CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction to Partition Violence

1947AD, the very remarkable date in the Post-Independence Indian historiography, marks the end of almost 350 year long British rule in India along with the birth of a new nation by the name of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. 14 August, 1947 saw the birth of Pakistan and the next day at midnight India won its freedom from the colonial rule. The mainstream historiography of both nations glorifies the date as 'partition' or *batwara*, the birth of new nation state; and *Azadi* or independence. But the independence and partition did not easily come alone; it came with the remarkable suddenness of bloodbath leaving behind a legacy of endless communal violence. The former one is valorized in the grand narrative of mainstream history, while the latter one as the dark side is completely ignored. About this indifference, the revisionist of Indian historiography Gyanendra Pandey, whose work has been at the centre of contemporary Indians' rethinking on the events of 1947, says in his article "Partition and Independence on Delhi, "The two faces of the Partition and Independence of India in 1947 are not in fact, I want to suggest, two separate faces at all --for the two conditions each other, constitute each other, at every step. If there are two faces …a 'ruling [privileged] class' celebrating independence, and a 'refugee class' unable to do so" (2262).

Partition has divided the society into two classes- 'ruling' and 'refugee'. The 'ruling class' is the privileged one, less or no affected at all while the refugee class became overnight refugees suffered the violence being killed, looted, raped, abducted and uprooted. Naturally the 'ruling' class celebrated the independence while the other could not afford that, despite their incomparable sacrifice. But this moment of division has either been suppressed in colonialist and national historical writing or it has been narrativized as aberrational and extra ordinary.

Partition remains the single largest episode of the uprooting of people in modern South Asia but Indian nationalist historiography is silent about this aspect of partition. In "The Prose of Otherness" Gyanendra Pandey asserts that history of modern India is dominated either by "the story of the British Empire in India "or "the career of Indian nation-state", consequently the history not only "gets extremely short shrift" about "the movement for Pakistan" but also "as the other of genuine nationalism…is painted in entirely negative colours" (204). This unprecedented sudden catastrophe resulted into several hundred thousand people were estimated to have been killed; unaccountable numbers raped and converted; and many millions uprooted and transformed into refugees as a result of the partition riot. This bloody partition, whose toll of lives rose to the proportions of holocaust, has left communal, political, economic and psychological aftermath. Partition manifests as, to borrow Menon and Bashin, "the eruptions of hostility or expression of antagonism [and] bitter divisive erosion of social relation between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs" (3). But ironically, in spite of its similarity to holocaust for its violence and trauma during the time, [even more aftermaths] it has not been held accountable in the same in which one holds Germany accountable for the elimination of Europe's Jews, or Soviet Russia accountable for the death of millions of peasants in the name of modernization and developments. There have been attempts in both India and Pakistan to consign it to oblivion.

Violence-prone partition does not get space in official history. Despite the magnitude of the violence, few scholars have studied the role of this essentially constitutive ethnic and gendered violence in colonial India and post colonial history. Pandey acknowledges, "In much of the historiography of partition, the history of violence has scarcely begun to be addressed" (189). About this exclusion of violence in Indian official history Urvashi Butalia in her article "Community State and Gender" observes:

> Why had the history of partition been so incomplete, so silent on the experiences of the thousands of people it affected? Was this just historiographical neglect or something deeper: a fear on the part of some historians, of responding a trauma so profound, so driven with pain and guilt, that they were reluctant to approach it?(13)

The partition was typically narrated in British historiography as uncivilized Indians' violent politics and British colonialism was a necessity for the time. Similarly nationalist historiography narrated the violent events as an accident and administrative failure of British machinery in peaceful transfer of power. It mainly focuses on the celebration of independent India and the contribution of elite leaders in achieving independence. But the violence of partition together with its accompanied outcomes such as mass migration, refugeeism and rehabilitation has been rarely mentioned. The mainstream history according to Menon and Bashin, "effortlessly manages to conceal the past" (*Border and Boundaries* x). History is the official document and political master narrative written in certain ideological parameter, so what contradicts the master narrative is silenced in it. As they quote Gulab Pandit, "in history books, only the names and dates are correct, not the rest" (*Border and Bounderies* 8). History is a mode of thought follows the lines of mainstream political ideology. History only contains the facts and figures that may not necessarily true. The facts are manipulated and presented in favourable perspective and figures hidden because history serves the interests of the privileged groups but not the emotion of the common people. So, it is not surprising that the official history has excluded the story of partition survivors. In his another article "In Defense of the …" Gyanendra Pandey investigates the problems of writing of violence in history, specifically in the history of sectarian violence in India. He observes historical discourse has been able to capture and

represent the moment of violence only with great difficulty, "the history of violence has been treated in historiography of modern India as aberration and an absence… [It is considered something outside normality and should not appear in Indian history] …Violence is not the real history of India at all" but the distortion of political events (270).

Partition of India and Pakistan is said to have taken place in August 1947, yet its beginning goes much further back into history and its ramification have not yet been over. It was what the communalism developed between Hindus and Muslims. About this development, the historian Bipan Chandra in his Book *India's Struggle for Independence* writes:

> British rule and its policy of Divide and Rule bore special responsibility for the growth of communalism in modern India, though it is also true that it could succeed only because of internal social and political conditions. The fact was that the same, with its immense power, could promote either national integration or all kinds of decisive forces. The colonial state chose the latter course. It used communalism to counter and weaken the growing national movement and the welding of the Indian people into a nation. Communalism was presented by the colonial rulers as the problem of the defense of minorities. (408)

British rule, first planted the seed of communalism and then tried to fake reunify between Hindus and Muslims and justified to maintain colonialism. A series of events fueled communalism further, such as the growing division between the Congress and the Muslim League, the debates between Jinnah, Gandhi and Nehru and other developments on the political front. And a series of events accompanied and followed it: violence, mass migration, refugee, and rehabilitation. However, the events later have occupied lesser status in what is understood as 'History' that

seems to have stopped at the point the country became independent. For this erasure of violence, Gyanendra Pandey asserts, “For too long the violence of 1947 has been treated as someone else’s history -- or even not history at all”(*Remembering partition* 6). In his essay “The Prose of Otherness” (1994), Pandey states that the history of partition in nationalist historiography is an “Other history” has been commonly treated as being extraordinary in nature, and has been excluded from the everyday experience, and represented “in the likeness to a natural disaster” (213). Nationalist historiography in India marks the violence of partition as an accident or a mistake. The nationalist historiography finds communalism as the cause of violence as being irrelevant to Indian history (33).

The silence remained almost half century. At the later period of the century, the revisionists’ work of rereading history and translation of books about partition experience from local language into English, and writing and editing novels and collection of short stories on the subject of violence broke the silence and made easy for the interested people get exposure to the reality behind it. Persons like Mushirul Hassan and Alok Bhalla made the history available by translating it. Feminist and subaltern studies research has focused on recording the oral testimonies of partition survivors and witnesses and making audible the silences in the histories and memories of partition, especially for women and ethnic minorities in India. In particular, pioneer works in anthropology, history, and feminist historiography by Veena Das, Urvashi Butalia, Ritu Menon Kamala Bashin, and Gyanendra Pandey, among others, have investigated women’s’ and refugees’ experiences of violence only when Pakistan parted as Bangladesh and Pakistan again. Only then it was realized that women and children were the primary victims of violence and this fact is ignored in the history. Pandey has observed the limitations of nationalist history in the exclusion of the subalterns’ involvement in partition and independence, and the

others recorded the survivors' (mostly women) testimony as a counter history to the nationalist elite history.

Partition has different implications for different agencies and institutions. For Indians, the partition was the logical outcome of Britain's policies of 'divide and rule'. For the Muslims, it was a dream comes true. The Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal remarks, "It was the masterly understanding of *real politik* that pulled the carpet from under the feet of all other political players in favor of the Muslim League" (qtd. in Menon and Bashin 5). For the Pakistanis it was their founding moment, it was the outcome of the struggle of Muslims to have their separate identity recognized by both the British and the Indian nationalist movement. In this sense Partition turned to be benefitting for all three political bodies- English Imperialists, Muslim League and Indian Congress. Jinnah, Gandhi and Nehru were attributed as the creators and freedom fighter while ordinary people, who had nothing to do with ideology and rhetoric of nationalism, had to bear the everlasting communal violence and suffer the victimhood being crushed in the unfortunate sectarian and separatist politics losing their nation and identity. They even did not know what nation they belonged to. For them, partition became euphemism of uprootednesses.

The actual partition is recorded to have occurred in August 1947 but the revisionist historian Gyanendra Pandey in *Remembering Partition* recounts two other different partitions before this incident. Because Partition was not the output of a day's whim but the preceding activities were the bases for actual partition event of August 1947. The first partition, Pandey thinks, was Muslim League's demand for Pakistan, which was articulated from 1940 onwards. The idea of Pakistan, a new state(s) in those regions of northwest and northwest India was envisaged on two aspects: "The Muslim-majority state Pakistan would be a Muslim dominated

state to balance a Hindu-dominated Hindustan" (25 - 26). Young urban Muslims might have galvanized the dream of reviving Delhi empire that was lost a few centuries before. It was hoped as a necessary check upon the growing power of Hindu dominated Congress party and a possible configuration of state structures after independence. In *Remembering Partition* Pandey writes:

> The demand of Pakistan was paradoxically presented as true freedom for both Hindus and Muslims. [It was] the fairest deal' for minorities and justice for all who were oppressed and poor. 'Divide and unite' was the League's paradoxical battle cry. Once the Muslims were free and secure in Pakistan, and Hindus in Hindustan the two could come together and in many areas: communication defense, foreign affairs civil rights. (*28*)

On the one hand, it was not only Muslim leaders' duality of demanding Pakistan and an excuse to escape the blame but also, the demand of pure land was seen as Muslims' answer to Hindu oppression and Hindu capitalism. On the other hand, Hindu literary and political rhetoric is also responsible to provoke communalism in Muslims. Hindus did not hesitate to adopt the imperialist rhetoric on medieval Muslim rulers as "anti- Hindu", "foreign rule" and "thousand years of slavery" (Bipan Chandra 412). The reiteration of Hindu communal myth like ancient Hindu rules heightened Indian culture and society to its ideal height while medieval Muslim rule demolished it to its permanent decay fanned the fire of communalism.

Jawahar Lal Nehru, in his auto biography *Discoveries of India* writes, "Muslim League was founded in 1906 under the inspiration of British Government and the leadership of one of its chief supporters, the Aga Khan. The League had two principles objects: loyalty to the British government and safe guarding of Muslim interest" (379). It seems that Muslim League was one

of the weapons of British machinery in its end of divide and rule. As for the revival of empire is concerned, The suppression of 1857 revolt, which was the joint affair of Hindu and Muslim against British rule, felt strongly by Muslims "put an end finally to any dreams or fantasies of the revival of the Delhi empire" (Nehru 375). Pakistan might have been compensation of Delhi empire to Muslims from British or it might have been weapon to British to revenge India's sepoy mutiny.

As the demand of separate nation by Muslim League was the first partition, the second partition, Gyanendra Pandey thinks, was the willingness of Sikhs and Hindus to have the Muslim majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal partitioned. In March 1947 the leaders of Indian Congress voted to accept the division of both Punjab and Bengal into two parts. This acceptance was supported by Sikh leader Master Tara Singh and conservative Hindu groups like Hindu Mahasabha. The Pakistani Historian Ayesa Jalal argues that this split was not the "demand of the supporters of Pakistan" because even Jinnah and Muslin Leaguers wanted only "Muslim autonomy on Muslim majority zones without any substantial change in existing provincial boundaries" or any significant movements of population (683). But this reaction of Congress High command, Pandey argues was "a frustrated and angry congress leadership to thwart the League by offering overdose of its own medicine" (31). Ultimately, it was this willingness to see India divided that set the framework for Radcliff Award which formalized partition in August 1947. Jalal asserts, "Muslim did not initiate partition but it was the short sightedness and selfishness of Congress leaders, [partition and independent both were projects for] Brahminical hegemony in India" (qtd. in Pandey31).

These first and second aspects of partition are ideological competition between Hindu and Muslim in understanding of the nation. The third partition is the actual performance that

materialized the dream ambition of the politicians through massive upheaval when "hundreds of thousands were uprooted and slaughtered, raped, and forcibly converted in a display of almost unimaginable malevolence" (35). He states the actual process of partition was characterized by an "enormous uncertainty of an extra ordinary volatility" (39). Massive chains of migrants moved east and west, and minority communities were increasingly anxious for their property and lives.

Abduction, sexual violence, murder and forced migration became tools through which community identities and national allegiances were tested and, ultimately redefined. The religious groups, who previously struggled for religious boundaries and formed harmonious devotion, were re categorized and redefined. In *Remembering Partition* Pandey notes that the cultivating "Meos in Mewat whose strong engagement with Hinduism and their Hindu neighbors ,who were sometimes called half Muslims simply became Muslims and as a result were free floating and fearless examples of other" (39). Within a few hours time their identity, nationality and belongings changed.

Like other nationalist historians, Pandey recovers the different positive aspects of the moment of partition and its violence as the termination of one regime and negotiation of the two new ones in his re-reading of history *Remembering Partition*s. He takes it as a moment of nationalization, when the visions of the nations were constructed, contested, and consolidated through process of "renegotiation and reordering for the resolution of the some old oppositions and the construction of new ones" (17). In the processes of the struggle for nationalization, violence too becomes a "language that constitutes and reconstitutes the subject" (4). The violence of Partition is a language shared by Pakistanis and Indians" to reshape the new nation of their own (4). If partition did not occur he questions, "on what terms Muslims, *Dalits* and women

would be granted rights of citizens?"(17) More importantly, Pandey endeavors to recover the voices of the silenced people (the subaltern groups) in Indian history and make them involved in the process of making the nation.

Partition has attracted meditation on both history and memory through the survivors' narratives. Survivors' memories treat the partition as narratives of war. The memoirs of the violence highlight refugee experience. Besides the communal lives the partition also divided the society as ruling or elite verses refugee or subaltern. The former enjoyed the achievement as Independence amongst the realities of partition but the latter whose class position could not afford the source of mechanism of protection and access to political power wandered amid the chaos. Pandey notes the two faces of 15 August: While Nehru celebrated India's tryst with destiny in a speech, at the same day a Sikh shopkeeper in Bhogal Mohalla felt that his tryst with the destiny was "wondering where we would be from one day to the next- whether we'd be able to stay on, finally, even in the place … That is what we are doing" (Pandey 2262). When India was suddenly parted as independent secular India and an independent Muslim country Pakistan, the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims residing beyond their respective new boundary, were dislocated, killed and raped (women). Those who survived were wondering for shelter from one refugee camp to another. They received independence being refugees. Thus, independence accompanied partition took the form of displacement, looting, killing, abduction and uprooting to most of the people living in Punjab. They were dislocated and labeled as refugee just in some couple of hours.

