CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Imaginings of Pakistan in Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided*

Partition of India entailed a most virulent form of violence in Punjab. A standard account of the 1947 communal violence in the Punjab such as Gyanendra Pandey's *Remembering Partition* terms this violence as "massacre" (6), "bloodshed (64)", "slaughter" (82), "mass killing" (189), and the like. Contemporary explanations of the violence both in India and Pakistan always portrayed the killing as erratic and spontaneous, many with the aim of blame displacement. Each country explained violence as retaliatory and in many cases termed it as self-defence. Both sides, immediately after partition, made available Partition accounts of the horrors of 1947. A good example is the accounts of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandkak Committee (SGPC) made available in form of Gurbachan Singh Talib's book: *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab 1947*. Talib argues the leadership of Muslim League planned the expulsion of non-Muslims from the Punjab because they wanted the entire Punjab to join the future Pakistan. As early as March in Rawalpindi division, they started eliminating and clearing Hindus and Sikhs. The SGPC report acclaims what it calls the Sikh's "epic resistance" offered by Sikh men and women in village after village throughout Punjab, with insinuation that the reprisal against Muslims in the East Punjab is merely a reaction which assumed alarming proportions only after the creation of Pakistan on 14 August 1947 (352). Another Indian version of the violence is the work of Justice G. D. Khosla's *Stern Reckoning*. Khosla affirms that the Muslim League leaders and cadres initiated the massacres that continued as a one-sided affair until mid-August 1947 and that were intended to "to strike terror" (107). Again, the

attacks in Eastern Punjab against the Muslim population were seen merely as retributive attacks to the preceding actions in the West Punjab.

Without going into the blame game, it can be safely said that the rupture in Muslim and Hindu-Sikh relations in Punjab started with the Rawalpindi massacre in village Thoa Khalsa that had been mainly targeted on the Sikhs. That event kick-started what Gyanendra Pandey, in *Remembering Partition*, calls the "third partition"—a period of arson, plunder, violation and murder which were unparalleled both in scale and method (35). The Thoa Khalsa massacre of the Sikhs was far from being a spontaneous and a temporary aberration; it was a cold blooded planning and execution. Thereafter, the Sikhs sought revenge for the massacres of their co-religionists—a reprisal that led to the outbreak of the violence of genocidal nature in both East and West Punjab.

While Paul Brass discusses organization in the killings, he terms the partition violence as "retributive genocide" (72). He considers "the genocidal massacres" in the Punjab to have been organized and planned, but their "special character is that they were not ordered by a state" (72). In contrast to this, Anders Bjorn Hansen has argued the partition violence shows that the state need not be the only actor in a "genocidal situation":

> . . . the genocidal violence can also occur when the state is either unwilling or incapable of countering the violence, while the actual power is usurped by various communal groups. Instead of focusing on state involvement per se, the attention should be on processes leading to the genocidal situation (117).

To cut the matter short, the Sikhs, the Hindus and the Muslims were both the victims and the victimizers in this orgy of genocidal violence.

A privileging of the gloss of nationality rather than the thrust of scholarship characterizes the treatment of partition in the establishment histories of India and

Pakistan. If the official Pakistani historiography sees partition as the crowning achievement of almost a century of Muslim aspirations and sacrifices in the movement for a Pakistani nation-state, the bourgeoisie nationalist Indian discourse posits the sectarian conflict as a secondary story and as a minor element to the main drama of the fruition of India's movement for liberation from the British rule. The Indian nationalist discourse, by backgrounding the unparalleled violence of the partition as an exception to the general run of Indian history, seeks to foreground the image of India as a secular, peace-loving republic. Nationalist Indian historiography, which has been oblivious to the representation of the pain and suffering of the millions of people on whom untamed and indiscriminate violence was perpetrated, offers only a footnote-like reference to the sectarian strife—that too only in the form of the cause of the event. In this historiography, partition, which is attributed to the machination of the decolonizing Britishers and the violence of the criminals, is treated as an accident in the triumphant march of an emerging nation-state along its secular, democratic and tolerant path.

Since the 1980s and more particularly the1990s, a new generation of scholars, however, has been questioning the received national historiography of partition. The revisionist historiography, the rise of which coincides with the barbarity of the right wing Sikh movement in the 1980s and of Hindutva in the 1990s, revisits the partition of India from the perspective of the subaltern. In this historiography, Pakistani Urdu short-story writer, Saadat Hasan Manto's prose receives unqualified praise for capturing the specificity of the violence, and the pain and trauma of the victims.[1] The recent subaltern intervention into historiography such as that formulated by Gyanendra Pandey, Veena Das, Ritu Menon, and Urvashi Butalia deems the pain and violence

[1] Gyanendra Pandey, for example, in *Remembering Partition*, observes that Manto's protagonist's "query" in "Toba Tek Singh" has become synonymous with the "query" of millions of refugees "whether his native village of Toba Tek Singh has gone to India or Pakistan, without everngetting a satisfactory answer" (43).

attending the lives of the Muslims in India and those of the Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan to be far more important than the political fact of partition. Whereas the rewriting by Das[2], Menon[3] and Butalia[4] involves both the state and society in the geopoliticizing of women who were the chief recipients of the partition violence, Pandey's revisionist history interrogates the historiography of partition itself and focuses on the question of how we as individuals and communities (or nations) live with violence, and on thinking what constitutes violence in our discourses and how therefore violence and community (or nationhood) constitute each other. In spite of being a major apologist for the exploration of the language of violence and the first one among the subalternists to underscore the need to negotiate with the problems of language in representing the trauma of the partition victims in his classic essay, "The Prose of Otherness," the question of trauma remains largely unaddressed in his historiographic reformulations[5] as well as in other studies except for Beerendra Pandey's 2009 essay on "Pedagogy of Indian English Partition Literature in the Light of Trauma Theory" which makes the point that the narrativization of partition trauma in

[2] In *Life and Words*, Veena Das writes thus: "The signature of the Partition in both the literary and popular imagination has been the violation of women, mass rapes and mass abductions, their expulsion from homes, the imperative to court heroic deaths, and the recovery operations staged by India and Pakistan. . . . The rhetoric strategy of focusing on abducted and raped women to the exclusion of the sexual violation of men allowed the nation to construct itself as a masculine nation" (13).

[3] In *Borders and Boundaries*, Ritu Menon and Kamala Bhasin remark: Central to the articulation of difference between India and Pakistan was the siting of the Pakistani nation as the "abductor country" in opposition to India's "parent-protector" role, "safe-guarding not only her women, but by extension, the inviolate family, the sanctity of community and ultimately, the integrity of the whole nation" (107).

[4] In *The Other Side of Silence*, Urvashi Butalia makes almost the same kind of observation with the recovery of abducted Hindu and Sikh women: "National honour: the honour that was staked on the body of Mother India, and therefore, by extension, on the bodies of all Hindu and Sikh women, mothers and would-be mothers" (151).

[5] In "Prose of Otherness," Gyanendra Pandey shows his awareness of the problems of maintaining an analytical stance in representing trauma: "The historian seeking to represent violence in history faces the problems of language (how, for example, does one describe pain and suffering?), of analytical stance (how can one be 'objective' and express suffering at the same time?), and of evidence (for does not large-scale violence destroy much of its own direct evidence?)" (190). Yet he does not show it by action.

canonical Indian English suffers from a tame surrendering to "identity politics" (130). The succumbing, the essay argues, gives rise to use of cultural trauma which is a vice rather than a virtue in the literature of violence and trauma. This dissertation, however, does not look at the events of the partition of India from the perspective of cultural trauma. But it does look at the unfolding of the events as a micro-history.

Most partition literature unfolds within the genre of romance. It features a love affair between a Muslim girl and a Sikh or Hindu boy. Tensions between different religious communities become responsible for the separation of the lovers or the death of one of them. Typically, the lovers are separated across the Indo-Pakistani border or killed in communalist violence between 1946 and 1947. The story of the couple allegorizes the division of colonial India into India and Pakistan. The uniting feature about such romances is that they circulate a tragic narrative about India's partition. According to these texts, the partition was an unfortunate, dark episode in colonial India history because it tore apart affective allegiances between people that we would otherwise regard as socially progressive. Featuring little in the way of a sustained reflection on the causes of the partition itself, these texts tell the story of the sublimity of the consummation of inter-ethnic desire and the disappointment that accompanies its foreclosure.

Filled with scenes of passionate Hindu-Muslim trysts in barnyards out of earshot of parents and families, partition romances narrativize micro-histories of India's partition that take note of the people and constituencies usually left out of colonial Indian history. They tell a micro-history, or subaltern history of partition that refuses a sustained reflection on the history of partition itself as a historical event.

Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided* marks a departure from the above trend because it engages questions about colonial Indian history, with specific attention to

women and girls. This dissertation argues that rather than thinking about partition in solely a tragic dimension, the novel shows how young women in colonial India were actively involved in conversations and political activism about the formation of Pakistan. It has been assumed that partition should not be merely thought about in a tragic vein but as a utopian vision for Pakistan pro-partition Muslims including even Muslim women.

The dissertation begins the discussion with some plot summary and attention to the Habib-Mohini romance. It, the, turns to the Jamaluddin sisters, Zohra and Sughra in order to make the point that *The House Divided*, as a model, exemplifies the way in which partition literature of the 1940s reflects on the historical place of women and girls in 1930s and 1940s colonial India.

CHAPTER 2

Women's Interrogation of the Colonial Indian History in *The Heart Divided*

The Heart Divided was first published by Mumtaz Publications in Lahore in 1957 approximately ten years after the author's death in March 1948, at the age of 35. The eldest daughter of the prominent Muslim feminist political activist and legislator, Jahan Ara Begum Nawaz, Mumtaz Shah Nawaz died when the plane on which she was traveling to New York crashed on March 15, 1948. Mumtaz was travelling to New York to speak at the United Nations about the deepening crisis in Kashmir. The novel was first published under the stewardship of her mother and family friend Prof. Ashfaq Ali Khan, each of whom wrote the preface and bibliographical note respectively.

The Heart Divided revolves around the experiences of two distinguished, wealthy, neighboring Muslim and Hindu families in Lahore in the two decades preceding India's partition. The friendship between the Jamaluddin (Muslim) and Kaul (Hindu) family runs back several generations to Mughal times. Sheikh Jamaluddin and Diwan Kailash Nath Kaul "exchanged turbans and [had] taken the vow of brotherhood, and the friendship thus established between the two families had continued for generations" (Mumtaz Nawaz 18). The heads of the two families would meet daily and "sit on a divan smoking the hookah, talking about the old days and reciting the verses of Hafiz, Saadi or Ghalib" (18). The novel begins amidst this backdrop of wealth, aristocracy, decadence, pleasure and cosmopolitanism.

The novel focuses on the lives and aspirations of the children of the two families, namely, Zohra, Sughra, and Habib of the Jamaluddin family, and Mohini of the Kaul family. As the novel opens, Zohra is still a student at the age of sixteen. Her elder

sister, Sughra, is about to get married, and their elder brother, Habib, is on his way home to Lahore after having studied law in England for several years. Both Zohra and Sughra are in purdah at the beginning of the novel and only sparingly enter public places marked by the mingling of the sexes. Zohra's Hindu friend and classmate Mohini is also sixteen. Unlike Zohra and Sughra, Mohini traverses public spaces such as the streets of Lahore and freely participates in anti-colonial demonstrates. The novel focuses on the lives of Zohra, Sughra and Mohini as they come of age as young women in the two decades before India's independence.

Part one of the novel follows the trajectory of traditional partition romances because it features the Hindu-Muslim romance between Habib of the Jamaluddin family (Muslim), and Mohini of the Kaul family (Hindu). Mohini and Habib fall in love after Habib's return to Lahore from London. Mohini has read Habib's letters to his sister Zohra in advance of his arrival, and discovered in them, thoughts about national politics and the necessity of Hindu-Muslim unity similar to her own. After a brief courtship featuring tea and cakes with Zohra in Habib's room, excursions to the local cinema in Lahore and Srinigar, walks in Lahore's Shalimar gardens, and a trip downriver in a shikara on a moonlit evening, the couple pledge their love for one another. Both families vehemently oppose the romance and their thoughts of marriage, claiming that the time for Hindu-Muslim inter-marriage has not arrived in society at large. As familial prohibitions render bleak the prospects for the success of the romance, Mohini contracts tuberculosis and passes away in her late teens in Kashmir.

Although *The Heart Divided* dwells on relations between the two families by means of the Habib-Mohini romance, it refuses to centralize that relationship as the focus of the narrative's unfolding. The novel stops short of using Mohini and Habib to characterize the partition in a tragic dimension. Instead the lives of Zohra and Sughra

occupy the center of the novel's narrative attention. Herein we encounter the theoretical innovation of the novel vis-a-vis its insertion of the partition of India into a larger historical narrative. The novel insists on narrating the partition of India in relation to the lives of Zohra and Sughra, both of whom participate actively in local politics around the time of partition toward the novel's end. Although Zohra campaigned for an undivided India for much of her adult life, by the end of the novel she realizes that her goals of universal healthcare, the eradication of poverty, and universal suffrage are best realized within the political space of Pakistan. While Sughra shares her sister's interests in democracy and the empowerment of women, she additionally understands partition as the creation of a space for the true practice of Islam called Pakistan. Like Zohra she refuses to understand partition primarily as a loss or vivisection of an inviolable united India.

The key feature about the novel is that it focuses on Pakistan. Krishna Kumar, for example, prases the novel: "Perhaps more than any other literary work, Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's *The Heart Divided* prepared me to recognize that there was a Pakistani view we Indians may not have the epistemic means to fathom" (40). He goes to praise the writer, Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, for interrogating the received knowledge of pre-Partition from a womanist perspective: "This book dwells mainly on the lives of women, particularly young women. It enables us to view the late 1930s— a period of rapid and significant political changes— in the everyday setting of a politicized Muslim family with three daughters (41).

The novel's opening pages feature the well known trope of the return of the prodigal son after having completed his studies abroad. Habib returns home to Lahore after completing a degree in London. His mother anxiously awaits his return, hoping to have him married soon. Like his mother, Sheikh Jamaluddin expects that his son will

marry quickly and he counsels him on the topic soon after his return. His expectation is that Habib will marry his cousin Akhtari in order to consummate an important financial arrangement whereby the estates of the two families become one after the marriage.

Soon after his return, Sheikh Jamaluddin calls Habib into his study and broaches the topic of marriage directly. In a historical moment where "it was not considered polite for sons to smoke in front of their fathers" (Nawaz 60), the Sheikh offers his son a cigarette as a "gesture to show his son that henceforth they were to be friends" (Nawaz 60). The father tells Habib how grandfather wishes to see him married during his lifetime, preferably around the time of his sister's upcoming wedding so that the family can hold a dual celebration in December. The novel recounts the ensuing exchange between father and son as follows:

> Habib was completely surprised. He was only twenty-four and had no wish to get married for some time yet. In fact, he had never given the matter a thought. He firmly believed that a man should not marry until he was earning enough to support a wife; besides, whenever he found a wife, it would be someone of his own choosing, and he did not know any girls. Of course, he knew that his family wanted him to marry his cousin, but he had been away for five years, and he had thought they must have realized by now that a man of his education and ideas would not agree to an arranged marriage.
>
> 'But Father,' he said, "I'm only twenty-four and I have been home for just a month, it is much too early to think of marriage."
>
> "I was your age when I married, my son, and it has turned out well. Yes, very well indeed."
>
> "I know, but times have changed. Besides, I don't know any girls, who am I to marry?"

"But son, it has always been understood that you would marry Akhtari one day."

"Surely, Father, that was never settled."

"Well, we have never had a formal engagement, but it has always been understood. You are a lucky young man. She is a girl in a million. Young, lovely and well brought-up. Besides, I have seen to it that she has been suitably educated. She spent four years at Q— School with your sisters and after that a governess was kept for her at Multan. What more can a young man want?" (61)

Viewers of Bollywood have seen this scene over and over again, not least in the 2001 box office success *Khabie Khushi Khabie Gham*. In response to Habib's continued objections to an arranged marriage, his father suspects the worst in the form of an attachment in Europe that obviates his son from falling in love with an Indian girl. He confesses his own history of an attachment to an English woman named Mary from his days at Cambridge many years ago with the caveat that "such marriages are never a success" (62). But Habib remains steadfast on his antipathy to an arranged marriage, claiming that his father must wait till he establishes his fledgling career in the legal profession in Lahore. The matter rests and the novel goes on to recount the components of Habib's acclimatization to Lahore in other dimensions.

