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Introduction

The Partition of British India into Pakistan and India in 1947 had an enormous impact on the population of the subcontinent. Especially the impact on women was unprecedented. Collectively remembered as a kind of intergenerational trauma, Partition still influences people today. Partition primarily designates the political separation of India's Hindu and Muslim population into distinctive independent countries, but this historical incident also refers to a traumatic experience for the people affected by those political changes. Partition did not only induce killings, riots and rapes and, thus, left women widowed, mutilated and dishonoured, but also evoked psychological challenges, like the loss of one's homeland and one's friends or the disintegration of families.

In postcolonial times Partition is a frequent theme in South Asian literature. It can even be categorised as a distinct genre, namely Partition literature. While conventional history mostly conveys only a very limited perspective, literature can reveal a wider scope of individual stories. Often, literature does not only report historical facts and political events, but it can also deal with emotional and psychological effects on people. Additionally, Partition literature gives a personal view on politics and is able to comment even critically on a hegemonic system (Menon and Bhasin *Boundaries*, 11). Literature is able to present a 'counter history' that retells the stories of individuals. With regard to Partition literature, Francisco has rightly analysed:

Only the literature truly evokes the suffering of the innocent, whose pain is more universal and ultimately a vehicle of more honest reconciliation than political discourse. The literary work on the Partition affirms that the subject of the Partition was first the human being – [...] (250)

Also Gilmartin has observed that fiction was a "more powerful vehicle" for describing common people's fates (1069). This is one reason why the study of Partition literature is an important contribution to historical studies. It becomes especially essential when studying female experiences during Partition.

Official history has been written primarily by men and also privileges men as the main actors, while female agency and contribution has been persistently left out (Lerner 13). Hence, history, as such, does not reflect a 'universal history' of humankind, because Lerner points out that a truly 'universal history' is one that is "equally concerned with men, women, establishment and the passing away of patriarchy" (ibid.). However, in literature the female side is frequently presented in an unbiased way.

Even though male authors tend to position male protagonists at the centre of their stories, female writers employ more often female protagonists and other female characters in their stories (Malik 8). It is through women writers that female stories are put at the centre of narratives and, thus, give an insight to commonly non-public domains.

Since the Partition of British India marks the end of colonialism and the beginning of postcolonialism in South Asia, the writers of Partition literature can be denoted 'postcolonial writers'. In this thesis I am only concerned with female authors originating from South Asia and, thus, can narrow down the definition to 'South Asian postcolonial women writers'.

In postcolonial theory one sub-section is mainly concerned with feminism and, in this diploma thesis, some ideas of feminist postcolonialism and postcolonial feminism (I will explain the difference below), will be useful for the analysis of the selected novels.

One prominent scholar who is concerned with feminist and postcolonial theories is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and her concept of subalternity will be investigated throughout this diploma thesis. Spivak has claimed that "the subaltern cannot speak", but in this paper it will be examined whether this is true with regard to female Partition literature or not. Do female authors let their female protagonists raise their voice and act for themselves? This will be one of the core questions of this paper.

It was already mentioned that women were constantly left out of the process of history writing, and they have been subordinate to men in a patriarchal system. However, in literature women can tell their (hi)stories in the same manner as men. Menon and Bhasin have observed that in Partition fiction "women's voices, speaking for themselves" can be frequently found (12).

By showing various representations of female protagonists in books by South Asian, postcolonial women writers, this thesis will prove that particularly women writers allow their female protagonists to speak and act.

Although the interest in a distinct female Partition history only started to emerge in the 1990s, women writers have been writing Partition fiction with female protagonists almost since the beginning. In this diploma thesis four books will be analysed of which the earliest was published in 1961 and the latest in 1994. The other two novels were published in 1980 and 1991, respectively. Most female authors write in their South Asian mother tongue and, therefore, they are not internationally known.

However, few of them have also written in English. In this thesis the four female authors are Bapsi Sidhwa, Qurratulain Hyder, Attia Hosain and Anita Desai.

When the interest in female experiences during Partition started to increase in the 1990s, after Urvashi Butalia, Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin published their studies on various female eyewitness accounts and involvements during that period of time, women were prevalently depicted as victims. However, as this thesis will demonstrate, female authors let their heroines obtain a wider range of representations in fiction. The question that motivates this thesis is: What kind of different representations do South Asian women writers employ in Partition fiction?

In order to answer this research question this thesis is subdivided in a theoretical part and an analytical part. In the theoretical part the historical background of India at the time of Partition will be explained. The focus will not only lie on the political dimensions, but it is also important to describe the social aspects and impacts on the population. Subsequently, the genre of Partition fiction will be introduced shortly and major works of this genre enumerated. Finally, several postcolonial and feminist theories will be presented. In the analytical part the selected novels will be analysed according to their female protagonists and other interesting female characters.

