

STUDY ON THE POSTCOLONIAL NOVELIST BAPSIDHWA



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ABSTARCT

In contemporary literary studies, the word "post-colonial" functions well as a critical category. The labels "Commonwealth Literature," "Anglophone Literature," "New Literature in English," "Third World Literature," and "Literature of the Developing Nations" have been gradually phased out in favour of it in recent years. Every single one of them is troublesome in one way or another. Even the concept of "post-colonial" is fraught with its own set of problems. The basic definition of the phrase, as well as its range of use, might be contested. Its application can be narrowed down for the

purpose of this study to refer to an unequal relationship between rich nations and poor nations in a variety of domains, including social, psychological, political, economic, and cultural practises and patterns, as well as the articulation of the same in literature. No matter how the above sentence is construed, post-colonialism may be understood as an outgrowth of colonialism. Post-colonial literatures came into being as authors strove to create a new type of fiction inside the English language by combining new imagery and, most importantly, new rhythms. This led to the development of post-colonial literatures.

Keywords: Novelist, Postcolonial, Literature, Critical

INTRODUCTION

The primary concerns of postcolonial writing are "placement" and "displacement," as well as "changing location," all of which lead to "the crisis of identity into existence." Frequently, the protagonists in post-colonial works will find themselves in a fight to build an identity, and they will feel confused between two cultures: the first culture is their own indigenous culture, and the second culture is an action culture. Therefore, the change of the native into someone other than herself - a traditional native, or at least one who is in a crisis over one's own cultural identity - is a prominent issue in post-colonial writing. This metamorphosis of the native occurs because of colonialism. Language in India may be found online at <http://www.languageinindia.com/>. ISSN 1930-2940 17:3 March 2017 T. Vembu is the editor of this work and holds the degrees of Master of Arts, Master of Philosophy, Bachelor of Education, and Doctor of Philosophy. Literature and Social Problems in the English Language Dr. N. Geethanjali, and S. Jayalakshmi Perspectives on the Post-Colonial World in Bapsi Sidhwa's Water 13 Key words: Bapsi Sidhwa, Water, Struggle to Establish Identity, and Native American Transformation Minority of Parsis and Zoroastrians Because of the strict teachings and high level of exclusivity upheld by the Parsi/Zoroastrian community, which Sidhwa is a member of, the population of this tiny minority group is on the verge of disappearing completely. After the Arab conquest of Iran in the seventh century A.D., the people who followed the prophet Zarathustra who were originally from Iran were forced to make the perilous journey to Gujarat in India, where they eventually established. These people are known as Parsis. As a result of their hard work and honourable character, they were able to succeed quite rapidly in the diverse society of India. They developed into a very successful and thriving commercial community. In post-colonial India and Pakistan, they were forced to relinquish their hegemonic control over commerce, politics, and education. As a result of the unprecedented political events and the growing sectarian violence, they inculcated a feeling of insecurity and dread among the populace. Accentuated by the external threats and the plights of the dwindling community, which is on the verge of extinction, contemporary Parsi writers like Boman Desai, Farrukh Dhondy, Rohinton Mistry, and Bapsi Sidhwa vociferously assert their ethnic identity and

earnestly attempt to reconstruct their racial history in their writings. This can be seen as a response to the fact that the Parsi community.