Habib's love affair with Mohini, the Hindu girlfriend of his sister, sets the stage for the novel's reflections on partition in a historical and political register that goes above and beyond the everyday partition romance. Habib first meets Mohini on a day when Mohini has come to play with Zohra. The components of the attraction between the two involve a shared commitment to a political future for colonial India that recognizes the political compatibility of Hindus and Muslims. The two secretly go rowing together on a moonlit evening on a double date alongside Zohra and Habib's friend Mehr. After

having been separated from one another for weeks due to family exigencies, Mohini and Habib pledge their love to one another for the very first time. The lover's kissing of the beloved is described in romantic, almost erotic terms: "Gently, he drew her into his arms and she snuggled closer to him like a bird in its nest. . . that passionate desire for her that had enveloped him like a flood" (160). The kiss itself is described in the background of the evocation of sublime romance: "The rim of the moon appeared above the dark hills and the whole world was hushed as it rose, growing rounder and rounder and dappling the warm waters of the lake with gold" (166). There is an elevated quality to this touching moment of the first Hindu-Muslim kiss in the novel between the Habib and Mohini. The scene is a lake in Rawalpindi, the rim of the moon appears in the background growing rounder and rounder and dappling the warm waters of the lake with gold, and the strength of Habib's feelings for Mohini hurtles us outside of the realm of human desire towards the sphere of the godly. We are in Romantic territory, here, in ways that take us back to Victor Frankenstein and his meanderings under the moonlight in Europe. Like a monster Habib towers over Mohini fearful of his own strength and inwardly pledges to protect her from the slightest remonstrance of the rain or wind. Mohini, too, finds herself deeply moved by this moment with Habib and vows to unite her life with his, despite all of the difficulties the couple stands to encounter in the 1930s.

Ever the pensive political activist, Mohini elaborates more on her thoughts about the political consequences of their love in a subsequent encounter. Deeply aware of the tension their relationship will cause to their parents and their friendship, Mohini recounts the thought process by which she becomes convinced of the necessity of their union as lovers. Two factors played a part in influencing her decision to follow through on her feelings for Habib despite the pain their marriage will cause their parents. "One

of them was my love for you," and the second, "most important factor," involves the following intimate reflection on love and politics:

> I tried to judge whether my uniting my life with yours would be harmful or beneficial to the cause to which I have dedicated my life, and I decided that if I were to remain true to my ideals, I should not hesitate. Once again, her voice was like a bell, and a light like the sunrise transfigured her face. If we are to be a free country, we must break down these walls that divide our people. So many communities inhabit this land of ours and each has its own creed and way of life, but that should not lead to disunity. Yet we are disunited, because we don't mix and mingle together as we should. Now we must build a nation. A nation that can take its rightful place among the peoples of the world; and young people, like us, must have the courage to break down such customs and traditions as come in the way of unity. You are not merely you, and I'm not just I. We represent two parts of a great people. Two parts that must harmonize and pull together if we are to gain freedom. Hence my decision, Habib. (167)

Mohini relates how she judges the ethics of her relationship with Habib on the basis of whether it "would be harmful or beneficial" to the larger political cause to which she has dedicated her life. Claiming that Hindus and Muslims must come together if India is to be free, Mohini tells Habib that young people, like her, must have the courage to break down the customs that have kept people in colonial India separate from one another. Hearing these words, Habib feels concerned that she understands their relationship in fundamentally political terms with seemingly little attention to the personal dimensions of their love for one another. He replies that he agrees with her ideas, and that he admires her courage, but adds that he is a simple man who loves her. Yes, Mohini says in a further statement of her philosophy that love is equivalential to

politics. The strength of Mohini's conviction startles Habib and he responds by saying, in his case, he would love Mohini irrespective of their relationship's implications for the political register.

As the couple come to grips with the concrete obstacles to securing familial permission, the relationship begins to unravel. Confronted with her family's objections, Mohini tells Habib she needs time alone to think about the best course of action and leaves Lahore to go to Kashmir. Within months, she contracts tuberculosis and passes away, ostensibly due to a biological aetiology, but implicitly out of grief about the impossibility of consummating her love. Shocked and saddened by her death, Habib metamorphoses into a ghost of the ambitious young lawyer that returned from London. He haunts the Shalimar gardens that he used to frequent with Mohini and quickly drifts out of the novel's narrative proper. At this point, the novel switches gears and focuses on Zohra and Sughra. It offers us the tears and tragic pathos of the Habib-Mohini romance but, unlike most partition literature, refuses to stop with the story of the separation of the Hindu and Muslim lovers. Instead, the story of Zohra and Sughra enables the novel to elaborate further on its principal theoretical preoccupation, namely, the relationship between women and the girls and politics in 1930s and 1940s Lahore. We caught glimpses of this theoretical investment in the novel's attention to Mohini's political musings, but its most sustained reflection on the place of gender in the socio-political realm comes through its attention to Habib's two sisters.

We have seen, then, that the first part of the novel focuses on a Hindu-Muslim romance in the vein of most partition literature. It has been argued that the theoretical innovation of the novel is that although it begins with the trope of romance, it switches gears to focus on the lives of Zohra and Sughra in the midst of contemporary political developments in the 1930s and 1940s. Before launching headstrong into an account of

the lives of Zohra and Sughra, the novel gives its readers a pre-history of colonial Indian history through the trope of fatherly anecdotes told to the young girls (Zohra, Sughra, Mohini) by their fathers. These vignettes well situate us historically to begin our analysis of the specific trajectories of Zohra and Sughra in the two decades preceding India's partition.

The novel's first account of the history of India's partition takes place through the rhetorical conceit of the anecdote told by the Muslim family patriarch to his wide-eyed daughter, Zohra. Zohra has just returned home from school after having made a public speech to protest the imprisonment of girls such as her friend Mohini. Soon after Zohra returns home, the principal telephones her father to tell him that Zohra has been involved in a student gathering that protested the recent arrests of other girls in the school. Bemused and unhappy that his daughter has started to get involved in political matters, Sheikh Jamaluddin gives his daughter a brief history of Hindu-Muslim relations in India as follows:

> "India is a vast land, my child, it's almost a continent and it is inhabited by many peoples, each of who has its own religion, language, culture and way of life; and each is anxious to be free to live and develop in its own way. Among these many peoples, two major communities stand out. They are the Hindus and the Muslims, and unless the freedom we aim at means freedom for all people and unless these two major communities join together to win it, freedom cannot and will not come to this vast Subcontinent."
>
> "Some Muslims are fighting in this struggle. Why don't the others join in?"
>
> "It's a long story, my child, and you will hear from it many times. It is so far a sad story too, but let us hope that it will have a happy ending someday?"
>
> "Tell me something of it."

> "Its roots go back into the history you studied in your school. You know how we Muslims came here; the first of our ancestors as far back as 712 A.D. You know how we ruled here for nearly eight hundred years, and you know how the country prospered and art culture flourished in that period. You also know the way by which the British came here first, as traders, and then at a time when India was weak, how they exploited our weakness to become our rulers. You also know that the Indian people realized this too late, that when they did, they rose up in revolt, and it was Muslims who led that rebellion, which your school-books call the Mutiny of 1857?"
>
> "Yes, yes, go on, Father, please."
>
> "So much your history books tell you, but they forgot to mention how the Muslims were crushed and beaten after the revolt of 1857. The white rulers weakened them in every way, their lands were confiscated, their industries destroyed, and in some cases, even the thumbs of the skilled workers cut off."
>
> "How horrible! Yet the history books say nothing about it?" (41).

Already, here, we are plunged right into the thicket of the history of colonial India, with the father telling his daughter about secrets of colonial Indian history that are unrecorded in contemporary history books. These early pages of the novel take us straight to the heart of the specific history of Muslims in colonial India in ways that prefigure the novel's larger preoccupation with Muslim subjectivity and Islam. Sheikh Jamaluddin begins by telling his daughter about the emigration of Muslims to India in the 8th century AD and the efflorescence of Muslim culture for centuries. Speaking of the 1857 Mutiny against the British, the Sheikh tells his daughter how the Muslims were crushed and beaten after the Mutiny of 1857 and how even the thumbs of the

skilled workers cut off. Innocent and incredulous, Zohra disbelievingly asks her father how it is possible that the history books say nothing of the oppression of the Muslims.

With the above remarks, the novel comments on the contemporary situation of Hindus and Muslims in a historical register that we rarely see in other literary or cinematic representations of the partition of India. Importantly, the historical narrative involves the exchange of information from father to daughter. Zohra begins to acquire a historical sensitivity to the predicament of Muslims that affects her struggle, later in life, to get involved in the struggle for Pakistan. Zohra's history lesson has only begun because her father and her uncle comment more on the specific valences of the contemporary Hindu-Muslim conflict. Worried that Zohra has given a speech, her uncle joins the conversation about the political history of Islam in colonial India. He gets nostalgic about the Hindu-Muslim togetherness. About th1 1919 stir against the British, he says: "'Those were wonderful days, Zohra,'" said Saeed, "'for Hindus and Muslims fought together shoulder to shoulder and the British were obliged to bow to their will'" (43). He blames the Hindus' greed for all power and the rise of Hindu fundamentalism for the division of hearts: "'. . . Hindus, who were still educationally and politically ahead of us, began to want all the power for themselves and to grudge their share to the Muslims. Under pressure from the growing communal Hindu Mahasabha, Congress took a stiffer and stiffer attitude towards Muslims. . .'" (43).

