

Chapter: I

Introduction to Hyder's *River of Fire* and Kamleshwar's *Partition* as fiction of the Discourse of Multicultural Co-existence

Qurratulain Hyder (Hyder hereafter) in her novel about partition *Ag Ka Darya* (1959) (*River of Fire*) (1998) favors the concept of cosmopolitanism as a means to bring about communal harmony and peace. Rather than constructing community, and creating prose of otherness, she attempts to create harmony among people by respecting differences. To the contrary, Kamleshwar Prasad Saxena (Kamleshwar hereafter) (1932-2007) in his partition fiction *Partition (Kitne Pakistan)* (2000) reproduces the Indian secularist version of multicultural co-existence and creates the prose of otherness about the Britishers and the Muslims.

Hyder's partition fiction *Ag Ka Darya (River of Fire)* was published in the original Urdu in 1959. It was written in Pakistan where Hyder had migrated after Partition. The author picks the title of the novel from the verses of the famous Urdu poet Jigar. In 1998 the novel was trans-created into English by the writer herself and published again. It is a fiction that captures the history of a single culture as it slowly encompasses many others. Describing individual lives in various ages, it engages with totality of existence.

River of Fire, which stretches over several thousand years, opens in the season of *beerbahutis*, small velvety red insects called the 'Bride of Indra', the god of rain and cloud in Shravasti of Bahraich region near the river Saryu in the fourth Century B.C. We see Gautam Nilamber, a final year student of the Forest University Shravasti trying to cross a swollen river. There he chances upon Hari Shankar, a runaway prince craving to be a Buddhist monk having been influenced by Buddhism, an emerging religion. He also catches the sight of Kumari Champak, the daughter of the chief

minister, and gets attracted to her. Later he comes across Princes Nirmala, sister of Hari Shankar, and Sujata, a low caste milkmaid. Letting the characters born and reborn, the story from here flows through different historical epochs:

Pataliputraduring the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, the Sharqu Empire of Janupur, the Kingdom of Oudh, the British Raj and finally the dawn of independence but no longer pleasing because of the memories of massacre and bloodshed.

The same set of characters born and reborn in the novel with different roles. Kumari Champak, the daughter of the chief minister in the fourth century B.C. becomes Champavati, a Brahmin girl, then Champa Jan, the courtesan in Oudh, and finally Champa Ahmad. Similarly, Gautam Nilamber shown as a student of Shravasti Gurukul initially is at a service of British government in the next phase. Then, in the third phase he is a teacher in a Brahmo Samaj while he is an intellectual dwelling in the London and New York preserving the values of his community in his being in the final phase. Kamal, the representative of the history of Islamic presence in the subcontinent is a traveller in fourth century who had reached Tughlakabad through central Asia and Kashmir. Then he becomes Abdul Mansur Kamaluddin and comes to Janupur, Kashi and Ayodhya to come across Sufis, a different brand of Muslims. Finally he emerges in the seventeenth and eighteenth century to show the mixture of Islamic and the local culture.

The story comes to an end making a full circle in post-partition India, when Hari Shankar and Gautam meet again at the same river, Saryu. There, they mourn for the passing of their lives into meaninglessness. On this point their friends have left for Pakistan. They brood over whether their friends who left them or themselves who stayed back betrayed each other. But this question remains unanswered.

After its publication,Hyder's *AagKa Darya (River of Fire)* has been analyzed by many critics from a couple of perspectives. Amer Hussein in his review published in *Times Literary Supplement* asserts that River of Fire "is to Urdu fiction what *A Hundred Years of Solitude* is to Hispanic literature (qtd. Oldfield, 29). Sukrita Paul Kumar says that the novel talks about the issues beyond partition:

It captures several turns of centuries, both in terms of historical linearity as well as with a sense of history that transcends chronology. The novel deals with the individual and goes on to present a collective identity. It is a fiction that captures the history of a single culture as it slowly encompasses many others. It engages with the totality of existence by delineating individual lives in various ages. (6)

The aforementioned lines say that the novel talks about several turns of centuries both in terms of linearity which also goes beyond chronology. However, it has not focused specifically on the discourse of peaceful existence in a multi-cultural nation.

Christina Oesteheld looking *River of Fire* from a perspective of a female regards the writer to use partition as subject matter and to exploit modern style and to express Muslim cultural identity as:

"QurratulainHyder...is an outstanding example for women writers's contribution in terms of subject matter, technical innovation and cultural ethos. Her novel *AagKa Darya (River of Fire 1959)* is regarded as a milestone in Urdu fiction" (7).

Oesteheld though has analyzed the novel in terms of the participation of women as a writer to deal with partition the as main theme;she has not even given a hint about her idea of peaceful India with multicultural existence.

Reading it from post-colonial perspective Umesh Singh eulogizes Hyder's attempt to decolonize English language through the use of different Urdu words and new coinages which will be difficult for a native English user to comprehend as:

Hyder's approach to language and her treatment of history in *River of Fire* enables us to understand the emancipatory potential of language. As a writer Hyder not only attempts to decolonize English language but also question the culture, history, and language whose strength and superiority has been systematically robbed of due to prolonged and protracted colonial subjugation (1).

Singh, in his reading, focuses on the post-colonial perspective and Hyder's resistance to colonialism through the experimental language. However, in his reading Hyder is shown to be totally negative to the British colonizers, which is not the reality. In fact, rather than othering Britishers or the colonizers, she has tried to explain the process of building of Indian civilization in which Britishers or the Christians also had a big share. In her imagined nation, even the colonizers have a due place.

Likewise, Manion- Fischer, a North- American critic praises Hyder for her act of discussing Partition from the focal point of culture; for infusing the memories of the terrible incident in the collective memory of people. He says: "Hyder's book makes history present, not in the actual memories of her characters, but in their collective cultural memory, which they cannot quite forget (3)". But he has not discussed the social purpose of painful experience transforming into an indelible memory.

Another critic, Thomas Palakeel analyzes the technical aspects of the novel. According to him, being appreciative for her use of magical realism as early as 1959 in regional literatures of India, a deeper realism could have made the novel better. He

says: “While her experiment in narration has enabled us to participate in 2500 years of imagined history, in fact, a more rigorous realism and narrative discipline could have made *River of Fire* a truly great Indian novel (302)”. However, in his analysis of the aesthetic dimension of the novel, he has totally forgotten the political aspect.

Similarly, Masood Ashraf Raja attempts to explain the reason of a failed reception of the novel *River of Fire* in western academy. He says the novel defies the very logic of critical expectations of the postcolonial or the commonwealth novel which has led to its marginalization: “A good postcolonial novel, especially for it to become part of the metropolitan counter-canon, must possess certain aspect privileged in the metropolitan academy (49).” He focuses on the lack of exciting response to the novel in educational institutions and regards its non-conformity to the characteristics of post-colonial literature the chief cause of being overlooked. But, he has also not talked about the discourse of peaceful co-existence, she has attempted to create through this novel.

Likewise, Kamleshwar’s *Partitions* (2000) is also another partition fiction based on partition of India into Hindustan and Pakistan in 1947. He elaborates a story written in 1984 of the same name to make this novel. Though on the surface it is the reflection of partition of 1947, it is, on deeper level, a meditation on manifold partitions through history, psyche, culture and many more. So, he has used ‘Pakistan’ as a metaphor of hatred, divisions, and violence. The setting of the novel is trans-historical because the writer makes many abrupt moves through mythical events, ancient historical events, partition and various other violence occurred throughout the global history. The novel is narrated from the view point of an aadeeb, who is an anonymous secular Hindi writer, a litterateur, and also a historian. The aadeeb has got a peon named Mahmood Ali whom he makes different historical and mythical figures,

deemed to have been guilty of helping create many 'Pakistans', stand in his court, who subsequently, are coerced to tell the truth. Not only this, the aadeeb makes the characters from epics like *Gilgamesh* (Gilgamesh) and the *Mahabharata* (Duryodhana) to be present at his court and tell their sagas. The powerful aadeeb, who can even revive the dead figures as per his wish, charges all the gods from the established religion of not caring the suffering of human beings.

The novel is replete with remarkable stories. The aadeeb's romance with Vidya, his extramarital relationship with a Muslim widow Salma, his family and health, his wife and an intelligent daughter are some of the stories of aadeeb's life. The next saga is that of a middle aged Sikh male Buta Singh and his marriage with an eighteen year old Muslim girl Zainab and the tragic ending of their marital relation. Similarly, the love of a raped Sikh woman SurjitKaur and Muslim ex-officer Tannu's love toward their respective home-towns, Multan and Gangauli. The next touching narration is the rape of a Bangladeshi woman by Pakistani and Bangladeshi police during Bangladesh's war of Independence in 1971. In the text, Kamleshwar has endeavored to show different partitions and their consequences upon both historical and fictional characters. The other issues that have been dealt about are the great role of author, individual rights, his freedom of choice, sense of alienation and so on. However, Gandhi has highly been eulogized.

After its publication in 2000, *Partition* has been analyzed by a few critics who have glorified Kamleshwar as one of the greatest writers of partition fiction. Nilanjana Roy has appreciated Kamleshwar's extended and all-encompassing canvas as:

Partition is only another defendant in a long-running trial where an anonymous aadeeb, a man of literature, presides over the testimony from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Nazi Germany, East Timor, the Aztec

civilization and mythical Greece. From Toba Tek Singh to Babur, Ignatius Loyola to the Gandhi ... QurratulainHyder to Mountbatten and Ravana, a cast of thousands wades through blood towards a tenuous peace in this extraordinary novel. (11)

Roy's excitement seems only to rest on the surfacial reading of the novel. It's a truism that this novel has encompassed several things in its epic canvas, but she has not tried to analyze the politics behind such representation. In fact Kamleshwar has only ventriloquized the voices. His representation is not genuine. It is an utter misrepresentation. His representation has got the 'othering' motive. By doing so he has played the politics of otherness.

Another critic, Alok Bhalla, likewise, has appreciated Kamleshwar for his recording of partition history from a liberal humanist perspective as:

In *Kitne Pakistan* [Kamleshwar] trace[s] the history of the Indian subcontinent from the first arrival of Islam in the tenth century to the creation of Bangladesh (1971) and show[s] that at no time in history was there a radical distrust between the different religious communities that inhabited this land. (196)

In this quote, the critic shows his unflagging belief in the historiography based on liberal humanism. In fact it is the very place where the present researcher attacks on. Liberal humanist way of representation cannot be true representation; it is prone to misrepresentation. Through the rendering of partition history from liberal humanist perspective, the writer has reproduced the discourse of Indian secularism as a panacea to the present communal mistrust and interface, which has already been an obsolete idea.

Similarly, another critic A.J. Thomas reading the novel from new historicist perspective has lauded the novel as a counter to ‘the official history’ as:

The novel takes the form of a long-drawn courtroom hearing, with the narrator, a nameless writer, the aadeeb ... the author’s alter ego playing the roles of the chief prosecutor, judge and witness all rolled into one. Father Time, the main protagonist, is summoned by the aadeeb to assist him in formulating his judgment. Each historical moment that is called into question is looked into detail to arrive at the alternative views other than the official one. (1- 3)

Thomas believes that Kamleshwar has become able to give an alternative to the official history. However, this researcher believes that though he has tried to do so, he has been trapped in his own ambush. The truth is he has never been able to represent the ‘margins’; his representation is misleading, fake, and disrespectful to them.

Similarly, Sukrita Paul Kumar who has juxtaposed Kamleshwar alongside other renowned writers of partition fiction like Yashpal, Manto, KrishanChander, Bedi, Krishna Sobti, Ashfaq Ahmad and many other believes: “The body of Partition Literature in Hindi and Urdu gains in stature with Kamleshwar’s *Kitne Pakistan (Partition)*” (21). However, the writer has not bothered to compare and contrast the representation of partition by the highly acclaimed writers like Manto and Yashpal with that of Kamleshwar. Manto and Yashpal are known for their ethically other engaged representation which is helpful for the survivors normalize the partition trauma. But Kamleshwar’s chauvinistic representation cannot be seen to helping traumatic people of partition violence. Likewise, though she has analyzed the exploitation of ‘Pakistan’ as a metaphor for hatred, dream, nightmare pain of

separation, she has not given any thought about its political implication i.e. the kind of effect it will have for the citizen of a sovereign nation- Pakistan.

Another critic BadriAcharya, has read the novel from the perspective of the representation of the partition violence, holding that his representation is misleading. On this, he says:

Kamleshwar's representation of partition violence is guided by his Kantian liberalist faith on glorification of the rationality and self at the cost of sensibility and the other who is taken as the 'object of knowledge'. So, he is unable to make the concerned people including the victims of partition feel and internalize the intensity of partition violence, let alone the possibility of 'working through' of partition trauma. (69)

So, Acharya has read the novel from the perspective representing partition violence and its effect on the trauma of the concerned people. However, he has not discussed about the discourse of living together of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic people as propounded by the novel.

So, the above mentioned reviews and criticism about the novels show that both of the novels are worth serious analysis. But, as hardly anyone has attempted to interpret them from the managing of the present day ethnic and communal conflict, this researcher believes it is a noble idea to discuss it from the perspective of the discourse of the peaceful multicultural co-existence. So, the present researcher aims to analyze the novel from the same point of view. The present research, taking the base of New Historicism, aims to analyze the two novels in terms of the production the discourses of multicultural co-existence in the present day India.

The term 'new historicism' was coined by the American critic Stephen Greenblatt, is a literary theory based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period (Barry, 172).” So it refuses to ‘privilege’ the literary text to the non-literary ones. In place of giving much importance and value to literary texts and regarding non-literary texts just as the historical background, it implements a practice of a mode of study in which literary and non-literary texts are given equal weight. Both literary and non-literary texts, in this mode of study, constantly inform or question each other.

This ‘equal weighting’ is suggested in the definition of new historicism offered by American critic Louis Montrose who defines it “as a combined interest in ‘the textuality of history, the historicity of text’ (Barry, 172). In Greenblatt’s words, it involves “an intensified willingness to read all of the textual traces of the past with the attention traditionally conferred only on literary texts (Barry,172)”.

So, there is categorical difference between old historical approach and New Historicism. The earlier historical approach had made a hierarchal separation between the literary texts. In the hierarchy literary texts were the object of value like the jewel and the non-literary texts historical background, merely the setting and the thing of lesser value.

The practice of giving equal weighting to the literary and non-literary material is the first and major difference between the new and old historicism. The second striking difference between them is that new historicism is indeed a historicist rather than a historical movement. That is, it is interested in history as represented and recorded in written documents, in history-as-text. New historicists would argue that historical events as such are irrecoverably lost. The thought had long been raised in the literary studies that the actual thoughts, or feelings or intentions of a writer can

never be recovered or reconstructed, so that the real living individual now entirely replaced by the literary text which has come down to us. So, the word of the past replaces the work of the past since, for the new historicist, the events and attitudes of the past now exist entirely as writing.