IRONIC AND TOUCHING

Sidhwa then proceeds to scan and describe the neutral scenes, the childlike wonder, and in doing so, she also dispels some of the seriousness that was before present. Her comments, which are both humorous and moving, are heard when a young girl of eight years old asks innocently, "Didi, where is the place for men widows The saucy tone that Bapsi employs in her writing makes certain that the story does not include even a single uninteresting scene. Chuyia is sent away by Madhumati with Gulabi to be prostituted as a replacement for Kalyani for a customer who is waiting (the client is the father of Narayan's buddy). Shakuntala learns of the situation and immediately takes off in an effort to avert the catastrophe; nevertheless, she is only able to reach the coast in time to see Chuyia's homecoming. The child has suffered severe psychological trauma as a direct result of being raped, and as a result, the youngster is almost completely catatonic. Shakuntala passes the night reclining on the sand by the water. The fact that Chuyia is able to avoid living a life of drudgery and the various illnesses associated with widowhood in the ghetto is a symbol of hope even for those who are stuck in the most hopeless condition. And it is precisely this sense of atonement that runs throughout the story that stops it from ever being dreary and sad. This sense of redemption runs throughout the narrative. Narayan is the one that backs her up, and without his help, she never would have been able to achieve such achievement. illustrating the post-colonial struggle for survival The drama Sidhwa's Water is set in postwar India and graphically depicts the struggle of postcolonial people to survive in the face of superstitious belief. The humanistic playwright, on the other hand, has chosen to reaffirm her trust in the feminine creative energy, which she believes is capable of preventing its own annihilation. The drama illustrates, from a post-colonial point of view, that the post-colonial self assertion, struggle, and survival can be found in Chuyia, the main character.

The term "postcolonial literature" refers to a collection of literary texts that have been produced in opposition to the practise of colonisation. Famous authors such as Ashish Nandi, Salman Rushdie, Khushwant Singh, Kiran Desai, Chinua Achebe, Joseph Conrad, and Michael Ondaatje, amongst others, have always been drawn to writing about this topic. The primary objective of these authors is to demonstrate that the deleterious impacts of colonialism do not cease with the departure of

British control from the regions in which they were born and raised. If one has a thorough study of colonial history, then one will, without a doubt, be able to distinguish the widespread effects that colonialism had. In his explanation of postcolonialism, Nagarajan states, "Postcolonialism investigates and analyses the aftermath of colonisation, as well as the impacts of colonial oppression." In other words, it provides an analysis of the literature that was influenced by the imperial process, as well as the literature that developed as a reaction to colonial dominance... (Nagarajan).

LIFE AND WORKS OF BAPSI SIDHWA

Many people see Bapsi Sidhwa as Pakistan's most significant writer working in the English language. Between the years 1978 and 1993, she penned four books that went on to receive critical praise on a global scale and were each afterwards translated into many languages. In 2006, Sidhwa released a number of new books, thirteen years after the publication of her last recent work. Her previous works have been reissued, and she has also written a novel titled *Water*, which is inspired by the film of the same name directed by Deepa Mehta. In addition to that, Sidhwa was the editor of the collection of writings titled *City of Sin and Splendour: Writings about Lahore*. Sidhwa has been a prominent participant in the public and political discourse in Pakistan, particularly for the rights of women, in addition to the literary contribution she has made.

In Pakistan as well as in other countries, Sidhwa has been recognised for her writing with a number of prestigious prizes. 1 Sidhwa is not very well known in Norway or Europe, despite the fact that she holds a prominent position in the literary canon of Pakistan. Therefore, it seems appropriate at this time to put her in a more comprehensive light as a writer who is also a feminist. Bapsi Sidhwa was born on the 11th of August 1938, and he spent his childhood in Lahore, Pakistan. Lahore is a significant location in each of Sidhwa's novels. In an interview with *Monsoon Magazine*, Sidhwa compared her upbringing to "very much like how Lenny's life was portrayed in *Cracking India*" (Rajan). Sidhwa, like like Lenny, suffered from polio as a youngster, and as a consequence, she was not allowed to attend school.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pawan Kumar (2017) The intriguing book *Ice-Candy Man* by Sidhwa was chosen as the subject of this research paper because the author wanted to demonstrate the postcolonial effect on her work. Sidhwa, while being a member of the Parsi faith, manages to tell the tale of the novel without showing any favouritism or affiliation. The story of the novel is based on the partition of India into two sovereign countries, India and Pakistan, and the devastating effects that this event had on Hindu-Muslim relations, moral decay, communal riots, the murdering of innocent people, the migration of thousands of people, and other aspects of Indian society at the time. The events of the book are presented from the point of view of a little Parsi girl named Lenny, who serves as the novel's narrator.