The above quotes take us from the glory days of Hindu-Muslim unity in 1919 to the failures of inter-ethnic cooperation in 1929. Zohra's uncle recounts how the Hindus attempted to monopolize political power and relented to the demands of the extremist Hindu Mahasabha. The predominantly Hindu Indian National Congress proposed a constitution that rescinded the progress that had made been ten years earlier. Zohra's uncle implicitly situates contemporary rifts between Hindus and Muslims in the context

of the 1857 Mutiny that her brother had introduced before. Noting how the Hindus were still educationally and politically ahead of the Muslims, Uncle Saeed takes the conversation back to the way in which the British treated the Hindus favourably after the Mutiny. By recalling his brother's remarks about how the Muslims were oppressed because of the 1857 Mutiny, he provides a further voice about how contemporary Hindu-Muslim relations have a long, complicated history that his niece would do well to know.

The point here is that the novel begins with a historical overview of the contemporary situation of Muslims in colonial India. Against this backdrop, it launches into a specific commentary on the situation of women and girls by focusing on Zohra, Sughra and the friendships and political alliances they develop in the course of their lives. The opening section contains a brief digression from Zohra and Sughra in the form of the failed Mohini-Habib romance, but by and large, the novel takes up the question of how the Jamaluddin daughters respond to the historical overview thrown down by their father and uncle. After the conversation with her father, "Zohra was depressed and thoughtful. She pondered over what her father and uncle had told her, but while she realized that the Muslims had done some grievances, she still felt they ought to in the struggle against foreign oppressors" (44). Her father reminds her to refrain from political activities, hoping that she now understands the complexity of Muslim oppression more thoroughly than before.

But at precisely this point in the novel, Zohra receives a letter from her jailed friend and Hindu classmate Mohini. In a letter dated November 17, 1930, Mohini recounts how "we girls were put into a lorry and taken to the magistrate's bungalow" until they were joined by "batches of girls from other parts of the city" (46). Brought under the magistrate's supervision for participating in political demonstrations that

mark the birthday of the imprisoned political leader Jawarhalal Nehru, Mohini notes how the girls are imprisoned in barracks with other women. Jailed in "barracks [that] had no doors" in which they "sat on the bare floor as no arrangements for cots or bedding had been made" (46), the female inmates "began singing songs and shouting slogans, there in the jail with the armed might of the government manifest all around us" (47). The end of the letter implores her Muslim friend Zohra to leak a statement about the girls' imprisonment to the press. Zohra agrees to Mohini's request without hesitation. She and her friend Surraya take Mohini's printed statement to the office of the *Herald*. Zohra stays in the car while Surraya goes up to the office to talk with the editor. Surraya comes back to report how "he was very nice and even promised to have it sent to the Hindu and Urdu papers" (51). "The next day," the novel remarks, "Mohini's statement was featured by all the nationalist newspapers: but how it got into the press was a great mystery which no one could solve" (51).

The reception of Mohini's letter encapsulates the stakes of Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's novel *The Heart Divided*. Despite her father's admonitions to stay away from politics, Zohra cannot resist her friend's request to leak a letter from prison to the local press. The world of politics and the civic realm holds a strange charm for her. She finds herself compelled to continue participating in debates at college and begins to take part in local political protests. Because of her friendship with Mohini, Zohra begins the novel consciously opposed to the idea of Pakistan and Muslim political activism. She hopes for the success of the romance between Mohini and her brother Habib. But as time goes by, Zohra converts to a belief in the necessity of Pakistan. Although the novel claims that the disclosure of Mohini's letter constituted a great mystery that no one could solve, the real mystery of Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's text concerns the reasons for Zohra's defiance of her father's stricture to refrain from politics. As we shall see,

the mystery that the novel seeks to unravel concerns the logic of Zohra's participation in politics and her ultimate conversion to the idea of Pakistan.

This novel's interpretation of the Indian colonial history gels with the overview of the history of the participation of women in Indian politics in late 19th century and 20th century India, see the book written by Mumtaz Shah Nawaz's mother, Jahan Ara Shah Nawaz:

> After the so-called Mutiny in 1857, women in India woke up to find that their position in society had become untenable during the dark years when there had been no peace in India, and in a number of large towns educated women had started working for the emancipation of women. Madras took the lead and Bombay and Bengal followed, producing such women leaders as Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mrs Margaret Cousins, Dr Reddy, Begum Suhrawardy and Mrs Ray. The first batch of graduates in different capitals had provided a wonderful example of selfless devotion to duty and, thanks to them, the concept of the education of women was taking root everywhere. Provincial women's organizations were coming into existence and a number of women were working in the Indian National Congress. In 1902, the Sikh conference delegates, including over 2000 women, and Shrimati Lajawanti collected one lac rupees, with which the Maha Vidayala School at Jullunder was started. Hindu and Sikh women were taking an active part in the social, educational, and political organizations that were spring up in the country. Muslim women could not do so because of their being in purdah and the fact that there was segregation of sexes amongst the Muslims. (13)

When the novel's story takes us to the streets of Lahore in the 1930s, the story starts giving us glimpses into the ensuing partition. The streets are dusty and full of cars

and sexed bodies mingling with one another as in many Asian cities of the 1930s. The streets are important for our story because Zohra's parents keep her at home most of the time, letting her leave home to go to school only in her father's curtained car. Clad in a burqah, Zohra returns home from school in her father's car and enters the zenana, the wing of the house reserved for women under Islamic law. In the zenana, she keeps company with her sister, her mother, female friends from the family and school, and the occasional visit from her father. Zohra reads books, writes and receives letters, talks on the telephone and playfully wiles away her time as a young Muslim girl growing up in Lahore. Short wonder, then, that the rupture in her life marked by her regular traversal of the streets of Lahore constitutes an endless source of fascination for her as she looks back over her life. The novel begins a reflection on the most significant break in Zohra's life experience as follows: "In later years Zohra had often wondered when the change in her life began. The change that had led her, a young Muslim girl, born and bred behind the purdah, to a life of independence and adventure" (Mumtaz Nawaz 1). Zohra struggles to identify the change in her life due to a conceptual difficulty in differentiating her own life from that of other Muslim girls of her generation. She realizes that her life and experience as an adolescent girl was so closely related to the lives of other girls of her generation, that she finds it difficult to decide when the change in her particular life began. Her coming out of purdah was coincident with a larger societal upheaval that similarly affected other women and girls such that Zohra finds it difficult to distinguish between the beginnings of the individual change in her life, and changes amongst the collectivity of Muslim girls more generally. The passage thus testifies to a larger societal upheaval challenging the integrity of spaces reserved for Muslim women and girls. Zohra's narrative of the change in her life reflects on the collective sociality of Muslim girls because the change itself involves a movement from

a collective sociality structured around the Muslim zenanas of her home, to the individuation specific to her experience of civic spaces such as schools, markets, and the streets of Lahore.

The important point here is that there is momentum towards a larger societal transformation affecting the lives of Muslim girls of a particular generation in colonial India. Zohra's reflections, here, tacitly suggest that the personal and societal transformation specific to her coming out of purdah was initiated by the reception of Western modernity, amongst Muslims, in colonial India. By Western modernity is meant the architecture of the city and urban life and the challenge that it throws down to the gendered segregation of Muslim households such as her own. The novel suggests that the changes in the sociality of Muslim girls of a particular generation correspond to the transnational flow of discourses about the West, the modern, and modernity from the West, to colonial India, in ways that the novel subsequently theorizes as the narrative unfolds.