The people of Bengal and Punjab were affected much. When the rumour of the power hand over to India by the British along with partition of these two states spread, the riot began. Before the exchange of population was practiced by the authority and demarcation of the borders

announced, the riot turned to pogrom and massacre to genocide. The riot was so spontaneous that the state and political organizations could escape the blame of such enormous violence. As Paul R. Brass writes, "Genocidal attacks on entire populations, including men, women, and children, made to appear 'merely' as massacres perpetrated by enraged or pathological killers or gangs or centrally directed force'(72). Whether the violence was spontaneous or ordered, and leaders took accountability or not; it was the failure of the political organization to prevent the massacre and their erroneous political hypothesis was responsible to instigate the mutual violence. Brass likens Punjab violence to other genocidal violence took place in Europe and Africa and says: "In several respects, the Punjab massacres precede and anticipate contemporary forms of genocide and 'ethnic cleansing,' retributive and otherwise, most notably the Hutu- Tutsi killings in Rwanda and the massacres and forced migration of peoples in ex- Yugoslavia: Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo"(72).

The demand for separate "pure Muslim state" of Muslim League, Indian National Congress' and British rulers' fruitless attempt to preserve the unity and replacement of Governor- General of India were described by the historians as the main causes of disaster. The historians argue that the creation of Pakistan was inevitable, for the earlier events (loss of Delhi empire) had already paved the way for Pakistan. The differences between Hindu- Muslim politics were modern invention and played crucial role to fan on the issue. But the casualties could have been prevented if Mountbatten had not taken the decision so hurriedly without proper homework. Pakistan was compensation to Muslims for Delhi empire by the British politics. Thus, religiosity was not the factor to create communalism, but it was entirely political factor. Therefore, all political leaders were responsible for the event. Paul Brass says:

> [T]he three principal Indian leaders - Nehru, Patel and Jinnah- and their subordinates are blamed for taking actions deliberately designed to provoke violence or, in the case of Nehru, that inadvertently precipitate violence. A third community- the Sikhs- and its leading political organization, the Akali Dal, and its leaders, particularly Master Tara Singh and Giani Karter Singh, have come in for a very greater share of the blame for the mass migration and violence that occurred in its central locus, namely, the Punjab. (74)

This was really unfortunate of the ordinary people to have leaders who deployed violence as tools to achieve their political ends. Jinnah pressurized the three principal parties over Cabinet Mission Plan for the creation of Muslim majority state Pakistan by deploying direct action in Calcutta in August 1946. The riot broke by killing and displacing millions from their home land. Calcutta violence and the other violence that followed "occurred during the tenure of a Muslim League ministry in the province of Bengal in which government ministers and Muslim League leaders were implicated"(Brass77). Such actions were mimicked in many other cities and villages. Punjab violence and Calcutta killings were the central violence of the century, the consequence of which could not be worked out yet and the legacy of which repeatedly occurred in every decade thereafter: 1965 India- Pakistan war, separation of Bangladesh in 1971, Delhi riot in 1980s (Sikhs' demand of Khalistan), demolition of Babari Masjid in 1993, Gujrat riot in 2002, Mumbai riots in 2006 and 2008 etc. Kashmir is suffering the same every day.

The moment of partition and independence of India and Pakistan became very costly for ordinary people – "men, women, children, Hindu, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians *dalits* all seared forever by the fires of communal riots that killed their families and rendered them homeless" (Banerjee 2518). Murder, rape, abduction, mutilation, conversion became the means of violence. The protagonists of the Partition drama (British administrators and Indian politicians) are visible

in the history but their supporting cast of bit players and other participants who played dual roles of both perpetrators and perpetrated in the production of drama have not been recognized. For some decades they remained invisible. However, a change did come about in 1980s. The emergence of emanicipatory movements like subaltern studies and feminist scholarship contributed in unveiling the mystery of Partition by looking at the history from below. A group of Indian historians known as subaltern studies collective began this project due to their dissatisfaction with the way nationalist historiography interpreted the freedom moment of India. They found it problematic that in nationalist historiography only independence and the elite leaders were celebrated and subalterns were paid little attention. The scholars began to recuperate voices of the voiceless in the history of freedom movement and thereafter in socio-economic movements in India. Gayatri Chakrabarty Spivak, one of the prominent scholars of subaltern group, advocates the emphasis on 'gendered subaltern'. She puts forward the problems of the absence of the history of women's involvement in insurgency in the elite historiography and the neglect of attention to the female subaltern in the subaltern studies project. She, in her famous essay "Can subaltern speak?" writes, "Within the itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effaced…if in the context of colonial production the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is ever more deeply in shadow" (287). She specifies the predicament of women as victimized by the double - oppression of not only the class system but also patriarch. Women were the worst victims of the most tragic violence. Ranajeet Guha, a prominent member of subaltern studies group figures out the problem with nationalist historiography. He says that it put great emphasis on the depiction of celebration of the elite leaders such as Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah, praising their devotion to

anti- imperialist movement and Indian liberation. Such history writing of Indian nationalism in Guha's words was "written up as a sort of spiritual biography of the Indian elite" (2).

Generally, in power politics, violence becomes a tool to achieve political means and women become the object of the violence. They have to suffer the victimhood in one way or the other. They are the mothers grieving for sons dead and missing; the widows struggling to survive in female headed households bringing up orphaned children; refugees displaced from homes; raped, abducted, mutilated and murdered in war. They are to bear physical and psychological violence of dislocation, fragmentation of families, loss of children and men, and the predatory masculinity and misogyny of war, rape and murder. Moreover, women are seen as symbolic and physical markers of community identity nation state, there is the pressure (on both men and women) to embrace identity constructs which undermine women's autonomy of being. For that they are victimized to communal and even familial violence. Essentially, women are the overwhelming victims of war.

Most of the societies are patriarchal and women's value in such societies signifies only sign exchange value in male- centered power structure. Their subjectivity is represented as instrumental in communal mode of power. The instrumentality of women and their situation of having no agency to speak for them as "suttee" or "sati" was the sacrifice of the Hindu widow who immolated herself in the funeral pyre of her deceased husband. Women agency is mostly constituted as perpetrated in the gendered violence. They are brought in public sphere as "the woman who actually wanted to die (Spivak 297).

In Partition violence women of all communities became the worst sufferers of gendered violence which was inscribed upon their bodies in every specific ways as they were objects to be

exchanged as commodities across the communal and national boundaries. Nationalism and communalism were two the most significant ideologies during the period and both of them have always been gendered in nature and placed women at the very heart of their discourse and action. The women who suffered during this period were later considered to be social outcasts by their community and in a number of cases by their families. The feminist scholars like Butalia, Bashin and Menon, Jalal, and Das revived the interest to the Partition movement as 'women's movement' that made intervention into the four - decade long silence. In this connection Menon and Bashin say:

> Yet the story of 1947, while being one of the successful attainments of independence, is also a gendered narrative of displacement and dispossession, of large-scale and wide spread communal violence, and of the realignment of family, community and national identities as a people were forced to accommodate the dramatically altered reality that now prevailed. (9)

The nationalist Partition history was read as the patriarchal history or the experience of men had "marginalized women" (Butalia13). Women were seen as small players who did not seem to have distinctive experiences of their own and who simply followed their men's commands succumbing to them in order to save the honor of their communities. The recuperation of partition history by feminist scholarship is an exploration of parallel account of women to official history, and also rewriting of the "histories of confused struggle and violence, sacrifice and loss, the tentative forging of new identities and loyalties" (Pandey qtd. in Menon and Bashin 8). In Joan Kelly's opinion, rewriting of women's history has two goals: "to restore women to history and to restore our history to women" (qtd. in Menon and Bashin 9). In other words the aim of rewriting women's history was to make women a focus of inquiry, to bring

them in the public sphere, to recognize them as the subject and agent of the story, so that their experience could be understood in their own historical context of time and place. Das says the Partition history as the gendered activity, for it recollects the traumatic memories of women who endured all sorts of suffering and pain at the hands of the family and the state. Their memory of surviving offers another form of historiography in contrast to that of the elites.

The patriarchal ideology regarding women's purity as the honour of the society and community has conditioned women to be the locus of double subordination in incidents of collective violence within family among different communities. The patriarchy treated the women's body as a "territory to be conquered, claimed and marked by the assailant" or to be protected by the men of their own families from "Other" (Menon and Bashin 43). Defilement of the purity is considered as the wound that scars the entire communities that reinforce patriarchal control over women's body. The patriarchal authority exercises their social and legal sanction to chastise women. So the men of their own family perpetrated the violence on them. Ritu Menon and Kamala Bashin write in *Border and Boundaries* :

> Very large numbers of women were forced into death to sexual violence against them to preserve chastity and protect individual, familial and community 'honor'. The means used to accomplish this end varied; when themselves took their lives, they would either jump into the nearest well or set themselves to ablaze, singly, or in groups that could be made up either of all the women in the family; the younger women; or women and children. (42)

The nature of such a familial violence, Butalia accords in *The Other side of Silence* was so patriarchal that the death or killing of their fellow women was glorified as "martyrdom", an

"act of bravery" and "heroism" of "supreme sacrifice" for saving their purity and honor (186). During the time of partition, control over women's sexuality was perpetuated by males of the own community or the 'Other', either in the name of protection for the community's honour or dishonoring the opponent community and state, which was inscribed in the bodies of women. The sexual violence during the time ranges on women's bodies from rape to stripping, parading naked, mutilating and disfiguring, tattooing or branding the breasts and genitalia with triumphal slogans amputating breasts, knifing open the womb, killing fetuses and alike. Menon and Bashin argue that "women's sexuality symbolizes 'manhood'; its desecration is a matter of such shame and dishonor that it has to be avenged" (43). They further argue that physical violence as such "engraved the division of India into India and Pakistan on the women of both religious communities in a way that they became the respective countries, indelibly imprinted by the other. Then masculinity finds its expression in the violation of women's bodies such as rape campaign, sex trafficking and abduction, and the murder of women who dishonor the community as well. For their own chastity and the community's honor, men forced their women to die by providing them with weapons, strangling them, drowning them or burning them. In other cases, as a product of patriarchy, women had internalized the patriarchal myth that the dignity and the honor of the community lies in their body, so women themselves gave their consent to such brutal acts. Their elimination denoted their martyrdom and their murders acquired social sanction, since the act of killing had after all the noble purpose of safe guarding community honor. For them, as Menon and Bashin say, "it was not only 'miscreants', 'outsiders' and 'marauding mobs' that they needed to fear- husbands, fathers, brothers and even sons could turn killers"(2).

In patriarchy men are always the authority who can decide on women for their every sphere of life. They are the givers whether it is life or death, or identity or recognition, honour or

dishonour. But women, the passive recipient, take male authority as necessary for their protection. In other words, the hegemony as such is a body politic. But questions can be raised: Who should the women fear to? And why do they need protection? If men seriously respect this social convention of body politic women need not fear anything. Men have abused this agreement as masculinity and have taken it for granted. They consider inflicting violence upon women as the very masculine task. The familial violence on women as such would be rationalized in such a way that one of the respondents of Butalia justifies the action: "… if the women of our family had not been killed... the ones who were left alive, would not have been alive today" (qtd in Banerjee 2518).The male members of their family brutalized their own women because they thought that it was the best way of saving their honor. The deeply engraved patriarchal value system that believed women as men's possession and protection of their women without allowing them their independent choice would be supported by mystifying the religious myths. Women were forced to follow the acts of mythical queen Padmini, who committed self-sacrifice as an option for submission to the Muslim invader. Butalia in her article reports the incident of mass suicide of 90 women in a little village of Thoa Khalsa:

> […] who drowned themselves by jumping into a well during the recent disturbances has stirred the imagination of the people of Punjab. They revived the Rajput tradition of self- immolation when their men folk were no longer able to defend them. They also followed Mr. Gandhi's advice to Indian women that in certain circumstances even suicide were morally preferable to submission. (16)

The violent death through forcible suicide as such was valorized in the glowing term martyrdom in patriarchal value system. The contemporary popular ideology has locked Hindu women in the masculine discourse that sexual violence on them is a dishonor, a social death and supposedly

makes the very victims; the women choose violent physical death as only option when they are raped or to be raped. Butalia, Menon and Basin have uncovered such many terrifying incidents and traumatic oral hidden histories of mass suicide, rape abduction and state recovery of abducted women and war children and their trauma, pain, anguish and ambivalent of state in their restoration in the family and society.

Recovery and Rehabilitation of the abducted women by the states of both sides was another episode of violence on women in partition. That was mutually constitutive act of mapping borders and boundaries. After the Partition, Inter Dominion Treaty was made between two nations for a massive rescue, recovery and rehabilitation. During partition riot women were abducted, raped and then sold from one to another abductor. Those women and their children born by rape were discovered and handed over to their real family. According to the treaty, both the nations should recover the abducted women by the men of different religion and submit them to their respective nation. India had to recover Muslim women and submit to Pakistan and vice verse. Most of them were unwilling to go back to their family for they had managed to survive in their own way and they were unlikely to be accepted by their real family as their honor was ruined by the men of other community and the men with pride of their real home would say shame on these women. Since they were not accepted they converted their religion and settled their life with their abductors. But even that was not tolerable to the patriarchal nationality and then in order to rationalize their irresponsible act during Partition the states of both side acted the drama of recovery and rehabilitation. It was a merely a politics but not humanity. It was implemented, as Menon and Bhasin assert for two reasons: “first, the relationship of Indian state with Pakistan and second, its assumption of the role of ‘parens- patriae’ vis- a- vis the women who had been abducted” (8). It was the dual role of India to show itself as responsible and

civilized government by rescuing women citizen and to cast Pakistan as abductor country. Mridula Sarabhai a key officer of recovery operation states, "For me, recovery work is not only a humanitarian problem, it is a part of my political ideology. The policy of abduction as a part of the retaliatory program has given a set back to the basic ideals of a secular state and Janata Raj" (qtd. in Menon and Bashin 8). Butalia too quotesKamalaben (one of the woman officers appointed for rescue operation), who recounts about attitude of politicians (mostly the men of both sides) concerning the recovery operation in her article:

> Women were exchanged for women, politically they were recovered and exchanged, the fewer we give away from here, the more popular we will be; our political workers also had the same feeling, because the fewer you give away the more popular you will be in Punjab and the more your status would go up, and the same thing would happen here…. (20)

Once again women became the instrument to achieve political end of the nation states. Their agency in partition was just those of submissive victims of patriarchal values. They were not given free choice of living their life even after their abduction. They were reduced to the objects to be exchanged as goods without having right to think about their own future. It was a deliberate violence on them on behalf of the state. That was second displacement, uprooting and trauma to them. They were forced to go back to their original community while their children were left with their biological fathers. The women officers were recruited with police force to persuade them to return but the task was not easy. Women feared redislocation and unacceptance, so they were reluctant to go back. Moreover, they had lost trust in males as their rescuers. They resisted recovery. Government had to take adequate legal measures to ensure the restoration of these deviant subjects to the patriarchal body of the nation in order to appropriately control and contain

their sexuality. So the recovery and rehabilitation project became violence for them. The forced abduction followed forcible recovery. As Butalia remarks in *The Other Side of Silence* "… women living with men of the other religion had to be brought back, if necessary by force, to their own homes, in other words, the place of their religion" (105). Far more Muslim women who were living with Sikhs and Hindus were recovered by Indian government while Pakistan did and followed agreement sincerely. These women were forcibly sent to Pakistan. These destitute women were sexually and politically abused by the abductors and the state. The recovery action was just destroying their lives. They had compromised to the situation and were happy with their abductor husbands and children. But recovery act again made them displaced. These women retorted angrily, "Is this the freedom that Jawaharlal gained? Better that he had died as soon as he was born. Our men have been killed, our homes destroyed" (qtd. in Menon and Bhasin 6). Ironically, Nehru the hero of the Independence and the protagonist of the grand narratives of Independence, had been reproached by innocent sufferers of Independence who had nothing to do with politics and even did not know why partition was necessary. They had no problem in living with Muslims or Hindus. They just had been victimized by high politics. Mrs. Qidwai admits the violent modality of operation as handing over from one set of butchers to another in her memoire *Azadi ki chhawon me* (In the Shadow of Independence). The government officials themselves admitted that recovery was the real abduction; it did neither give them free choice of living their lives nor their real family.