Writing as the only remnant of past is the thought new historicism borrows from deconstruction. It accepts Derrida's view that there is nothing outside the text, in the special sense that everything about past is only available to us in a textualized form. So the things of the past are filtered at least three times. Firstly, they get processed through the ideology or outlook or discursive practices of its own time. Then, through our own ideologies. And, finally, through the distorting web of language itself. What is represented in a text is thereby remade. So, new historicism involves constituting another remaking of past. It is for the same purpose a text under discussion is juxtaposed with some chosen documents so that a new entity is formed.

The next great influence in new historicist thought is that of Michael Foucault, a French philosophical historian. Foucault brought together incidents and phenomena from areas normally seen as unconnected, encouraging new historicists and new cultural historicists to redefine the boundaries of historical inquiry. Like the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, Foucault refused to see history as an evolutionary process, a continuous development from cause to effect, from past to present toward the end, a moment of definite closure, a Day of Judgment. No historical event, according to Foucault, has a single cause; rather, each event is tied into a vast web of economic, social and political factors. Like Karl Marx, Foucault saw history in terms of power, but unlike Marx, he viewed power not simply as a repressive force or a tool or conspiracy but rather as a complex of forces that produces what happens. Not even

a tyrannical aristocrat simply produces power, for the aristocrat is himself empowered by discourses and practices that constitute power.

Similarly, the affinity between new historicism with cultural materialism cannot be gainsaid. In fact new historicism takes a good deal of its outlook and its name from the British left-wing critic Raymond Williams who developed the concept of cultural materialism. It is described as a politicized form of historiography. In other words, it is the study of historical material including literary texts within a politicized framework. The framework also encompasses the present which those literary texts have in some way helped to shape. This critical method combines an attention to historical context, theoretical method, political commitment and textual analysis. The emphasis on historical context undermines the timeless significance traditionally attached to the literary text. Theoretical method, likewise, implies the break with liberal humanism and the absorbing of the lessons of structuralism, post-structuralism and other approaches which have become prominent since 1970s. Thirdly, the emphasis on political commitment signifies the influence of Marxist and feminist perspective and the break from the conservative-Christian- framework which hitherto dominated Shakespeare criticism. Finally, the emphasis on textual analysis locates the critique of traditional approach where it cannot be ignored. In other words, there is a commitment not just to making theory of an abstract kind, but to practising it on canonical text which continue to be the focus of massive amounts of academic and professional attention, and which are prominent national and cultural icons.

New historical approach to the production of the discourses in present day India is greatly significant. In the contemporary time, there are mainly two discourses of living together: Indian secularism or *hindutva* , and *anti- hindutva*, which we might also call cosmopolitanism .Since the country regained its sovereignty from British

clutch and parted into India and Pakistan, Indian government took to secularism as the way of harmonious co-living among different communities. But in the later period mainly from the last decade of twentieth century Indian secularism has come under severe criticism connecting it to Hindu nationalism and *hindutva* and attempts have been made to give different way of establishing peace in the country. So, the present researcher will take these discourses into account while analyzing the novel *River of Fire* and *Partitions* to reach to the conclusion that the former produces the discourse of cosmopolitanism and the latter that of Indian secularism which is close to Hindu nationalism or *hindutva*.

This dissertation has been divided into four sections. The first section introduces the topic of the research in reference to the novels. Discussing the different literatures produced about these texts, it also makes a point of departure of the researcher clear. Besides that before proposing the planning of the research, it gives a brief introduction to new historicism, the theoretical modality used to analyze the proposed texts. Second section discusses New Historicism and the discourses of multicultural co-existence prevalent in India in the contemporary time in detail. Similarly, chapters three and four, which come before the final conclusion, analyze Hyder's *River of Fire* and Kamleshwor's *Partitions* from the perspective of the theory discussed in the preceding chapter respectively.

Chapter: II

New Historicist Approach to Partition of India

And Discourses of Peaceful Multicultural Co-existence in Contemporary India

New historicism, is a theoretical approach to literature that came in vogue in 1980s in American Academia. This approach looks literature, primarily as the product of a man who is a social construct. It does not take the literary work the way liberal humanists do, as the product of a best mind giving humanly significant and transcendental truth. It rather treats writer as a product of the contemporary ideology of the society s/he lived in. Seeing connections on different disciplines, it studies a literary text juxtaposing it with many other texts from other disciplines. Not only this, it blurs the hierarchy between low and high art and deems even the so called low arts as worth discussing. Likewise, it believes on the textuality of history and historicity of a text. In other words, this approach witnesses some tinges of truth in literary works and some traces of imagination in the supposedly scientific disciplines like history because as they are written by persons there is a certain manipulation or arrangement of facts on the basis of their ideologies. So, for this literary approach all the discourses are the product of and the representation of certain ideology. On the basis of same theory, this researcher argues that *The River of Fire* by Hyder and *Partitions* by Kamleshwar are the products of the discourses of multicultural co-existence dominant in the contemporary time or 1990s. They support to the different versions of the multicultural co-existence.

So, for a complete assessing of a literary text, this approach does not ask to focus on the given text as an independent whole, rather demands the readers to associate the text to the author's biography, his/her philosophy about different things, social position and so on. Similarly, it gives equal emphasis on the selection of facts,

of structure, medium and so on. Along the line of Foucault, in this dissertation too, the authors' lived experiences, philosophies, sex, gender and so on will be juxtaposed with their novels to uncover their ideologies produced in the texts.

The term 'new historicism' was coined by the American critic Stephen Greenblatt. His work *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (1980) is regarded as the beginning of this theoretical practice. However similar trend was conspicuous in the books published in the decade of 1970s, for example J.W. Lever's *The Tragedy of State: A study of Jacobean Drama*. This book challenged conservative critical views about Jacobean theatre, and linked the plays much more closely with the political events of their era than the previous critics had done.

According to Stephen Greenblatt, who coined the term in 1982, New Historicism originated as:

a feeble witticism, a word play on New Criticism. The new method was intended to be a shift in emphasis that would ground the study of literature in its historical context, or more precisely-within the different discourses of the time(Berghahn, 143).

So, Greenblatt simply wanted to stress the importance of historical material in the fabric of literary texts.

Peter Barry defines new historicism as “ a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period (Barry 172)”. So, new historicism does not privilege the literary text as the foreground which is written against the background of history. It rather gives equal status to both history and literature and seeks to understand and evaluate one in reference to another.

The equal weighting to literature and history is suggested in the definition presented by Louis Montrose, an American critic who defines new historicism as a

“reciprocal concern with historicity of texts and the textuality of histories” (Montros, 410). By historicity of text, Montros means to suggest the historical specificity, the social and material rooting of all the modes of writing including the texts that critics study and the texts in which we study them. By textuality of history, he suggests that we can have no access to a full and authentic past, to a material existence that is unmediated by the textual traces of the society in question. Furthermore, the survival of those traces rather than others cannot be assumed to be only contingent but must rather be presumed to be at least partially consequent on subtle processes of selective preservation and effacement- processes like those that have produced the traditional humanities curriculum. Likewise, those victorious traces of material and ideological struggle are themselves subject to subsequent mediations when they are constructed as the “documents” on which those who profess the humanities ground their own descriptive and interpretive texts.

New historicism has assimilated the ideas of various post- structuralist theories. The prominent influences are: the view of the revisionist Marxist thinker Louis Althusser’s view of ideology, Michel Foucault’s view of discourse, the deconstructive criticism and the developments in cultural anthropology, especially Clifford Greetz’s view of culture. Among them Foucaults’ idea of discourse is worth mentioning. He believed:

the discourse of an era instead of reflecting pre-existing entities and orders, bring into being the concepts, oppositions and hierarchies of which it speaks; that these elements are both products and propagators of “power” or social forces; and that as a result, the particular discursive formations of an era determine what is at the time accounted to be “knowledge” and “truth” as well as what is considered to be

humanly normal as against what is considered to be criminal, or insane or sexually deviant (Abrams, 190)

New historicists take delight in anecdotes, heterogeneous narratives and "thick descriptions" that illuminate literature from the margins without constructing a causal or monological relationship with it. They are interested in the various discourses that inform literature rather than in recovering the meaning of a work. Different texts of the same period (tracts, sermons, travelogues, protocols) are read against each other and in connection with poetic texts. The interweaving of texts thus destroys the dichotomy between high and low culture; literature, as any other texts, is just one more element of the discursive formation of society itself. New historicists investigate the transitions between cultural documents and their transformation into literature; they ask of a text or part of it not what it means, but how it was integrated. In other words they believe:

literary texts do not originate above history, transcending it; they are part of the political, religious and social institutions that form, control, and limit them; they do not exist outside of but within the discourses of power. (Berghahn, 144-45).

A new historian reconstructs a historic moment with as much density and reality as possible without totalizing it in a "master narrative" and without situating it in a diachronic order. History is only describable as a dynamic field, no longer as a coherent totality. There are many stories that are interconnected, but no history in the old sense. The same is true for the perspective of the new historicists, which negates the teleological connectedness of history.

They also believe that since literary texts are part of historical processes and the result of social production, there can be no original moment of creation, only

representation of a moment in history. This kind of representation is not to be confused with any form of mimetic theory or with romantic notions of original creativity. Rather it is a network of expressive acts, negotiations among discursive practices, and "circulation of social energy" (Greenblatt) (qtd. in Berghahn, 144) within the text. In short, history is read as a cultural process represented in literary texts. So, within a method that stresses the historicity of literature there is no room for such traditional concepts as the autonomy of art or the genius of the author. In the circulation and exchange between literary and non-literary texts there can be no place for an autonomous art work, and the author is as much a product of discursive formation as the text itself.

So, it has some marked differences with the old historicism in its treatment to literary and non-literary texts. The first and major difference is the "the practices of giving equal weighting" to literary and non-literary material" (Barry 174). The earlier approaches made a hierarchical separation between literary text and historical background taking the former as an object of value and the latter just as the background and setting which is less valuable. Regarding the traditional historicism Lois Tyson says:

it is confined itself largely to studies of the author's life, in order to discover his or her intentions in writing the work or to studies of the historical period in which the work was written in order to reveal the spirit of age, which the text was then shown to embody. (Tyson 291)

So, for traditional literary historians, literature existed in a purely subjective realm, unlike history, which consisted of objectively discernible facts. Therefore literature could never be interpreted to mean anything that history didn't authorize it to mean. But new historicism rejects both traditional historicisms' marginalization of history

and new criticisms enshrinement of the literary text in a timeless dimension beyond history.

For new historicists literary texts are cultural artifacts that can tell us something about the interplay of discourses, the web of social meanings, operating in the time and place in which the text was written. And they can do so because the literary text is itself part of the interplay of discourses, a thread in the dynamic web of social meaning. For new historicism, literary text and the historical situation from which it emerged are equally important because text or the literary work and the context or the historical conditions that produced it are mutually constitutive; they create each other. Like the dynamic interplay between individual identity and society, literary texts shape and are shaped by their historical context.

Peter Barry, in his book *Beginning Theory* has summarized the steps new historicists take to analyze and evaluate a work of literature in the following points:

1. They juxtapose literary and non-literary texts, reading the former in the light of the latter.
2. They try thereby to 'defamiliarize' the canonical literary text, detaching it from the accumulated weight of previous literary scholarship and seeing it as if new.
3. They focus attention (with both text and co-text) on issues of State power and how it is maintained on patriarchal structures and their perpetuation, and on the process of colonization, with its accompanying 'mind-set'.
4. They make use, in doing so, of aspects of the post-structuralist outlook, especially Derrida's notion that every face of reality is textualized and Foucault's idea of social structures as determined by dominant 'discursive practices' (Barry 179)

In this regard, despite some negligible differences, new historicism shares affinities with cultural materialism, a marxist mode of new historicism in vogue in contemporary England. Cultural materialists insist that whatever the “textuality” of history, “a culture and its literary products are always to an important degree conditioned by the material forces and relation of production in their historical era” (Abrams 194). So, they are particularly interested in the political significance, and especially the subversive aspects and effects, of a literary text, not only in its own time, but also in later versions that have been revised for the theatre and the cinema. It is the politicized form of historiography. This means that it is the study of historical materials including literary texts within a politicized framework, this framework including the present which those literary texts have in some way helped to shape. To sum up, the difference between these two approaches is new historicists situate the literary texts in the political situations of its own day, while cultural materialist situate it within that of the readers too.

Literature is a discourse produced by the author. However, the statement is just implied there. According Michel Foucault, authors are the cultural constructs; it's not a free independent subject speaks in literature, but they are the mouthpieces of the cultures they lived in. Similarly, Frederick Jemison says that writers get influenced or affected by the dominant political ideology of the contemporary time knowingly or unknowingly. He might desperately try to be objective, scientific and neutral, but virtually it is impossible. So, analyzing the intention of author is one of the best ways to reading a texts. On this regard Michel Foucault says:

The author provides the basis for explaining not only the presence of certain events in a work but also their transformations, distortions, and diverse modifications (through his biography, the determination of his

individual perspective, the analysis of his social position and the revelation of his basic design). The author is also the principle of a certain unity of writing...The author also serves to neutralize the contradictions that may emerge in ...texts. Finally, the author is a particular source of expression that, in more or less completed forms, is manifested equally well, and with similar validity, in works, sketches, letters, fragments, and so on. (111)

So, while interpreting, assessing, evaluating and critiquing a literary text it is wise to consider the different ideas and ideals prevalent in the society at the time of writing, the author's position on them, the author's experiences and so on because these things always cater the substances for interpretation.

Though multicultural co-existence had been the reality of India, this idea has come under a great challenge in the last three decades. According to SahniBisham India is a multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-racial society. They all live in an environment where many languages are spoken, people with different faiths and beliefs live side by side and interact with one another. Such is the characteristics of their society and it has been so for centuries. Over the centuries people have evolved, to a large extent, a community of outlook and a set of common values, common languages and even customs, which have continued to exercise a pervasive influence over our lives. But though this had been the reality before the formal partition of the country, it has become an utter lie after it; there are multicultural societies but they are more like foe than friends and brothers as in the past. There is even confusion as to how to bring about multicultural co-existence.

At present there are basically two warring discourses of effecting multicultural co-existence: the discourses of secularism or the Hindu nationalism, and the discourse

of cosmopolitanism upheld by those who have been disillusioned by the official Indian version of secularism which they interpret as being Hindu nationalism or majoritarianism indeed.

Hindus and Muslims make the major chunk of the population of present day India with Hindus accounting for about 200 million and the Muslims around 80 million. Between these cultures, no time in the historical period, any kind of major distrust is heard. During the colonization of the nation by Britain too, these were the communities who suffered, became victimized and panicked together. They also struggled and fought together to win Indian independence in 1947. But unfortunately freedom cost the union. As the country achieved independence, it also got divided into two separate and sovereign states- India, a Hindu and Sikh nation and Pakistan, an exclusively a Muslim nation, though there are still people from other communities living in these nations in a large amount.