For the historical relation between Islam and modernity, it is worthwhile to briefly talk about Ahmad Aziz's book *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-196.* Aziz's book sketches the history of Islam in colonial India in the context of other world religions, nation-states, and empires. Ahmad's emphasis upon the historical inter-relation between Islam in the Indian subcontinent and religious, political, and scientific discourses elsewhere in the world—notably in Europe— makes a compelling case for Islam's dialogic relation with European modernity. In this regard, European modernity was not extrinsic to Islam in India from the 16th century onwards, but was rather instrumental to the form and historical trajectory of its constitution. The influence of Jesuit missionaries on the 16th century Mughal emperor Akbar initiated a shift from an Islamic orthodoxy to a heterodoxy that encouraged the comparative study of major

world religions; similarly the Mughal discovery of European renaissance painting marked the beginning of important changes in Mughal painting and architecture: the Taj Mahal, Aziz notes, was built in consultation with architects from Italy amongst other places. Aziz traces a panoptic history of the dialogic relation between Islam and other parts of the world, notably featuring the neo-modernism of the poetry of Muhammad Iqbal, the Muslim poet that presented the earliest, explicit pronouncement of the 2 nation theory. In an address to the annual convention of the Muslim League in 1930, Iqbal claimed there had always existed a Muslim nation within the nation of India. Aziz examines Iqbal's thought in the context of the influence of Nietzsche, Bergson, and Ernest Renan on his political and religious thought. The intellectual debts to Bergson and Renan reveal the genealogy of Iqbal's attempt to theorize a non-theocratic, modem Islamic state that addressed supposedly "modem" European phenomena such as science, technology, and the rights of women. The book touches briefly on the relationship between Iqbal and Jinnah, claiming the influence of the former on the latter without substantiating the claim. The innovation of this book consists in its evaluation of the history of Islamic thought within a global context. Unfortunately, the text fails to elaborate its claims about the trans-national genealogy of the thought of thinkers such as Sayyid Ahmad Kahn and Muhammad Iqbal: Aziz posits the influence of Nietzsche and Bergson upon Iqbal's thought but fails to elaborate that influence with any depth or sustained attention. Furthermore, the book avoids the question of the relation between Islamic modernism and European modernism of the early decades of the 20th century after suggestively invocating such a relation in its title.

Such a historical contextualization of *The Heart Divided* leaves us in doubt that Mumtaz Shah Nawaz draws on the emerging modernity of the 1930s and 1940s

colonial India. The forces that caused Zohra's life and to change so radically in November, 1930 are the then amenabilities to Westerm modernity in colonial India in the first decade of the 20th century. That said, the novel returns to the question of the streets, the city and civic places and its impact upon Muslim girls again and again. One day, after having returned home from school, Zohra asks her mother whether she can accompany her friends Surraya and Lakshmi to go shopping. Zohra's mother hesitates but gives her consent with a caveat. The car reinforces purdah over and beyond the first line of concealment by clothes and a veil. Her mother's directive conjures images of Zohra window-shopping from within a car, buying products by way of her outstretched hand that emerges faceless, from a car window, for the purpose of completing a purchase. We learn more about the beginnings of Zohra's trip to the shopping bazaars as follows: "As the car shot out of the gate, Zohra suddenly remembered that she had left the top half, or cape, of her burqah behind. . . . [She] can . . . not go out into the shops. The things I wish to see can be brought to me." (Mumtaz Nawaz 7). Her e, Zohra reflects on her hasty exit from the house as the car leaves Nishat Manzil and travels down Empress Road. She realizes that in her haste to get into the car she has forgotten the part of her burqah covering her face. Zohra resolves that as long as she stays true to her mother's command to stay within the car, no harm will be done because the car itself is curtained. But after Surraya and Lakshmi get in, the car breaks down and her two friends suggest taking a tonga to the mall until the driver has had time to repair it and pick them up a little later. At this point Zohra's resolve to stay unseen crumbles in the face of her friends' encouragements to step onto the streets, unveiled. Lakshmi remarks that no one will recognize her and Surraya teasingly characterizes Zohra as a "frightened goose" (9). And so, in response to this seemingly random sequence of events— composed first of her forgetting the top half of her

burqah, followed by the breakdown of her father's car— an unveiled Zohra accompanies her friends to go to shopping. At the end of the novel's first chapter, readers finally arrive at an answer to the question of how a quiet November evening in 1930 might constitute the beginning of momentous personal changes in Zohra's life. At this date, Zohra stops her previous habit of traversing the streets of Lahore in purdah or in her curtained father's car. Instead, she goes about unveiled like a Hindu girl.

Zohra's unveiled ambulatory peregrinations on the streets of Lahore do not pass entirely unnoticed. The driver of her father's car mentions the incident to his wife, who passes on the news of her transgression to one of the maids in the Jamaluddin household. The maid, in turn, passes along the gossip about Zohra's unveiling to her aunt The gossip circulates in the name of protecting the moral virtue of the family at a time of radical social upheaval and change. Zohra's aunt coaxes the maid to reveal the news about her niece's trip to the shopping bazaar as follows:

> "If Zohra's done wrong, I, as her aunt, should be told. It is I who have to guard the morals of my nieces. Their easy-going mother is incapable of doing so."
>
> "Of course times are changing, but Bibi, who would have thought of a girl of your family going with her face uncovered, and in the bazaars too!"
>
> "Her face uncovered and in the bazaars? Woman, you must be mad!"
>
> "Oh no, I'm not mad. It's the world that's going mad now-a-days." (13)

This reflection about the decline of morals in a "world that's going mad" appears throughout the novel, but most notably in the early chapters where we see the clash between Zohra's generation and that of her mother and aunt. In short, women of Zohra's mother's generation understand the reception of modernity as having a corruptive effect on women and morals in late colonial India. Zohra, in contrast, understands modernity as charged with utopian possibilities for the realization of

democracy, freedom, and self-empowerment. After her father's sympathetic intervention allows her to escape her mother's accusations without censure, Zohra understands him as granting "tacit permission to go out shopping in her car without a burqah" (17). She consequently makes a habit of folding away her burqah every time she goes shopping, only to put it back on, for appearances sake, as the car returns home to Nishat Manzil. This habit of going about town unveiled becomes central to Zohra's request for her father's permission to participate in inter-university debates marked by the sharing of public spaces with male students from other colleges. "But I've been out for shopping and to the pictures without a burqah," Zohra protests to her father after he refuses (69). Fielding her father's continued objections to her going around without a burqah, she adds: "But things are different from what they used to be" (67). Zohra uses her unveiling as the marker of a historical break that authorizes her participation in the collegiate debates. Modernity, then— as signified by her unveiling in public— becomes Zohra's justification for participating in larger civic spaces. Her participation in a different phase of history justifies the right to debate and enunciate the request with no sustained explanation. Sheikh Jamaluddin grants Zohra permission to participate in a college debate at the next occasion at which Zohra is invited to speak. She wins the first prize for her speech opposing the resolution, "Women's place is in the home and she should not take part in politics" (224).

Zohra gradually enters more and more of the public sphere and takes part in debates and civic activities with other people, men and women. Much of this personal transformation occurs in the midst of the novel's attention to the Habib-Mohini romance, so the novel provides few opportunities to track the steps of her entry into civic life. The return of Zohra's friend, Rajindar, from London, gives the novel an occasion to surmise the transformation in Zohra's life. Eager to hear about Zohra's new

life in Lahore, Rajindar asks her about her political activities and career. The answers reveal that Zohra teaches at a university for men and takes part in debates and lectures at "the Students' Federation," and that her "sympathies are still with the Congress" (236). Believing in the possibility of a united India that contains both Hindus and Muslims, Zohra commends the Muslim League but agrees with her friend Rajindar in claiming an antipathy to communal organizations directed toward one religion or another.

At this point in the novel we see that Zohra has come far from her initial, tentative forays into the streets of Lahore with Surraya and Lakshmi, or her participation in public speaking events at school. That said, her political sensitivity remains tightly circumscribed insofar as it remains unready to take a definite side on the question of Muslims in India's political future. Zohra agrees with Rajindar that something must be done to stop the growing divide between the Indian National Congress and Muslim League but, beyond that, knows not what to do. The ghost of her dear friend Mohini haunts her reflections on all this as revealed by her continued conversation with Rajindar:

> "Quite. I always think of the tragedy of Habib and Mohini— Oh Rajindar, if only they had been allowed to marry— somehow—it seems that their lives reflected only our national tragedy."
>
> "But some inter-communal marriages have taken place now."
>
> "That's true.. .and sometimes I wonder if Mohini had lived...? But in spite of the few inter-communal marriages.. .the two communities are drifting further and further apart.. .something big must be done, and not merely by individuals, to cement the cleavage."

"I rely on the common man. The workers and the peasants live together in peace. Their troubles and sufferings are the same, be they Hinuds or Muslims. They will unite."

"But the Congress and the League must also unite, that is why we are hoping and praying for coalition ministries after the elections.. .but that's enough for politics, let's talk of other things.. .I've told you all about us, but you've told me nothing of yourself. What are you going to do?"

"To begin with, I'm going to teach at the New College for Women."

"So you'll be a lady professor, how wonderful! But why are you not joining the staff of the Punjab College? I hear they offered you a position."

"It was a better position that my present one, but it's a government college and their rules would have forbidden my taking part in politics."

"You are going to work for Congress?"

"Yes, and ..."

"And what?"

"Have you ever heard of the communists?"

"H m .. .but vaguely. I've met one or two communist students."