Syeda Samar Shahid Bokhari (2016) It should come as no surprise that post-colonial literature serves as a mirror record for the ideals of the age in question. Specifically, gender issues have been at the centre of postcolonial texts as either the primary focus or one of the key components. The relative location of gender within the social circumstances as and when the document was registered in the timeperiod offers some idea banks for the people who are reading it. The subject of women's roles in society has regrettably never been satisfactorily resolved despite the fact that it has existed from the beginning of time.

The predicament of the weaker sex has been brought to the attention of the audience by postcolonial writers to a certain extent. In another sense, we can refer to it as postcolonial feminism. If we were to classify it as a subset of feminism, however, we would not classify it as a mythological nous. In this particular piece of writing, the diasporic works of Bapsi Sidhwa marvel, which are books that reflect feminism, will serve as the primary centre of attention. They have, without a doubt, mapped out the whole spectrum of the feminine condition from beginning to end. It has been detailed how the family structures of the colonies are set up in a complicated crisscross manner. Postcolonial writers challenge preconceived notions about the world that are linked to stereotypical portrayals of women everywhere. This study takes a step-by-step approach to dispelling these common misunderstandings and presents the results as shining examples of postcolonial writing.

Bapsi Sidhwa and *Anil's Ghost* (2018) Postcolonial literature emerges as a medium through which hegemonic ideologies may be interrogated and dismantled as a theoretical construct. It is a possible site of resistance that illustrates the way in which imperialist power institutions try to oppress,

mute, or erase those who have been subjugated, as well as the enduring impacts that this process has had on postcolonial states. Two postcolonial novels, *Ice Candy Man* (1989) and *The English Patient* (1990), both written by Michael Ondaatje, investigate the ideas of identity and history in terms of the marginalising hierarchies and discourses that are formed via various forms of power. Anil, a forensic pathologist from the diaspora, is the protagonist of Ondaatje's novel *Anil's Ghost*, which investigates the political unrest in Sri Lanka during the 1988–1989 insurgency from the perspective of the diaspora.

Sonika Sethi (2017) Although *The Pakistani Bride* is Bapsi Sidhwa's first novel, it is the second novel to be published after *The Crow-Eaters*. Bapsi Sidhwa's first novel was titled *The Crow-Eaters*. The writer went on a trip to the Karakoram Range, and while she was there, she heard the horrifying tale of a young Pakistani girl who had the courage to flee from an intolerable marriage, but was instead killed by her tribal husband in the Hindukush mountains. This trip was the inspiration for the writer to write the novel. She couldn't stop thinking about the story, and she felt compelled to tell everyone else about it. Her first novel was developed from a short tale that she originally wrote. The story paints a striking picture of the restricted universe that women inhabit in a society that is ruled by males and in which women are not seen as unique people but rather as something to be owned, as nothing more than a plot of land and perhaps a beast that can be bartered for other goods. She is required to practise *Purdah* in order to shield herself from the scrutinising gaze of males, who stand for a sexually restricted culture. Her docility, submission, and submissiveness are the source of her lord's pride, and even the tiniest act of disobedience on her part is regarded as an assault on his unwavering honour. In this country, women have no voice in any decision-making process, whether it be personal or professional, household or communal, private or public, regional or national. This is the story of Zaitoon, a young and exuberant girl who, for the sake of her tribe's honour, is forced to wed a brutal tribal leader. By evading her tyrannical husband and escaping his grasp, Zaitoon not only goes against the course of her life, but she also puts it to the test.