Nonetheless, the saddest thing is that at the time of the division of the nation and the exchange of population, out bursting of a horrendous communal violence claimed the lives of millions of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Meditating on the partition violence MushirulHasan remarks, “[P]artition created 10 million refugees, led to the death of over a million people and resulted in sexual savagery, including the rape and abduction of 75,000 women” (2663).

There were definitely many reasons for the partition and the resulting bloodshed. But Hindus and Muslims, from the time onward started to look to one another with disbelief, this lack of trust exists not only between India and Pakistan, it is the same within Hindus and Muslims within India. In last few decades the distrust has so intensified that every single individual incident is connected to communal terms. Time and again the attacks on Hindus and Muslims have carried out and the

Indian state has also proved to be ineffective to control them. In the post partition era, there are distinctly two discourses of multicultural existence in India: first, the discourse secularism or Hindu nationalism or majoritarianism and the discourses of those who go against these ideas.

It is because of the same reason, despite being separate and sovereign nations, India and Pakistan have never been able to make their relation healthy. Blaming one another for the tragedy, people of both countries have not been able to emerge from the trauma of partition and the resulting violence. Within these countries too, the relationship between and among the people from different communities have been badly marred by the historical trauma. India, after the partition, has always been defined as a secular nation. But in the last three decades Muslim people have constantly have the sense that the nation rather than upholding the true ethos of secularism, is following the principles of majoritarianism or Hindu nationalism or the Hindu version of secularism which is far distant from the original notion of secularism i.e. the separation of politics and religion, it had at the time its propagation in eighteen century Europe. Facts made them hold and believe that Indian secularism is based on *Hindutva*, a Hindu fundamentalist concept which believes that in India every actions should be conducted to the best interest of Hindus as they are in the majority and as the Muslims, at the time of partition have already got their share of nation as Pakistan. As the time is rolling on, the distrust between and among different communities of India is only intensifying

After India had got emancipation and even after the nation had experienced partition India was to remain a multicultural nation upholding secular democracy. Because of the assurance of the leaders like Nehru, Gandhi and others on the secular democratic political system of India, many Muslims didn't leave their hometown to

migrate to Pakistan after partition. And in fact the constitution was made on the same ethos. After India became independent and sovereign nation. The first constitution and its amendment in 1976 defined it as a secular nation. Referring to P.K. Tripathi, Thomas Pantham summarizes the main articles of the Constitution providing for a "secular state" as follows:

All persons have equal freedom of conscience and religion...No discrimination by the state against any citizen on grounds of religion.....Untouchability stands outlawed by Article 17 ...every religious denomination has the right to establish and operate institutions for religious and charitable purposes...All religious minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice and they cannot be discriminated against by the state...No citizen can be discriminated against on grounds of religion...Public revenues are not to be used to promote any religion...No religious instruction is to be provided in educational institutions which are wholly maintained out of state funds... culture”.

(Pantham, 526-527)

But as the time rolled on and the architects of Indian constitution like Nehru and Gandhi were superseded by other leaders of congress the inherent politics of Indian post partition nationalism based on secularism began to float. It became further manifest when Indian government was spearheaded by BharatiyaJanata Party (BJP) in the last decade of twentieth century. Then the secularism based on Hindu nationalism was fully exposed making the people of other community feel betrayed. As the communal mistrust became intense, efforts to revise the history of secularism in India also took place.

For the distrust of Hindus and Muslims the decade of 1990s is remarkable. In this decade The *Ram Janmabhoomi* (The Birthplace of Rama) campaign which led to the violent demolition of Babri Masjid and in 6 December 1992 at Ayodhya by the Hindu fanatics with the belief that prior to the construction of the Muslim temple, there was the temple of Ram, a Hindu God. Similarly, the intention of the then Prime Minister Viswanath Pratap Singh to implement the decade old Mandal Commission report which had recommended extending the reservation of jobs and seats in educational institutions to members of *dalits* (former 'untouchables') and other backward classes which evoked the high caste and genius students as far as self-immolations as spectacular acts of protest. These twin movements, not to mention ethnic insurgencies in non-Hindu-majority regions of India such as Punjab and Kashmir, triggered a deep crisis for the Indian nation, both internationally and domestically. Internationally, India's self-professed image of itself as a secular nation was seriously undermined as a growing stereotype of a "predominantly Hindu India" began to dominate media reporting in the West.

An even deeper crisis of identity was felt domestically when the BJP, swept into power in 1998 by the winds of the Hindutva (Hindu-ness) movement, sought to further homogenize this image of a Hindu-state. At this context victims of the Hindutva movement (Muslims and *dalits*) and the campaign's opponents (left-liberal politicians and intellectuals) began a renewed search for the meanings of Indian "nationhood," turning to history for this critical reexamination. BJP's effort to revise the history textbooks issued by NCERT in 1998, also led to the suspicion and dissatisfaction of people from marginalized community toward Indian governments' policy and attitude. This effort included projecting Muslims as foreign invaders, underplaying the contributions of other religious communities, understating the

impact of caste discrimination in Hindu society, and even omitting the important fact that Mahatma Gandhi had been assassinated in 1948 by a Hindu fanatic. This new “official” history provoked an outcry from many professional historians, who complained about a return to obscurantist, unscientific, communal historiography.

In response to these changes implemented in some BJP-ruled states in India, many professional historians began directing their own research to the fundamental problems of a pluralist nation, namely, the roles of religion and caste. As a result, the 1990s witnessed the publication of an enormous amount of historical literature on communalism, the caste question, and nationalism, particularly, religious nationalism. This increased production of historical literature was also fuelled by the 50th anniversary of the nation-state, which focused new critical attention on discourses of secular nationalism—a discursive common ground shared by both the Nehruvian Congress Party and the leftist parties. In the same attempt they questioned the Indian version of secularism and sought to establish a nexus between Indian secularism, majoritarianism and the Hindu nationalism which were all said to have based on the principle of *hindutva*. They also uncovered myriads instances of the prejudice of state on non-Hindus including the verdict of the Supreme Court. Even Gandhi and Nehru could not be exempt from their attack.

Hindutva is a chauvinistic idea propounded by Savarkar which claims Hindu to be the proper progeny of India and thus need to have the final say in all affairs related to it. Speaking on it, Rudolf C. Heredia says: “Hidutva defines India as Hindu and wants all Indians to be Hindus. Indeed, it is but a contemporary avatar of an older and more chauvinistic brahmanism (Heredia, 63)”. This nationalism holds that Hindus are effortlessly and organically citizens of India because their religion and aboriginal culture of their nation coincide, this is not true for Christians and Muslims,

whose *punyabhumi* (holyland) and *pitrbhumi* (motherland) are different. So, in line with this thought, Christians and Muslims are the alien souls in Indian body.

Taking the presence of Muslims and Christians in Indian soil, SanghaParivar who even BJP sides, have devised two ways of disarming this dangerous alienness: the first is *shuddhi*, an exorcism, a purging of the foreign ghost that has taken possession of the inherently Hindu body and the second the acknowledgement of the basic inferiority of Muslim and Christian status and subordinating to the national identity which in turn is premised on Hindutva, the ideology that asserts the basically Hindu foundation of India. So, the philosophy of BJP Hindu nationalism and in fact Indian secularism aim to homogenize all the differences so as to make a uniform nation. According to the critique of Indian secularism state has tried to protect the interest of Hindus through various means.

MukulKesavan has recorded many cases of state partiality to non-Hindu people of India. The first example of the state bias was the abolition of the reservations in the new republican constitution given to different communities by the colonial state taking it “a strategy of colonial power to divide the Indian people” (Kesavan, 69). The next instance of the Indian state and the Indian constitution’s partiality is the willingness to accommodate feelings of Hindus in the near total ban on cow slaughter arguing that killing of draught and milch cattle is not good. The biasness of Supreme Court is said to be seen on the judgments of supreme court given in 1996 quashing the Bombay High Court verdicts that had annulled the election victories of leaders of the BJP and the Shiv Sena on the grounds of corrupt electoral practice of appealing to the religious faith of people using the word “Hindutva”. The High court had done so equating the word with “Hindu”. But Supreme Court, while

striking down the High Court judgment observed the word “*Hindutva*”, by itself does not invariably mean Hindu religion. .

In the decade of 1990s and there after Indian secularism has been criticized by a lot different scholars from different nations and the people from minority communities in India. Many of them have also attempted to put forth their ideas about the possibility of peaceful co-existence in a multicultural society like India. Drawing a distinction of Indian concept of secularism with its European counterpart attempts have been made to unmask its politics associating it to majoritarianism, or hindu nationalism. Putting secularism in its original context in India, critics have even questioned the intention of the likes of Nehru and Gandhi. On this note, Prakash Chandra Upadhyaya says: He says:

Historically, Indian nationalism has been constructed around the traditionalist idiom of the majority Hindu community. It was to this community that the elite classes who dominated the nationalist movement from its inception belonged.... This majoritarian emphasis lies at the heart of the Indian model of secularism. It is evident in the ideas of the two nationalist ideologues, Gandhi and Nehru, whose views on other questions differed widely, but who jointly articulated and best represented the congress tradition of Secularism. (816-817)

Upadhyaya says that secularism was redefined in a uniquely Indian way. It was not taken to mean the separation of religion from politics, and the attenuation of community-based political identities. Instead, it took on board the British view of India as a communally compartmentalized society, but whereas the British chose to believe that India’s communities could never work together as part of a single political system, Indian secularism promoted the ideal of cooperation and unity

among India's communities. But while all communities within this unity would be equal, one would be more equal than others-namely the majority 'Hindu Community'.

AshisNandy analyzing the paradox inherent in the term secularism says that it has lost its significance in India now to some extent the society has already been secularized and people have grown fearful. He says:

Secularism as an ideology can thrive only in a society that is predominantly non secular. Once a society begins to become secular...the political status of secularism changes. In such a society, people become anxiously aware of living in an increasingly desacralized world and start searching for faiths, to give meaning to their life and retain the illusion of being part of a traditional community. If faiths are in decline, they search for ideologies linked to faiths...if they find such ideologies they cling to them defensively....(157-58).

When Indian public life was overwhelmingly non-modern, secularism as an ideology had a chance: the area of the sacred looked intact and safe and secularism looked like a balancing principle and a form of legitimate dissent. Even many believing citizens described themselves as secular, to keep up with the times and because secularism sounded like something vaguely good. Now that the secularization of Indian polity has gone far, the scope of secularism as a creed has declined. Signs of secularization are now everywhere; one does not have to make a case for it. Instead, there has grown the fear that secularization had gone too far, that the decline in public morality in the country is due to the all-round decline in religious sensibilities. Many distorted or perverted versions of religion circulating in modern or semi-modern India owe their

origins to this perception of the triumph of secularization, rather than to the persistence of tradition.

Nandy further says that, modern Western rational-scientific secularism, which Nehru attempted to impose on the Indian society, has failed either to eliminate religion from politics or to promote greater religious tolerance. Hence, it can no longer pretend to guide moral or political action. He says:

Nehruvian secularism..is part of a larger, modern, Western package of scientific growth, nation-building, national security and development. These constitute a modern demonology, a *tantra* with a built-in code of violence. Whereas secularism demands of the members of religious communities to dilute their faith so that they can be truly integrated into the nation-state, it guarantees no protection to them...(Pantham, 529)

Nandy's argument is to suggest that it is the very project of modern nationalism and its statecraft and scientific developmentalism which generate and nourish religious communalisms, which the state elites combat by resorting to the use of the ideology of the secular or nonreligious nation-state. This counter posing of the tyranny of the modern secular state and the violence of modern communal organizations is, in Nandy's view, nothing but the internal dialectics of modernity's nation-state paradigm.

Like Nandy, T. N. Madan also criticizes Indian secularism because it “denies the immense importance of religion in the lives of the peoples of South Asia, secularism is in this region an impossible credo, an impracticable basis for state action and an impotent remedy against fundamentalism or fanaticism” (Panthan, 531).

Ruling out the establishment of a Hindu state as an utterly unworkable proposition, he maintains that religious zealots, who contribute to fundamentalism or fanaticism by

reducing religion to mere political bickering, are provoked to do so by the secularists who deny the very legitimacy of religion in social life.

Likewise, ParthaChatterjee, somewhat like Nandy, and Madan believes that secularism as being inadequate to war against the growing Hindu majoritarianism. He contends that:

the theory and practice of secular state cannot bring about what...is needed in India, namely the toleration of religious, ethnic, and cultural difference...the official model of Indian secularism and the present campaign of the Hindu right for setting up a "positively" secular state have brought India to a "potentially disastrous political impasse.

(Pantham, 532)

According to Chatterjee, since its birth, the project of the nation-state in India has been implicated in a contradictory movement with regard to the modernist mission of secularization. One part of this nationalist-modernist project was the secularization of the public-political sphere by separating it from religion, while another part was reformist intervention of the state in the socio-religious sphere mostly of the Hindus. Describing the contradiction between these two parts of the project of modernist secularization, Chatterjee writes that the interventionist violation, by the state, of secularism's principle of the separation of state and religion was justified by the desire to secularize.

Another critic Priya Kumar argues that secularism in its western definition, which is based on the idea of separate religious and secular spheres, is not sufficient enough to guarantee peace and brotherhood among different religious groups. However, she has faith in "a reason-based secularism for dissenting against religious dogmas and orthodoxies" (Kumar, xxi). Unlike the traditional secularists, she

believes that religion is integral to its social and political relations; particularly it is so with the areas of nationalism, citizenship, and the state. Furthermore, she also shuns that religion has declined in modernity. It is only so with minority religions in a secular-state. But, majority religions are disseminated under the name of knowledge, culture, ethics, and morals in modern “secular” nation-states. As for minority religions, they have been forced to the marginal culture and made strange and unnecessary to the nation.

In Nandy's view the ethico-politically appropriate alternative to them lies in the nonmodern, presecular conception of religions as accommodative, tolerant faiths or ways of life as was practiced, in exemplary manner, by Asoka, Akbar and Gandhi. They, he reminds us, derived their religious tolerance not from secular politics but from Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism, respectively (Panham 530-31)

Gandhi's religious tolerance, he writes, came from his anti-secularism, which in turn came from his unconditional rejection of modernity. Accordingly, Nandy writes that as far as public morality goes, statecraft in India may have something to learn from Hinduism, Islam or Sikhism; but Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism have very little to learn from the Constitution or from state secular practices

Madan concludes that "the only way secularism in South Asia, understood as interreligious understanding, may succeed would be for us to take both religion and secularism seriously and not reject the former as superstition and reduce the latter to a mask for communalism or mere expediency" (Panham, 531). He eulogizes Gandhi not only for emphasizing the inseparability of religion and politics but also for opening up ways of interreligious understanding and of a spiritually justified

limitation of the role of religious institutions and symbols in certain areas of contemporary life.