"I am a communist." (236)

The above passage takes us to important territory because it gives us a sense of the high degree of political literacy held by the women in the novel. Rajindar is a communist even though the government has officially banned the Communist Party of India. She notes how there are a few communists in the Indian National Congress. "They are a small group, but have some of the best young people among them." Zohra, Mohini and Rajindar are highly aware of the range of possible alternatives for political activism in colonial India. Here, Zohra remarks on her desire for "coalition ministries" between

Hindus and Muslims to emerge from elections of the 1930s. Meanwhile, Rajindar reveals her belief in communism as a viable political alternative to the separatism of contemporary politics in colonial India. In passages such as these we are a far cry away from the bathetic and pathetic dimensions of the Mohini-Habib romance. Instead, the novel triumphantly illustrates the awakening of a political consciousness amongst Muslim women in colonial India as evinced by their discussions about the most pressing political issues of their day. Women are not kept at home, confined to the zenanas, but are active, teaching and talking about politics. As the narrative progresses, Zohra and Sughra move from talking about politics to participating in local, grass-roots political activism. About the novel's attention to Marxism and Islam, Niaz Zaman writes: "[ShahNawaz] suggests through Sughra's words, that Islam was Marxist before Marx. 'Are you a Muslim?" Sughra asks her mother who opposes Ahmad because he belongs to a 'lower caste.' 'Have you forgotten that Islam came to abolish the barriers of tribe, class and caste, and every Muslim must believe in an international classless, casteless society'" (85).

After the Lahore resolution of 1940, Zohra has no choice but to recognize the legitimacy of the Muslim League. For years, Zohra had "loved and idolized India as the motherland for which each of her sons and daughters must live and die" (Mumtaz Nawaz 391). But all of a sudden, the Lahore resolution put her face to face with the idea of partition. Zohra becomes increasingly unhappy but finds the demand for partition difficult to question because it came from her own people, the ones she loved and cherished. Nevertheless, even the signifier Pakistan fails to captivate her: "Pakistan, the name was strange for her and did not arouse a deep tenderness like the word 'India', yet for millions of people it had already become the promised land and she could see that the adherents of the new idea were growing daily" (392). In precisely

the moments where Zohra struggles to affectively reconcile herself to the idea of Pakistan, she starts noticing how "it had already become the promised land" for "millions of people." After hearing a speech by Quaid-i-Azam (Jinnah), for example, Zohra sees how other members of the crowd "saw the dawn of a new ideal, an ideal that had already gripped their hearts." Looking around at the audience of Jinnah's speech, she notes how people were captivated by the idea of political sovereignty for the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority: "It was as if someone had said to them, "You shall be free!—and this and this alone is the way..." And they had lifted up their eyes to gaze at new horizons and their minds had raced ahead of them down fresh vistas of thought (390). These moments where Zohra sees other people enthralled by the idea of Pakistan mark the beginnings of her own personal conversion from belief in a united India to the political potentialities of Pakistan. Soon after news of the 1940 Lahore resolution spread across India, she meets her childhood friend Ahmed at a mutual friend's house. The son of a clerk, Ahmed had been kept from seeing Zohra in their adolescence because Zohra's family deemed him of too low a class background. Encountering an adolescent crush of a different social status touches something deep in Zohra. She confesses her ambivalence about the idea of Pakistan but Ahmed begins to convince her of its necessity. Claiming that Muslims begin to think that they will be swamped and lose their identity in this vast land, or worse still, that they will become lower caste, Ahmad explains the demand for Pakistan as the freedom-urge of the Muslim people. Zohra begins to become convinced of the need for Pakistan, especially after hearing it from someone who can testify to a lifetime of experience as a lower caste in matters of social class.

As her relationship with Ahmad blossoms into romance, Zohra becomes more and more comfortable with the idea of Pakistan as a utopian political space. But it is her

sister Sughra that elicits the beginnings of Zohra's full-fledged conversion to the Muslim League and the idea of Pakistan. Sughra echoes Ahmad's characterization of Pakistan as a democratic ideal but goes further in suggesting that Zohra's investment in the Muslim women's struggle for their rights is best conducted by means of the Muslim League and not the Congress.

> "But I've nothing in common with the League," Zohra responds, skeptically. "Quite," Sughra replies, "But what had you in common with some Congressmen?...And the League needs sincere workers to make it a living democratic peoples' organization, and Pakistan will need people like you to make it a peoples' state." (442)

Here, Sughra calls upon Zohra's political industriousness as more readily realized within Pakistan and the League than in the Congress.

Zohra affirms her support of the League after she agrees to marry Ahmad. After claiming she will be happy and proud to be a poor man's wife, she feels it important to elaborate upon her specific political investments because, though deeply sympathetic to the League, Ahmad has other political affiliations as well. A political activist invested in allegiances to unions, the Communist party, and even the Indian National Congress, Ahmad refuses a facile categorization of his politics. Zohra feels inclined to confess her deep and abiding conversion to the Muslim League as a way of clearing the ground between them before marriage. Remarking on how lost and depressed she feels because of the political atmosphere and the war news, Zohra confesses how she has resolved to become more involved in grass-roots political activism. She wants "to work among women, especially among Muslim women" because "that's where I'll be most useful" (448). Zohra has come a long way from her initial antipathy to a Muslim politics. She feels she "should join the Muslim League" because "no one can deny it's a people's

organization" (448).The League has democratized and ceased to serve the interests of Muslim princes and landlords. Zohra conceives of her role within this democratic Muslim League as helping people to deal with "the problems that Muslim women have to face." She has so many "contacts" and "friendships" amongst Muslims and Muslim women that the League best accommodates her desire to participate in Punjab politics (448).

But for all of her interest in serving Muslim women, Zohra's remarks reveal how she is fundamentally subservient to her fiancee Ahmad. She seeks his permission to serve in the League. Even though she prides herself on a feminist politics organized around helping Muslim women, she apologizes to him for focusing her efforts on such a specific constituency. Even as Zohra pledges her interest in working for "the building of the great new democratic world that we both believe in," she reinscribes herself in a heteronormative, patriarchal relationship (449). At precisely the moment in the novel in which she elaborates an amorphous feminist commitment to helping Muslim women, she enters a relationship in which she feels the need to obtain the sanction of her fiancee regarding her political goals. Her political awakening and liberation is accompanied by a heteronormative, patriarchal subjection. Zohra actively solicits Ahmad's permission to participate in the Muslim League. Her remarks show that she needs his permission to have the courage to take part in grass-roots political activism. His influence in structuring her conversion from belief in a united India to Pakistan reveals how heteronormativity constitutes the desire for Pakistan in the case of one of the novel's main characters.

To recapitulate the trajectory of our argument, we have found that Zohra leaves her house and starts taking part in college debates with the grudging consent of her mother and father. She qualifies herself to become a university professor and later, gets

involved in the struggle for Pakistan after she meets her childhood friend and fiance Ahmad. Because of Ahmad's low class background, Zohra becomes involved in Marxist political activism targeted around the improvement of the well-being of Muslim women. She confesses to her husband that she feels best qualified to work with Muslim women because of her existing network of political contacts and personal relationships. The novel documents little in the way of Zohra's actual work with Muslim women, but it does give its readers a sense of her political trajectory.

Zohra begins the novel helping her jailed Hindu friend Mohini. She opposes the idea of Pakistan but slowly embarks on a conversion that culminates in her belief in Pakistan at the novel's end. Whereas most partition literature features a Hindu-Muslim romance that fails, *The Heart Divided* uses the trope of romance to show how heterosexual desire became the platform for imagining the formation of Pakistan. Only once Zohra meets Ahmad does she begin to pledge her support for partition and Pakistan in a forthright way. Her romance with Ahmad brings about her full-fledged conversion to the idea of Pakistan after all of her earlier antipathy and reservations about it.

Reviewing our argument further, recall that the novel began in a thoroughly historical register with the panoptic lecture on colonial Indian history given by Sheikh Jamaluddin to his daughter Zohra. Whereas most partition literature focuses on the tragic dimensions of India's partition in the form of the separation of two lovers, *The Heart Divided* begins a programmatic engagement of the relationship between women, girls and Indian history. The novel moves on to discuss the means by which Zohra leaves the confines of the zenana and gradually becomes more and more involved in civic and political affairs. Rather than convincing her to remain away from politics, her father's speech catalyzes her interest in the realm outside the home and hurtles her

"toward a life of independence and adventure." Her example shows how women were constitutively involved in the historical production of India's partition rather than mere victims of an amorous separation or case of rape, mutilation, suicide or murder. *The Heart Divided* alerts us to the ways in which women were active participants in the political realm in contradistinction to being solely the victims of men. The next section examines an additional example of the way the novel illustrates how women were actively involved in the political sphere by way of the case of Sughra, Zohra's older sister.