Such was the drama of recovery yet rehabilitation had no guaranty. The women recovered were unlikely to be accepted by their family because they had borne children being raped, they had polluted their community or nation's honor. They became "shameless women" for the men of their community, who themselves had diluted the shame of many women of other

community. Their new settlement was again uprooted and made them permanent refugee in India and Pakistan. Abducted women had multiple identities which did not provide any belongings. Menon and Bashin quote one of the informants in *Border and Boundaries,* "A woman has no religion- her only religion is womanhood. She gives birth, she is a creator, she is god, and she is a mother. Mothers have no religion, their religion is motherhood. It makes no difference what they are, whether they are Sikh, Hindus, Muslims or Christians" (243). But these women victims of partition were denied even their motherhood but only womanhood (they were not allowed to take their children from the men of other religion), who were, in Butalia's words, "represented on spending sorrowful days and unthinkable nights at Pakistan and Hindustan at the hands of lustful Muslims and Hindus" (167).

Patriarchy prevailed everywhere -- in nationality, communality, religiosity, historiography and politics. It is the powerful force to shape any ideology. Communality conceived in the womb of patriarchy is so in rooted in the society that even political rhetoric cannot overpower it. In the case of rehabilitation mission the state hypothesis was rendered a failure by the patriarchal notion of honour. Nehru and Gandhi repeatedly made exhortation to their families to restore their sisters and wives in their family by giving references of Hindu religious text Ramayan. But even in Ramayan, Sita, despite her purity, had to prove it by surviving *agniparikshya* to be accepted at home. Ever since Ramayan women in patriarchy every time have to take the burden of proving their chastity to be approved in their own family. The social norms, community honor, national border and boundary, everything inscribes on woman's body. She takes the burden of all these principles but belongs to nobody or nowhere. Such was the condition of recovered women. Even pleadings of nationalists' and officials could not provide them with their belongings. Since their own belonging was violent to them, they were

unlikely to get respectable restoration in their family they preferred building their new life with the very men who was her abductor the rapist, the killer of their fathers, brothers and husbands rather than return to their families and communities. It was very difficult for them to compromise with their self esteem but the fear of rejection was more terrible than any other condition. Despite their multiple temporary identities, they remained in no man's land in the refugee camp on government charity with new identity of permanent refugee. They might have got Hindustan or Pakistan but not their *vatan (*natal home).

The terrible plight as such of these women survivors of Partition remained silent for more than four decades. They made silence the strategy or pact for survival under patriarchal patronage. Forgetting was necessity to them to sustain life. They never dared to uncover the sexual assault upon them. Only in the 90s almost half century later, their silent trauma was uncovered by feminist scholars and acknowledged their contribution. The breaking of the silence functioned as an acting out of their trauma that was necessary for their survival aftermath of violence. As Veena Das asserts:

> I have myself found this a very complicated task, for when we use such imagery as breaking the silence; we may end by using our capacity to "unearth" hidden facts as a weapon. Even the idea that we should recover the narratives of violence becomes problematic when we realize that such narratives cannot be told unless we see the relation between pain and language that a culture has evolved. (88)

Intervention of traumatic violence on women survivors by Feminist scholarship directs them "to a range of possibilities for domesticating and reoccupying life-worlds shattered by violence" (Priya Kumar 151).

Baldwin has fictionalized the survivors' memoire as an attempt to constitute the fragmented subjectivities of the female subject of mass violence. Such fictionalized accounts of survivors' enables the readers to imagine the traumatic experience inhibited in their mind. These fictionalized testimonies raise questions about survivor women's identity, nationality religiosity and belongings. She has tried to break the silence that the women have adhered as the tool to survive under patriarchy. Independence and the birth of new nation played naked dance of bloodshed on their bodies exploiting them as platform to exercise power, politics and patriarchy of all communities and parties involved. But the Patriarchal historiography denies and erases this gendered violence practised on women's bodies. The subaltern's irony, Baldwin's fictions, according to Beerendra Pandey, "bring to the fore a contemporary perceptions of the gendered partition violence that reorders partition history with a contemporary feminist ethics in mind and with a much more radical perceptivity of socio-political enablement than the women writers of the partition generation" (181).

CHAPTER TWO

An Overview of Politics of Irony

Irony, in its simple form, means a statement or event undermined by the context in which it occurs. It arises from some kinds of contrast. It may be contradiction in action and speech or action and intention. Irony may produce a comic effect, depending upon the circumstance of the case. The concept of irony has a rich tradition in the West, and to this day is not only discussed and debated by philosophers and literary critics alike, but can also be seen at use everywhere in popular culture and today's media. According to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* the word irony can be traced back to the Greek *eiron,* which means "dissembler", and is the root from which the Greek *eironi*, and the Latin *ironia* are derived (both of which mean irony).

Generally speaking, the sense of irony is dissimilation, or of a difference between what is appeared and what really is. The Greek term *eironeia* was first used by Plato in his *Republica* referring to the irony in Socratic dialogue. In Latin *Ironia* was used by Cicero as a rhetorical device and then French borrowed term *Ironia* and then English used this term as a literary device. Irony, especially in its Greek use is the outcome of the deliberate pretention of the *eiron*, an ironist, and the self- deception of the *alazon*, a victim or the butt of the irony. Such a dialectical discrepancy of the appearance and reality or 'eironic' and 'alazonic' features of irony have been later explored as a powerful "rhetorical enforcement" for its special rhetorical and artistic effects (Muecke 8).

Muecke thinks the meaning of irony differs with the time, place, person and the context. He asserts, "The word irony does not now mean only what it meant in earlier centuries, it does not mean in one country all it may mean in another, nor in the street what it may mean in the study, nor to one scholar what it may mean to another" (qtd. in Hutcheon 9). He meant to say

irony is not universal, its use, purpose and target gets changed with the time. About the existence, appropriateness and meaning of irony there has been always a debate through the time. The use of irony from the position of power or dominant power and the oppressive power is different. The former one uses irony as a weapon for negating, while the latter one as affirming.

In medieval circle irony would be considered as "courtly romance" far from philosophical argument. It would be misunderstood and misinterpreted. It was the eighteenth century literature when irony was deployed as a rhetorical technique. It would be used as a tool by high- born people or dominant authority for trivializing the low- born or oppressive ones. The writers like Pope, Jonathan Swift, John Bunyan, Defoe etc. were the renowned ironists of the time. The use of irony by such elitists became "largely destructive" (27). The irony would be used in its conservative function the desire of which is more didactic rather than political. The conservative function of irony, therefore, is controlled by, as Bakhtin says, "the dogmatic and authoritarian cultures that are one sidedly serious" (qtd. in Hutcheon 27). Those they have been on the receiving end of ironic attack consider themselves as the serious and the univocal, so are the ideal

Hutcheon goes beyond the traditional definition of irony as opposite of what is said to "a semantically complex process of relating, differentiating and combining said and unsaid meanings - and doing so with an evaluative edge" (89). The modern society has become complex with the issues of different micro political interests. People of different walks of life, culture, gender, race, and political ideology are either conscious of their right and position by themselves or empowered by different socio – political enterprises. Along with the complexities of social structure and political consciousness of people, the meaning of irony also has become complex. Recently irony has become the weapon of the group which is marginalized in the

society being deprived of political right to fight against the dominant authority. The women, blacks, colonized, and poverty stricken people who are also known as subalterns employ irony as one of the weapons to resist and defy the relation of power as they have no other weapons to resist, to be heard and to rebel. For them irony is a means to create counter discourse to the authoritarian discourse in which they are excluded. About this Hutcheon quotes what Terdiman's observatition:

> [T]he postcolonial and feminist enterprises, among others, have often turned to irony as a counter discourse as the rhetorical figure of the dialogic whose function is to project an alternative through which any element of the here-and-now may be shown as contingent, and there by subject the whole configuration of power within which it took its adversative meaning to the erosive, dialectical power of alterity (177).

The politics of irony can be used as oppositional or progressive function that problematizes the authority and builds alternative discourse to make over the erosion made in power relation. It also can be used as conservative or negativizing way. But both of these affirmative and negative political functions cannot really be separated one from the other because those who see irony as primarily destructive also tend to see it as totally complicitous and, thus, hypocritically affirmative.

As a sociolinguistic term irony is a communicative event or speech act. The ironist as speaker and the interpreter as respondent or listener participate in the communicating irony. Due to diversity of speech in a single speech community, comprehension becomes complex, and misunderstanding in comprehending irony may take place because of different world of

discourse. However, people share the meanings transmitting through different mediums. G. D Martin asserts "the whole communicative process is altered and distorted by these different worlds of discourse" (qtd. in Hutcheon 66). In ironic discourse, but Hutcheon says, the "whole communicative process is not only altered and distorted but also made possible by those different worlds in which each of us differently belongs" (66). She argues irony itself "*creates* the special relationship" between the ironist and interpreter and it is "the community that comes first and that in fact *enables* the irony to happen" (66). When misunderstanding and confusion occurs in responding irony the readers feel that they have missed ironies. When irony is missed to be understood that irritates the readers or audiences, then intended ironic communication does not take place between ironist and the interpreter. Irony is more easily understood in a well- defined or even closed group whose members share a social environment. Irony is culture specific. Lack of acquaintance to the context creates difficulty in interpreting irony. I. A. Richards says "ignorance or absence of necessary intellectual context, or defective scholarship" (qtd. in Hutcheon 91) is the other reason for difficulties in grasping irony. The ignorance, Booth means the "ability to pay attention, prejudice, and lack of practice and emotional inadequacy" (qtd. in Hutcheon 91). It shows grasping irony is not an easy task; it needs a lot of efforts to figure it out.

Hutcheon as a theorist of irony theorizes it as a "matter of interpretation as much as of intention" (77). Irony employed in text is to be explored by interpreter. What the ironist intends to represent is to be explored but it might not be accurately explored. It is like a game interplayed between the ironist and the interpreter. Both of the parties should have good orientation of the game or it is not well played. Similarly, if the intended irony is not perceived by the interpreter it remains unaddressed or useless. She thinks the significance of irony lies in its perception. "Irony is not irony until it is interpreted" as such (5). Some writes about irony and the other about

interpretation but she says both the tasks are inseparable. Irony 'happens' if it is interpreted. In this sense irony is a "risky business" (Hutcheon 9). There is no guarantee that the reader or interpreter can perceive the intended irony of the text or not. Ironist intends to set up an ironic relation between the said and unsaid but may not always succeed in communicating what s/he is intending. Hutcheon argues:

> Irony happens in the space between the said and the unsaid ; it need both to happen. Ironic meaning is inclusive and relational; the said and the unsaid coexist in the interpreter, and each has meaning in relation to the other because they literally interact to create the real ironic meaning, and the unsaid is not always a simple inversion or opposite of the said. It is the complex inclusive, relational differential nature of ironic meaning making. (13)

Thus, interpretation of meaning and its politics is crucial to the construction of irony. Therefore, politics of irony is "a relational strategy in the sense that it operates not only between said and unsaid meanings but also between people: ironist, interpreters, and targets" (58).

The ironist may or may not leave signals of the intended irony. Mizzau opines, "most efficacious irony is the least overtly signaled, the least explicit" (qtd. in Hutcheon145). He meant to say, the fewer the signals, the better the irony. The irony can be the choice of any form of communicative component like conversation or reading. Ironic statements (verbal irony) typically imply a meaning in opposition to their literal meaning. It uses the "language giving the lie to itself yet still relishing its power" (Hartman 146). It means irony is employed at any level and in many forms of language, art and communicative component.

In literature, irony, generally, is used as a weapon to provoke emotion or subvert the power of the oppressive authority or system. Very rarely irony functions as conservative role by presenting the characters or situation that legitimize the oppressive authority. When irony is used as conservative, it is one of the strategies to intensify the oppression. At first irony intensifies the undesirable condition so severely that the victim is empowered to resist on its own. Excessive oppression compels the oppressed subject to resist. When one cannot directly rebel, s/he uses alternative trajectory to defy the power. Irony is a trajectory applied by oppressed groups or victims or those who are virtually victimized to defy the authoritative power. It is the political dimension of irony that it has a target upon which ironists intends to attribute intended irony. This is what Hutcheon says irony as the "discursive strategy operating at the level of language (verbal), or form (musical, visual, textual)" (10). Irony can be targeted through different forms of art. The "discursive strategy" depends upon context and the identity and position of both the ironist and the audience. The ironist implements any possible ways that is appropriate to the time and context, and audience. Irony is a matter of unspoken understanding; unstated critique.

Irony is a fascinated troupe in the west among theorists, artists and critics alike and every century likes to be called as the age of irony. Authors and critics use irony as a tool to authorize their texts through their attribution of irony. It possesses the cutting edge in its verbal and structural forms. Irony is the mode of reading what is "the mode of unsaid, unheard and unseen" (Hutcheon 9). It is not only used to differentiate what is said and unsaid but irony has evaluative purpose as well. It can and does function tactically in the service of wide range that include attributing, legitimizing, under mining, undercutting, subverting, reinforcing etc. This is what Hutcheon calls the "transideological" nature of the politics of irony (9).That means irony can be used either to undercut or to reinforce both conservative and radical positions and also functions

in negative and positive ways. The politics of irony can be "provocative when its politics are conservative and authoritarian as easily as when its politics are oppositional and subversive: it depends on who is using/ attributing it and at whose expense it is seen to be" (Hutcheon15). Irony is used as a tool either to undercut or to reinforce both conservative and radical politics. The politics or irony in this sense, at once forces a distinction between ironies that might function constructively to articulate a new oppositional position; and ironies that work conservatively in a more negativizing way. In the former case the ironist would target the system being the part of the position of power, while in the latter case the ironist as an exterior would stand outside in it.

Drawing on the concept of the speech genre put forth by Mikhail Bakhtin, and the work on irony by Wayne Booth, Hutcheon argues that irony relies heavily on knowledge shared within what she calls "discursive communities". Discursive communities includes the things like "class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual preferences are involved, but so too are nationality, neighborhood profession religion and all the other micro political complexities of our lives to which we may not even be able to give labels" (18). There is a vital relationship between ironist, interpreter and cultural context that allows irony to happen. Discursive community shares, in Hodge and Kress' words, "a set of rules prescribing the conditions for production and reception of meanings; which specify who can claim to initiate (produce), or know (receive) meanings about what topics under what circumstances and with what modalities" (qtd. In Hutcheon 92)). Grasping irony itself is difficult due to its complex nature with inherent ambiguity. Hutcheon asserts, "it is almost a miracle that irony is ever understood as an ironist might intend it to be: all ironies, in fact are, probably unstable ironies" (115). The cultural disparity brings more

complexity in receiving irony. Success of irony depends upon lack of socio linguistic disparity between ironist and interpreters, so mastery over irony is impossible.