The selected novels are *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa, *Fireflies in the Mist* by Qurratulain Hyder, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* by Attia Hosain and *Clear Light of Day* by Anita Desai. I have chosen these novels according to various criteria. One of the most important aspects is that these novels present a wider variety of female roles and representations and not only one aspect of female Partition fiction.

Cracking India's story is situated in Lahore and therefore shows the Pakistani side of Partition. The author, Bapsi Sidhwa, as well as the narrator are Parsees, which means they embody a neutral perspective on the religious struggle of Partition, which was mainly fought between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. In this novel Ayah, a Hindu servant woman, is abducted during Partition and, hence, a victim of this violent time.

In *Fireflies in the Mist* the main story is set in East Bengal, which is nowadays Bangladesh, but also discusses the postcolonial situation. The two heroines of this novel are freedom fighters during the independence movement in Bengal and, thus, embody the opposite representation of Sidhwa's protagonist. The author, Qurratulain Hyder, is a Muslim and had been living in India, Pakistan and England. She employs Hindu, Muslim and Christian female characters, who are spread all over the world after

Partition. The main focus of this narrative lies on women's political activities in revolutionary groups before and during Partition.

Sunlight on a Broken Column presents one possible representation of Muslim women. It is set in a Muslim, upper class family in Lucknow, which is also the author's background. While the protagonist's main concern is to break free from her traditional family, Partition is still an important topic. Although she does not directly engage in political discussions, she is constantly confronted with it, because the men of her family actively participate in politics. In a sense it can be said that Partition and the independence of the country enable the female protagonist to oppose her traditional family. She becomes a modern woman at the same time when India breaks free from colonialism and enters modernity.

This situation is similar to the last book of the analysis: *Clear Light of Day* by Anita Desai. In this novel the story centres on a Hindu family in Old Delhi. The female protagonist is also presented as breaking with the traditional value system. In being compared to the 'new woman', a kind of educated, independent and modern woman, the protagonist reaches an almost equal status to the men that surround her. She is the role model for women of the new modern, independent and postcolonial India. In this narrative, Partition is merely the backdrop of the story although it indirectly influences the lives of all the characters.

In the years after independence almost nothing was known or told about women's fates during Partition. When the interest in female experience during the decolonisation process increased, the main role that was appointed to women was either as victims or as refugee workers. However, as it will become clear with the analyses of the selected novels, women occupied a variety of roles. It definitely affected women (and probably men, as well) psychologically and traumatised a whole generation. Women either had to struggle with the direct consequences of Partition, like riots, rape, abduction or they were indirectly influenced by this huge political and social change. While some lives were destroyed, some women could grow from the challenge.

1. Partition of British India

In 1947, the formerly British-governed Indian subcontinent was divided into two separate nations, India and Pakistan. This Partition was a consequence of a tedious political and social process. Although the Indian independence movement had already started to play a political role much earlier, the decision to divide the subcontinent was finally relatively unstructured and hurried and resulted in confusion and violence. In the aftermath of Partition millions of people migrated to the newly founded countries of India and Pakistan. The whole areas where populations were on the move were afflicted with riots, murders, abductions, and rapes. The birth of these two nations was overshadowed by a trauma for their populations that still affects people today. On a political level, the two countries have been antagonists since their brutal division and have fought several wars. On a social level, people are still suffering from separations, loss, abductions, rape, and many other personal traumata (Butalia, Menon and Bhasin, Shaikh, Nandy).

In this chapter I want to give an overview of the historical and political background of my research area. In the first part I will write about the political situation on the Indian subcontinent before Independence and how the independence movement emerged. In the second part I will explain the social conditions for the majority of people during and after Partition.

1.1 Political Dimension

The political scene during the struggle for independence was very complex and multifaceted. The first and foremost goal of the freedom movement was to achieve independence from England and therefore, the Partition of the subcontinent was only a side effect, but one that still affects the world today.

The Indian subcontinent had been under European influence since the beginning of the 15th century, when Portuguese traders and missionaries came to the newly discovered country. They were soon followed by the Dutch, French, and British. In the course of the centuries Britain's economic and political influence grew almost without any resistance from within (Kulke 227ff).

In 1857, a rebellion of Hindu and Muslim soldiers in the Anglo-Indian military army, made Great Britain aware of their diminishing position on the subcontinent. This rebellion is generally known as ‘Indian Mutiny’, but in India it is significantly referred to as ‘The First War of Independence’¹ (Agrawal 46). This discrepancy between views held in England and India can also be observed in the years leading up to Independence. England reacted to the rebellion by ending the East India company and, transferred control of India to the Crown and the British government. At the same time, political awareness and the idea of nationalism started to flourish in India in the decades after the 1857 Rebellion (Kulke 259 & 284). A variety of different movements and leaders paved the way for India’s independence movement in the 20th century.