Abu-Bakar Ali (2017) The primary question is how these intricate literary interventions are represented throughout a dominant nationalist historiography that does not make room for them to be represented in any way, shape, or form. The literary practise of these women authors is examined through the lens of what is at stake as a result of their varied and diverse gendered

contributions, which force Pakistani nationalist discourse to re-evaluate its own precarious ideological foundations. This is how my project views the literary practise of these women authors. These authors and the repressed histories that their texts are a repository for navigate a precarious path between the potentially regenerative power of an independent, postcolonial future and their position as marginalised silence within this purportedly "inclusive" reality. Their texts are a repository for the histories that these authors have repressed.

PAKISTANI BRIDE OPPRESSION EMBODIED

The most overtly feminised piece by Bapsi Sidhwa is *The Pakistani Bride*. Sidhwa examines Pakistani women's circumstances for life, love, and self-worth via a wide variety of characters. Women in marriage, women and sexuality, women as objects of male domination, and women as subjects of their own feelings are all topics covered in the book *The Pakistani Bride*. The attention is on female bodies the entire time. The female body is the most significant visual element of the book, whether it is seen by men or experienced by women. This element connects to the novel's most significant issue, which is Pakistani women's living situations. The bride is a more particular representation of the female body than the female body as a whole, both in the title and throughout the book. The bride becomes a representation of men's control over women's lives and bodies because she had no input in the marriage's planning and it was the most important transaction of her life. *The Pakistani Bride* is written in a variety of writing styles, and Sidhwa references a number of literary genres in her narration.

The book combines elements of a realistic novel with those of a trip novel, gothic novel, fairy tale, and ghost story. *The Pakistani Bride*, on the other hand, is primarily and principally a feminist book and may be seen as having ties to the canon of nineteenth-century American women's literature in many respects. These early feminist books place greater emphasis on educating readers on the origins and effects of male oppression of women than on how women should attempt to emancipate themselves. However, the primary goal of these books is to demonstrate how the heroine manages to have a fulfilling life while operating under the current societal and gender norms. Instead of placing a difficulty in the forefront, the emphasis is on enlightenment and negotiation. The heroine's internal growth, as she grows more assured in both herself and her role as a woman, is also given place in the stories.

KINSHIP SYSTEMS AND MARRIAGE TRANSACTIONS

The Pakistani Bride places a significant emphasis on the female body as a prominent subject throughout the entirety of the story by analysing topics such as marriage, gender segregation, violence, and sexuality. In the narrative, the male characters draw a clear line between the women in their own families and other women in the world outside of their homes for a variety of reasons. This dichotomy is established by the males. Women who are related to the family are protected from the outside world and from men who are not linked to them. They are also kept out of sight from males who are not related to them. A lusty viewpoint is taken of women who are not linked to the guys in their life and who, for a number of reasons, are not protected by their men. This includes women who work in sexually exploitative professions. In each of these narratives, female characters are shown as being nothing more than objects. This perspective on female characters is quite pervasive in the first half of the book, and it continues to play an essential part all the way through the second quarter of the novel as well. Therefore, certain essential viewpoints on women in society are offered in the first portion of the story. These viewpoints are exhibited throughout the narrative.

THE PRACTICE OF PURDAH

Men and women in Pakistan may lead lives that are almost completely unlike to one another as a result of the gender gap that exists in the country. It varies from location to place and class to class, but as a general rule, it is expected of men and women to eat in separate areas of the house, dwell in distinct sections of the house, and spend as little time together as is physically possible. This is a must. The bulk of discriminatory behaviours that eventually lead to segregation are the result of actions taken by those in the middle class. They are not as westernised as those in the upper class, but in contrast to those in the lower classes, they are able to afford to live in separate quarters. Despite this, they are not as wealthy as those in the top class. As a consequence of the segregation of the sexes, it is obligatory for women to spend the majority of the 19-day period within the confines of their homes. Purdah is an Arabic word that literally means "curtain," and it refers to the practise of keeping men and women separate in public spaces. It may refer to a figurative or literal curtain that physically or symbolically separates the female quarters and lives from the male lives. Purdah is practised for a number of reasons, one of which being the attitude towards women