Irony contests with dominant discourses using their said language as its strength and allows ironic discourse upon what is vulnerable to be disrupted. It has cutting edge that is used as weapon by the feminists, Blacks and post colonists to "deconstruct and decenter" (Hutcheon 32) the dominant discourses. The feminist enterprise of South Asia has exploited irony in rereading of partition history of 1947 of India, which is silent on the violence perpetrated on women, during the time of colonial independence.

Political irony in Partition Fictions

The bloody partition of India in1947 took the lives of millions of both men and women but the women of the three parties involved – Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, were the severe victims. They were abducted, and raped by multiple rapists, again sold from one man to another. After recovery they were rejected by their family. They had to suffer double displacement: at the time of riot and then after their recovery. They could escape such sexual assault only being killed by their kinsmen. The killing as such was justified by both men and some women by valorizing it as martyrdom. The partition violence was, thus, the gendered violence which has been represented with the trope of irony in partition fictions especially by women. The ironical edge become noticeable when looked at the nationalist histories which remain silent about the violence on women. The feminist intervention into partition history through the trope of irony excavates the buried history and placed it as an alternative history with striking pointedness.

The partition fictions written by women writers deal with the sad reality that our patriarchal society adheres to such convention that a woman's body is considered as the honor of the nation, community and family she belongs to and to dishonor her body means to dishonor the very particular community or family that she is attached with. Beerendra Pandey asserts this conventional over expectation on women's honour is the "major factor for subordination of women to the status of secondary citizen" in our society (175). Her honour is what she is saved for and also killed for the same. In Partition riot while women's honour could not be maintained and violence led to mass rape, the male members of the family who are supposed as the protectors- the brothers, fathers or husbands took the drastic measure to keep their daughters or sisters from indignity, thus preserving, by extension, the body of the entire family unit. The women had no choice except supporting them. In this connection Beerendra Pandey uses Hutcheon's concept of political irony to posit that Indian partition fictions by women uses the trope of the irony "to radically map the micro politics of power relations between men or women vis- a- vis partition violence" (178). In this regard, he adds that the purpose "be heard by the centre and yet keep critical distance and thus unbalance and undermine the patriarchal discourse" is along this critical observation that this dissertation analyses the trope of irony in Baldwin's "Family Ties" and *What the Body Remembers* (178).

In "Family Ties", written in the backdrop of Indo-Pak war in 1971, Baldwin uncovers the paternalistic foundation of the normative nationalist subject. This literary narrative portrays the very plight of subaltern subjectivity through a ten/ eleven year old narrator girl whose innocent prospective is oriented by extreme patriarchy as insignificant subjectivity in comparison to her male counterpart. In the society where patriarchy is at its height a daughter is considered as a *paraya dhan* (someone else's property). She is bringing no returns to parents. A son is asset

while a daughter is liability. A mother takes her as a burden if no one marriages her and for father if she dishonors the family. The narrator understands that she is as helpless as "a kukri in the chicken –seller's cage" and her brother like the chicken- seller (butcher) could "wring the chicken's neck" whenever he wants (26). Baldwin employs political irony to suggest that male authority is sanctioned with the privilege to shoot at their sisters or daughters if they fail to protect them from the enemy because their honour is more important than their life itself. Even killing is legitimized for men while no choice is left for women. The narrator's father authorizes his son to defend his sister at any cost: "If the Muslims come and your sister is in danger, you must shoot rather than let her fall into their hands" (26). And the brother is proud of his privilege to do so. An idealized masculinity demands that men kill their women rather than allow their honour to be compromised. But Baldwin does not underscore such irrationality of intra - familial violence as necessary for the cost of honor but she interrogates why women's honor matters but not the women themselves.

When recovery act was operated the state reputedly circulated even (Gandhi and Nehru personally appealed the public) that the abducted women after recovery should be accepted in their original family by giving the reference of the story of Ramayan that abducted Sita by Ravan was accepted by Ram after her recovery. But ironical reference over these leaders' appeals is that in Ramayan Ram fought against Ravan, the abductor, and brought her back, but the brothers of abducted women in partition violence either killed them or rejected them instead of rescuing these women. The narrator girl's aunt Chandani Kaur was rejected by her brother because she transgressed the family honor being abducted and then raped in partition riot in 1947. The family ties regard her abduction a crime or a social death but the self conscious narrator does not underscore it.

Baldwin exploits subversive political irony that does not only interrogates but also destabilizes the bourgeois patriarchal nature of Indian society by placing the silenced subaltern subjectivity at the center of her narrative. The ironical nature of patriarchal assumption the narrative has mentioned that men uphold the family honour by killing the sisters or daughters while women have no choice except submitting their body to the killers to support them to be masculine either by killing or raping women. Such feminized valor of men is justified as patriarchy's attempt "to keep women within their *aukat* , their ordained boundary" (Butalia 171). The allegedly sacrifice of women in Thoa Khalsa that reminds the Rajput women's self immolation gets Baldwin's critique in the narrative through narrator's fear when her brother vows to kill his sister when she falls in Muslim's hand. There are always the myths grown round the women to control their sexuality. But the narrator does not internalize that she should be "a Sikhni of the family of whom [her father] can be proud" (23). By rising question on women's behalf if ideal femininity lies only in self sacrifice for the longevity of patriarchy, Baldwin problematizes the paternalistic demystification of myths that reiterates the self sacrifice of Rajput women but not of Jhansi ki Rani because the femininity is not expected to be attributed as a warrior like her. Such cowardly patriarchal concept of sacrifice and martyrdom according to has limited women's role within the home anyway for the community, victimhood, and even non-violence. To actively remember these women as "symbols of the honor of the family, community and nation is then also to divest them of both agency and violence" (B. Pandey 171). Women just served as boundary markers between national, ethnic and religious collectivities but their emergence as full-fledged citizens is jeopardized by such valorization.

In the utmost patriarchy women themselves participate in patriarchal practice of legitimizing the notions of honor and men's privilege in controlling women sexuality. Baldwin's

sharp irony attacks a deep rooted patriarchal discourse that overlooks unbalanced distance between son and daughter kept by parents. The westernized mother's overestimation of the son as only "support in her old age" is self - ironized by the son to be "a seller and a buyer" or a druggist (35). If dad's only son "smokes, he will become an impure Sikh" (31). Baldwin interrogates if the paternalistic norm itself is a burden for men too.

Baldwin's another literary narrative *What the Body Remembers* echoes her "Family Ties" as its extended form. The narrative is narrated from two Sikh women's prospective in the back drop of India's partition in 1947. The events set from Pari Darvaja (the doorway of fairies) taken place pro-partition in a Sikh minority village of Rawal Pindi to Refugee camp in Delhi in 1947. Roop the protagonist makes a journey of a young wife of a middle aged man, a surrogated mother from Rawal pindi to a refugee in Delhi. Belonging to the privilege class in the attachment with colonizers, Sardarji sends Roop and three children to Delhi before havoc disperse in Lahore. Satya and Roop, who make co-wives in Sardarji's life, are victimized by patriarchy in different ways like sterility and surrogated motherhood then a refugee. Satya, the first wife of Sardarji, despite her well – birth, skill and intelligence, that self assertive woman could not become an ideal wife to him due to her infertility. Then Sardarji brings co – wife to her she is Roop, who is 25 years younger than him. Satya's infertility and Roop's humble birth are social stigma these women have to face. It is the predicament of South Asian women that they have to bear sweeping generalizations of myths, some are correctly made, and others simply project the male approaches to women's problems. In patriarchy a childless woman and a widow is disregarded as inauspicious. An ideal femininity is attributed to *satti,* who immolated herself on the pyre of her husband; Gandhari, who was the mother of hundred sons and blindfolded herself for her husband was naturally blind, and Rajput women who offered self martyrdom for their husbands were

killed by Muslims. The womanhood is idealized by the myths mystified in a way that patriarchy wants the women to see as such. Female is always unwanted. The obsession for sons has killed many female fetuses in mother's womb. Pro-partition Sikh society was very antagonistic towards female and Baldwin's narrative mirrors such social practice by deploying irony.

Trespassing the male's zone or freedom for them is punishable. They are never allowed to the public sphere. Such predicament of women in South Asia is ironically represented by Satya and Roop. Satya's misfortune began not only due to her infertility but her ready tongue that always criticizes Sardarji's western hegemonised mentality. She does not succumb to Sardarji's masculine ego that demands "to lower her eyes before him" (287). She is a woman born before her time into a feudal patriarchal world, fatally unable to lower her eyes in front of a man, seeks out, rejects, and then misses with an ache when he can no longer have it. In traditional elite society women should remain in *purdah*. Men always want to keep women "in their *aukat*"(Butalia 171). Satya suffers because she has transgressed patriarchal femininity by defying male authority that is a taboo for women.

Patriarchy has applied different mode of actions to take over women sexuality. The marriage is one of them. Marriages are always the subjects of male prestige. The success and failure of marriages rely more on the will of men than those of the women who are married not who marry. As a meek creature a girl is to obey every paternalistic norm imposed on her because she must not let her father's head lowered. Roop's marriage to Sardarji takes place in similar condition.

It is woman's body that has to remember patriarchy. It is carved on women's body in different forms. They have to remember men's lust, women' pain, violence, murder and alike in

their body. Roop's repeated delirium: "[…] I must remember Kusum's body….Roop will remember Kusum's body re- membered", (451) highlights the crucial importance of a feminist mode of cultural recall in "defamiliarizing and rendering uncanny our sanctioned group memories and national mythologies" (Priya Kumar 120). Women's body reflects pain. Roop tattoos in her body to reflect her mother's death as if her body is a canvas to smear ink of pain over it. Women have to bear severe endurance and they bear it because they are brought up being told the stories of women's sacrifice to up lift the patriarchal norms. They are taught to internalize what "the women are for" (32). They are taught that a woman is a copulated body and reproductive body without right. That is why Simon Beauvoir opines about the reality of women that a girl is not born but made.

The subversive political function of irony is deployed by Baldwin by presenting Satya and Roop as their names suggest the emblem of truth and beauty respectively. They are the two facets of femininity - truth and beauty, to resist masculinity (Sardarji). Baldwin is a masterful storyteller and critique. Though the idea that men look at women "only from the corner of their eyes" underpins her story Baldwin's women are not meek and succumbing women rather than they are subversive to defy traditional patriarchy (447). Satya and Roop are not clotheshorses for feminist statements. They are complex, shaded and resonant with ironies. Roop, on the other hand, is the perfect foil -- Sardarji's "little brown koel"a woman so ornamental she is like an irritating itch (199). But it is a measure of Baldwin's mastery that we never forget that this Roop is but a sad parody of the feisty girl who once roamed her father's haveli in Pari Darvaza without fear of consequence. A girl in whom poverty, fate and personal ambition have pared down to being little more than a vessel for Sardarji's seed, but who struggles for greater self-expression. Roop's instruction to her infant daughter like this: "listen, but do not obey everything […].

Always speak. Never be silent. Respect your elders, but don't be too generous …say what you want" is ironical to subjugation that patriarchy intends to see but required self empowered nature of women for their dignified survival what Baldwin wants to convey in the novel (181). It represents the aspect of femininity that subverts the repressive masculine authority by her indomitable womanhood. Taking the reference from Paola Bacchetta in attribution to the political irony deployed by Shauna Singh Baldwin in her fictions as "critical inter-subjective feminist historiography" (181). Beerendra Pandey further adds:

> the subalternist irony in Baldwin's story brings to the fore a contemporary feminist perception of the gendered partition violence that reorders partition history with a contemporary feminist ethics in mind and with a much more radical possibility of socio – political enablement than the women writers of partition generation. (181)

Baldwin ironizes the partition violence from subaltern prospective in such a way that places women's agency of victimhood in partition violence as a counter discourse in national historiography.

Nehruvian vision of secular nation space and Gandhian philosophy of non – violence has been ironically failed by their own administrative machines. Satish Despande opines how the impractical vision had underestimated the effects of communality:

> Nehruvian secularism had their roots in the western model of a secular modern nation and were insufficiently indigenized, they could only exist in the newly created national sphere – they could not strike roots at the regional level […]

> Nehru believed that the legal guarantee of equality of citizenship regardless of religion, caste, creed or other social attributes would render communalism obsolete. (183)

Gayatri Spivak's work on subalternity and silence, articulated in her claim that the "subaltern cannot speak" is a useful reference point for thinking about the problematic issues of voice, agency and silence surrounding representations of sexual violence. (104) In the specific context of the Partition, and aftermath of it, this representational void underlines a larger fabric of culturally imposed silences: a canny silence about the sexual violence experienced by women in police custody by policemen, by rescuer and also within the sanctified parameters of the home at the hands of the men in their own families. A Hindu-centric textual imaginary maintains a silence about the abduction and rape of Muslim women by Hindu and Sikh men. The violent consumption of women's bodies inherent in the staging of sexual violence as spectacle produces the subalternity of the sexed subject as woman, and implies that women's voices cannot be recuperated within the parameters of a patriarchal modernity which constructs narratives *What the Body Remembers* and "Family Ties".

To sum up, the partition fictions by Baldwin create counter- historiography to bourgeois patriarchal national historiography by excavating that dark side of partition which was denied in nationalist freedom discourse. The political function of irony employed in these partition fictions of modern India seems to be conservative as well as subversive. It is conservative in the sense that it has given continuity to the patriarchal conventional notion of valorizing honor killing as self - imposed martyrdom. It functions as subversive in the sense that honor killing of women by men is revelation of self – demasculinization of men for they were not able to defend their women. The radically subversive political irony reflects a truly subaltern kind of writing that

picks holes in the bourgeois nationalist patriarchy, while the conservative political irony focuses on the discontinuous subjectivity of marginal being limited with the codes of continuity, affirming, and promoting the convention of the bourgeois patriarchy.

CHAPTER THREE

Counter History of Partition Violence: The Feminist Edge of Irony in Shauna Singh Baldwin's Partition Fictions

Baldwin's *"Family Ties"* the longest story in the anthology of short fictions "English Lessons and Other Stories" (1996), exploits the cutting edge of political irony in demystifying the traumatic history of partition as the gendered violence. Written in the background of Indo-Pakistan war in 1971, it represents the cultural memory that is removed from Partition history from the second generation prospective. A ten year old Sikh narrator girl experiences the violence that took place during partition of India in 1947 through her father's driver Nanda Singh. But her perception of trauma of violence is different from that of her father who had lost his parents and a sister in the violence. She is a Sikh girl brought up on the mythical stories of "Guru Gobinda Singh from two hundred years ago, wearing a saffron turban, wielding a huge *kirpan* – and leading the 61st Cavalry" against oppressive Mughal rulers. She learns the valour of Sikh warriors and identifies her father with them (220). Whenever there is a war between Muslims and Sikhs, every Sikh man is bound to fight against Muslims because they are the age-old enemies to each other. Guru Gobinda Singh wielded *kirpan* against the enemies but her father does not want to even talk about war. He says he had lost a lot in the war and he does not want to lose any more. The very first irony is her identification of father with Guru Govinda Singh, who wielded *kirpan* against enemies, while her father-- the representing figure of Sikh community-- authorizes his son to show the bravery defending his sister by a revolver at her. Her father, who is never tired of preaching the valour of the Sikh Gurus to his son, escapes his children's eyes by making excuses of losing his parents and sisters in the war.