While Zohra takes the first steps toward a life beyond purdah, her elder sister Sughra moves in a converse direction as she prepares to get married to Mansur, the man her family chose for her when she was thirteen. Though Sughra remains in purdah throughout the novel, the trajectory she traverses in marrying Mansur takes her away from her parents' house in Lahore to the rural village of Multan. As Sughra senses well before her actual wedding, the move from the city to the countryside correspondingly involves a curtailment of the freedom and pleasures she enjoys within the cosmopolitan space of a big city. "Here at Lahore," she muses, "she had become used to the company of her college friends, to drives and picnics and shopping expeditions and to occasional visits to the cinema houses, where they sat in a purdah box. There would be none of these things at Multan. Life would be confined to the four walls of her husband's house with occasional visits to relatives thrown in" (6). Though in purdah, Sughra scarcely enjoys fewer of the attractions of the city than her sister: like Zohra she takes part in shopping, drives, picnics, and trips to the cinema. But unlike her younger sister, Sughra evinces a marked captivation with Islam, the poetry of Muhammed Iqbal, and Islamic mythology as evinced in the following remarkable passage:

> Across the sea was far Arabia and further still Syria and Palestine and Turkey. Would she never see these lands, whose very history beat in her blood? The glorious past was so different to the drab present. So different that she longed to escape into it, to retreat from the dull reality and to lose herself in dreams. She could see the armies of Salahuddin marching across the desert, drums beating and banners flying, with row upon row of knights and heroes mounted on restless chargers ready to die for the greater glory of Islam. And in front of them, always in front of them, the unknown knight with the crescent banner. Nearer they came and nearer, and the beat of their drums echoed the beating of her heart. And now they had entered the city and were marching through the streets, and as they passed below her window, she bent down and flung the leader a deep-red rose, and he raised his head and smiled. (115)

Here, Sughra imagines a trans-national Islamic empire encompassing Arabia, Syria, Palestine and Turkey as a means of escaping from the "dull reality" of life in her in-laws' house in rural Multan. The topography of her imagination reveals itself as richly populated by medieval images of "knights and heroes mounted on restless chargers," drums, banners, crescent images decorating the costume of Muslim armies, suggestions of martyrdom, romance, and chivalry. Sughra's return to her father's house in Lahore following the breakup of her marriage leads, in its wake, to an affective investment and attachment, on her part, to cities and an urban modernity that coexists alongside her fondness for an imperial Islamic space with medieval resonances as indicated above.

Sughra returns to her father's house in Lahore after her son's death, ostensibly to complete the work of mourning, though fundamentally to extricate herself from a failing marriage. Here, Zohra's friend Rajindar cajoles her into accompanying her on a

trip to a female pediatrician's office on the outskirts of the city for the purpose of procuring some volunteer work to expedite the recovery of Sughra's melancholy health and spirits. In a scene eerily reminiscent of the moment when Zohra finds herself forced to walk the streets of Lahore because her father's car breaks down, Sughra encounters a similar predicament with her friend Rajindar, this time because the roads are so narrow they preclude passage by car. The car's inability to go further enables Sughra to see and experience, for the very first time, aspects of urban Lahore hidden from her life of privilege in her parents' home. Sughra's first experience of the squalor and unevenness of the outskirts of the city is rendered even more disturbing by her visit to the pediatrician's office: upon realizing that the doctor volunteers her services in order to treat children who cannot otherwise afford healthcare, Sughra incredulously asks Zohra and Rajinder about the lack of government ministration toward the poor and sick inhabitants of the city. Their blase reply regarding the necessity for systemic, political change sets off, in Sughra, a blaze of reflections about larger political and social issues. Her confrontation with the modernity of the city thereby ushers in a personal revolution that leads to her involvement in politics, and ultimately to her reconciliation of a socialist politics committed to urban transformation alongside a thoroughly medieval Muslim imaginary.

The combination of the city's dilapidation, and the sight of sick children from families unable to afford adequate food, clothing and medicine converge to cause Sughra to reflect deeply on the larger societal conditions responsible for the perpetuation of inequality. Though she initially finds it difficult to reflect on societal issues such as poverty and healthcare, Sughra "dimly realized that all this could not be put right in a day, that mere charity would not even touch the fringe of the problem, and that it was the prevailing system of government and society that was at fault" (260).

Regarding the correctives to the present government and society, though, "the how and wherefore of it she could not grasp" (260). Herein she begins reflections on the privileges of her own life, societal inequality, and the place of Islam within these broader societal reflections.

At this point Sughra realizes that, though she had always wanted freedom from political oppression—whether from the British or Hindu majority— another form of freedom was worth fighting for as well, namely, "a freedom whereby poverty, disease and ignorance could be abolished forever" (261). Thus she resolves to broaden her knowledge of literature and politics beyond her knowledge of Iqbal and the Muslim renaissance, and consequently begins to engage Rajindar, Zohra, and her family about issues of social justice:

> The next day Rajindar sent the promised books and Sughra devoured them with an eagerness that amazed her. Far into the niht she would read, and the words of Shaw and Laski and Bentham would echo in her mind again and again.
>
> New ideas and thoughts and feelings mingled with the old, and slowly but surely a synthesis of the two began. She read, once again, the later poetry of Iqbal and learnt to reinterpret it in the light of her recently acquired knowledge. Her fundamentally Muslim upbringing had fostered in her the idea of the brotherhood of mankind, but now this acquired a depth, a breadth and a vision that it had lacked before. (263)

Sughra's move to the city, then, forces her to reconcile her visions of Islam with the reality of everyday life in modem cities. The experience of seeing different parts of the city renders her more receptive to modem thought and the necessity of imagining the institutionalization of Islam within the everyday constraints of the modem world. As a

result, Sughra becomes actively involved in local politics and campaigns to enfranchise and educate women.

Sughra returns to her father's house in Lahore after her son's death. Her friend Rajindar convinces her to visit a female pediatrician's office to find some part-time work in order to relieve her melancholy spirits. After the car breaks down, Sughra and Rajindar end up walking through narrow streets on the way to the doctor's office. Sughra sees "a thick black liquid" in the "open drains" and "piles of refuse lay here and there" (256). Saddened by seeing urban dilapidation and squalor for the first time, she reflects on politics and city life. Deeply touched by the "expression in the eyes of the sick women" and the "memory of the waxen faces and stunted limbs of children," Sughra begins thinking about the role of government in perpetuating social injustices such as those she saw with Rajindar (261). Realizing how her formative years "had made her intensely Muslim," she sees how, all along, "it was freedom that she most longed for." Although she had "turned to the Muslim League for guidance," she now begins to think about the place of Islam in securing political and social justice for the first time (261).

As a way of beginning to fight for social justice, Sughra goes door to door to enfranchise women voters for local elections in the late 1930s. She realizes how "apart from a few educated households.. .none of the women knew anything about the political views of the candidates in the field, nor did they realize the significance of the vote" (270). She sees the importance of educating women about the importance of voting rights, and continues her involvement in local enfranchisement efforts. Her activities enable her to confront the specific problems of Muslim women as revealed below:

> Very soon Sughra was busy all day visiting different parts of the town in the company of the nieces of Mian Aziz. She met women of all kinds and ages and classes, and learnt to know and understand them and to sympathize with their difficulties. She saw that Muslim women did not enjoy those rights which their religion had given them, but lived and laboured under a social system that not only suppressed their liberty as citizens, but even deprived them of their rights as human beings, and her anger and her sympathy rose to a fever pitch until the cause of Muslim women became a passion with her. Islam had been the first religion in the world to give the rights of inheritance to women and yet Muslim women in the Punjab were deprived of these. Islam had made divorce easy, yet not only was it considered a terrible disgrace, but under the British-made laws, there was hardly any way in which an ill-treated, neglected or even abandoned wife could get it. Islam had enjoined widow-remarriage, but Muslim widows who married again were looked down upon. Sughra thought continually about the grave injustice that Muslim women had to put up with and she blamed the influence of Hindu culture for many of the hardships that her sex had to bear. (274)

Here, Sughra reveals her commitment to understanding the impact of Islamic law upon Muslim women in the "different parts of the town" that she visited. In thinking about inheritance rights and divorce law practicalities, she blames "British-made laws" and the "influence of Hindu culture" for "many of the hardships that her sex had to bear." She also takes note of patriarchy within the Muslim community insofar as "Muslim women did not enjoy those rights which their religion had given them." Sughra's involvement with the League stems from an intense feminist interest in social and political equality between Muslim women and men. Her sister Zohra joins the League

because it proffers the practical benefits of an organization and infrastructure that enables her to work toward her interests in democracy. Sughra, in contrast, works for the League because of a genuine commitment to understanding the relationship between Islam and social justice.