and the role that women play in maintaining and deciding a man's honour. This is one of the many reasons why the practise of purdah is observed. It is commonly believed that the women in the family are absolutely helpless and defenceless if the males do not provide them with protection and power. Physical and mental frailty are the two spheres in which it is stereotypically assumed that women are less capable than males. On the one hand, it is commonly believed that women are unable to defend themselves due to their physical make-up and, as a consequence, are reliant on men to shield them from the dangers of the outside world. The majority of a woman's waking hours must be spent behind the four walls of her home since it is customarily considered that the outside world offers a risk to women. This practise is sanctioned in the name of "their own good." On the other hand, women are seen as potentially dangerous simply because of their gender. People have the misconception that they are not cognitively dependable, that they are easily tempted, and that they may be sexually enticing. In addition, there is the belief that they are sexually tempting. The guys take precautions to ensure that they are separated from other men in order to avoid having any inappropriate contact with males whom they are not familiar with. Not only are women seen as a danger to themselves, but also to the honour that men work so hard to maintain in their communities, women are seen as a threat to this honour.

One might make the case that the division of labour between the sexes helps to reinforce itself in a reiterative manner. Men and women are unable to learn how to connect with one another in a manner that is not sexual when there is a low level of interaction between the sexes in society.

PROSTITUTION AND THE VIRGIN/WHORE VIEW OF WOMAN

The society of the novel holds the belief that women are both ignorant and sexually untrustworthy at the same time, as was just explained. This contrast is shown at many different places throughout the narrative. In addition, this culture establishes a dichotomy between the roles of women as virtuous mothers and daughters and the roles of women as whores: There is a double standard that has to be addressed when taking into account the variety of women's bodies. In this culture, the mother and the virgin are seen as the two best examples of female chastity, and both are highly admired and sought for by members of the community. Despite the common idea that women's bodies and sexuality are naturally wicked, a wife's virginity should be held in the highest regard at all times. For this reason, it is deemed impure for a woman to give birth, to menstruate, or to have

sexual intercourse. Despite this, being a mother and a wife is the most valued and esteemed role that a woman may perform in her life. Therefore, in order for women to make up for the impure nature of their bodies, it is absolutely necessary for them to make a concerted effort not to be overly sensual and active sexually and to keep their purity in all other aspects of their lives. This is the only way that this imbalance can be remedied.

As a result of the modesty and purity that is associated with being a mother, as well as the mentality of the virgin-whore, it is possible for men to view sexual experimentation and enjoyment as an impure activity to engage in with their wives. This is due to the fact that the mentality of the virgin-whore is prevalent in many cultures. As a consequence of this, these men could make the decision to abandon the company of their spouses in favour of the less controlled company of prostitutes. Other women, in contrast to the women who observe purdah, are not required to adhere to the standards of behaviour that are connected with purdah. This is because purdah is not obligatory for all women.

PUBERTY, THE FEMALE WORLD AND MARRIAGE

At this point in time, Zaitoon's very own body will begin undergoing transformations. After this point in the story, Zaitoon takes on the role of the novel's protagonist; Carol will eventually join him in this role, but for now, Qasim is relegated to the background. The topics of sexuality and the body are taboo subjects in this society, and as a result, Zaitoon is in the dark about both the physical changes that are about to take place in her body and the effects that these changes will have on her ability to have children. Even though Miriam warned her that she would find blood in her pants soon, she is nevertheless completely taken aback when she gets her first period. Zaitoon, who is just eleven years old, has been attending school, playing outside, and acting in a manner consistent with a kid she is still. Now that her body is maturing, she has no choice but to mature at a quicker rate. The words "You are now a woman" are said to her by Miriam. Do not engage in play with boys, and under no circumstances should you let a guy touch you. "And this is why I cover my face with a burka...". In addition to this, she won't explain to Zaitoon "how babies are made." using the justification that she does not have any children of her own and hence is unable to comprehend the process. After Zaitoon has been the victim of sexual assault later in the book, an endearingly naive recollection from her younger years comes flooding back to her. Zaitoon thought back to the

morning when she found the little tight bulge in her body, which she recognised as the beginning of her womanhood. She had suddenly been timid, and while in the dirty shower stall, she had looked about to ensure that she would have some kind of privacy. She cocked her little neck to the side and glanced in the mirror. Her eyes and fingers investigated the fascinating new experience.