Similarly, an innocent mind is polluted by demystification of age-old communal hostility between Sikhs and Muslims and supremacy of patriarchy. Baldwin stages the way in which collective memory establishes a continuum of violence and hostility between Sikhs and Muslims ranging from the distant past to the more proximate trauma of Partition.

The narrator is brought up in the patriarchy at its height. She learns the discriminating value of male and female from her parent. She learns men are superior to women; they are always "smart…with laughter" and they can always ask "why" to justify their superiority (21). The narrator girl compares her brother to the brave sons of Sikh guru Govinda Singh who was interred alive in a brick wall but did not convert to Islam. Unlike her brother Inder, she is a "silly little kukri, a hen instead of a Sikhni of family" of whom her father "can be proud" (23). Baldwin ironically questions the patriarchal conventions of family ties that valorize the son over the daughter. A son is the pride of the family; while the daughter a stain on family pride. She is a burden even for the mother as she fears if no one marries her due to her "steady" and fatty" (21) figure "with glasses" (35) and the father fears for "her faint heart that can bring dishonour to those who loves" her (24). Each new incident of violence between Muslims and Hindus or Pakistan and India reminds them the original trauma of violence in which they had lost a lot. They do not have courage to face the same situation once again. The narrator's father had lost his parents to a marauding Muslim mob in 1947 partition riot. His sister had been abducted and raped by a Muslim man and converted as Jhehanara Begum. Therefore, the narrator's father, showing his revolver, reveals his desire to his son: "I want you to know how to use it to defend this little kukri" (25).Very chilling scene for the narrator is her brother's assurance of patriarchal consensus of determining the selfhood of their female member as intrinsic to them. Without hesitation he assures the father "I will" instead of asking "why" that he would always be asking

for every statement (26). Baldwin deploys the subversive irony in the narrator's silent question "Is it worse to be caught, converted and killed or raped by Muslims than to be killed by a brother"? She concludes, she does not need to fear the Muslim Other – "far more is the danger from those within" her family (26). The narrator realizes that her brother is given permission to claim ownership of her selfhood. He is told that he has the power to will her "to live or to die" (31).

The narrator's awareness to gendered vulnerability leads her to ask questions about her aunt, Chandani Kaur (Jheharana Begum), whose name was never taken at her house. Her father takes her name only to remind his son to fulfill the patriarchal obligation of protection of his sister's honour. He disregards her as dead. The narrator thinks her father also had protected his family honour with the same revolver that he taught his son to use when he has to choose his sister and family honour. One day she finds an old letter sent to her father by a social worker that his sister Chandani Kaur, who has been rescued from Pakistan, where she had been converted as Jehanara Begum and had a son too, was willing to return to her natal place. She wonders why her father did not shoot at her while he wanted his son to promise that he would protect her from enemy by killing her. The ironical implication lies in narrator's gratitude to her father as a generous person, who let his sister live even though she transgressed the patriarchal threshold of chastity being abducted by a Muslim. She regrets: "I hold the letter against the slight rise of my chest in gratitude. Dad did not kill his sister…. How can I have been so base, so vile, so ungrateful daughter as to have let such a thought enter my mind? He was just preparing us, as a father must in a time of war" (28). Baldwin wittily illustrates what Menon and Bhasin say about intra- familial violence and women's internalization of it. In this connection they say "It was not only miscreants, outsiders and marauding mobs they needed to fear-- husbands, fathers,

brothers and even sons could turn killers" ("Recovery" 2). Her father's driver, Nandu, informs her about the reality, "[A]ny sister of your father would have died before allowing herself to be called Jehanara Begum… no women of your father's family would have allowed herself to become a Musalmaan and then to have a Musalmaan's child" (29). Though alive, the name of Chandani Kaur had been washed out of their mind though she repeatedly wanted to come back; she even drowned her illicit half- Muslim son, but her brother refused to accept her as his sister. The narrator realizes that her aunt Chandani Kaur has been suffering greater trauma than her – a form of social death. The climactic irony is that family ties, brought up in all- pervasive patriarchal order, partitions a sister and a brother. Though he never accepts Jehanara Begum as his sister, for him she "must be an imposter, for she could not possibly be his sister" (30) , she haunts him in different forms either in the form of agony of dishonor or the regret for his failure to perform brotherly duty of protecting his sister by using revolver at her. So he wants to make sure that his son will not repeat his mistake when needed.

When her family has denied Chandani Kaur's existance, the narrator refuses her memory to disappear in oblivion. She senses: "Above us luminescent and reproachful, a woman-face moon dangles like a pendant on the breast of the dissipating day" (36). She realizes her gendered vulnerability to experience her aunt's tragic story so becomes the secondary witness of her past and communicates it to the readers at present. She re-creates her aunt's traumatic memory and passes it on to the readers through the process of emphatic identification and solidarity that bridges the gap of the time.

"Family Ties" underscores the ways in which women's internalization of their subordinate position in religious group and nation is crucially important. Unlike other partition

fiction writers Baldwin resists patriarchy through Chandani Kaur, who does not submit her to the abductor but tries to claim her natal family. The narrator is told that her aunt repeatedly writes letters to her brother until she goes mad. Unlike brave Rajput women, Chandani Kaur is the representative figure of those women who were double victimized by patriarchy and by communality. The raped women like her are, as Veena Das says, "occupying a zone between two deaths" (84), one from violence by Other and the next from rejection by their owns. Immersed within the patriarchal norms many women offered themselves up as sacrifices to protect the honour of the community and to avoid social death . This narrative uncovers the patriarchal narratives of community and nation that marks women's bodies as the repositories of group's selfhood. Chandani Kaur is the severe victim of patriarchal norms and the silence hold by nation and the women themselves. Until the feminist historiography of Partition concerns, many Chandani Kaurs remained unwritten. The narrator ironically echoes that patriarchal obligation of adapting silence in this way:

> [To] be the part of the family you have to agree to keep its secrets. Because there are penalties to be paid by kukris who crow. After all there is nothing in my history about one Chandani Kaur who became Jehanara Begum and who is dead for my father and mad besides, nor any woman like her (34).

The narrator has learned why they should keep silent. The women who survived partition violence either kept silence or went mad like Chandani Kaur. Survival is very costly for them as they have to face social death in patriarchal sense. "Family Ties" is more about the women suffering from patriarchy than Partition. Chandani Kaur suffers double patriarchal victimization. To be a woman is her crime so she is abducted by a man of the other community; and being

abducted and her forcible conversion is her another crime, so she is rejected by her family. Her brother fears the tradition set in patriarchy that does not allow him to restore her in the family. So the narrator is told, "any sister of your father's would have died before allowing herself to be called Jeharana Begum… she was dead for your father" (29). It is not only an eighteen year old woman Chandani Kaur to suffer patriarchy but also an eleven year old narrator girl who "begins to know what pain it means to be a woman" even twenty five years after Partition. The women in all occasions and of all ages are threatened by patriarchy (27).

The women characters in "Family Ties" are the victims not of partition violence but of familial violence. In the patriarchal family ties it is not only the men with hatred they should fear but men with love they should fear. The love of their protective figures like fathers and brothers is deceptive. The narrator girl says, "Moonlight Princess comes to me in my dreams that night, telling me I can trust no one. Especially if he says he loves me" (26). The ironic subversiveness stems from her subaltern female political consciousness to resist such a patriarchal domination to women – a new subjectivity that makes her feel "no rush of fear" to other for the "first time" she feels "far more is the danger from those within" (26). They love them so they kill them to defend their honour otherwise they are symbolically dead to them. It is assumed that death is what women cherish. Baldwin ironically illustrates Butalia's question if women really desire to die. Either physical or social, death always hangs over them like the sword of Damocles. If they are physically saved, they are dishonored and disregarded as socially dead or preserving their honour costs their lives. Living a life costs social death for Chandani Kaur. She is a no human being to her family. As a daughter's living does not matter, what matters is her honour. Similarly, her love, desire or choice does not matter. Only men's love to women matters because it decides

their life and death. Narrator's brother, Inder, ridiculously asks her, "What does your love matter? You're just a girl" (32). She very disappointedly complains, "My love or hate, bravery or fear doesn't matter" (32). Chandani Kaur is not dead but her life does not matter to her brother; she wants to come to her family, it does not matter to him either. She lets her son be drowned in order to be restored to her natal family, but it also makes no difference to him. Being a brother he cannot protect his sister's honour, but it does not matter to him. But what matters to him is that she lost her honour after being abducted by a Muslim man. Thus, the narrator girl very gently ironizes the brother's masculinity in relation to the sister's honour.

Another ironical fact is that it was the Sikh Guru, who first said men and women are equal. He did not teach to discriminate. But patriarchy demystifies the Guru's words for its own convenience. Women are taught to internalize their subjugation. Under such patriarchal family ties, the self-conscious narrator girl ironically uncovers the micro politics of power relation between men and women. She ironically reveals men's superiority to women:

> Now I am thirteen. Nanda Singh prepares the car for Inder to drive as though he were doing it for Mummy or Dad; […] Inder is old enough to have his own room and [...] we share a bathroom, where I find a sick- sweet smell, syringes hidden behind a rusty pipe, and cigarette ash like bird-droppings, but still Mummy refers to him as "Inderji" when talking to the cook and tries to tempt his nonexistent appetite with everything from imported Camembert cheese to Swiss chocolates. He keeps the large dose of pocket money coming, saying he needs it to buy acne cream, and she tells me daily how he will be the one to look after her when she gets old and I am finally off her hands. I watch Nanda Singh let Inder bump the

> old car out of the driveway and drive off without me. Now he's a seller as well as a buyer. (34-35)

Parents' over indulgence to their sons generally spoils them. They are biased to the sons and discriminate against the daughters in providing facilities-- even food to them. Ancestral obligations are tightly deployed on women while it is slackened for men. Sikhism prohibits smoking. The narrator reminds Inder "If you smoke you will become impure Sikh and then Dad will say you are not his son" (31). The patriarchally set up family ties frame his thought like this: "Dad won't say that – I am his only son …If you tried it you'd be dead … and if you tell, I'll kill you" (31). Killing is so easy to the men: "like the chicken seller killing the little kukri" (31).They take it for granted. As Inder is free to decide his sister's life and death, he is free to obey or disobey the obligation. Even if he disobeys that does not transgress the patriarchy but protects it. Such freedom to "only [the] son", who is expected to be the support of old age, has spoiled him (36). He has started taking drugs.

Likewise, *What the Body Remembers* (1999) by Shauna Singh Baldwin is also the narrative of the Sikh women in India in 1937 following the age-old patriarchal patterns. In Sikh society a daughter is unwanted child. Even if she survives, she is usually given scant education and a vegetarian diet, even when meat and eggs are available, which are reserved for boys, she is taught a little bit that her purpose in life is to be married and bear sons. She must depend on her father, husband or brother for economic support and physical protection. Not having social insurance, they are entirely dependent on male relatives. Early marriage is preferred. A girl who is still unmarried at seventeen is a failure. Widowhood and sterility for women is severe curse to them. Such women are considered as ominous for their family that they bring misfortune to the

men folk they are associated with. Women always are considered as the conveyers of the honour to their men and they are preserved for the same. It is thought that a dishonoured woman dishonours her male relatives. A sixteen year old Sikh girl, Roop, is the protagonist character of the novel that is set in Pari Darvaja, "the doorway of fairies" (18). She has learned to be a "good-good, sweet-sweet Sikh woman" (111), and to be "silent and obedient" girl with shame and modesty that were required to be a woman (112). The "good girl" is "rewarded for her behavior by being placed on a pedestal by patriarchal culture" (Tyson 90). Yet as a child she is bold, fearless and eager for adventure. But after being married as the second wife to Sardarji, who is twenty five years older than her, she has been really changed. The surrogate mother hood, co-wife to a middle aged sterile woman Satya and young, beautiful and son-bearing wife to an Anglophile, Oxford educated upper class engineer husband, brings drastic changes in her life. In the beginning, she remains quiet even when Satya takes her children one after another. A militant girl of Pari Darvaja becomes a passive recipient of patriarchy after marriage. After Satya's death she has to confront Partition and is displaced to Delhi from Lahore. The events of the partition of 1947 make her rebellious as if Satya's spirit is transferred into her. She speaks the voice of Satya and remembers the body of Kusum, her sister-in-law, the representative of all Sikh women who were sacrificed to preserve the patriarchy.

Being the youngest and the most beautiful daughter, she is pampered by her father Deputy Bachan Singh, the Lambardar of his village, who has dreamt her to be married to a rich man despite her defective ear. He has kept this reality secret to everyone in the family for he fears that she may not get a husband because of the defect. Unlike other girls and even her own elder sister Madani, Roop is a bold, adventurous and rebellious girl. Her women relatives are worried for her boyish nature. They complain, "Roop! Boy's things happening in a girl's body"

(87). So, she has been taught patriarchal norms about women's role and values in society right from her childhood. Her Nani has taught her to "learn what the women are for" (32). She thinks women are for bearing sons to their husbands. Gujri frequently reminds her "learning is just remembering slowly, like simmer coming to boil" (32). Similarly Lajo Buwa teaches her rules how to be a graceful woman:

> Rule number one: you want to make a good marriage; you must be more graceful, more pleasing to your elders. I want to hear only 'achchaji', 'hanji' and 'yes - ji' from you. Never 'nahin - ji' or 'no - ji'… Rule no two: Speak softly, always softly…. Rule number three: "Never feel angry, never, never. No matter what happens, or what your husband says, never feel angry. You might be hurt, but never feel angry. (26 - 27)

Every woman is to learn these rules as *mantras* and women follow these rules and teach their juniors as well. They are taught to keep quiet and never protest. All these women are suffering patriarchy in one way or the other. They suffer, so they teach Roop so and so. They have learnt to internalize patriarchal norms to the very core of their heart. It is very ironical that by having suffered patriarchy they are reinforcing the same system. Her Nani has to stay in her married daughter's place for not having a living son which is very shamelessness" to her (63). Her desire for son never satisfies though her daughter is dying of bearing sons. Revati Buwa stays in her cousin - brother's place for being unmarried and disgraced by everyone for she has no man and children to look after her. She always approves what Nani says. Lajo Buwa's husband always tortures her for she cannot bear a son for him. So she always emphasizes on pleasing the husband by never saying "nahin – ji". Likewise, Gujri, a Pothari plains woman is given to Roop's mother

as a wedding gift, “like Mama’s dowry pots and pans.” (24). She has no choice but to accept her position as a virtual slave: she is given away by her father because at the age of seven she has already been married and widowed, and “her whole village thought her unlucky” — meaning that she was cursed and would bring bad luck to others. She could never marry again “lest she kill another husband” (24). Her miserable condition of being an early widow has taught her to be aware of the differences between Madani or Roop and Jeevan (the daughters and the son).