Similarly, turning to the recent shift in the ideological articulation of Hindu nationalism, Chatterjee points out that its present championing of positive secularism is meant not only to deflect accusations of its being anti-secular but also to rationalize, in a sophisticated way, its campaign for intolerant interventions by a modern, positively secular state against the religious, cultural or ethnic minorities in the name of "national culture and a homogenized notion of citizenship..

So, in his rejection of secularism Chatterjee comes close with Nandy. Both of them believe that that the politics of interventionist secularization is part of the same practices of the modern state which promotes religious communalism or religious intolerance. However, in the feasible and desirable alternative to the standard and official versions of secularism Chatterjee, unlike Nandy opines that:

finding that the the liberal-democratic state can only recognize individual rights, and not the collective rights of cultural or religious groups, Chatterjee directs his intellectual efforts not to secularize the state in the name of any universalist framework of reason, but to defend minority cultural rights and to underscore the duty of the democratic state to ensure policies of religious toleration (Pantham, 533)

So, Chatterjee seems to be saying that for a proper relationship between the state and the religious, ethnic and cultural groups, we need to go beyond the state sovereignty vs. individual rights discourse of liberalism.

In contrast Priya Kumar argues that much contemporary discourses of secularism in India are infected by the Hindu Rights. The emphasis in the secularist

debates has been on maintaining unique religiocultural identities, because the very notion of Hindutva is based on idea of forceful cultural assimilation. So, about the translation of secularism in Hindi, she makes the following proposition:

I propose that the Hindi word *dharamnirpekshata*, which is often used to translate, secularism, must be reformulated as the closely related yet different term *dharamnispakshata*. Often taken to mean an “objective” or impartial stance, *nirpeksha* is more accurately translated as absolute, indifferent, without expectation or consideration. Hence, *dharamnirpekshata* can be rendered as indifference to religion, or having no concern with religion- a fairly accurate translation of western secularism...the term *nispakshata* is perhaps a more faithful translation of the notion of impartiality, understood as the state of not being biased, being neutral to both sides. (Kumar, 25)

So, according to Priya Kumar, the way secularism has been defined and executed is fallible, because in India where religion is an integral part of the social life secularism cannot not be used not as the indifference of the state to religions, the way it is used in western society but need to practice state impartiality. Secularism should not neglect the different religious communities, but it should give the equal protection. Kumar’s idea has a close affinity with Jacques Derrida’s concept of cosmopolitanism, the idea Derrida proposes as beneficial for the harmonious co-existence of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic people.

Cosmopolitanism is a modern concept envisioning the co-existence of the multi-religious and multi-ethnic people possible in a society or nation. It is understood to signify an ethical way of thinking beyond one’s group- most typically “the nation”- to imagine justice on a global scale. It has also come up as a critical concept in

Derrida's late work. The concept is closely related to his call for an ethics of hospitality, where hospitality is meant as the unconditional welcome offered to all others. Martha Nussbaum, Bruce Robbins, Pheng Cheah, Paul Rabinow, Anthony Appiah, Homi Bhabha and David Hollinger are some of the cosmopolitan thinkers.

Derrida's concept of cosmopolitanism is linked to his concept of hospitality. He says that "the Great Law of Hospitality- an unconditional Law, both singular and universal, which ordered that the borders be open to each and every one, to every other, to all who might come, without question or without even having to identify who they are or whence they came..." (18)

In his deconstructive style, Derrida shows a contradiction in the concept of hospitality in the ordinary sense and for an absolute hospitality. He believes that the very thought of welcoming and inviting to our place to somebody involves a kind of hierarchy, the host assuming a sovereignty to the space. So, Derrida proposes an absolute hospitality which breaks with hospitality in ordinary sense. In the perfect hospitality one requires to open up his/her home not only to the absolute foreigner without even asking their name.

Derrida affirms a vision of hospitality in which the host becomes the hostage of the other prior to becoming the host, it calls for a relinquishment of all claims to mastery and ownership. Moreover, hospitality must not be restricted to the "foreigner", the xenos- who is the citizen offered to all others, including those who might think of as "barbarians", to whosoever turns up before any determination or any identification "a human, animal, or divine creature".

So, to include the wholly other Derrida deconstructs the traditional meaning of the word "foreigner" itself. The other or the foreigner is away from the conditional

circles of language, family or citizenship, but beyond the other of these units. Hence, his bottomless hospitality violates all the laws of the common concept of hospitality because this revised sense of hospitality does not know the concepts like debts, calculations, duty or contractual obligations.

Priya Kumar says that execution of Derrida's concepts of cosmopolitanism and hospitality can be the panacea to maintaining the peaceful co-existence of multi-cultural people in India. Priya Kumar believes that Derrida's thinking on cosmopolitanism and hospitality allows us to qualify and temper the insights of contemporary Anglo-American discourse on cosmopolitanism. Rather than limiting ourselves to thinking, feeling, and acting beyond the nation, he pleads us to interrupt the totality and the cohesiveness of any sameness that has been given to us by blood, birth, belonging, or by the juridico-political contract. He also enjoins us to offer an unconditional welcome to all others to enter our ensemble, our home, especially those who have been designated as our strangers and enemies. Only then can we begin to think in terms of inaugurating the living together of justice and peace. So, in Derrida's thought hospitality and cosmopolitanism correspond to the split between the ethical and political.

However, the present researcher contends that that is not enough. Derrida's concept of cosmopolitanism and hospitality should be mixed with his own concept of forgiveness too. Exploiting his concept of forgiveness, the Indian different communities can get rid of the sense of revenge sprung from their past bitter experiences, like the experience of partition and the contemporary violence. On this note, Derrida's concept of forgiveness is also worth mentioning. On forgiveness he says that:

In order to approach... concept of forgiveness, logic and common sense agrees for once with the paradox: it is necessary...to begin from the fact that...there is unforgivable. Is this not, in truth, the only thing to forgive? The only thing that calls for forgiveness? If one is only prepared to forgive what appears to be forgivable...then the very idea of forgiveness would disappear. If there is something to forgive, it would be what in religious language is called mortal sin, the worst, the unforgivable crime or harm.(32)

Most of the present day ethnic and religious violence, in India are the product of the historical trauma of the partition. Though living together, they still take those faults as unforgivable and needing vengeance. Taking Derrida's concept of absolute forgiveness, they might get away from the feeling of revenge and create a peaceful coexistence possible. So in the present day India there has been two discourses of living together of the multicultural people. Between these two versions Kamleshwar's *Partition* has tried to uphold the official version while Hyder's *The River of Fire* is a pure example of a cosmopolitan fiction.

Chapter:III

Cosmopolitan Discourse of Multicultural Coexistence in Hyder's *River of Fire* and Kamleshwar's Discourse of Indian Secularism in *Partitions*.

Qurratulain Hyder's fictional nation in her seminal novel *River of Fire* is also influenced by the concept of cosmopolitanism; so, it is inclusive and egalitarian. In the novel she retells the history and the formation of Indian culture and nation which is composite. She shows Hindus, Muslims, Christians and people from other culture and religion as both the contributors to the great Indian culture and also the common sufferers in the historical process. Like a true cosmopolitan thinker, she presents Indian land as welcoming to the people of all creeds. Similarly like a true humanist philosopher she praises the positive aspects of all cultures, and also criticizes their setbacks. She presents history as the flowing river which undergoes different ups and downs, ebbs and flows, and yet flows to make it a river proper. In this regard she shows partition as one essential experience of the flow of history as a river.

The novel focuses much on the harmony and understanding between Hindus and Muslims and the culture they have developed together along the history at the backdrop of communal mistrust, Hindu majoritarianism, and the bullying of Muslims minority in the present day India. Occasionally, she also puts blames on British Raj for ruining Hindu-Muslim harmony along with her attempt to explain the causes of partition. But her conclusion is that it is an utter foolishness to blame either party- Hindus, Muslims, and the British Raj for the separation of the nation; she rather holds that everyone has got equal share on the partition of India. However in the present context it is wiser to look at the composite culture Hindus and Muslims have grown over centuries of years and live together forgetting the horrible incident of partition just as an accident.

Hyder's novel invests a huge chunk of the novel portraying harmony among people of different creeds in the Indian culture mainly in pre-partition and pre-British era. Indian culture is so hybrid that it is difficult to distinguish the culture of one community from other. This period has been depicted as a period of innocence when irrespective of the creed, tradition and other differences, people had accepted each other and benefitted from one another's practices by assimilating them. The blending of such practices is so subtle that it is, at times, hardly conspicuous.

The early example of harmony between people from different creeds and the sense of cosmopolitanism is reflected in friendship between Gautam, an Indian Brahmin, and a Greek traveller in the fourth century B.C. Though the Greek traveller turns out to be disguised Hari Shankar, a missing prince of an Indian Hindu king, sent to Taxila for higher studies only to be disenchanted from kingship and other worldly affairs having been influenced by Buddhism, an emerging creed of the then time. The kind of positive attitude toward and receptive nature they show is really reflective of the cosmopolitan thought in the then composite culture. The interlocutors talk to each other in a candid way, and share the dry food the supposedly Greek traveller carries. The land and people are receptive of any person from any place without any condition. In this regard the Greek puts: "People are so honest in this country. I have been travelling over hill and dale fearlessly. No highwaymen, no robbers" (9). It is because of the same unconditional welcoming of people and place the Greek has been able to "speak the local lingo fluently" (9).

The next illustrations of understanding and harmony between Hindus and Muslims and how they had learnt to accept each other and lived harmoniously creating a hybrid culture in the past are found in the discussion of folk literature, language, custom and so on. Such practices are existent in the post-partition era too

because according to the writer “civilizations do not vanish overnight” (419). They are neither forgotten nor become obsolete with the physical disintegration of the countries.

In the novel *Kamaluddin*, an avid researcher of the Indian civilization describes how he found a text by Vidyapati Thakur, a Hindu scholar eulogizing a Muslim king as: “In the course of my Sanskrit studies I came across a poem by Vidyapati Thakur...[H]as described Ibrahim Shah’s capital...In his durbar, the poor petition the generous king and get what they are destined to get” (67-68)”. The aforementioned quote shows how much tolerance and understanding of each other Hindu and Muslims had in the past. It also deconstructs the general explanation of Muslim leaders as rude, unfeeling, and undemocratic found in the Indian official history.

Hyder, in her novel, also shows the mutual understanding between Hindus and Muslims through the language they used, particularly Hindi. She says that “...Hindvi, the polyglot language which consists of Prakrit, Persian, Turki and Arabic words spoken by common people in the Indo-Gangetic Plains” (71)...the Turko-Persian word ‘Baba’, father was generally used for Hindu holy men” (82). So, the harmony and understanding between them must have enabled them for this cultural assimilation. Apart from the cohabitation of Hindus and Muslims, this illustration also explains the contribution of Muslim people to enrich the Indian language and culture as a whole.

Furthermore, the harmony is reflected in the musical practices. The *ragas* the Muslims singers sang and the hymns Hindu people vocalized reflect homage to each other’s gods in abundance, showing respect to each others’ practices. In the novel,

Kamal, a wanderer from Middle East, listens the following hymn from a group of singers which is respectful to the gods of every creed. The hymn goes:

Had there been no Incarnation of Mohammed,
 There would have been no
 Kingdom of God in the Three Worlds.
 Hail, Hail Abdullah, Hail Blessed
 Amina,
 Hail the city of Medina, and
 All the saints and the Lady Fatima, Mother of the world.
 Now I bow down before Brindaban,
 Hail Lord Krishna, the Eternal
 Lover of Sweet Lady Radhey (99)

This hymn is the perfect example of the mutual respect and harmony between Hindus and Muslims that we can find in the folklore of India. This is also a classic example of compositeness. The speaker, in the hymn, irrespective of the difference between Muslim creed and that of Hindus includes an eulogy of both Muslim gods like Muhammed ,and Abdullah, and Hindu god and goddess like Krishna and Radhey. It seems as if s/he is inspired with the thought that the essence of every religion is the same though there might be many manifestations on the surface. Such tolerance or the understanding of each other is even manifested in marriage songs.

Similarly, deconstructing many stereotypes about Muslim rulers of India mentioned in the official historiography, the novel mentions many instances where the rulers addressed the harmony between Muslims and Hindus. In the novel RadheyCharan, a Hindu tells Cyril Ashley, an agent of the colonial government about the Hindu Muslim unity of the past referring to Ali Aliwardy Khan, a Muslim ruler.

He says: “Ali Aliwardy Khan’s government consisted of a large number of Hindu ministers and generals (121)”. At another instance, she says about another Muslim ruler Nawabvazirs that he created a culture which combined the finest elements of the civilizations of Iran and India as:

The NawabVazirs of Oudh banned the killing of monkeys in deference to the Hindu monkey-god, Hanuman. Dussehra and Holi were officially celebrated by many Mugal kings in the Red Fort at Delhi, Holi and Basant were official festivals in Lucknow. Asaf-ud-Daulah’s mother, NawabBahu Begum, used to come to Lucknow from Fyzabad to celebrate Holi. Sadat Ali Khan, the fifth NawabVazir’s mother, Raj Mata ChhattarKunwar, built the famous Hanuman temple in Ali Gunj, Lucknow, with a crescent a top its spire. (131)

This is an impeccable example of the existing understanding between Hindus and Muslims. In fact before the arrival of British people, Hindus and Muslims were living in a relative peace. Together, by assimilating each other’s cultural practices they had developed a hybrid practice. Not only the Muslims, Hindus were also greatly generous toward Muslims. On this note, the novel, talking about Calcutta in the pre-British rule state maintains that “The shehnai players of the city were traditionally Muslim and were often employed by temple priests to play their wind instruments in the morning for the ritual of ‘waking up’ the deities” (209). Such mutual understanding had formed some common practices too.

Apart from the customs signifying good omen, they would also follow each other’s festivals. On this note the novel mentions that “Hindu and Muslim boarders jointly celebrated the festivals of Id and Diwali. Some Hindu girls wore ghararas and solemnly lighted joss sticks on the occasion of Milad Sharif, the Prophet’s birthday”

(214). Furthermore, the novel talks about the great respect exhibited by Hindus officers at the sorrowful rite procession of Muslims to the house of the bride, on the eve of her betrothed person Young Qasim, the son of Imam Hussain. On this evil occasion “Hindu officers and men of the U.P. Police Cavalry dismounted as a mark of respect to Imam Hussain, as they accompanied the ChupTazia. This was what India and Indian culture was were all about” (234). Not only this, in different election, Hindus eagerly would support Muslims leaders as Indira Nehru is reported to have supported Mustafa Hyder in election in the novel. So, Indian society was a cocktail or potpourri; cheerful co-existence among the people of different creed was the norm.

