avoid rescheduling elections and shift the focus of public debate by resorting to Islamic national policies. In his final year of rule, before the military coup of 1977, he introduced Islamist policies which culminated in sweeping measures to ban alcohol, gambling, and other activities proscribed by Islam” (Nasr 2).

noting “Jinnah the maker of Pakistan was hardly an easy idea to domesticate-and yet Pippy did it” (Suleri 113). Jinnah assumes powerful patriarchal and religious connotations for Pip—a reverence that extends to Sara. By domesticating the concept of Jinnah and immortalizing the man as both deity and patriarch within the family, the political becomes a filiation. The process is artificial, but suggests an intimate connection between the personal and the public. The partition redefines conceptions of the nation, and despite the divisiveness that results, also promotes a sense of ownership and connection to the leaders who represent the categorical identities at the highest position. Jinnah, the father of Pakistan, becomes the father of the family, and thus, assumes claims to patriarchal forms of protection in both contexts. Despite allusions to his failures in upholding these claims for either individual or nation, he remains the recipient of an ethereal reverence as the ultimate patriarch.

Suleri’s father continues to forge the connection between patriarchy and politics as his reverence for Jinnah grows, exchanging his own majority power for a childlike subservience to the national symbol for majority power.²⁵ Thus, the text suggests hierarchies persists even after the supposed equalizing action of partition, and the threats to individual security essential to the justification of the political act caused individuals to seek patriarchal protection on a national scale. However, the source of the protection also becomes a violator of the claims by perpetuating divisive rhetoric and ideas that lead to communal violence. When Jinnah declares, “The Mussalmans are a nation by any definition” Pip becomes “freshly fathered” (Suleri 114). He devotes himself to the cause

²⁵ Ironically, given Pip’s reverence for Jinnah, this preference of nation over family is one of the many critiques waged against Gandhi, as individuals scrutinized his patriarchal presence, claiming he “the Father to a nation” was “apparently much less so to his own family” (Lal 59).

of the nation through this familial association with Jinnah. This restructures the domestic sphere within the context of the nation, serving as the domestic agent as opposed to the foreign, rather than the domestic opposed to the public sphere. This realignment between self and adopted political family affects Pip's private family to come—the effects of the political decisions made during the partition invade Sara's present. These loyalties present themselves in the texts Pip would later author, leading to a piece of defining family history known as "the Letter." The Letter sets the tone for interpersonal family dynamics. Jinnah, after reading Pip's books lauding his achievements, writes him "congratulat[ing him] on marshaling facts so well and giving a clear picture of the seven years of struggle" which leads to future of "marshaled facts" to the point that "he wouldn't forget that [his family was] not facts and would marshal [them] too, up and down the nation" (Suleri 115). The association between "marshal" and "facts" is incompatible. The subjectivity implied by the militant ordering denoted by marshaling does not comply with the objectivity of facts. In this case, history becomes the product of those who claim allegiance to the politicians in power. The false sense of belonging Pip derives from the letter, which the diction suggests is an allusion to gratefulness for favorable subjectivity, informs his decisions to choose the nation, his preferred filiation, over his family. Therefore, Pip aligns himself with the national system of patriarchal protection, despite the historical precedence and present truths that suggest the imminent failure of these claims, and in doing so, fails to uphold his traditional duty within the context of his private family.

While those in favor of the two-nation theory claimed the partition was a necessary move in order to ensure the protection of Muslims via the creation of a separate

nation-state, the texts discussed challenge these claims to both protection and separation. While the political elite redefined the borders associated with the newly divided India, articulating the subsequent division of individuals according to “appropriate” nation, these decrees did not translate to purity. Migration in conjunction with memory maintained connections between individuals and space, despite an externally enforced repression of the past. This connection to the past maintained through the imagination, much like that necessary to nation-formation, perpetuated a sense of longing for “wholeness” in a political environment advocating for necessary “parts.” Thus, despite Jinnah’s insistence on acceptance of the present reality, nostalgia for communal wholeness, rather than national majority status remained a concern. Therefore, the texts suggest decisions made on the national scale affect the individual, but cannot eradicate essential hybridity dictated by a shared past.

Conclusion: Resisting the Partitioned Self

These texts approaching partition from both Indian and Pakistani perspectives resist objectivity when defining the domestic spheres of nation and family. This positions preventative and retrospective claims to the objective in relation to history as products of individuals with power trying to maintain the status quo through repression of memory. Though these individuals often frame these claims as forms of necessary protection, the texts critique the manner in which these forms of patriarchal protection, enunciated within the public and private spheres, limit voice and action. Thus, protection from the political—turned religious—becomes a tool to maintain power and limit possibility for those occupying the peripheries to be heard within the process of nation-formation and maintenance.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who used the two-nation theory to advocate for the partition, also claimed that eventually “in the course of time all these angularities of the majority and the minority community—will vanish” adding “you may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State,” in the same speech in which he acknowledged the inevitability of the partition of India (Jinnah). The malleability of the divisiveness perpetuated by the political elite indicates the Hindu/Muslim divide was not the true source of the partition. Jinnah’s shift from demanding a nation-state for Muslims to a speech suggesting a desire for coexistence and tolerance among all religions external to the government, positions the two nation-theory as a political tool rather than a fundamental necessity. Therefore, claims to protection

from the political elite function as a device to advance private agendas affecting the masses without the public's explicit input.