As a girl she is reminded of her lower status in comparison to her brother Jeevan, “who will have a good kismat, he is a boy” (23). He is allowed to see women “at the corner of his eyes as other men do” (47) or women are not important enough to concern for a man. He has learnt to trivialize women. Though brought up in deep rooted stiff patriarchy she is rebellious defies discriminating norms between sons and daughters. She thinks herself different from other girls including her sister Madani. She says, “Not for me the things these women have to bear. I’ll not carry firewood or any pitchers of water” (24). She does not have Madani’s “share of pickles” (19) but reaches into tiffin bowl made for Jeevan until her hand meets Gujri’s slaps “Ay Roop – bi! No eggs for you – the egg bhurji is for Jeevan… eggs and meat for a girl? No don’t waste them” (20). She is often commented as “very risky” having “too much Mangle in her stars” making her “quarrelsome” (20). With sharp criticisms, Roop is given lessons to differentiate man and woman and internalize woman’s role.

Though daughters are given less priority to the sons, they are more sensitive towards parents’ feelings and economic situation. They always think of them even at the cost of neglecting their own wishes. Roop also becomes sensitive to her father’s difficulties. To pay off the debt incurred at her sister’s marriage, she encourages Bachan Singh to accept the proposal

brought by Sardar Kausal Singh (to whom Bachan Singh was indebted to loan up to the neck), for his married brother-in-law's second marriage. Roop is ready to become the second wife to twenty five years old senior husband. She offers sisterly relation to Satya but a sharp minded woman like Satya does not let her enjoy even her motherhood. She surrogates children for that woman to please her polygamous husband Sardarji. A bold and risk taking girl of Pari Darvaja is reduced to a timid and docile woman because of being overpowered by her class and gender inferiority. The poverty stricken motherless beautiful girl is forced to remember what a woman is for – a lucky woman to be the mother of a rich Anglicized man's son. It is assumed that: " Roop should appreciate her good fortune. She has been married despite: Papaji's misfortunes; having no mother to arrange her marriage; being born under very strong influence of Mangal; having one ear bad. She should be "joyful and unafraid" in her unmatched relation (135).

Unlike women in his family, Roop's father, Bachan Singh, born as a Hindu then converted to a Sikh, though poor, is a caring father to his daughters. He has sent them to school going against his female relatives like his mother-in-law, and sisters. He has "hoped for many things for his Roop... He has indulged her all this time in case her kismat brings her a husband who will not be kind." (121). As Roop was born under the influence of Mangal at her birth and also with a ear deaf, Bachan Singh is worried for her marriage. He knows that the future course of her life will be almost entirely determined by the character of the man she marries. Despite the fact that he is indebted to Sardarji, he hesitates to accept the proposal of a married rich man old enough to be Roop's father. But Roop herself dares to face the risk as she is born with many social stigmas--a motherless girl born in poverty with the influence of Mangal. She sees Sardarji for the first time on their wedding day, and she knows almost nothing about him except that he is rich.

A man is considered superior to a woman for he is a bread winner. Obviously, he brings home money and a woman stays at home. But the man and his children do not eat money and do not sleep in money. A woman makes that money bread to eat and bed to sleep. She nourishes him, comforts and entertains him so he can go out to earn bread. She well manages his family; she makes his house a home; makes his living a life; nurtures, entertains, loves him, gives him heirs and sacrifices the most important part of life for him. She endures pain, offers her body for his comfort and desire and so-called honour. But in return, her work is trivialized and what she receives--disgrace, blames and insults for her unintended lacks. For this fate of a woman, neither men nor women are responsible but what is wrong is that age- old patriarchal practice in which a woman is just to remember patriarchy in her body and mind. After marriage, Roop begins remembering the burdens of patriarchy on her body--as a little girl she remembers her mother's painful demise in bearing another son; at sixteen, she remembers the job of a beautiful, young wife of a middle aged, childless man, who is vociferous in having a son; she remembers Satya's hatred as a co-wife; the burdens of bearing the first baby who is not a son, and losing motherhood by offering first daughter to Satya and then the son bearing pain of milk filled breast having no baby to suck, are almost unbearable to her. As she is taught to endure even if she cannot, she endures. In her one good ear there are only Gujri's words never be ziddi or they will say "let- her- be - alone" (120); Lazo Buwa's words, "Never trouble your husband" (26) and Papaji's words, "Above all give no trouble" (128). She has been taught "men only see women from the corner of their eyes. Their eyes are like horses' eyes: they do not see what lies directly before them" (47).These patriarchal teachings have tightened Roop's tongue, so she keeps silent as if this only is the armour of women for their survival. But how long she can endure? She attempts to resist and leaves home quietly in order to claim her right. She takes a risk by leaving

Sardarji's house first all alone and then gets Mani Mai to bring her children to her father's place. She takes children with her as the weapon to claim motherhood and also to legitimize her marriage in her neighborhood, otherwise people will say her "some man's concubine" (262). Sardarji takes her back in the condition that she would be given back her children, and Satya would be away from them. She has to use her motherhood as an instrument to get her voice listened and also take revenge against Satya. It is her first attempt to rebel against patriarchy for her right, respect and dignity. But in patriarchy women are always to be blamed. If they try to resist they are blamed as shameless, if they show their modesty that is taken as their weakness. Since they do not inherit father's property, they have no home of their own. They are like guests at father's place. Once they are married, they are disowned from their right to their maternal place. They are not welcomed by their kin if they have to leave their husband's place. It is reiterated to them that they should not leave their husband's house but their dead body. Violation of such patriarchal obligation brings shame to their fathers. Roop's leaving her house humiliates her father so she is reminded that "his duty to Roop ended the day of her marriage, but his duty to Jeevan lasts to the day his body follows Mama's to cremation and beyond" (262). Roop is insecure even though she has a family. Such homelessness of Roop reduces her to "paper- mache puppet doll about to play her part" (220). Roop's body remembers what the women are for.

It is the universal truth that ruling becomes easier by dividing the ruled ones. Patriarchy also becomes effective when women are brought into rivalry. So when patriarchy is at its height women are dispersed by bringing them in contest in different forms. Men are always put in the centre and women are to contest around them as if they are born only to achieve men's favour. In the novel Satya and Roop stand as rivals to win Sardarji's favour. They are trying to replace each other. When Roop leaves house, Satya feels herself victorious:

> Satya knows only that her Sardarji came back to her. For just a few days he returned to her bed as a man who knows all his actions are forgiven. Satya's heart leapt and she felt the way she had when she first saw him after his return from Balliol; frightened by the force of her own love, the pain of it…Satya forgets to remember a little girl taken, a certain cup of salted tea, a boy – child's birth cord fed to the fire, then a little boy taken… All Satya can feel is that Her Sardarji came back to Satya the way a trader returns to walk the streets of the city that raised him from boy to man. His hands re-remembering her body were sure, practiced, economical in movement, and different – Roop has taught him the pleasure of giving pleasure. (275)

This metaphorical political division of Satya and Roop reflects British politics of divide and rule or ruling would not be possible if there was unity among the ruled ones. Sardarji has broken their sisterhood in the same way that British Imperialism has divided Indians as Muslims Sikhs and Hindus.

How women easily forgive men? Sardarji becomes almost unattainable to Satya. She blames not Sardarji but Roop for her condition and in Roop's fidelity she feels to be victorious in achieving him. On the hand, Baldwin portrays the self- conscious new women who keep trying to resist patriarchy though they are sure to be punished for that. On the other hand, Satya, who is a militant woman for women's right disgraces Roop's first daughter and gives her tea with salt as a punishment for not bearing a son. She quenches her thirst of motherhood by deserting Roop. Later Roop takes revenge by getting her away from her children and husband.

A feature of patriarchal society is to see a woman just as a 'fair sex'. Her significance lies in her physical beauty. It is a means for her to overpower a man. An attractive woman is usually in advantage. Roop literally means feminine beauty in Hindi and Roop in the novel is the exact incarnation of beauty and youth. She is idealized for her skin – "smooth as a new apricot beckoning from the limb of a tall tree, her wide heavily lashed eyes, so demurely lowered innocent" (150). She is a physical ornament and sexual prize, a vessel for bearing children for Sardarji. Her beauty is the main instrument for her to be overindulged by her Papaji and given too many expectations. She "does not eat plain wheat roti…won't eat a banana unless it is cut up and placed on a thali before her… wants to wear a fresh clean kameez every day…doesn't want to sleep on a mat" (26). She is given more preference to Madani that they know "what kind of family Roop will have to adjust to" (26). She does not learn cooking as "cooking should be learned by women who need it in place of beauty" (81). She puts away books because "reading is for defeated girls, who cannot be married" (105). She learns "how do you do?" and "delighted to meet you" (105). She is considered as a lucky girl with good kismat. Sardarji indulges her as his "little koel". He overlooks her mistakes and even defenses her weaknesses from Satya . Even at her in - laws' place she does not have to bother for learning cooking. Mani Mai teaches her to use knife and fork and reminds her that "cooking is not what women like you (Roop) are for" (154). She has learnt physical beauty matters most to a woman's life.

Sardarji indulges with the "little koel" on his bed but he does not think her fit enough to his Victorian drawing room with English guests. Therefore, she is not taken out on formal occasions like Ramlila for "she really doesn't have the requisite dignity yet" and there will be English people and Sardarji's higher- ups (249). Satya, despite her nationalist underpinnings,

feels satisfied when Roop "cannot speak or read the git – mit git – mit talk" and she is not let exposed out to Sardarji's English friends (150). Here we can see political value of English language to offer security and insecurity to the people in colonial and even post - colonial India. Like Sardarji, her brother Jeevan , a soldier in national army, persuades Roop to learn English so that she can become indispensable to her husband in his professional and social dealings with the British. This value, he believes, will in turn offer her protection as a woman in a still uncompromisingly patriarchal Punjab. But for Roop, Punjabi is the only language that offers her protection. She defenses her native language and culture that her mother taught her. Let's see the conversation between Roop and Miss Barlow, Roop's English tutor, that shows a woman's linguistic and cultural sensibility:

> "Write your story," Miss Barlow's voice breaks into her thoughts. "Perhaps you can say you have come to Christ through me". Roop . . . dips her pen in the inkwell and writes. But her hand can only remember how to write about Sardarji, and it wants to tell the world only that Satya was beautiful as a rani. She writes: "When a bird is released, the first song it sings is the beauty of the cage it has lived in, and the birds that were in the cage with it.
>
> "I don't see the point you're trying to make, Roop," says Miss Barlow. "I really don't."
>
> Miss Barlow teaches English without knowing a single world of Punjabi—she says Punjabi sounds ugly, hard and rasping… Roop wants to tell her Punjabi is the only language her mama knew, so it is beautiful. She wants to say it was the language of Guru Nanak and of land watered by five rivers and the Indus. But

> Miss Barlow is deaf to this with both ears. If Roop speaks in Punjabi, her face blanks as if Roop were a jackdaw calling.
>
> *Listen to me; you were a woman, like me. Learn my language, it will not harm you. Use the words I have and maybe we can say more than*
>
> *This is a cat*
>
> *This is a bat*
>
> *This is a hat.*
>
> *I do not have a cat I have never seen a bat. And I do not wear a hat; I wear a chunni.* (332 Original Italics)

The scene, focalized through Roop, telescopes the politics of language, as also of gender, religion, and nation in 1940s India, issues that continue to reverberate across 1980s and 1990s Punjabi politics and into contemporary, post-millennial India.

Baldwin's novel is an attempt to interrupt the pattern of silence and make women speak as principal interlocutors in history. She consciously sets out to articulate the feminine reality of the time and successfully explores the other side of silence as she concentrates on Sikh women's experiences of domestic and political turmoil. Satya, functions as Baldwin's weapon to critique patriarchy. She is a bold and defensive woman with prophetic wisdom. During their long marriage, Satya, whose name means "truth," is in many ways Sardarji's " closest ally, every inch of her tuned to his needs" (374). Besides managing the business aspects of his landholdings, she considers it her duty to keep him from straying too far from the traditions he was born to. In their arguments, she always defends Indian traditions and knowledge, and when Sardarji says she doesn't understand, and complaints that she is quarrel some, she replies, "I tell you the truth." She challenges his admiration for European achievements, and speaks scathingly of the English:

"Everywhere they tramp across our land; they see and remember only themselves" (276). When Sardarji ignores her she warns him that "one day you will wish you had listened to me, prepared yourself. There is a Hindu coming when the English leave..." (328). Satya's prophetic vision anticipates the Sikh movement of the 1980s when Sikhs fought for Khalistan as Muslims got Pakistan and Hindus got Hindustan but what did they get though they massacred millions of Muslims in Partition. Satya's wise arguments against Sardarji's anglomania become costly for her. Though she is always right, her assertive, indomitable and fearless nature is always offensive to her colonial patriarchal husband. Her critique on Sardarji's loyalty to English and hatred to Indians is indigestive to him. Baldwin describes what Sardarji's male ego demands to Satya:

> It was the moment when his beard scratched her cheeks and his falcon eyes looked directly down upon her, held her eyes until he must have seen how very small his face was, how very tiny, reflected in her gray eyes. And in that long, long, long moment, she knew Sardarji expected her to lower her eyes before him.
>
> But she couldn't.
>
> Just.
>
> Could.
>
> Not
>
> She was a woman who came in to the world with her eyes wide open and she could never lower them before a man. (276)

Satya recalls the single moment when she knows what her husband wants but that she can never do that (to lower the gaze in front him). It is the quality of her to look him in the eye and tell him the way it is that also eventually separates him from her. Her inability to bear him a son is not only fact to bring the co- wife to her. It is her "tongue sharper than Kakei's" (137), her indomitable nature and straightforwardness that hurts Sardarji's colonized male ego. He slowly goes away from her despite the fact that Satya is up to his class while Roop is far inferior to her. In patriarchy a man cannot bear to be reflected small in his woman's eyes. If a woman is conscious enough to protest, patriarchy ignores her wisdom by blaming it as nonsense. The masculine domination as such prevails more in upper and middle class society. Satya's rebellious nature is also responsible for bringing co-wife to her.

In patriarchy a woman is a complete woman only when she bears a son. How much virtuous she is that goes in vain if she does not bear a son. Infertility is a great curse to her. It is assumed she has no right to share his bed if she brings nothing from the coupling. Satya's Bebeji (mother) would say to her, "a woman is merely cracked open for seeding like the earth before the force of the plough. If she is fertile, good for the farmer, if not bad for her" (8). Satya is gradually ignored by her husband due to her infertility. His indifference to her is beyond infertility to her. She is replaced by Roop. Sardarji tries to compensate her by giving Roop's first daughter and then son shortly after birth but he takes them back in Roop's protest. Her indomitable nature never lets her succumb to such unfair treatment. When she is to be defeated she prefers death to submission. Her voluntary tuberculosis saves her from yielding to patriarchy.