So, focusing on the compositeness of Indian culture, Hyder emphasizes the contribution of Muslims people in India. In the present day India, basically after the partition of the country into India and Pakistan, Muslims are taken to be the either second graded or foreign citizens. The official Indian historiography charges Muslims to have usurped the land of India from Hindus and also to have failed to protect it from British invaders. They are rather reported to have welcomed British people falling prey to different temptation. Muslims have also been constantly shunned for being disloyal to India and still having loyalty to Pakistan, a Muslim nation. But on this context, Hyder refutes this charge and highlights the contribution Muslim people have made for the Indian culture. Different from a popular misrepresentation of the Muslim rule, she paints an edenic picture of Muslim Raj as:

The Ganga flashed on. Boats continued to sail on its gold-and blue surface-state barges, merchantmen, galleys, fishing rafts...Their sails swelled in the evening wind against the setting sun and it looked as if hundreds of swans were about to fly away to the snowy north. Songs rose from dugouts and dinghies- the hymns of yogis, the chants of

fakirs. Cargo ships sailed towards the country's great markets bearing cotton textiles from Gujarat and Bengal, silks and brocades from Kashi, artefacts from the Deccan. People from distant lands were voyaging on the great river. Bhikshus from Tibet and Kashmir, Arab tourists, architects from Shiraz, Javanese dancers. There was peace and prosperity in the country. Sultan Sikander ruled in Delhi and all was well with the world. (93)

The above paragraph praises the rule of Sultan Sikander, when he was ruling Delhi. Basically it highlights the kind of cosmopolitan society he is supposed to have created. People from different places, community, trade, origin had come there unconditionally and performed their duties and wishes. This is a society free from any forms of prejudice on any basis. The intention is to deconstruct images of Muslim rulers created and disseminated in Indian historiography. She might be telling that in fact there was an absolute peace, happiness and understanding among the people under their rule.

Similarly, the novel shows Muslim rulers greatly contributing to the preservation and spreading of knowledge, namely musical. The novel presents an image of Sultan HussainNayak, a Muslim ruler as a lover of knowledge and art. He is supposed to have contributed to the Indian classical music composing his own original melodies. He is also shown to have got many books written in Sanskrit translated into local vernacular and preserved them. For the purpose of translation he asks Kamaluddin, a migrant worker to learn Sanskrit as: "Now you must learn another language young man- Sanskrit. I have important work for you to do" (66). He also asks him to get a treatise of classical music translated from Sanskrit as: "I have just been informed that some pundits in Ayodhya are in possession of a very ancient

treatise on classical music. Go there at once and find out all above those manuscripts. Seek the pundits help in deciphering the text” (74). This also deconstructs the negative images of Muslim rulers of India created in Indian historiography.

Apart from that, the novel also contains Hyder’s discourse on how Muslim people had contributed for in the Independence Movement of 1857. This ruptures the popular saying in India that Muslims were not and are not loyal to India. The novel says that during the months of independence, a strict system was laden by British Raj between Delhi and Lucknow. In such adverse conditions too Muslim publishers published Urdu news weeklies. On this note, the novel further maintains that:

The Urdu papers printed fairly accurate reports from all the battle-fronts, gleefully publishing the news of the murder of Englishmen and the burning of their bungalows and establishment. When the rebels’ occupation of Agra was celebrated in the Red Fort, Indian musicians also played on an orchestra of western instruments, but the euphoria and excitement did not last long. After a fierce battle Delhi was recaptured by the English in March, 1858. (169-170)

This quote says that Muslims people have also tried their best to save their nation from the infiltration of British people and maintain the purity of it. The contribution of Muslim press was one of the most remarkable things. When Indian people were waging war against British people, covering their news, mainly about the progress of the Indian people, the Muslim media had inspired more and more people to participate in the rebellion. More so, after their partial victory initially, they had also celebrated that greatly, though they eventually failed to establish their sovereignty. Similarly, the novel also talks about a Muslim businessman, Umar Sobhani who had funded for the Indian National Congress, waging a great enmity with British rulers. The novel

records this event as: “Umar Sobhani, the cotton King of Bombay, who financed the Indian National Congress. As a punishment, the British government brought down the price of Lancashire cotton and made him a pauper overnight. He died in 1926” (230). This shows how Muslims people put the interest of the nation at the cost of their own fortune.

Entertainment industry of India was the domains where the Muslim people had put their best efforts. Mahatma Ganditoo acknowledged and lamented on it after the partition of India, because India fell short of artisans. Even in the post-partitioned India entertainment industry is greatly sustained by Muslim people like Salman Khan, Amir Khan, Sharukh Khan to take only a few actors leaving many actresses, singers, musicians, directors, producers and other professionals. Hyder too amends this fact in her novel. In one instance the novel reads:

Like the Jews in America, a disproportionately large number of Muslim men and women belonged to the entertainment industry and were among the leading performing artistes of the country.

Innumerable gharanas had maintained the traditions of Hindustani classical music. The Muslim thread was present in every pattern of Indian tapestry.(233)

This paragraphs claims that in the development of the Indian culture, Muslims contribution is also equally valuable. Indian is a composite culture; it is an absolute foolishness to overlook Muslim populations’ charity in it. In the novel Hyder attempts to show Islam religion in a positive light. In India and elsewhere in non- Islamic nations, Islamic religion is taken to be orthodox, inhuman and violent. From their practice of *jihad*, killing of enemies to please their god, this religion is said to sanction

violence. But Hyder believes it is an outright wrong interpretation of the Muslim religion. She says:

Islam has become useful for politicians. It is being presented to the world as an aggressive, militant, even anti-cultural religion. Its promoters are not concerned with Islamic humanism or the liberalism of medieval Arab scholars or Iranian and Indian poets and Sufis. (375)

This paragraph is ironic towards politicians for politicizing Islamic religion for their vested interest; she charges them of highlighting negative aspects at the cost of positive aspects like humanism. Indirectly, this tells us about the contribution of Islamic faith in the Indian subcontinent by helping to spreading humanism.

In the novel, in the post-partition era, Kamal, the former citizen of India but now a Pakistani citizen, comes to visit his birthplace. On arrival, he finds all the Muslim heritages having been claimed to be Indian, forgetting the Muslims' contribution. Then, Kamal wants to tell that those things were the earliest civilization of Muslim but he cannot, for there's no one to listen and come to it. He feels sad hearing Indian government not acknowledging this contribution. His intention to correct it signifies the thought of the novelist that in the culture or heritage India feels proud of, there is also an equal share of Muslim people.

However, Hyders' portrayal of Muslims is not all positive; as a humanist she never hesitates to criticize the negative practices of Muslims and also of other communities. In doing so, she paints a real picture of both human beings and human societies i.e. all the people of a community and cultural practices cannot be positive. With different peoples of different community there lie many shortcomings, and we should always try to correct these weaknesses. It is a humanist attitude of her. She means to say that no culture of Hindu, Muslim, and Christian is perfect, they contain

many weaknesses. Acknowledging these we should try to correct it. Such self-criticism and criticism inherent in a foreign culture for a corrective purpose makes her truly a great writer and seeker of harmony between and among different communities.

In the novel she shuns the attempt of Sikander Lodi, a Muslim ruler who, in a bid to set up a new education system, demolishes whole of a university. Of him and his tendency she says:

He is very interested in the promotion of education, yet he comes to Janapur and demolishes the city's famous university and its college. And while the colleges were being ravaged SikandarLodhi, the educationist, sat in his headquarters discussing the new syllabus for school children with his advisors. He has had the Rose Lake complex of palaces razed to the ground with a vengeance. Nothing left. In his frenzy he even ordered the demolition of the mosques but his ulema stopped him. (89)

The afore-mentioned paragraph shows Hyders' ability to rise above narrow sectarian thoughts. Herself being a Muslim writer, she would never have criticized SikandarLodhi, a ruler of her own clan so bitterly if they had any communal bias. It also shows her attitude towards history. No matter how ugly the history of a place or society is, we can and should never forget it. And in order to develop a society and culture, she is not of the opinion that we should destroy the mark of previous society or history totally. After conquering an empire, SikandarLodhi wants to introduce a new education system there. But to do so he thinks he needs to have the old structures totally destroyed, which according to Hyder, is a stark stupidity. In the same way, he is also criticized for his attempt to ruin mosques. At another instance, she criticizes the whole Indians including Hindus and Muslims as:

Indians had rejoiced at Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 but could not celebrate the heroes of 1857. They found their heroes in Turkey, Italy and Ireland. Novels were written in Urdu about the Turco-Russian War of 1878, Muslims named their new-born sons after the heroes of the Balkan Wars and World War I. (228)

In the given extract she criticizes the overall tendency of Indians people including Muslims. She, mainly expresses her unhappiness and dissatisfaction on the Indian people and its government's failure to give due respect and recognition to the Indian heroes who sacrificed themselves for independence of nation fighting against British Raj in 1857. Many Hindus and Muslims happily sacrificed their lives for the national cause but in Indian historiography they have been mentioned duly. Neither the common populace has done anything to commemorate their contributions. Actually it was a great moment of national unity when people of every single community had rallied against British Raj. Highlighting this unity, Indian government can bring about peace and harmony in the present troubled time.

At another instance, she criticizes both Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League for the partition of India leading to the present day inter-communal unrest. She says:

When a Maharashtrian pandit of Shastriyasangeet sings and an Ustad gives a concert, do they belong to two different civilizations? Now this new business of Culture is being redefined as "pure Hindu" or "pure Muslim" by Mahasabha and the Muslim League. (232)

This excerpt criticizes both Hindu and Muslim leaders who divided the citizens of Indian nation under Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League before India's political emancipation. She charges both of the sides for failing to understand the

compositeness of Indian culture. For their vested interest they chanted the communal slogans which ultimately led to the partition of India. She further believes: “Indians have become victims of urban middle-class politics” (229) because life in the villages was different. In rural areas there was no enmity between Hindus and Muslims. Everyone there would refer each other as *bhabiya*, *chacha*, *dada* irrespective of their culture, caste and religion.

Her bitter criticism is also directed toward those Indians (both Hindus and Muslims) who left their country in the wake of communal violence resulted by partition. In the novel Champa expresses pity over such foolishness in people who went to England without attempting to extinguish the fire of communal hatred amid the partition of India. Leaving back her friends and homeland, many of her friends decide to go abroad, but Champa determines to stay back. To such people she says: “They are shameless hypocrites. They were all anti-British leftists and now they are making bee-line for England, deserting the toiling masses for whom their hearts used to bleed. Damn them (265).” In particular, this is a satire toward those Muslim people who had followed leftist politics. But in general it is a criticism to all of those people from all community leaving their country in a difficult time for their personal comfort.

Not only the Muslims before partition, she criticizes the Muslim rule and ruler in the post partition Pakistan. She charges the leaders for manipulating the ethos of Islamic religion and failing to highlighting its humanism. According to her the Pakistani politicians have presented Islam religion as an aggressive, militant, and even anti-culture religion. They are not concerned with Islamic Humanism or the liberalism of medieval Arab scholars or Iranian and Indian poets and sufis.

Though not the entire cause, Hyder believes the present disharmony between Hindus and Muslims is because of the British colonialism. So, in the novel she

critiques the British colonialism and their agents as well. The critique is mainly reflected in the character sketch of Cyril Ashley and the activities he involves himself in. He can be taken as a perfect colonial agent who is presented to have come to India to seek opportunities.

In the novel Cyril Ashley is one of the chief characters who wanders in the streets of London having passed his Bachelors in Arts in quest of some career. In the meantime, in one coffee talk, he meets a man called Peter Jackson, who had come from India making a great fortune. The man advises him to go to India to build up his career saying that the situation is very favourable for British people in India as after the fall of Mugal central authority everyone wanted to capture Delhi and there was just a chaos. He inspires Cyril to go to India saying: “We have lost America, dear friend, and gained India, almost simultaneously...Go to Calcutta. If you use your brains you will have pots of gold at the end of the rainbow before you can say Peter Jackson” (106). Saying so, finally he becomes successful to coax him to become his business partner. This, in the novel, is aimed to critique the British Raj whose purpose of coming to India was to amass wealth not to educate Indians as they claimed.

Similarly, the novel criticizes the racist attitude of the British people. Before Cyril comes to India, the native of Britain strictly advises him not to make any contact with the “half-castes” (110) meaning the native Indian people. Likewise they have also been characterized as lecherous, debouched, and unfeeling people. Cyril had only just come to India when he plays with the emotion of a Eurasian girl in Eurasian Town and leaves her deserted. In their greed for wealth and property they levied tax in everything like marriage, salt, oil and other foods. In the novel a father of *sati*, whom Peter Jakson saved from burning off alive in pyre along with her dead husband, tells this bitter reality fearlessly to him as: “You are taxing salt and oil and all

edibles...You tax even our marriages” (121-122). This shows the true vile nature of the British Raj, which the novel shuns.

The novel categorically claims that the rift and misunderstanding between Hindus and Muslims is the cause of the infiltration of British people to India. Not only that after their arrival, there has been supposed to have been an utter impunity in India. The novel says that “No Hindu-Muslim rift in the princely states- the problem is characteristic of post- 1857 British India. Jaipur and Gwalior both Hindu states, have the most spectacular Moharrum celebrations, patronised by the Maharajas” (2333). Similarly, Hyder refutes the colonial discourse which says there was lawlessness in India before the arrival of British people. In rebuttal she says:

Had there been lawlessness in India before the British came, commerce and industry wouldn't have flourished to such an extent that it attracted the European powers. True, we had no Roman Law, but did the English abide by the book when they broke their treaties with the native rulers? (124)

This is a piercing critique of British colonialism. She means to say that as India was already a developed and a prosperous country British people had come there to loot their wealth by ruling over it. Similarly, she also characterizes them as brutes and betrayers of people's faith who violated the contract they made with the native kings of India. They had only been allowed to act as a trader but they shipped their army into India and later hijacked the government itself.

Likewise, she castigates British divide and rule policy implemented during the colonial time to prolong their rule. The novel recounts an event occurred not so long before independence when the movement had reached to its climax. The Indian National, in a bid to intimidate the colonial government had launched No Tax

Movement and it had been spreading like a wildfire in to villages. But the colonial government, though the restlessness and disintegration, was economical “gave it a Hindu-Muslim twist so that the masses could be diverted from the root cause” (199). On the same note, Professor Bennerjee expresses his anger to the colonizers for their divisive politics as:

Have you ever realized...that Hindu-Muslim riots were unknown before the arrival of the English? There used to be big, full-dress wars, but they were waged by rival political powers who happened to be either Hindus or Muslim. Of all the Mugal Emperor, Aurangzeb had the largest number of Hindu generals in his army. (253)

This paragraph clearly heaps blames on colonial rule for the spreading of ethnic and communal rivalry in India and the debased communal wars. Before their arrival, the wars would be individual and of small scale. The British people taught communal wars to Indians, and when this war reached to its climax in the post-independence time, many western journalists came to India to cover them eagerly pretending as if they never heard of such wars. On this point Tehmina, a patriotic educated person utterly frustrated with the situation responds to them saying: “The west had millions of dead bodies littered over half the world till only two years ago. We are not the only savages” (273). In fact in the history of killing western civilization is far ahead. They were the people who waged two bloody world wars. Similarly such a brute like Hitler is also the product of their own civilizations. In fact they are the most wretched barbarians, they’d better think of civilizing themselves.