THE MALE GAZE

The fact that the word "marriages" is employed in this passage is evidence of this point. It is only natural for young women, who do not have a future in education or the workforce to plan for and anticipate, to view marriage as the single most significant achievement they will have in their lives, and it is only natural for them to look forward to it with a corresponding level of excitement. This is because young women do not have a future in education or the workforce to plan for and anticipate. The fact that the narrator makes reference to "women's life" rather than just "lives" creates the idea that women do not have a lot of freedom of choice when it comes to deciding how to conduct their own lives. At this point in time, the only option that makes any kind of sense is to be married. Given the circumstances, it is essential to emphasise that Carol likewise has high standards for the man who will one day become her spouse.

LIBERATION AND RETURN TO DEPENDENCY

When Zaitoon goes away, it is the first time in her whole life that she is by herself. She is no longer understood in terms of her relationships with other people. She is no longer a woman since she is cut off from civilization; instead, she is a female person or an animal that is striving to survive. Her previous roles include those of a daughter and a wife. Her roles have been established with foundation in the fact that she is a woman, and she has been taught to embody the attributes and expectations that her society has of her as a woman. Her roles have also been determined with basis in the fact that she is a woman. Zaitoon's culturally trained femininity is eroding, and her animal instincts are taking control of her body as she is freed from, or bereft of, the roles she was expected to play. The brutal treatment she received from Sakhi was the catalyst for her transition from human to animal form.

The way he treated her may be compared to how an animal trainer would treat a pet. In later conversations, he refers to her as a "filthy, black little bitch." (185) and since there is no sense of

female solidarity in the community, the ladies of the hamlet continue to refer to her as a bitch after she has fled. The final section of the book focuses mostly on establishing Zaitoon's persona as that of an animal. This is the portion of the book that is most densely packed with imagery, and practically everything of it is tied to Zaitoon, her body, and the process by which her body is turning animal: "Like rats in search of gloomy nooks, Zaitoon felt safe only in the dark," the author of the story says. She was overcome by a sudden panic attack, and as a result, she began to climb across the boulders like a crab. The picture of Zaitoon as a bird, on the other hand, is the one that is invoked the majority of the time: "She was a fledgling distant from its nest." After some time has passed, Zaitoon stumbles upon a vulture, which she interprets as a reflection of herself:

CRACKING INDIA CRACKING THE OPPRESSION

The novel *Cracking India* is Bapsi Sidhwa's work that has received the highest praise. Both the novel and the film adaptation of this incident have achieved legendary status as tales of the Partition. The novel focuses on an upper-middle-class Parsi home in Lahore during the turbulent time of the Partition of British India into India and Pakistan. This event occurred during the time period covered by the novel. In *Cracking India*, feminism is not articulated as directly, and the anguish endured by women is not presented with the same degree of brutality as it is in *The Pakistani Bride*. In most of the criticism of *Cracking India*, the feminist issues have been relegated to a secondary role due to its labelling and reading as a novel about the Partition of India. Despite this, the same indignation and awareness of the subordinate position of women is present, even if it is expressed in a more subtle form. Life in Lahore before, during, and after the Partition of India is the subject of *Cracking India*. The book is packed with childhood recollections and experiences from Lenny, a little girl, and her family, the Sethis.