But despite her active and sustained involvement in political activism after returning to Lahore from Multan, Sughra finds herself deeply moved and taken aback after first learning about the idea of partition and the creation of Pakistan. She learns about Pakistan by way of a friend she meets while travelling to a Muslim League meeting as part of the women's delegation. In a longer conversation on Indian history her friend Kamal claims the existence of a Muslim nation with the larger Indian nation and then introduces her to the idea of Pakistan as follows:

> "And so I believe in a separate Muslim state."
>
> "You believe in what?"
>
> "A separate Muslim state. India must be divided."
>
> "But this— this is a new idea— an amazing— ''... She was silent for a while. Her mind was staggered and she was thinking hard. (343)

For all of Sughra's surprise and wonder in the face of the idea of "a separate Muslim state," she recovers from the shock of this new vision with marked alacrity. When her friend elaborates on Pakistan as a place to "live in as free men, to work and play and worship in our own way without let or hindrance," Sughra responds with her own utopian vision in kind as "a society wherein women will get their birthright.. .and hunger and want and ignorance will be no more" (344). What's remarkable, here, is the celerity of Sughra's translation of Kamal's vision of religious freedom into a specific vision of feminist, socialist politics. She understands Pakistan as embodying the possibility for realizing women's rights, and ending hunger, poverty, and ignorance.

Despite their secular and non-secular differences vis-a-vis their imagining of Pakistan, Zohra and Sughra both understand Pakistan as a space for the practice of political activism. Zohra concurs with Ahmad's characterization of politics as aiming toward "the building of a new world" in which "peace shall abide and the toilers will enjoy the fruits of their toil" (344). He further notes how the ideal is a utopia until it is achieved. Like her sister, Sughra believes in Pakistan as a repeated striving toward a political ideal. The early 1940s elicit Marxist reflections on class and money from her, too:

> For Sughra, too, 1941 had been a strenuous and a depressing year. She sometimes looked back on this period as the time when she really learnt to face realities, and the cold clear light of day shorn of dreams. She continued her work among Muslim women and found increasing distress in middle-class homes. The housewife found it more and more difficult to balance the budget, for prices continued to soar and incomes remained the same. For the wife of the clerk, for the widow of the petty official, for the daughter of the small shop-keeper, it became impossible to feed and educate the children or to clothe them in decent apparel. Many commodities disappeared from the market and the procurement of cheap cloth, medicines, sugar and oil became a problem. Yet the shops where silks were sold at exorbitant prices were always crowded with the laughing, chattering womenfolk of the new rich, and the big landlords who were making more money than they could spend. Engrossed in her political work, she had recently paid less attention to those social problems that had been strikingly demonstrated to her in her early visits to the city, but now the thoughts that had taken birth in her mind came back with renewed vigour, and combined with her political ideas in a new synthesis. It was during this period that she realized that

> for her the mere winning of Pakistan would not be enough and that even after that she would have to go on fighting to build the Pakistan of her dreams—the land where the people would rule and not just the few, where equity and justice would abide and the resources of the state would be utilized for the good of all. Where men would have equality not merely in name but in opportunity and women would get their proper place in society, and where that system by which excess and want exist side by side would be no more. To her way of thinking such a land alone would be a truly Islamic state. (419-9)

Working amongst Muslim women of middle class background, Sughra finds "increasing distress" insofar as the "housewife found it more and more difficult to balance the budget" (418). In many homes, "it became impossible to feed and educate the children" because the war caused prices of daily goods and commodities to skyrocket. The economic distress amongst middle income Muslim families causes her to pay more attention to those social problems that been strikingly demonstrated to her in her early visits to the city. Once again she sees urban dilapidation, poverty and filth after years of sustained attention to specific problems of Muslim women, voting and awareness about contemporary political candidates. Her realization of the enduring quality of urban problems in Lahore leads to a related epiphany that it would be necessary to continue her political activism after the creation of Pakistan. She notes how "she would have to go on fighting to build the Pakistan of her dreams." Only in a land where "the people would rule and not just the few," would the world witness "a truly Islamic state." As the novel closes, Sughra discovers that her estranged husband Mansur has been practicing many of these same Islamic ideals of "equity and justice" by opening a children's hospital in deference to their deceased son. The two reunite and pledge to remain together in striving for the attainment of Pakistan.

Summing up, the reunion of Sughra and Mansur reverses the trajectory of the heteronormative coupling that accompanies a political awakening in the case of Zohra and Ahmad: whereas Zohra learns of a socialist politics from Ahmad, Mansur comes to believe in Islamic socialism as a result of Sughra and her departure from him. But in both cases, the idea of Pakistan is elaborated in relation to a heteronormative dyad that must come together in order for it to be fully envisioned. The novel claims the centrality of sister-sister kinship, and heteronormative sexuality to the possibility of imagining the idea of Pakistan.

CHAPTER 3

Conclusion: Reflection on Women's Relation to Partition in *The Heart Divided*

The analysis in the previous chapter has shown how the novel began in the vein of a paradigmatic partition romance structured around tragedy, specifically by way of the failed love affair between Habib and Mohini. Later, the novel turns its attention to the involvement of Zohra and Sughra in conversations about contemporary politics in colonial India. Both of them start out as sheltered Muslim girls that end up actively involved in political activism associated with the struggle for Pakistan. Zohra pledges her support for the Muslim League as the best way to influence the lives of Muslim women. Sughra believes in the cause of the Muslim League as a possible way of bringing about an Islamic state.

What is the significance of a narrative such as this? Why is it important? To get a sense of the import of this text, let us return to Urvashi Butalia and a moment from her seminal text *The Other Side of Silence.* In her introduction, Butalia recounts her outrage at reading history after history of the partition that fails to think about the human dimensions of India's partition. Almost all of the work she read focused on the political dimensions of colonial Indian history in the form of Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League:

> I began, like any other researcher, by looking at what had been written about Partition. And there was no dearth of material. Yet, as I read my way through it, I found myself becoming increasingly dissatisfied, sometimes even angry. If the books I was reading were to be believed, the Partition of India was something that happened in August 1947. A series of event preceded it: these included the

> growing divide between the Congress and the Muslim League, the debates between Jinnah and Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, and a host of other developments on the 'political' front. And a series of events accompanied and followed it: violence, mass migration, refugeeism, rehabilitation. But the 'history' of Partition seemed to lie only in the political developments that led up to it. These other aspects— what had happened to the millions of people who had to live through this time, what we might call the 'human dimension' of this history— somehow seemed to have a 'lesser' status in it. (5-6)

In a passage that echoes the opening lines of Guha's famous essay, "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India," Butalia laments a particular construction of the history of India's partition that systematically displaced "what happened to the millions of people who had to live through this time." Suspicious, too, of the facile chronology offered by some histories about the "growing divide between the Congress and the Muslim League," and other "political" events that putatively constituted India's partition, she suggests the need to rethink its history by paying attention to "other aspects" of the event, namely, its "human dimension":

> These aspects of Partition—how families were divided, how friendships endured across borders, how people coped with the trauma, how they rebuilt their lives... .find little reflection in written history. Yet, increasingly after 1984,1 began to feel that they were essential to our knowledge of Partition. (7)

Here, Butalia calls for reflections on the lived experience of partition that, in her mind, have largely been de-narrativized or excluded from "written history." This attention to lived experience importantly includes a reflection on women in colonial Indian history in ways that, to her mind, have not been adequately addressed in postcolonial and South Asian studies scholarship. She goes on to argue that women have been left out of

colonial Indian history and exhorts scholars to look at archives that top-down historians have ignored or paid scant attention to. Her book, and the body of contemporary feminist scholarship on India's partition more generally, examines issues of gender in the history of India's partition by looking at the gendering of the violence that accompanied India's partition.

Contrary to Butalia, the argument the dissertation has tried to make is that women have been represented prominently in representations about the partition, although perhaps not in the genre of history or politics. The genre of partition literature in the 1940s amply records the historical role of women in India's partition as exemplified by *The Heart Divided.* The point that the dissertation has tried to make is that there is no shortage of a reflection on women and their relation to partition history in South Asian literature from the 1940s. *The Heart Divided* instantiates an early modernity of Indo-Pakistani women and their connection to colonial Indian history, which shows their political agency vis-à-vis the far-reaching partition of British India. For the Muslim women, as this novel shows, the political agency is embedded in their imaginings of the utopia of a separate Pakistan.

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