Though the novel, for the most part, blames British Raj, it also acknowledges the contribution they made to the Indian culture and civilization. For example, even in present day India, British Raj is credited for the abolition of

*satis*system, the system of burning the wife along with her husband in pyre after his death practiced by Hindu people. In the novel too, Hyder acknowledges this fact. Cyril, a Breton not only saves a sati from burning, but also safeguards her life marrying a 'social shame'. In fact, it's a great contribution to save a *sati* and also marry her. In this way, they had added on the social modernization.

At another instance, Hyder acknowledges their assistance in creating modern India saying: "So the British were...the villains... Yet the indisputable fact remains that they created modern India. Even Maha Guru Karl Marx said so" (229). This sounds true. Many people around the world agree on that the present day progress and prosperity India boasts upon rests on the infrastructural development and the development of consciousness India achieved during colonial time. British Raj is accredited for the construction of different highways, and railroads, which are the basics of development. Similarly, India has also immensely benefitted from the educational system introduced in the colonial epoch.

Not only that British are also considered to have spread liberalist and the leftist thought in India. Hyder in the following quote approves this as: "Indian liberals were influenced by the liberalism of nineteenth century England, and in the 1920s two Englishmen, Pratt and Bradley, organized the Communist Party of India" (229). This shows that even the belief and thought of JawaharLal Nehru and Mahatma Ganddi's liberalism and the thoughts of different leftist leaders like Jinnah is the legacy of British colonial rule.

This novel, though written in 1957, was transcreated in English in 1998 by the writer herself. So, it depicts the Indian society marked by Hindu majoritarianism and Muslim marginalization even though India as a nation had prospered a lot. There it has seen an increase in communal unrest and violence. The condition of Muslim

people has deteriorated further than it was in colonial period. The narrator in the novel reports the ever worsening condition of Muslims thus:

According to a data collected by the government in 1921, more Muslim girls attended in school in UP than their Hindu counterpart. But the community still is on backward in India. If we compared present condition with the pre-independence state the situation has deteriorated. (224)

This is somehow true. In the present day India, Indian Muslims are not taken to be Indians; they are taken to be Pakistani. Their loyalty toward India is always questioned. They are rather charged being a spy and traitor. This condition is well depicted in the novel through the predicament of Kamal, an avid Indian, but a Pakistani after the nations get parted as:

He felt as though people were looking at him suspiciously. “You are a Pakistani,” they seemed to be saying, “Come to the police station. You ought to be in the lock-up. You are a Pakistani- Muslim spy.” The wheels of the train also seemed to be repeating the same clangorous, harrowing, blood-curdling refrain- spy-traitor-spy-traitor-traitor-traitor- (395-396)

This paragraph not only represents the feeling of the citizens of a fellow nation Pakistan in India but the feelings of all Muslims dwelling in India for generations. In the present day India as the Indian secular government is also inclined to the principles of Hindu majority, Indian Muslims are regarded as the non-Indians. Believing them being loyal to Pakistan, a Muslim nation, they are not trusted in high ranks of government jobs. Constantly, they are being accused as spying on India on behalf of Pakistani government. They are rather being interpreted as the terrorists and

have become the first target of the Indian government when any terroristic event takes place.

In fact such feeling of insecurity in Muslim minority was one of the causes behind their demand for separate nation. This feeling in the novel is represented in the response of Champa, an Indian Muslim choosing to stay in India even after partition while talking to Kamal, now a Pakistani coming to visit his birthplace in India, after one year of stay in Pakistan. She says: "As long as Jawahrlal is alive everything will be all right. But what will happen after he goes? Only Allah knows. In the long run, our succeeding generations will face the same fate as Spain's Muslims." After the partition of the nation got set to take place many Muslims chose to go to Pakistan. However around 80 million of them stayed back because the Indian leaders including Nehru promised the nation would be a secular, where even the Muslims would have equal rights of the citizens. But within some years Muslim people begun to feel the sense of partiality done by Indian Hindus community and the government led by Hindus. They had apprehended it soon India started to be governed by their own elected people, but still Nehru had taken care of the things well because he was a great authority, difficult for people to contradict. But they had the fear that once he died, there would be no one to protect them. As they feared the situation exactly turned to the same direction. Slowly as the time rolled on they have come to a time when Muslims are treated as foreigners, spies, and traitors.

After the creation of Pakistan, living in India for Muslims has become very difficult. It is the understanding of the Hindu populace that as Pakistan was created in a bid to give Muslim people their land, all of them should have gone there; now if they haven't gone, it's their fault; but in India they cannot demand for equality. If they want to stay in India, they have to live being subordinated to the Hindus. Not only has

the populace, even the people steering the governments after partition, leaving the initial government spearheaded by Nehru, have also been guided by the Hindu philosophy. So, Muslim citizens in India in the post-partition have been living in a really dilapidated condition. Hyder represents this situation in the novel as: “We U.P. Muslims have been ruined because of the creation of Pakistan..[M]ost of our family members packed and left with just a few old fogeys like myself here...the gentry has more or less emigrated “ (400). So, those left behind were mostly poor and old people. Now in India, people and the governments are further marginalizing such people further. Some gentle Muslims are also taken to be thugs in the guise of grave men the way people take Kamal as a “fashionable thug” (405). Despite their genius, it’s very difficult for Muslim people to get jobs.

In the post-partition time, in order for Muslims to get jobs, they need to get recommendation from some high ranked Hindu person in the time immediately and it remains the same till date. In the novel Kamal, a Muslim man graduating from a good University in England, tries to find the job in India hoping to stay in his own birthplace. But he doesn’t get entrusted despite his excellent academic performance. So, finally he gets doomed to go to Pakistan. This is the condition of Muslim people in India. They are hardly trusted to love India; Indian people and the government have executed the politics of exclusion and constantly intimidated them.

The novel, trans-created amid the ethnic unrest of the late twentieth century India, gives her opinion on the partition of 1947 as well. She holds that the present unpleasant distrust and enmity as the legacy of the same horrendous event. Ambitions and stupidity of politicians, politicians’ making politics mightier than culture, the economic exploitation of Muslims in India for generations are some of the reasons of partition figured out by Hyder.

For one thing, Hyder implies that partition was not the interest of common people of India, their concern was but the happiness and prosperity; they were the leaders who needed either one nation or many nations. It is the irony of democracy that the leaders decide upon many issues acting like the real representatives of them, but in most of the cases they get swayed by their personal desires. In the matter of national decisions like war, election, separation and the like the common people never have their say. Hyder also refers to this fact about the partition of India. For example when partition took place “nobody had ever asked Mirzapur’s Qamrun Nissa and Ram Daiya their opinion on these matter...the jingoistic attempts of chauvinists to purify this culture were creating bad blood and confusion” (203). In this quote, Hyder refers to the way common people are excluded from taking decision in political matters. Most of the times the intents of politicians go contrary to the people’s opinions and expectations.

In the novel, Nissa and Ram Daiya are the two maids representing the subaltern populace of India. These people were ignorant why partition took place and if it was good. They were neither asked to express their opinion nor if it was good. They are the representatives of common people making the majority of population in every nation, who busy themselves struggling with their daily needs. The opinion of such a number of people is left out while taking different grave and significant decisions. The same thing happened when the Indian leaders decided on making two separate nations. Their dillusion of making two nations having pure Hindu and Muslim culture people brought about bloodshed, destruction and the never-ending mistrust between Indian Muslims and Hindus. What if if they had gone for collecting public opinion on whether to divide the nation? Would the majority of people have

voted for it? On this Hyder believes that definitely the common people would not have gone for partition.

The modern historiography on Partition has found out that up to 1943 Indian leaders had never thought of the two nations. But in the time after that, mainly in the dawn of Independence, they disagreed to each other and agreed on two nation theory. Furthermore, it is also been stated that the leaders of Indian national congress were themselves not in favour of giving rightful rights to Muslims in a unified India. They are supposed to have preferred to give them a separate nation than the equal rights and opportunities in a greater India.

Hyder has also attempted to give an way out of the present situation and make the harmonious existence between Hindus and Muslims and the people from other castes and creeds possible. Broadly looking, she seems to be putting forward the idea of Derridean cosmopolitan philosophy as a balm to heal the communal misunderstanding, leading to everlasting peace and harmony. Besides that, the necessity to understand compositeness of Indian culture; focus on culture, not politics and the ability to understand the contingent human self and the naturalistic understanding of human life are some of the ways proposed by Hyder for peaceful co-existence among the people from different communities.

In the novel Hyder bemoans the fact about India where “Politics has been mightier than culture” (353). Whereas according to her, the reality should just be other way round i.e. culture should be dominant than politics or the politics should be the slave to humans not vice versa. In Indian society, culture was dominant when they had waged the war of Independence; it’s the mighty culture that had united people of all faiths against the British rule. But as soon as British people had chased out of India, Indian people got divided in terms of political line, worst of all, they got

divided in the communal line forgetting the compositeness of their culture. And the politics became so powerful that it paved the way for the partition of the nation with the bloody bloodshed. Still to this date politics has become dominant and has generated mistrust in some and a blind faith in others. So, according to Hyder understanding the importance of culture might contribute people to live harmoniously together.

The necessity to acknowledge the essential compositeness of Indian culture is her next discourse for the peaceful co-existence of multiple communities in India. The novel largely focuses on the time of India when the society was all welcoming to the people of different nationalities and castes and creeds. In the canvas of the novel people come to India from around the world without any hesitation and carve their destiny. From different places they bring different cultures, traditions and ideas and infuse it into Indian culture. Leaving their birth-place aside, they even choose to die in the Indian soil. Even the welcoming of the East Indian Company in India is unknowingly inspired from the same cosmopolitan thought, though it later harmed Indian people and culture. The novel shows the making of the Indian culture by people from different origins and faiths. In that time the Indian society was peaceful and prosperous. But after the partition of India, as the composite or cosmopolitan thought wanes, the society becomes chaotic. Nehru had, according to her shown the understanding of this compositeness, that's why he had made "a derelict old lady, a direct descendant of Bahadur Shah Zafar, sit next to him on the ramparts at Red Fort on the 15th of August" (274), acknowledging the role of Muslim people in forming composite culture of India. But the leaders after him disremembered this fact.

Her call to people to focus on their history marked by cosmopolitanism and compositeness is also reflected in the metaphor of river used in the novel. The novel

uses river as the metaphor of Indian civilization. A river has many ups and downs, ebbs and flows, happy and sad memories but the water collected from different brooks move ahead together toward their destination forgetting those unpleasant incidents. In the like manner, civilizations also have got the bitter experiences like partition and the following bloodshed, but forgetting such things the different communities of India, mainly Hindus and Muslims should live in peace cherishing their shared history. Rather than judging every incident from the feeling of bitterness of the time, they should see how they had, for the time immemorial, lived together forming a single hybrid Indian culture.

In the novel, Hyder states that Indian people should be concerned to ameliorate their lives and economic conditions; they should not quarrel with each other in the name of religion. Hyder's focus on prosperity not on religion is reflected in Kamals' conversation to Champa when he says: "ChampaBaji, I don't want religion. India needs peace and bread" (254). She means to say that Indian people always should understand that religion is a matter of personal faith, they in fact should think of how to make their lives better; they should bring about personal modernization in their thoughts, only then India as a nation can be modernized.

Taking the partition of India and Pakistan as light as a bad dream worth forgetting, Indian people should continue with the good feelings to each other. It's not that they try to disremembering the incident of partition, they should talk about it but they should put this in different broader contexts. Hyder's such feeling is expressed in Time's speech to Champa. It says: "You can't run away from me (352)" at a time when she was hesitating to return to her divided homeland after completing her study in London. The sense is that whenever people remain with each other for a long time, the bitter things like partition are normal, so the wiser thing would be to juxtapose

such weaker things with some stronger and positive memories. In terms of partition also we should try to understand all the aspects of it. One should visit such incidents but positively. If we saw such things neutrally, we could reach to normalcy easily.

Hyder shows that the initial discomfitures would fade away with the passage of time. In the novel, the main character, Kamal initially cannot endure the aftermath of partition. He becomes very despondent and does not see any hope. But as the time rolls on, he gets himself in a comfortable situation. Though he greatly moans his compulsion to leave his homeland, he cannot help going to Pakistan. But once he goes to Pakistan, he slowly settles into its life and makes a good career. It is also reflective of the traumatic memory which will eventually be normal with the passage of time.

In the novel, Hyder not only tries to solve the misunderstanding among the people of different communities of India. She also shows that people of India and Pakistan are also culturally the citizens of a single nation and the enmity between them is just an unnecessary thing. When Kamal, after his formal migration to Pakistan, his nationality after partition, comes back to India for visit, he finds hardly any difference between India and Pakistan. He expresses his impression as: “countries there are two; but the activities of the commoners within them the same, the rulers are ruling different nations; but people living the similar lives of the people who used to starve continue to starve now (388-393)”. Through this she wants to enlighten the commoners about the reality of partition. It was never done in the interest of common people; it was just the interest of the leaders because they wanted nation and territory to rule.

The novel comes to an end with an emphasis from the writer that the people of both India and Pakistan should collectively take the blame of the partition if it was necessary otherwise they should take the thing easy and communicate to each other

like brothers and sisters. The conversation between Hari Shankar and Gautam highlights this fact as: “Kamal has deserted us. Betrayed his friends, gone away for good and let us down. Together, we could have challenged the galaxies.”” We all have betrayed one another,” Gautam replied quietly (425-426)”. It shows that so far as it is possible the people within India should try to take the incident of partition normally, as an unwanted unpleasant action. And if it is necessary to blame someone then everyone is to blame; more than the citizens the leaders should be blamed.

Kamleshwar’s nationhood imagined in his *Partitions*, on the other hand, is influenced on the official concept of secularism. The kind of fictional nation he imagines is narrow, identitarian, sectarian and hierarchial; it is not egalitarian. His way of painting the negative image of Muslims and colonizers and making of so many comments in favour of composite culture bespeak of his secularist ideology appropriate for peaceful coexistence among people from diverse cultural and religious groups. So his idea of harmonious relation among diverse group is conditional. His idea of secularism is rather close to the nationalism of BJP based on *hindutwa* which aims to bring about religious and cultural peace on the basis of some conditions. It expresses the belief that as Hindus make the majority of the population the state should operate in their interest. And the minority community should tolerate the oppression of them to get to stay in India. His thoughts are not cosmopolitan. As if India was the nation of Hindus only, he criticizes Muslims and Christians and even regards them solely responsible for the partition of India into India (Hindustan) and Pakistan.