These memories and anecdotes are told from Lenny's point of view. Characters in the book include Lenny's mother, father, godmother, cousin, and Ayah (nanny), all of whom played significant roles in Lenny's life when he was a youngster and were given names based on their occupations or the nature of their relationship to Lenny. The world of the adults is seen in a clear and precise manner when viewed from the outside via the eyes of Lenny. In the first half of the book, Lahore is described as a city where people of all religions and ethnicities coexist peacefully and get along well with one another. The following segment of the book is a depiction of the tension that is growing over the entirety of India as well as the violence that erupts when Partition becomes a

reality. The next few chapters focus on the events that took place after Partition and the violence that altered the lives of all of the people. *Cracking India* is more cohesive than *The Pakistani Bride*, which is disjointed in terms of both its writing style and its storyline and point of view.

THE DISABLED AND UNWORTHY FEMALE BODY

The narrator's attention is divided between two different female bodies over the entirety of the book: the sensuous and appealing body of Ayah, and the body of Lenny, who is crippled. The narrator looks back on his early childhood recollections in the first part of the book, and there is a strong connection between those experiences and Lenny's impairment. Lenny's youth was marked by several experiences that contributed significantly to the construction of her identity, including trips to the hospital, procedures, and agony, as well as the benefits of being crippled. The fact that Lenny has polio is a source of enormous heartache for both of her parents, but particularly for her mother. Her mother feels that the fact that she did not take care of Lenny personally but instead entrusted her care to the ayahs is the root of her daughter's disease, and she holds herself responsible for this decision. On the other hand, Lenny does not consider her sickness or her subsequent handicap to be a drawback in her life.

On the other side, she believes that "having polio in infancy is like being born beneath a lucky star," which is an interesting take on the subject (20). Ayah uses a stroller to transport Lenny about because the little girl is unable to walk properly. She takes pleasure in the pity and attention that is bestowed upon her, and she is well aware that, "while other children have to clamour and bounce around and earn their candy, I only sit or stand, wearing my patient, butter-wouldn't-mel and flashing my callipers – and I am showered with candy" (18 spelling error in the original). As a result, Lenny is able to successfully exploit the disadvantage that her impairment presents.

CHILDREN'S BODIES AND CHILD MARRIAGES

The fact that Lenny comes from an upper-middle-class family does, however, grant her a fair amount of independence and positive expectations for the years to come. In *Cracking India*, there are quite a few kid characters, including Lenny's brother Adi, her cousin, who is simply referred to as Cousin, as well as the next-door neighbours Rosy and Peter, and all of these children share the same affluent upbringing as Lenny. On the other side, the girl who cannot be touched, Papoo, does not have as much to look forward to in her life. Papoo is the daughter of the sweeper, and she

lives in the servants' quarters behind the Sethi family's house with her mother and father. Papoo is also the name of her father's job. Papoo is subjected to unending mental and physical torment since her mother despises and rejects her. The reader is never told in the book why Muccho, the protagonist's mother, has such a strong distaste for her daughter.

EDUCATION OF DESIRE AND THE SEXUAL FEMALE BODY

The young Lenny views his lack of attendance at school as a chance to get knowledge about other aspects of life. She gains an education in the art of seduction between men and women as a result of her time spent with Ayah, which enables her to visit a significant portion of the city of Lahore, including its historical parks and structures. Aside from this, she does attend to Mrs. Pen, who instructs her in reading, writing, and arithmetic, so she does have some formal education: In spite of the fact that she is making an attempt to fill my head with meaningless information and the trappings of study, I nevertheless manage to pick up some useful information. A smell of Mrs. Pen helps me see things more clearly. In addition to ingraining history into my subconscious, it teaches me the biology behind dead cells and the deterioration of bodies. [...] In contrast to the aroma of Ayah, which transmits the unadulterated freshness of creation, Mrs. Pen's scent is reminiscent of times gone by. Lenny is less concerned with acquiring intellectual information and more concerned with expanding her understanding of the strange adult world. She utilises her perceptive eyes to learn from what she observes.