Unlike Roop, Satya has outspoken nature. She keeps resisting. She raises voice. She never hesitates to reveal the truth though it is against Sardarji's will. She has always complaint

against Sardarji's servitude to English Raj. She does not share happiness in his promotion. She is critique to his indifference to Gandhi's non- co operation protest and his over excitation in his promotion. She never places the people like Sardarji at the height of freedom fighters. She critiques his worthless promotion as a bone thrown at the dog for his loyalty to his master. Let's see how Baldwin presents Satya's reaction on his excitation for his promotion:

> "Satya! Satya! I have been promoted".
>
> Satya had said quietly, "This posting and your new position are another bone that British can throw before Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru, hoping to appease the non – co operators and all the self – rule agitators, justify the blood spilled and pain endured by protesters".
>
> "Are you really suggesting I do not merit this?" he growled.
>
> "I said only that you may be excellent at engineering, but you may not be worthy of the freedom fighters' sacrifices". (154)

Satya's bitter but true remark pinches Sardarji. Shortly after that he secretly marriages Roop. Satya inheres truth that becomes the cause of her ever losing battle. If she has known "a woman must choose the wisdom of lies over the dangers of truth" (468), she might not have been avoided. It is the irony of embodying truth.

She does not succumb but does her best to disrupt Sardarji's second marriage. When she fails she chooses death. Her revolt reaches its climax when she prefers death to be defeated. That is the only thing she can do by her choice. She wakes to the dignity by her free will and death only gives her *izaat*. As Veena Das asserts a woman is "like a discarded exercise book in which the accounts of past relationship were kept" ("Language and Body" 54). Women stand "in stark

contrast to the behavior of man" (Das qtd. in Mallot 174), and they seek their meaning in death. They choose death to value their existence. Paradoxically, their existence is realized only after death. Satya's voluntary tuberculosis is a fearless protest and also a means to dignify herself. Respect, dignity and honor are the untranslatable qualities of femininity which Satya has maintained though she has to choose death for it.

Satya is strong and fearless. She questions the gap between the intention of Sikhs to treat women as equals and the reality of women not being valued or treated the same as men. Roop, after Satya's death realizes she will never let them belittle women's status to men's. She says that Gurus of Sikhs had never said men are superior to women: "Guru Nanak says all men are born of women that the lineage continues because of women. The Guru says all women are valuable as princess and should be called Kaur to remind men of it. He says, "Why should we talk of her, who gives birth to kings?... there is none without her" (330). Sikhism has placed women higher than men but the Sikhs practise otherwise. The following passage is such a good example of how Satya's wishes express the struggle between the reality and her wishes for it:

> Surely, there will come a time when just being can bring izzat in return, when a woman will be allowed to choose her owner, when a woman will not be owned, when love will be enough payment for marriage, children or no children, just because her shakti takes shape and walks the world again. What she wants is really that simple. (310)

Satya is the only voice who claims a power of subjectivity that is not available to any other protagonists. She alone transcends the symbolic realm effectively, as her character is

imbued with contradictions, the wish to please her husband and does not override her own self-interest.

She loves her husband "as the way foolish Sita loved Ram even after he spurned her" (308). When his indifference to her becomes unbearable beyond her bareness, she chooses death as a release of her imprisoned subjectivity. A self- assured woman Satya possess free will that she does not lose even in disagreement with Sardarji. As long as she maintains the dignity of Badi Sardarni, she is fearless even to surrogate Roop's womb. As a woman she is jealous to Roop's motherhood and Sardarji's attention to her. She tried her best to desert Roop's married life. She takes her daughter Pawan though she hates the baby for being a daughter. She is then returned to her mother when she seizes Roop's son Timcu. Despite her wisdom against her husband's Anglo mania, she troubles Roop in many ways. Baldwin presents Satya as an self-empowered woman who dares raising voice against extreme patriarchy but she does not leave the periphery of patriarchal wish that want to see women's revolt worthless to male power. Like other women Satya also adopts silence through death.

Though Satya seems to win Roop in taking over her infants Pavan first then Timcu shortly after their birth, she is losing the battle against Roop in achieving Sardarji's affection. Her body does not support to win this battle against Roop. She realizes her fortunes wane when Roop begins to win Sardarji's affection: "These days, Satya's body remembers for her and it tells her to be daring in ways that she could never contemplate before…. She laughs aloud at the memory. What does it matter? My husband does not want me" (290). After returning from Roop's village Pari Darvaza, he has taken back Timcu, Roop's son from her saying "a mother and children should never be separated" (291). She will not be taken with him to Lahore in his posting for she "fight too much" he does not "get any peace" she has "too much anger" (291).

She is gradually marginalized. The sharp tongued Satya , who is "proud of resistance" (296) to Anglomaniac Sardarji's negative comment on Indians as "disorderly people" and "Singhs are the only Sikhs with that unshakeable firmness, that steadfast loyalty" (294). She exposes Sardarji's hypocrisy in sarcastic manner as "long hair does not guarantee man will follow the Gurus in all ways. Guru Nanak had but one wife" (294). She is now quiet when he growls at her, "Who taught you to raise your voice to your husband this way? It is jealousy, all jealousy. I tell you I won't countenance it" (293). Her twenty six year long memory with Sardarji "sedimented in her over the long years, striped layers on her mind… She has not realized how many years she lived in a state of readiness anticipating Sardarji's every whim expressed in a movement, sometimes a sidelong glance, or a sigh of longing"(294). It is the irony of Satya's life.

A woman's modesty easily defeats her by her husband. Indomitable Satya has no choice except adopting death to avoid her defeat. She comes to "recognize her body as a kind of enemy, forever providing a physical text to her failures and her sufferings" and decides to finish it (Mallot 175). But her hope and wills relocate within Roop afterward. The irony inheres that on the one hand, Roop always wants to escape Satya and get her away from her children and Sardarji's life , on the other hand, she herself has to adhere Satya' s will, wish and hope within her. In both, Sardarji's and Roop's ears echo Satya's voice time and again.

The other women characters in the novel also have no choice except accepting patriarchy silently. Kusum, the daughter-in-law of Bachchan Singh represents those many Sikh women who were horribly hacked by their male kins to preserve honor in Partition violence in 1947. Women are the honor for men of their community, and if they are dishonored by the men of the other community (or the same), that dishonors the men associated to them. So, if their chastity is threatened, that is escaped by killing themselves. Such horrible killing is glorified as martyrdom.

They have been left no choice except coercive martyrdom when their honor is prone to be violated. Kusum is hacked into pieces by her father-in-law in her consent or she is assumed to be raped by Muslims in partition riot.

Kusum's slaughter is the most shocking and horrible scene of partition riot in the narrative. It mirrors the mass killing of Sikh women and children in Punjab by one of the respondents of Butalia named as Mangal Singh and his two brothers who killed the seventeen women and children of their family before setting off across the border:

> After leaving home we had to cross the surrounding boundary of water. And we were many family members, several women and children who would not have been able to cross the water, to survive the flight. So we killed – they become martyrs – seventeen of our family members, seventeen lives… our hearts were heavy with grief for them.…Had we not done so, we would have been killed…. (qtd. in Butalia 154)

He proudly valorized this coercive martyrdom of women when Butalia asked him like this:

> Fear? Let me tell you one thing. You know this race of Sikhs? There's no fear in them, no fear in the face of adversity. Those people had no fear. They came down the stairs into the big courtyard of our house that day and they all sat down and they said, you can make martyrs of us – we are willing to become martyrs and they did. Small children too… What was there to fear? The real fear was one of dishonor. If they had been caught by the Muslims, our honor, their honor would

> have been sacrificed, lost. It is a question of one's honor … If you have pride you do not fear. (qtd. in Butalia 154-55)

Bachchan Singh also retells that horrible incident to Roop with grief why and how he could dare to slaughter his obedient daughter- in-law's body anticipating her abduction and rape by Muslims if he did not do so:

> Kusum was my responsibility … I said to me Kusum was entrusted to me by Jeevan, she is young, still of child bearing age. I cannot endure even the possibility that some Muslim might put his hands upon her. Every day I had been hearing that the seeds of that foreign religion were being planted in Sikh women's wombs. No, I must do my duty. (455)

He loves Kusum as Roop and Madani. So he has to take such terrible choice as other men took at the time of Partition. His explanation says he cared for her so much so he offered her martyrdom He explains:

> I called to Kusum – she was on the terrace, watching the kerosene torches flame in the hands of the mob at the edge of the village. I took her into my sitting room and told her what Sant Puran Singh said we Sikhs must do, and that I had to do it now. She understood. Always she made no trouble. She said I should take her into the front room, your mama's room, so her sons with Revati Bhua, should hear no cry from her lips….In your mama's room, I said the first lines of the Japji to give me strength, and to guide my kirpan. Then turned her back so I should not see her face, took off her chunni to bare her neck before me. And then…. (456)

How can a woman become so much enduring to endure such terrible audacity of a man? Why she becomes so sensitive to his comfort that his hand does not tremble while striking upon her neck? Is it man's masculinity to slaughter a woman who quietly offers her neck for he cannot save her chastity? Is his honour preserved by doing that? Does it behoove a human being? Is not it dehumanization of a man by his own hand? Such questions are raised on men's masculinity. For such demonic act Butalia in her *Other Side of Silence* quotes Kamalaben:

> I found it difficult to believe that human beings could be like this. It was as if the demons had come down on earth … it is when the demon gets into Shivaji that he dances the tandav nritya, the dance of death and destruction…. It was as if this spirit had got into every one, men and women. Partition was like a tandav nritya …I have seen such abnormal things, I kept asking myself, what is there to write, why I should write it… (105)

Roop's Papaji justifies such brutality with his claim that he has saved his two grandson's lives and his family's honour at the cost of her life. It is his duty to save Kusum's honour but not her life and he has performed the same honestly. As men love their women so they kill them. He leves Revati Buwa and Gujri who are not his nearest kins .The very fact is that both of them do not have men to protect their honor and be dishonored if they were abducted. Therefore, they were left alive. Baldwin reveals the very ironical reality of Independence and Parition through Gujri, "Go to your India, What will this Independence do for a servant woman like me?" (463). Gujri and Revati Bhua represent all those innocent women and also men who have nothing to do with Independence but are just victimized. The majority of people of the both sides of the borders are like Gujri. They are only instrument of the leaders' selfish wishes. They have no

objection to living together under their respective creed and culture. Definitely there are some differences, but no communal hostility has emerged among them. The so-called nationalism is the provocative catalyst to the emergence of communalism. Roop analyses how innocent people have been made scapegoat and women are severely victimized. She experiences what Kusum's body remembers. Baldwin describes the horrible scene like this:

> A woman's body lay beneath, each limb severed at the joint. This body was sliced into six parts, then arranged to look as if she were whole again. Even more than such cruelty, her attackers have left a message for her husband to read from her remains: "We will stamp your kind, your very species from existence. This is no longer merely about *izzat* or land. This is a war against your quom, for all time. Leave. We take the womb so there can be no Sikhs from it, we take the womb, leave you its shell. (446 - 47)

It is neither nationality, nor honour, but obsession of revenge and manifestation of man's savagery. Such obsession of people is not less serious than that of Hitler's, who perpetrated genocide of millions of Jews during the World War II.

The shadow woman of Roop asks if really a woman chooses to die. Why? Surely to avoid to be raped, as "rape is one man's message to another: I took your pawn. Your move" (447). She is a pawn to provoke one by another. If one wins she is raped or the other, she is to die. Who asks her what she wants? But it is granted. Perhaps she assumes only death is the way for her to be heard. So, Satya chooses to die of consumption voluntarily and Kusum to be hacked. Both of them are sacrificed for the same cause i.e. to protect the patriarchy. Though Kusum's death is idealized as martyrdom, it gains no value in the national history. So it contributes to boost

patriarchy only. The act as such is ironized as self-feminization of men that being unable to protect their women from enemies, they kill them and protect their (men's) own honor but not of women. A woman is never safe from the lust of men, even if she escapes the murder she is mutilated, raped, paraded naked and then sold from one man to another. The very irony is that she needs the protection from those who are supposed to protect her. Both love and hatred of a man is costly for a woman. They are slaughtered and martyred. Baldwin deploys irony in a sister's expectation on her brother: "*No one will ever match Jeevan in generosity or in courage. And he is my protector, Madani's and mine – every year we will remind him with the gold thread of a rakhi tied around his wrist and every year he will renew his promise"* (Original Italics 92*).* Brothers and fathers' courage and generosity are to be feared by women.

Women's body stands for nation in the Indian Subcontinent--a body that remembers partition, violence and the birth of nation. The body of nation is parted, lines are sketched by foreigners and people are exchanged violently. A woman becomes the object to humiliate the opponents. Like Kusum's body, the body of India is ruled; when she cannot be ruled, she is parted in slices and each slice is divided. Let's see what Urvashi Butalia, in *TheOther Side of Silence,* says about this:

> Partition represented an actual violation of this mother (Bharatmata) , a violation of her (female body).The picture carried by *Organizer*, with the women's body mapping the territory of India, and Nehru cutting off one arm which represented Pakistan, is a powerful and graphic reminder of this. If the severing of the body of the country recalled the violation of the body of the nation as mother, the abduction and rape of its women, their forcible removal from the fold of their

> families, communities and country, represented a violation of their bodies as real – not metaphorical – mothers. (150).

Kusum's slaughter is a doublly ironized-- the failure of patriarchy that cannot protect their women, their honor and the failure of Indians that they cannot save their mother land from being divided.

Sardarji is colonial hegemony personified. Along with the Degree of engineering from England he has "acquired Cunningham, his own personal English--gentle man-- inside" (132). He is not happy with Indianness in both body and mind. Like any Hollywood hero he "donned the suit and pants and made them believe he was just like them-- only with a turban" that he calls his only " ten percent" (132-133). For him, English are the godfathers whose necessity for India he has described to his father like this: "to know your adversary, you enter his mind and see from his eyes. You eat his food and feel the way it must feel to him, going down fireless settling … Oxford, Cambridge and that holy Ganga of the English man, the River Thames" (132). He is an epitome of Indians whom English have designed having everything of English except blood and colour. He is the puppet of his internalized Cunningham, who edits his every paragraph in his mind before utterance. What is done and what not done is dictated by shadow Cunningham in him.

Despite his Oxford degree, Sardarji does not understand his wives. He feels insecure to Satya's criticism against his anglicized mind set. Despite his English scholarship, he feels inferior to Satya's wisdom. Both of his wives are far inferior to him in qualification but he still tries to overpower them. His English shadow. He is seduced by Roop by her beauty and Satya by her sharp mind. Both of his wives, though different, function equally to supply his demands.

Satya's bitter critique against his hegemonized loyalty always stings him. His patriarchal authority is threatened by her indomitable nature, so he takes advantage of her sterility and brings Roop as a co-wife.