Kamleshwor’s sectarian attitude is reflected on the title itself. The original Hindi title bears “*Kitne Pakistan*” (How many Pakistan?) he regards Pakistan as the metaphor of hatred. Never bothering to understanding and studying the

marginalization and deprivation of Muslims in India which has its root in the historical times, he interprets the call for partition as purely based on religious belief. Not only this with an utter senselessness he regards all the divisions taken place in the world in historical process as “Pakistan”. In doing so, he never realizes how the Muslims residing in India and Pakistan might feel. Kamleshwor’s mouthpiece adeeb in the novel says: “Everyone is involved in creating new Pakistans against the interest of their own people...Hatred determines man’s identity and caste today” (83). He also says that “Pakistan is another name for hatred” (96). Devaluing the historical significance of partition he says “May I...relate how Pakistans were created in the hearts and minds of people many centuries ago?” (228).

This reflects the negative attitude of the writer not only to Muslims of Pakistan but about the Muslims and all the minorities of India. He means to say that Muslims are the epitome of hatred. They cannot live in harmony with any other community. The demand of separate Pakistan was also the reflection of the same hatred of Muslim people. Such narrow interpretation of partition of India and Pakistan by Kamleshwor goes against the new historiography of partition in the present time and supports the official historiography of partition. Through the same example we can see the indifference of the writer about the suffering of Muslim and other minority community in India. That’s why his adeeb bluntly expresses: “I have no time for the half-dead or the living, I only deal with corpses” (52).

In fact for the upholder of secularism suffering of half-dead/half- alive minority people does not make sense. Secularism highly depends on the concept of tolerance which means tolerating someone who is different from you and the force to be tolerated must be a minor force otherwise there cannot be tolerance. So, it is the very strategy of secularism to make majority or greater force and the minority or the

weaker force as per its belief on the tolerance. In secularism which can also be said majoritarianism, therefore the life of the people from margin, which is like half-dead or half living, is not paid any heed because it is the very strategy of secularism to rule over a nation, to bring peace over the people who are from diverse culture.

Kamleshwor's secularist ideology is also manifest in his characterization. In the novel *Adeeb*, the arbitrator of the world who can, irrespective of the time people were born and died, summon different dead people as per his wish to understand the cause of the partition of India, is a Hindu. However, his peon Mahood Ali, is a Muslim. So, in his assigning a Muslim the role of a peon shows his sectarian ideology of Hindu secularism that India is following. He presents *adeeb* and Mahood Ali relation as : "The *adeeb* smiled and remarked, "you've become quite an intelligent man, haven't you while carrying out your duties" (97). In this portrayal Muslims themselves are not sensible enough, that they need to be the apprentice of some Hindu people to learn intelligence. In other words, it is also making the point Muslims in themselves are not complete, that they can get to near perfection by taking Hindus as their gurus, working under them.

Not only that, here and there in the novel we can find many statements that are aimed to hurt the sentiment of Muslims by attempting to tarnish the image of the ideal people of Muslim community like Iqbal, Rehmat Ali and ShibliNomani. Iqbal was the person who gave India one of the most popular patriotic songs of all times (*SaarejehaseachhaHindustanahamara...*). Similarly, Rehmat Ali is highly valued by Muslim people for his coinage of the word "Pakistan" in 1993 under which the new sovereign country "Pakistan" got its name. And, ShibliNomani is popular as a great muslim historian of Muslim community. But, Kamleshwor's *sadeeb* remarks about Iqbal: "Iqbal was talented but his constant struggle to obliterate his Hindu heritage

turned him into a dangerous bigoted man” (146). Of Rehmat Ali he says: “Ali...[I]t was an impossible and ill-considered dream” (279). And about ShibliNomani he says: “ShibliNomani instead of being a rational, thinking human being, what you are, first and foremost, is a Muslim. That is your failing...” (164).

Furthermore, he also portrays the picture of Mahomaad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan as a senseless puppet of British colonizers. He says that Jinnah could not understand the politics and policy of British colonizers of dividing and ruling India and senselessly fell prey to that. He says: “Jinnah Sahib had become your trump card. The truth is that you Englishmen deliberately made him your trump card” (282). Not only that forgetting the impoverishment and the marginalization of the Muslims in India that propelled them to make a demand for the separate Pakistan, he contends that the partition and the resulting bloodshed were solely the outcomes of the unhealthy and impious acts of Britishers and Muslims. He puts this as: “All that bloodshed took place because of Jinnah’s weakness, Mountbatten’s conspiracy” (146). Echoing the Indian official historiography of partition, Kamleshwor characterizes Jinnah as a traitor as:

Jinnah gazed at Mountbatten, only too aware in the game of political chess, he was a mere pawn in the hands of British...[M]inor acts of discourtesy and overriding arrogance had given birth to never-ending hostility. Fostered by hidden personal rivalries such animosity had shattered the dreams of masses, leaving in its wake bigots handicapped by illusions of religious superiority. (45)

In fact, this is a misleading idea. The latest scholarship about partition has interpreted that Jinnah never wanted a separate nation. His demand for Pakistan was in fact a bargaining chip to secure more and more rights for Muslim minority in India. But the

agent of Indian secularism are stated to have thought it better to annex the nation than to endow them different rights.

The attempt to tarnish the image of the ideal figure of Muslim community is the expression of his hatred to 'other'. In the novel he creates the 'self/other' dichotomy and puts all the minority groups in the 'other' and deplorable beings. His lack of courtesy is but his hatred to the Muslim community. So, in the world imagined by Kamleshwor in the novel, the equal treatment to all people, creed is impossible. In the fictitious world minorities do have conditional existence; it can never be unconditional welcome to the strangers as expressed in the concept of cosmopolitanism conceived by Derrida.

As Kamleshwar favours a hierarchical society in the name of secularism, he dislikes the Indian Marxist writers for they had interpreted the demand for Pakistan as the product of ages long subjugation of Muslim people and culture in India. He expresses his anger for their support in Muslim cause as:

You marxist had considered this hatred a necessary evil born out of religious and communal compulsions and had supported partition of the country... Sajiaz Zaheer became the general secretary of Pakistan's Communist Party (82-83)

In fact Kamleshwor himself was part of the movement of Marxist Indian writers called *Nayi Kahani*, but later he dissociated himself from the movement because of his faith in Hindu version of secularism the Indian government was clinging to. Marxist advocated for an egalitarian society in India. But as Kamleshwor believed in stratified society, he broke up with the movement.

In the novel Kamleshwor also presents colonizers in absolute negative note. According to him they are the people who did totally wrong to India. They were

absolutely profit minded and did nothing to ameliorate India and Indian society during their reign in India. They are also shown to have planted the seed of hatred between Hindus and Muslims of India that culminated in the partition of India into Pakistan and Hindustan. Kamleshwor attitude toward colonizers is totally negative. He does not have tolerant view. It is as if India is purely the land of Hindus and it has got no space for any outsiders no matter how long they live there, how much contribution they make to the Indian civilization. According to him Britishers and Muslims caused its partition irrationally.

In the novel *Fuhrer*, the director general of the British Archaeology Survey of the late nineteenth century India confesses that the age-long conflict between Hindus and Muslims regarding the demolition of Ram Mandir of Ayodhya was caused by the British colonial mission. He says : “As part of our changing policies, we had decided that in order to keep the British government from collapsing, it was necessary to create rifts between Hindus and Muslims who had been united in 1857” (61). This is a blunt generalization. In order to sustain the British government, the colonial government must have tried to create enmity between Hindus and Muslims because they together would make an invincible power. But to say that the differences between Hindus and Muslims was entirely the trick of Britishers is fallacious; it is to gainsay the historicity. Hindus and Muslims, though inhabiting in one place were the communities apart, following different religion, culture, tradition and speaking even a separate language. By piling the blame on Britisher the writer is covering guilt of Hindus in paving way for the partition of India in 1947. But Kamleshwor believes it is the divide and rule policy that inspired Britishers to change inscription on Babri Masjid as:

It was what motivated me to deface Ibrahim Lodi's inscription on the Babri Masjid. The translation of this inscription still lies in the files of Archaeological survey of India. No one has thought of destroying it. However, the two crucial pages of the *Babarnama* which prove the king had gone to Avadh, not Ayodhya, mysteriously disappeared. Having played this dirty trick, the British and, particularly, H.R. Neville, the Faizabad Gazetteer, went a step further. The latter placed on record the falsehood that Baber had stayed in Ayodhya for a week and ordered the demolition of the Ram Mandir. (61)

In the aforementioned paragraph, the writer makes the historically real character A. Fuhrer to speak the stunning fact about Hindu- Muslim conflict on the destruction of Ram Mandir which is supposed to have superseded by Babri Masjid. In the historical record, it has been mentioned the Muslim emperor Baber had got the temple destroyed and erected the Masjid after his name. But, in the extract this fact is denied. Instead, the British colonizers of India are made responsible for the manipulation of the fact to perpetuate their regime by destroying the solidarity of the native people. As early as 1857, the chief communities of India- Hindus and Muslims had exhibited a firm unity fighting against the colonizers together. After that they devised the plan to dismantle their solidarity and found the politicization of religious faith the surest way. So, for the matter they misread the inscriptions and made the history where religious community established its center of faith to the complete dilapidation of another, thus sowing the grain of ever continuing conflict between Hindus and Muslims.

Whatever the writer says might be partially true; in order to cause a rift between Hindus and Muslims they might have wrong read, changed and hidden the ancient inscription about different things. But Kamleshwor's referring to these facts is

not justifiable. His main purpose is to confirm to the official historiography of the partition which blames Muslims and Britishers for the partition and the resulting violence. Nowhere in the novel *Kamleshwor* hints about the part Hindus and the leaders of Indian Congress had played to pave way for the horrible incidents. Like the criticism of Muslims the text is replete with the criticism of British colonizers. By doing so, he at times digresses from the main issue, the history of partition. His entire aim seems to purge the Indian Hindus by blaming Britishers and Muslims.

Furthermore Britishers are also shown to have wrongly interpreted the fact about the construction of Babri masjid in Ayodhya in order to cause mistrust between Hindus and Muslims. Construction of Babri masjid has always been a contested issue in India. It has also, from time to time, caused a riot between Hindus and Muslims. In 1992 the fanatic Hindus demolished the *masjid* and erected a Ram *mandir*. It is the interpretation of the Hindus that prior to the setting up of Babri masjid there was a Hindu temple. The then Muslim emperor Baber is supposed to have got it made killing “one lakh seventy-four thousand Hindus” (62). In the novel *Adeeb*, the poet who is also the chief justice of the court of time makes Baber, the Muslim emperor to defend the charge laden upon him. He presents data of the historical population of Ayodhya which is far less than the casualty supposed to have occurred during the incident. On his defence Baber says:

In the Faizabad Gazetteer the British officer Neville has recorded that the population of Faizabad- Ayodhya rose from nine thousand nine-hundred and forty-nine in 1869 to eleven thousand six hundred and forty-three in 1881. This implies an increase in the population by two thousand in a mere twelve years. Honourable Adeeb, it's up to you to guess what the approximate figure must have been in my time that is in

the year 1528. How then could one lakh seventy-four thousand Hindus have been killed at the time? It should now be quite clear to you the Britishers have played a trick on us. (62)

This is yet another attempt of Kamleshwor to purge Hindus of present day Ayodhya of their irrational and barbarous acts of killing Muslim minority in India. In modern day India even after partition of nation Muslims are the victim of unexpected Hindu barbarisms. In the extract mentioned earlier Kamleshwor evoking a Muslim emperor piles the guilt on British-India government. They are shown to have manipulated the Indian historiography.

In the novel like the Muslims, Kamleshwor also shows British colonizers in an absolute negative light. His attitude is different from the humanist attitude of Hyder attitude who criticizes the negative aspects of all including her own community and eulogizes the positive sides. But such perspective cannot be seen in Kamleshwor. For him 'other' are always bad totally. One instance of such portrayal is reflected on the description of the way colonizers went to America as:

Do not overlook the fact that the New World came into your hands in the course of your quest to discover India. You had no religion; you merely wore the mask of one. Hypocrites that you are, you claimed that these explorations were undertaken for the spiritual salvation of the people who inhabited the countries you set foot in. You certainly didn't venture forth with horses and explosives to save souls; your actual intention was to enslave them. (296)

This extract misrepresents the fact. It says that British people had no religion when they went to America. In fact the history says that the earliest migrants to America from England were the deeply religious puritan people who had gone there taking it as

the promised land mentioned in the Bible. After they went and colonized the lands they definitely enslaved some of them, but it cannot be said that they only spoilt the land and people.

Criticism to British colonizers is also made in the reference to slave trade and its dehumanization. Slavery is another name of colonization. During colonial time the trend of treating human beings mainly of Africa as inhuman had begun. People were enslaved and transported to Europe and America mainly for cheap labour in industries. Besides, they were made domestic slaves where they were sexually exploited. Like commodity they would be sold from one master to another. In the novel, “ashruvaid”, the person who studies the tears of people narrates the aadeeb about the slave trade as:

The physique of the male slaves determines the price the condition of the teeth, the price of the slave children. As for the price of female slaves, it is decided by subjecting their breast to a humiliating physical scrutiny. They are then transported by boat to the huge vessels that lie off the shore and finally shipped across to America. (289)

This is the genuine description of the cruelty and dehumanization of slavery that the British colonizers started in America. But in the case of Indian colonization such things are unheard of. Though the case is true in connection of America, in the context where one is talking about Indian context, it seems hardly meaningful. In order to tarnish the image of Indian colonization, he takes the example of America. It only makes one’s argument weak. It is the digression from the main point.

At another instance, Kamleshwor criticizes the British colonialism for destroying the native culture wherever they went for colonization. So, in the novel. In

the novel *Montezuma*, the ruler of Aztec Empire says to Bernal Diaz, the colonial historian-

Are you aware...[B]efore your arrival, these Inca tribes cultivated potatoes and maize on a large scale? That theirs was an agrarian society with its own granaries? They had turned the vast valley of the Andes mountain into arable land. They had a king, a council of ministers, a bureaucracy and an army. Their granaries overflowed with grain that sustained the royal household officialdom and the army.

Each one of the Incas worshipped the sun as soon as they awoke in the morning. Can you deny any of these facts? (305)

The given extract not only blames the colonizers for destroying the native civilization; but by showing the non-European cultures already civilized with the advent of their own system of carrying out different things- administrative, social, agricultural and others, it also abuses them for destroying them. It is the truism that due to colonization many cultures in India, Africa, and Latin America have lost their many things underwent change, however it is not wise to tell that the transformations were all into a negative or bad directions. Many countries and civilizations have in fact, benefitted from the contact with the British people. They have learnt modern ways of agriculture, governance and so on from the colonial rule.