Ayah is the teacher from whom she gains the greatest knowledge. In *Cracking India*, Ayah possesses the female body that is both the most detailed and the most coveted. Whenever she is present, people comment on her chocolate skin, her beautiful face, her "rolling bouncy walk that agitates the globules of her buttocks under her cheap colourful saris and the half-spheres beneath her short sari-blouses," as well as her sensual scent. Her walk is described as "rolling bouncy walk that agitates the globules of her buttocks under her cheap colourful saris and the half She exudes a massive amount of physical power, as seen by the quote, "Ayah's presence galvanises men to mad sprints in the midday heat." Ayah is what one would, in less academic terminology, refer to as a sex bomb. Whereas Lenny's mother has a physical presence that is described as 'motherliness,' and Godmother has a physical presence that radiates stability owing to her size and age, Ayah is what one might describe as a sexual time bomb. "their leaden eyes drawn to the magnet" is how Lenny

describes how guys are compelled to be around her because of the inherent sensuality she exudes. Lenny learns about men and women, relationships, and sexuality through seeing Ayah and the many men who vie for her favour as they engage in a game of wooing. Lenny also learns from the lessons that Ayah imparts to Lenny about her own sexuality.

PUBERTY AND A SEXUAL WORLD

As the months pass, Lenny discovers the changes in her body, as puberty sets in. She also discovers an interest in boys and men that she has not been aware of before. From early on in the novel, Cousin has been more than normally interested in Lenny, and she sees him as one of her “teachers”, guiding her in the mysterious ways of life. He shows her things: “Let me show you my scar,” he offers, unbuttoning his fly and exposing me to the glamorous spectacle of a stitched scar and a handful of genitals. He too has clever fingers. “You can touch it,” he offers’ . As they both grow a bit older, Cousin becomes more and more explicit in his relationship with his younger cousin, and tells her that he is in love with her and wants to marry her one day.

AYAH’S BODY AND THE PARTITION OF INDIA

While Lenny is beginning to recognise the signs that her body is transitioning into adolescence, the Partition of British India is becoming closer. The political battle lines are being formed along religious lines, and an increasing number of politicians are arguing in favour of nation states that are founded on a particular religion. India is being created as the new Hindu state, while Pakistan is being designed as the new Muslim state. The Sikhs' demands for a separate Khalistan have been refuted, while the Parsis are currently awaiting the outcome of the land division before deciding how they would proceed. While this is going on, the religious leanings of the people who are a part of the group that Ayah is a part of are becoming more and more apparent, which is causing a gradual buildup of tension inside the group. Ayah's "chocolate chemistry" is the glue that ties the group together in the early half of the book, regardless of the members' different backgrounds in terms of race, social status, or religion. It is not a coincidence that the name Shanta, which Ayah was given, signifies serenity in the Hindi language. Other critics have regarded Ayah as a representation of India as a whole, and her body as a sign of the land that is being ripped apart, despite the fact that it is something that is sought by people of all religious and ethnic backgrounds.

It is true that Ayah, in the eyes of her companions, becomes the personification of her faith, but I do not intend to go to this extreme. Lenny makes the observation that this is not only true of Ayah, but of everyone else in her immediate environment as well:

CONCLUSION

The Pakistani Bride and Cracking India in order to throw light on the ways in which the image of the female body is utilised and to shed light on the ways in which this image embodies the feminist message of the books. The purpose of this comparison is to shed light on these issues. Close readings revealed many similarities between the novels' treatment of the female body; however, they also revealed some interesting developments that took place in Sidhwa's feminism from The Pakistani Bride, which was published in the 1970s, to Cracking India, which was published in the 1980s. The patriarchal system of subjugation of the female body is explored in significant detail in both The Pakistani Bride and Cracking India. Both of these books are highly recommended. The novels demonstrate how the lives of the female characters are controlled by their sex by focusing on Zaitoon and Lenny when they were little children and when they were in their early teenage years. Because of their feminine bodies, both of the girls' educational opportunities are severely limited. When Zaitoon begins menstruating, she is removed from the classroom immediately.

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