The texts resist the asserted fundamentality of mixture as incompatible used to justify partition because it not only perpetuates the partitioning of nation, but of self as well. New conceptions of nation, space, and community, as well as other externally redefined notions of filiations and affiliations, produced disorientation, which in turn, led to repression as coping mechanism. Thus, the nation-state implicitly demanded a partitioning of the self, or memory, in order to conform to national borders, supposedly producing uniformity. The texts, however, in challenging this uniformity through formal and thematic hybridity, resist the impulse to frame memory and history in discrete, ordered categories. The novels challenge the two-nation theory and the projected protection accompanying homogeneity, through illustrating the differences between individuals of even the most local filiations. Though both born into a Muslim family, Saleem and Jamila assume different relationships with religion, and despite migration and asserted adherence to the ordering associated with partition, Jamila maintains her capacity for complexity and mixture, evidenced by her cravings for bread. Language also remains fundamentally subjective as individuals relate to the signifiers that supposedly denote, but more closely, connote, forced categorical identities. Just as there are multiple conceptions of slogans, ("Pakistan Zindabad," "Quit India," etc...) within the texts and historical accounts of the partition, to ignore the possibility for subjectivity within the nation-state is to perpetuate action without understanding. This understanding demands recognition of the discrepancy between inherently subjective political decisions, and their asserted objectivity, and thus demand for "inevitable" conformity. Just as the Suleri

sisters deviate from their father when cataloguing history despite connection through genealogy and simultaneity in temporal existence, objectivity remains an elusive concept of mythological capacity.

The texts undermine the assertion that partition of self and nation is natural. Manto's "Toba Tek Singh" demonstrates the artificiality of politically dictated discord based on categorical identities subsuming individual complexity. The inmates remain not only unaware of the partition and its consequences, but cannot comprehend the supposed inherent divisiveness between them until external intervention. Thus, language may emphasize unavoidable fundamentals, but this enunciation does not make them universal truths dictating societal reactions at all levels. Furthermore, even members of the same family rely on different approaches to constructing relationships between self and religion or self and nation. In *Clear Light of Day*, Bim's uncle laments his sons' decision to privilege religion and history over economic security and familial duty. Thus, despite observing the same filiations, men within a singular family unit disagree regarding the orthodoxy of religious observance, and thus, sources of loyalty function as origins of discontent.

Even when conflict stems from fear of the constructed other, not all those who participate in the violence or are victims of it align neatly with dictated categorizations. Manto's short story "The Assignment" demonstrates this, as the father does not waver in his belief in the general "good" in society, while his children gradually begin to fear those who do not conform to their religion. Though the children are ultimately justified in their fear, the story does not justify the fear itself. The violence does not exist because of fundamental differences regarding "god" or "state" or "family," it exists and persists

because the external signifiers denoting these divisions become symbols of contention. If fathers within families observing different filiations and affiliations could previously coexist, the story suggests the shift comes from a source other than a sudden realization of incompatibility. Therefore, the individuals who decided to partition India, especially those who favored stringent nationalism and unyielding devotion to the two-nation theory, perpetuated a social order based on conflicting differences, demanding incompatibility for personal gain and a supposedly higher sense of order.

Imposed divisiveness that brews conflict functions as a political tool written and enforced by the elite who benefit from the claims to protection they can make in reference to it, without having to sacrifice the personal or private via direct participation in the destruction and chaos. Thus, the subaltern persists beyond the context of direct colonial occupation. The political elite constructs theories and policies that suppress individuals through superficial groupings, preventing the assertion of subjective, or subject, voice, and diminishing the possibility for these individuals relegated to the peripheries, or in some cases the more apparent center, to be heard. This form of oppression stemming from a theory rooted in categorical identity suppressing individuals from the state level, in conjunction with the texts that depict the persistent silence in a supposedly “postcolonial” nation-state, suggests the notion of the subaltern does not end with decolonization. Literature, despite addressing this, does not appropriate the subaltern via an attempt to substitute voice. It depicts the qualities and conditions associated with the subaltern, such as instances of oppression or disorientation, without offering them as reproductions or “the alternative.” The subaltern subject is not a repressive component of times past; they are contemporary issues associated with arguably still imperialistic

power-dynamics disguised by new names. Margins, even within a nation that positions an individual's "chief" filiation as a majority, exist. Thus, degrees of silence persist as well.