What the Body Remembers is also the story of Sardarji as well. If Roop and Satya dominate his inside world, the outside world of Sardarji is the world of dams, English education, British bureaucrats and their scornful attitude towards Indians. His is the world where the seed of a new India lies dormant. Events that condition India's history flit outside the walls of Sardarji's haveli. But gradually the characters inside are swallowed by the horror and swirl of the outside world. Baldwin does not leave too many stones unturned for the reader. Often ironic, she believes in making statements, some of them of a political nature. Her sarcasm is biting, especially when she goes on to describe the leaders who shaped India's destiny, be it Gandhi, Nehru or Jinnah. In this context, the reader senses the author depicting Partition from the point of view of the Sikhs, a warrior class trying hard to make sense out of a world where there is no *izzat* for the values they have grown up with, a community which by the stroke of a pen is uprooted from everything they called their own. Once Sardarji argues to Rai Alam Khan :

> "You and I may not, Alamji, but as for the Sikhs, yes, the Sikhs do need their concern. If Gandhi gets his Hindustan and you Muslim get Jinnah's Pakistan, will Master Tara Singh and his Akali party get us a 'Sikhistan?' "
>
> Cunningham laughs – "Sikhistan! What a preposterous idea!"
> Master Tara Singh swears he's going to ask for it, mind you. But asking doesn't mean receiving everything you ask for."
> "Really I had not heard – and if Master Tara Singh asks for a Sikhistan, where

> will that be?"
>
> "Punjab Province naturally," Sardarji says with certainly, Punjab being where the faith arose, Punjab where Sikh once ruled, where almost all Sikhs live". (336)

Sardarji's colonized shadow Cunningham makes fun of his fantasy about Shikhistan. It sounds the English anticipate what is happening between Sikhs and Hindus in near future .They want to see Sikhs' demand to separate autonomous state representing their identity like Muslims'. Unlike Alam Khan, Sardarji is too loyal to English. So his nationality sounds funny to him. As Hindu-Muslim conflict is good for the English, so Hindu-Sikh conflict is good for the Muslims as well. Unity between them strengthens their power which is dangerous to rivals. Rai Alam Khan reminds Sardarji that like Muslims andSikhs are also ignored by Hindus and the latter's hostility to Muslims does not ensure their equal position in Hindus hegemonized Indian politics. Rai Alam Khan insists that partition has no alternatives but he does not support for Sardarji's idea of Sikhistan for they are in minority position. He plays double cross to Sardarji that Independence is must to create Pakistan and Sikhs were given due respect by British but not by Hindus. He says:

> With all due respect, Sardarji, Sikhs are being given far more importance by the British in all these negotiations than the size of your population warrants, because British need the Sikh--and Muslims too, let us admit--in their war. Master Tara Singh can demand what he likes I predict he cannot be victorious. (338)

When Partition is sure to be formalized, all characters are separated by their communality. Sardarji's facet of Cunningham makes fun of Gandhi's nationalism: "…will all of this replace any farmer's bullock carts and tractors? Not if Gahdhi has his way… Nehru is more modern, but

if Independence comes we will all return to spinning. A chuckle escapes him at the thought of people like himself and Rai Alam Khan spinning" (338). Baldwin critiques Gandhi's nationalism as too idealistic to follow.

Metaphorically, Sardarji functions a double role: he embodies English imperialism that has ruled over undivided India having the strategy of divide and rule resulting the division of Pakistan and Hindustan; at the same time his polygamy partitions himself: to be ruled by Truth embodied by Satya and Beauty by Roop. He has manipulated both Satya and Roop. Baldwin writes: "Satya [is] Sardarji's tool, the instrument by which he [controls] Roop, and then [stands] back complaining how his women [fight] like cats, never giving him any peace. But so too [is] Roop the instrument by which he [tortures] Satya."(325). He has controlled women sexuality by using women themselves. The climactic irony of *What the Body Remembers,* which is feminist in nature, is that Sardarji heavily misses Satya when British quits India leaving irreparable losses and legacy of communal violence and that he realizes Roop's strength when she saves his children in the prime time of Partition violence while Sardarji himself is growing emasculated. Baldwin's political message is clear: Women have the courage to speak the truth while men lie and that women risk their lives to save men while men kill women in the name of honour even when they fail to protect them. Sardarji knows Satya has been right about English, Hindus and Sikhs. She echoes in her mind when Partition occurs. Sardarji ironically wishes "if he were Shah Jahan, he would build her a marble Taj Mahal to show the world how much he loved her" (374). Satya is now "inaccessible" but she is not completely gone but echoes into Sardarji's mind and continues to whisper the truth to him: "Satya would say Punjab Boundary Commission is another British sham", (382), "…Jinnah, Rai Alam Khan – indeed all the Muslims he knows would quarrel with the word. They think of Lahore as a Muslim city" (383). Sardarji realizes that

people like him had been used by colonialists as instruments to defeat Hindus and Muslims. Both of the groups are fighting for the reason – Muslims for Pakistan and Hindus for Hindustan, but Sikhs are in between them. What should they fear – "A massacre of Muslims or slow death under the rule of Hindus". The dilemma of the time is "like choosing between cancer and tuberculosis" (383).

Before partition Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs would live together with harmony despite religiosity. When partition violence is sure to happen they were ready to protect one another until the frenzied mob havocked. In Muslim dominated Pari Darvaza, Roop's village, the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims live, work and socialize together with very little friction. Bachan Singh as lambardar is the leader of the Sikh community and he has good friendship with Abu Ibrahim, the pir, spiritual leader, of the Muslims of the district. Roop and Madani play a pebble-tossing game with Huma, Abu Ibrahim's daughter, and the men of Pari Darvaza regularly get together in the fields to gamble on cockfights between Bachan Singh's black partridges and Abu Ibrahim's brown ones. The verbal byplay between the men is barbed but still friendly. Abu Ibrahim tells his partridge to fight "like Akbar the Great," and Bachan Singh retorts by asking his bird to "fight like a Sikh" and "avenge each Guru beheaded at the hands of the Mughals" and provokes the rival to reply "Mine will make yours return every inch of marbles your Maharaja Ranajit Singh stripped from the tombs of our emperors!"(30). The Muslim – Sikh hostility is not recent just created by British but it was age-long hostility when Rajput Maharajas were displaced by Mughals. This scene both foreshadows the coming conflict which will "be always bloodier, always more violent" (31) and shows something of how it might have been avoided.

Most of the story is vested in narrating Satya and Roop as the victims of patriarchy - Satya's resistance and Roop's submission; the former lacking traditional femininity, while the latter having excess of it. Satya seems to be more conscious than Roop but she also cannot raise above the patriarchal ground. She is overcome by patriarchal femininity. She is supposed to raise herself above it but her jealousy weakens her. Their rivalry to obtain Sardarji's favor stands for two power hunting streams of Indian politics as Hindus and Muslims. Like Roop she also adopts silence when her voice is not heard. Satya's silence has voice that condemns men's indifferent attitude to women and vain nationality of the leaders. After Satya's death, Roop holds her position and takes charge of family's protection. Sardarji sends Roop and her children to Delhi just before the havoc breaks in Pindi. He tells Roop, "Go to Imperial Hotel in Delhi … you will be safe with Mr. Farquharson" (396). The very ironical fact is that Sikhs and Hindus are not safe with Muslims and vice verse while the British who have caused the Partition are trustworthy. Women, again become the instruments of civilizing mission of English to barbaric Indians, who even protect their own honour, women. Baldwin has employed irony in presenting men's failure in protecting family from terror. Roop succeeds in saving her children with the help of Jorimon, a Muslim nurse maid. At the time of grave crisis, Sardarji is growing relatively emasculated while Roop is empowered having Satya's spirit within her. She is horrified at seeing the perpetration of violence on women – their abduction, rape, murder, naked parade and violent death of many innocent men and children. She hears the women's stories – […] "naked Sikh women were forced by Muslims to dance before mosques. Naked Muslim women were forced by Sikhs to dance in the compound of the Golden Temple in Amritsar…. Everywhere in platform, women pull the remnants or rags about their breasts" (436). She astonishes on the shamelessness of men, their self – dehumanization and cowardiceness. She wonders how mean

they can be; women are only bodies to be raped, plucked and squeezed; should women be ashamed of for demasculinity of men? Satya's spirit within her shouts, "they have learned shame of their own bodies from men of all faiths who cannot trust each other. So much shame, so little *izzat* for girls and women" (436). Women themselves should be ashamed of men's such shamelessness. She asks what men want - women's body. Baldwin's staunch irony gets expression in Roop's panic cry while she can't stand men's savage atrocity upon women's body and wants to shout when she can bear it no more and blood simmers to boil in her veins:

> […] every man, woman and child should just once, in this life time see a woman's body without shame. See her as no man's possession, see her, and not from the corners of your eyes…*"See me; I am human, though I am only a woman. See me; I did what women are for. See me not as a vessel, a play thing, a fantasy, a maid servant, an ornament, but as Vaheguru made me."* (Original italics, 436)

She wants to ask if these women were abducted and raped for this reason; is women' body the site of independence? Is it the cost of Independence? Roop sarcastically laughs when "Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mr. Jinnah and Master Tara Singh took to the airwaves to plead for reason" (431).

When Roop is fighting the panic and terror of searching for her family, who is dislocated during the riots and rampage, a familiar voice says clearly in her mind, " We are each alone, though a crowd of our quom might mill about us, little sister. Always each woman is alone. Roop looks around mystified, hears of "women abducted, mutilated, always by

them ---never by us. Men etch their anger upon woman-skin; swallow their pride dissolved in women's blood" 431).

Baldwin's irony attacks the vein of the celebration of Independence by shameless authority. She remembers Satya's pain and Kusum's trauma while being sliced by her own father-in-law in her body along with her own agony. Satya's shadow speaks to Roop "Why does a woman choose to die?" (460). Satya's shadow whispers in Roop's ear: "Sometimes we choose to die because it is the only way to be both heard and seen, little sister" (460). According to Sikh and Hindu religious belief human souls are continually reborn on earth until they have earned entrance into heaven. Satya has not yet been born again, but she is still a conscious spirit who cares intensely for those she has left behind. Roop becomes the medium for the restless spirit of women to break the silences of many Kusums and Satyas.

Death becomes only means for women to show the meaning of their body. Baldwin has successfully portrayed this historical tragedy that women experienced on the aftermath of partition. She has ironized familial violence meted out to women under patriarchy. Patriarchy has dehumanized and extreme of which has been displayed in and after math of Partition. Such an atrocity against women is intolerable to any woman and a sensible man. Baldwin's narrative fires occasional ironic salvos against patriarchy that has reduced women to mere pets indulged at their master's will. This saga of Sikh women is sung by Baldwin through Satya first and then Roop and placed it as a counter history to the national history of the national heroes in the grand narratives of the Sikhs and the Hindus. Irony undercuts these grand narratives to strikingly show their other sides. When Roop reached the station to receive Sardarji, she "sank to her haunches with shards of eyes piercing through her veins" to see the train smeared with blood and windows

smashed. She feared Sardarji dead and lost her mental balance temporarily. She continued to wait for Sardarji for days witnessing every bloodied train from Lahore. She heard several news and stories of raped daughters, naked Sikh women forced by Muslims to dance before mosques, naked Muslim women forced by Sikhs to dance in the compound of the Golden Temple in Amritsar. "Everywhere on this platform, women pulled remnants of rags about the breasts- Satya would say they have learned shame, shame of their own bodies, from men of all faiths who cannot trust each other." (432-33). The dreadful irony lies upon extreme patriarchal definition of nationality as dishonoring other by violating women's body when Roop discarded all her clothes, in the state of unknown stupor and blood simmers into her vein, for everyone to see a woman's body without shame. She wanted to scream, "See me, I am human, though I am only a woman. See me I did what women are for…If a man does not lay claim to my body, the country will send someone to do so"(436). Patriarchy maintains in women's modesty and nation spared her independence on the shame of women. Here women's body stands as the allegory of nation that is divided between the men of their own community and the other community.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion: The Ironies of 1947

More than three centuries long British imperial rule in India ended on 15 August 1947. Obviously the date marks a very celebrating occasion but Independence became very costly for India because it had to lose its territory, people and property. Partition was the darker side of Independece. India's partition was not only political and economical division but as Butalia says the "division of hearts" (*The Other Side of Silence* 7). It sowed the seed of everlasting communal conflict in the people involved three communities – Sikh, Muslims and Hindus. Though the statistics was various, millions of people were killed, and permanently displaced. Women were the severe victims of the time for thousands of women were abducted, raped, and killed. Women faced violence on three levels: communal violence as members of the other communities abducted, raped, and mutilated them; familial violence as they were encouraged to commit suicide or were murdered by family members in order to protect the family's honor; and national violence as the new countries, particularly India, forcibly recovered them, stripped these women of their citizen rights, and made them abandon their children, who they borne being raped. Women survivors told, they had to suffer horrible conditions but not for auspicious cause of Independence but becoming the instrument to humiliate the males of the other community. They were not only victimized by those men who hated them but also by those who loved them. But their sacrifices were trivialized by accomplishing silence by national historiography. They were lost in oblivion until the feminist historians, and subaltern study group led by Ranajeet Guha, and the revisionists like Gyanendra Pandey, Butalia, Menon and Bashin intervened into the muteness. The survivors' memories, narratives, and films have been employed as testimony to

create counter history-to the grand narratives of 1947. "Family Ties", which precedes Baldwin's 1999 full-fledged novel *What the Body Remembers*, makes copious use of irony from a feminist prospective in order to expose patriarchy's hypocrisy. Twenty- five years after 1947, women's consciousness in India has changed for the better and the girl narrator's ironizing carries that edge of the consciousness. *What the Body Remembers*, which in a way, is a novelistic rendition of "Family Ties" draws heavily on the works of Urvashi Butalia and Ritu Mennon—members of the feminist organization Kali for Women—to lend a feminist edge to Baldwin's recounting of the partition violence of 1947. The edge of the irony helps her to reorder the history of 1947 with persuasive perspectives of feminist counter history.

Irony, a literary device used in literature that covertly express to the opposite set of what it overtly posits. It is used by the writers as a tool to critique what is intended not to be revealed. Mostly this is used by the marginalized groups of society like blacks, women and subalterns to get their voice listened. Shauna Singh Baldwin deploys this device to reveal what the grand narrative of nationalist history is mute about. Women's sacrifices during the partition have been trivialized and they are made the victims only but their agency is reduced to only scapegoat of patriarchy by excluding it from mainstream historiography. Baldwin has successfully employed political irony to expose the patriarchy's culpability upon women to inflict sexual assault to save the honour of their community or dishonor the opponent ones. "The Family Ties" reveals the patriarchy's shamelessness of valourizing the bravery of men in their cowardice act of killing their sisters and daughters to save the honour, if not, excluding them from their family ties, and *What the Body Remembers* exposes the women's body as the site of patriarchal desire. She says, "Woman must choose the wisdom of lies over the dangers of truth." (468) Thus, she dwells upon the unenviable position of women in the society. In these fictions Baldwin's irony attacks on

man's comparison of themselves to Guru Govinda Singh, who never feared to be killed to save the honour of the Sikh quom. She ironically offers a profound message, a learning point in this context, "Guru Nanak says that all men are born of women, that the lineage continues because of a woman. The Guru says all women are valuable as princesses and should be called Kaur to remind men of it …she who gives birth to kings….there is none without her." (330). She leaves big questions if this message of Guru Nanak is really adopted by the sons of Gurus during partition; women as the honour of society is to be dishonoured by whom; how can be a woman safe if her own saviors turn to be killer to her?

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