At another example, Kamleshwor criticizes the lack of the ethics a guest. He says that as in India where British people went as traders, they went to Mexico they refugees. But later they took the sovereignty of the nation in their hands through unfair means. In the novel *Montezuma*, the ruler of Aztec expresses this as:

I am Montezuma, the ruler of the Aztec empire. I had welcomed Cortez as an honoured guest when he arrived in Mexico. But in return,

he unleashed havoc on our clan. As a result, my council and my people turned against me. (298)

This is just a plea to cover one's weaknesses blaming others. Definitely, those who go into a land as a refugee don't have a great ability to exert influence as they are in minority and powerless. Besides, it is foolishness to blame some outsiders for devastating the harmony of our families. If there is not unity in a family, then the members must have some differences. So, this is just a trick to evade one's loopholes by blaming others.

Kamleshwor also criticizes British polity for destroying the indigenous Indian culture. He is of the opinion that in exchange of different cash crops and things they just left social decadence, like the practice of prostitution. The following passage not only criticizes British rulers, but also Muslim emperors. The formers are supposed have brought English whores to lure Muslim emperors who are said to have exchanged their power with a momentary pleasure. In the novel the peon of the court of aadeeb says:

... the representatives of the East India Trading company have misused the Hooghly river's estuary. In exchange for indigo, opium, black pepper, cloves, cardamoms, ginger and cinnamon, they have offloaded scores of European prostitutes on the shores of Bengal. This is the perverted vision of beauty blighting India's shores. Robert Clive has just made a gift of fifteen such women for the harem of Mir Jafar, the sipahsalar of Bengal's Nawab Siraj-ud-daulah. (288)

This extract is disrespectful to both British colonialism and Muslim rulers. It is obvious that earning was one of the motives of the British colonizers. But through this passage the writer also charges them to cause decadence of Indian culture namely

initiating prostitution. We can never pinpoint to the real beginning of such things as prostitution. Sex has always been there since there were human beings in the world. In this context, it is an utter childishness to blame British colonizers for starting sex business in India. Besides, whether prostitution is really bad is also a debatable issue. Similarly, the passage is greatly disrespectful to Muslim emperors. For emperors, the most important thing is their empire; it is the source of their identify and power. Even if they wanted to involve in sexual orgy they can easily get the native women, they don't surrender their power for some foreign whores. So, the intention of the characterization is to belittle the Muslim emperors to hurt the Muslim sentiment. This is nothing than a foul trick of piling the blame of partition to Muslims and purging Hindus from their sins.

Likewise, the spreading of the capitalism and the extension of market for European products was another end of the colonizers according to this novel. This purpose of imperialism is described in the novel as :

It is for the sake of market that imperialism is born. Conversely, it is to keep imperialism alive that markets are created. An umbilical chord binds the two. Imperialism manifests itself in different ways. There can be democratic economic imperialism that needs to subsist on the markets that generate profit. Markets! Markets! Markets! Markets alone define the principles and parameters of industrial progress. This is known as capitalism. Imperialism is another name of it. As is colonization. (292)

In the extract Imperialism has been bluntly linked to capitalism. Doing so, the writer is implying that capitalism is as bad as imperialism. There is no question imperialism, taking the political authority and sovereignty of a nation by the people of a foreign

country is outright bad. But the question as to whether capitalism is bad is an arguable issue. Though not imperialism, India has hugely benefitted from capitalist system of economy. Finding it a good system, India is continuing with this system in after the independence of the country. So, this cannot be a genuine criticism, it is criticism per se. The writer thinks that by criticizing British people, it can win the sympathy the poor Muslims. It is not because of the capitalist system, but because of the questionable Indian secularism many people namely Muslims have been deprived of bread and butter.

In the next instance the writer in the novel talks about the supply of opium to China during the colonization in India. The great Chinese writer and historian Lu-Xun, speaking before the court of aadeeb says:

after consolidating their position in India, the men from the East India had begun smuggling opium in China. Those pirates would load their streamers with cartoons of opium that had been produced in Calcutta. On reaching the island of Macao, they would hide among the sand dunes. From there, these men would smuggle out opium via either Wangxia or Kuancha. Stealthily, their streamers would glide up the Pearl river estuary, eventually reaching Canton, Linting or Whampra. The routes of these smuggling vessels were charted very carefully so as to allow them to enter the mainland undetected. It is from there that this narcotic was smuggled to every corner of the country. (293)

This excerpt attempts to show the earning motive the British colonizers contrary to their civilizing mission. Smuggling of opium is a historically proven fact. But in the novel, this comes as a digression from the main issue of the novel which is to investigate about the cause of the partition. As the writer does not want to talk about

the role of Hindu leaders behind the cause of partition he is investing his time criticizing the colonizers. Besides, British colonizers had not done everything wrong. Still to this date, they are credited for the modernization of the Indian society abolishing the malpractices like *sati* and effecting infrastructural development on which the progress of India owes greatly. So, unlike Hyder the writer has a biased attitude to colonizers. For him 'other' like Muslims, Christian or Colonizers are all negative and the Hindus are all positive.

In the next instance, Kamleshwar makes fun of making a haste by the British colonial agent in deciding the boarder of India and Pakistan, when it became certain that there would be a partition.

Cyril Radcliffe was...neither a sociologist nor a geographer. Yet, Mountbatten had assigned this lawyer the task of drawing up the boundary lines between India and Pakistan. Radcliffe had been tersely told: 'You are to divide both Punjab and Bengal into two separate parts, following which you will demarcate the international boundary separating and Pakistan....I have to visit all these places.'

'That's not possible. We have no time for that. It's July now, by 15 August, all the formalities of partition to be complete. Mountbatten's tone was crispy.(319)

This paragraph highlights one of the facts of partition of India. Such a serious act like deciding the boarder of India and Pakistan was done in a very short time. But the way Kameshworpotrays the image of British colonizers in this is totally wrong. Behind partition and deciding the boarder between countries colonizers did not have the total agency; Indian people had already become triumphant, and they were going to leave the country very soon. Besides, partition was not the only wish of British Raj.

Neither was it necessary for them to divide the nation and become its agent so soon. It was because of the lack of trust between the leaders who represented Indian National Congress and Muslim League, who had no confidence about settling the matter by themselves, they had sought the help of the British colonizers. So, this is also a foul plea to hide one's weakness and blaming others for that.

In this way, Kamleshwar's novel *Kitne Pakistan (Partition)* written in post India-Pakistan partition period (2000) propounds secularist discourse of multicultural co-existence in India. In most cases he criticizes Muslims and British colonizers for the cause of partition. However, he never talks about the negatives sides of the Hindus. Like a true believer in Hindu nationalism, he believes in hierarchical relationship between minority and majority. That's why as a person from Hindu majority, he misrepresents many fact about Muslims and Christians. This is also reflected in his attitude in the formations of different characters and the comments made on them.

To sum up, Hyder's *River of Fire* supports anti-secularist or cosmopolitan discourse of living together of multi-cultural people in India whereas Kamleshwar's *Partitions (Kitne Pakistan)* is close to Indian secularism which harbours the principles of *hindutva* and Hindu nationalism. Hyder's world is welcoming to all different sects of people, despite differences they get along with each other well, the world is populated by the people having some strength and weaknesses, they also take the blame of partition together, and they have even equal space for enemies. But Kamleshwar's novel is quite far from these things. His fictional world is hierarchical; there is one god-like figure whom other people have to obey. As per his whim he controls and represents the opinion and even the destiny of people. At times he also seems to feel pity over the poor condition of the people, but it

is not genuine. He is arrogant and describes everything related to himself and his community positively, but possesses no eyes to see positive things in others.

Constructing 'self/other' distinction, he sees all others in negative light.

Hyder in her novel shows making of Indian civilization as an collaborative act of people from all sects like Hindus, Muslims, Christians or Colonizers but in Kamleshwor the world is already made by Hindus and there is a Hindu king like figure who is repenting for the partition. In an attempt to live their lives together the dwellers Hyder's novel come together, separate, share, evolve and make a composite culture. They see each other with an utmost sense of humanity and respect. But in Hyder's novel there are masters, there are slaves, there are patriotic people and there are traitor. Some people mainly Hindus are larger than lives but the other sect people are presented in debased forms.

For the most part of the novel Kamleshwar criticizes Muslims and Colonial power, but Hyder sees them with neutral eyes i.e. she never hesitate to praise Hindus and Colonizers along with criticizing. Hyder invests equal energy to talk about the positive and negative sides of Hindus and Colonizers. She has the same view to her own community, Muslim. But Kamleshwar does not possess such quality. For him Christians or colonizers and Muslims are what Hindus are not who are all good.

With regard to the cause of the partition of India, Kamleshwar has similar extremist view in contrast to the balanced view of Hyder. Kamleshwar is of the view that it happened because of Muslims and Colonizers. He is intent on finding the culprit and punishing them. For him it was an event resulted after years of planning. But for Hyder it was simply a whimsical and irrational event on which everyone is equally guilty. She does not hold that the people should be punished, she rather is of the opinion that human beings sometimes become victim of their own whims and

irrationality which should not be taken seriously. By this she means to say we should not always judge people from some whimsical behaviour they show sometimes in their lives. She focuses on the commonality more on the differences among different Indians.

Last but not the least, about the possibility of living together of different cultures too they differ from one another. Hyder believes that mutual coexistence is possible based on equality, however for Kamleshwar 'the other' or minority communities should be subjugated to Hindu community if they imagine of living together. In this way Hyder's novel produces the cosmopolitan view of multicultural co-existence in India while Kamleshwar favours Indian secularism.

Chapter: IV

Hindutva's cosmopolitanism: A study of Kamleshwar's *Partitions* and Hyder's *River of Fire*

Kamleshwar's *Partitions* and Qurratulain Hyder's *River of Fire*, the novels published amid the growing communal violence of the late twentieth century between Hindus and Muslims in India, have tried to address this issue and have attempted to give a way out to make harmonious co-existence of different communities possible in India. However, their solution differs drastically from one another.

Kamleshwar's *Partitions* advocates the idea of *hindutva* given by Savarkar and the traditional interpretation of secularism because he imagines a hierarchical society where minority has to take the oppression of majority easy. In contrast, the imagined society of Hyder reflects the idea of Derridian cosmopolitanism, for it is more egalitarian; it is a society where there is no hierarchy, compulsion and limitation. It is because of the situatedness of the writers. Kamleshwar is an anti-leftist writer so, his ideas are not democratic. But Hyder as she comes from a marginalized community and gender, she has more democratic and tolerant thoughts.

Kamleshwar's *Partitions* advances the discourse of living together of different communities in a multicultural society in line of Savarkar's *hindutva*, the philosophy that Hindus are the legitimate dwellers of India because their *punyabhumi*, the land of religious centre and *pitribhumi*, the territory where they live and do economic activities, coincide whereas, by the same logic the Muslims and the Christians cannot be the proper citizens of India because their *punyabhumi* is somewhere outside. So, according to this philosophy, in order to be able to live in a multicultural society like India where one culture makes the huge majority, they ought either to undergo purgation or accept their marginalization. Kamleshwar's imagining of a nation in his novel bespeaks this philosophy.

So in the fictitious nation of *Partitions*, there is a head that controls everything: peoples' thoughts, ideas, status, relation and so on. He has a little respect for others. The supreme man can manipulate any fact to present others badly. Whereas his own attitude towards himself, unlike it is to other people, is flawless; he presents himself as a god. He has got the tendency to justify every ill actions committed by himself and his community, even though they are done accidentally. He celebrates the idea of secularism and tends to protect others irrespective of their thoughts and feelings in so protected. For him secularism is the perfect philosophy. So, in his community there is the presence of majority (those who tolerate) and minority (who are tolerated) as a bottom-line. For the most part of the novel the writer blames Muslims and the British colonizers for the partition of India and the violence and bloodshed it led, never attempting to see the thing from their perspective. The way he overlooks the share of Hindus in the partition of the nation indicates that the majority should have the upper hand in a society.

Hyder, on the other hand, has a balanced view. Hyder's India is cosmopolitan. Like a true humanist interconnectedness of different human cultures is emphasized in her novel. There live countless people who hail from different community, culture and nationality together; they also have a sense of respect and human feeling to each other. There is no hero controlling the destiny of people. They all are constrained by the course of civilization following its own way. They try to control their destiny and are equally get controlled by it. India is an open place where people from different notches and corners come and live. Collectively they develop a multicultural and hybrid society. As they live together, they undergo the process of acculturation to the extent that they cannot distinguish their fundamental culture from those of foreigner.

Hyder does not show the othering tendency like Kamleshwar. Kamleshwar presents Muslim community and colonial rule as villainous and piles all blame of partition on them. However, Hyder's attitude to Hindus and Colonial is balanced. She praises their positive qualities and shuns the negative ones. Unlike Kamleshwar, she never shows any blind faith on her communal practices. She endeavors to correct many misconceptions or myths about Muslim community for example; they are loyal to Pakistan, discussing the contributions they have made in different historical epochs in knowledge, art, culture, music and so on. However, she does not show any obsession toward it. She also castigates their frailties.

Regarding the portrayal of British colonizers too, the two writers differ significantly. The portrayal of them by Kamleshwar is too negative. He only focuses on the harm they caused to Indian civilization and the kind of fortune they made. But Hyder along with their weaknesses or ill acts does not shrink to talk about the positive influences they exerted. She rather shows them to be the victim of the historical process as Hindus and Muslims. Colonizers in the novel, though possess some agency are also fall prey to the great river of civilization when it runs through places experiencing different ebbs and flows, lefts and rights and ups and downs.

Last but not the least, their rationalizing the the causes o partition is also contradictory. She has got a tolerant view about the partition of the India. She says that if it necessary to blame someone for the horrendous incident, then everyone should be equally blamed. But she does not think that this incident is something that deserves blaming someone and some community. Such philosophy of Hyder is reflected in her metaphor of river in the novel. On this she sounds a bit deterministic too. She believes like a river civilization also has its own way and it does not care what happens on the way. Like the river which has different ups and downs, ebbs and

flows in its course, civilization also has manifold troublesome and sad incidents like partition and bloodshed. So the wisest thing is to manage to flow with it together crushing different egos we have. Before the historical processes we are just helpless creatures. But Kamleshwor only puts the blame of partition on Muslims and the colonial rule. He criticizes the Muslim rulers for not being able to safeguard the nation from the infiltration of the East India Company who ultimately caused the division of India. Similarly, he blames colonizers for sowing the seed of communal mistrust which culminated in the partition and the violence.

So despite being published on the same context and addressing the same issue, Hyder's *River of Fire* and Kamleshwar's *Partition* cling to different ideologies of multicultural co-existence in the contemporary time. Hyder being a woman and Muslim living in India has been influenced by cosmopolitanism Derrida, while Kamleshwor being a male and a member of majority Hindu community upholds the Indian secularism as a panacea to the communal strife, unrest, mistrust and violence.

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