Even the four men who are historically held responsible for the decision to partition varied in their definition of "partition" and their opinions regarding it. Thus, to claim the nations of India and Pakistan operate according to widely held, mutual understandings, is to deny the presence of uncertainty, individual interpretation, and the ability to assert subjective voice. The texts, by depicting reactions to partition that are fragmented, disjointed, and disoriented, critique historical narratives defining trauma according to discrete parts, dates, and facts. In this manner, history either perpetuates a violent future or remains confined to descriptions of a partial past. In both cases, the texts suggest historical records have the capacity to contribute to the partitioning of self and nation. Therefore, literature calls for responsibly nuanced history that takes into account the past, present, and future as constantly informing one another. This change in approach, allows history to reflect the manner in which memory functions as accretive repetition, rather than isolated components corresponding with externally dictated notions of a selective, objective past. The texts vary in their genres, forms, and levels of interaction with history, suggesting literature itself positions hybridity and mixture as fundamental components of both experience and memory. The texts, though fiction, reflect a more honest reality by embracing hybridity, instead of resisting it. Literature emphasizes subjectivity as the only certainty, critiquing presentations of the "dominant narrative" through depictions of innumerable alternatives, allowing the self to resist partition through hybridity.

Works Cited

- Althusser, Louis. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. London: Verso, 2014. Print.
- Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *Nation and Narration*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Brennan, Timothy. *Salman Rushdie and the Third World: Myths of the Nation*. New York: St. Martin's, 1989. Print.
- Bruslé, Tristan, and Aurélie Varrel. "Introduction. Places on the Move: South Asian Migrations through a Spatial Lens." *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal* (2012): 2-11. Web.
- Butalia, Urvashi. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2000. Print.
- Desai, Anita. *Clear Light of Day*. New York: Harper & Row, 1980. Print.
- "Famous Speeches by Mahatma Gandhi." *Famous Speeches by Mahatma Gandhi*. Gandhi Research Foundation, n.d. Web. 10 Mar. 2014.
- Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: Vintage, 1988. Print.
- George, Rosemary Marangoly. *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth-century Fiction*. Berkeley: University of California, 1999. Print.
- Goodyear, Sara Suleri. *Meatless Days*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989. Print.

- Guha, Ramachandra. *Makers of Modern India*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard UP, 2011. Print.
- Husain, Intizar. *Basti*. Lahore: Sang E Mil, 1983. Print.
- Hussein, Abdullah. *The Weary Generations*. London: Peter Owen, 2003. Print.
- Heffernan, Teresa. "Apocalyptic Narratives: The Nation in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*." *Twentieth Century Literature* 46.4 (2000): 470-91. *JSTOR*. Web. 16 Sept. 12, 2013.
- Jalal, Ayesha. *The Pity of Partition: Manto's Life, Times, and Work across the India-Pakistan Divide*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2013. Print.
- Kaul, Suvir. *The Partitions of Memory*. Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 2002. Print.
- Khan, Yasmin. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2007. Print.
- Khosla, G. D. *Stern Reckoning: A Survey of the Events Leading up to and following the Partition of India*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1989. Print.
- Lacom, Cindy Marie. "Revising the Subject: Disability as "Third Dimension" in *Clear Light of Day* and *You Have Come Back*." *NWSA Journal* 14.3 (2002): 138-54. Print.
- Lal, Vinay. "The Gandhi Everyone Loves to Hate." *Economic & Political Weekly* 4 Oct. 2008: 55-64. Web.
- Manto, Saadat Hasan. *Mottled Dawn: Fifty Sketches and Stories of Partition*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1997. Print.
- Menon, Ritu. and Kamla Bhasin. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 2000. Print.
- Minault, Gail. *The Khilafat Movement*. New York: Columbia UP, 1982. Print.

- Moon, Penderel. *Divide and Quit*. Berkeley: University of California, 1962. Print.
- Morris, James. "The Partition of India." *Norton* (1978): 1-6. Web.
- Nairn, Tom. *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited*. London: Verso, 1997. Print.
- Nehru, Jawaharlal. "Tryst With Destiny." *YouTube*. YouTube, 14 Aug. 2008. Web. 12 Mar. 2014.
- Oxford English Dictionary*. 2000. *OED*. Web. 20 Feb. 2014.
- Page, David. *Prelude to Partition*. New Delhi, India: Oxford UP, 1982. Print.
- Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. London: Random House, 1995. Print.
- Said, Edward W. *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983. Print.
- Singh, Anita Inder. *The Origins of the Partition of India: 1936-1947*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1987. Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri and Aleksandūr K'osev. *Nationalism and the Imagination*. London: Seagull, 2010. Print.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty., and Rosalind C. Morris. *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*. New York: Columbia UP, 2010. Print.
- Tinker, Hugh. "Jawaharlal Nehru at Simla, May 1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 4.04 (1970): 349-58. Print.