South Asia has always been a multicultural and multilingual area. During the time of British Colonialism India was known as ‘British/Crown Raj’ and its area reached from today’s Afghanistan to Myanmar. People with many different languages, cultures, religions, and living conditions were living in a vast area under one ruling power. The British rulers could be seen as the only common denominator for the whole Crown Raj. Nevertheless, as British colonial rule started to struggle and experience various challenges, the people were also united by a new educated elite of critical intellectuals, who no longer believed in a foreign rule for India.

During the 19th century various cultural movements tried to awaken a sense of nationalism in India. This nationalism was accompanied by religious suspicion, as Muslims and Hindus (the two main religious groups) did not always share the same views. As a consequence religion began to become interwoven with politics. Hindu religious reformers, like Ram Mohan Roy² or Dayananda Sarasvati³, tried to strengthen the national consciousness by reforming Hinduism (Edwardes 368). This first introduced tensions between Hindu and Muslim populations, who had been living peacefully together for several centuries. Most organisations that tried to strengthen a nationalist unity were Hindu and thus the Muslim community felt underrepresented.

In 1885 the Indian National Congress (INC), a loose political organisation, was founded. Among its original goals were not merely independence but self-government, reforms and more political representation for intellectual Indians (Edwardes 370). The

¹ In historic books and articles a wide range of denotations for this conflict can be found. Agrawal (46) sums up the most common.

² In 1828, Ram Mohan Roy was the founder of the organisation „Brahmo Samaj“: a society, that used monotheistic religions as a role model and denominated one Hindu God, Brahma, as the main God of Hinduism.

³ Dayananda Sarasvati was the founder of the organisation „Arya Samaj“ in 1875: a society that tried to promote a pure form Hinduism.

early INC was loyal to the British rulers and comprised members of the Hindu, British and Muslim communities (Kulke 287). It held annually conferences in different cities all over India, but in between these conferences almost nothing happened and there was no permanent office. The INC was an elitist organisation throughout the 19th century and only later reached out to appeal to the masses (Masselos 77). During 1905-1908 the INC experienced a split between its moderate and radical members. The two groups represented very different political views. Gangadhar Tilak, the leader of the radical Congress group, thought that *swarāj* (self-government), was the ultimate goal and justified the use of to reach this goal. The moderate Congress group, led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale, thought that negotiations were the better political method (see Edwardes 374f). Although the INC has always underlined its secular ideology, Muslim members soon began to feel sceptical, because they saw it as a mainly Hindu organisation. This was one of the reasons why a separate party for Muslims, called the Muslim League, was founded in 1906.

The Muslim League was only concerned with rights for the Muslim community in India and although the INC was defined as a party for all Indians, no matter what religion or caste, it soon turned out as mainly concerned with Hindu issues (Kulke 288f). This was not surprising since the majority of the population on the Indian subcontinent were Hindu. According to the *General Report of the Census of India, 1901* there were about 220 million Hindus in contrast to about 62 million (395). Although it is not clear in how far we can trust this census, these figures point to the difference between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority in the early 20th century. It may help us to understand why the Muslim community doubted the possibilities of a successful political representation under this Hindu majority.

In 1905, the British divided the state of Bengal into a Hindu-majority West-Bengal and a primarily Muslim East-Bengal. The partition was allegedly necessary because of problems in administrative organisation, since Bengal was a very large and populous province⁴. It has been asserted that the British “executed this administrative act” in order to “strike at the territorial roots of the nationalist elite of Bengal” (Kulke 289). What was important for the future was the consequences of this act. As Kulke describes it, the immediate reaction to the partition of Bengal was “a furious agitation in which political terrorism became a prominent feature as young ‘Extremists’ took to the

⁴ At the beginning of the 20th century the province of Bengal comprised today’s provinces of Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Orissa and the state of Bangladesh.

cult of the pistol and the bomb” (289). On the one hand, the radical group of the INC became more prominent. On the other hand it can be assumed that the founding of the Muslim League was also a direct consequence of the Partition, because they supported this partition. In 1911 the British revoked the first Partition of Bengal and the moderate INC can be viewed as the superior, at the end of this party internal struggle (see Kulke 291).

In 1914 Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi returned to India, after fighting for the rights of Indians in South Africa. Gandhi had studied law in England and had been living most of his life in South Africa, where he was leading the movement against laws designed to push Indians out of the country. In doing so, he developed his ideas about passive resistance. The Indian political leader, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, invited Gandhi to India to help in the independence movement. In India, Gandhi revised the English name “passive resistance”, which he thought was no longer adequate, and changed it to *satyāgraha*, which derives from the Sanskrit words *satya* (truth) and *āgraha* (firmness) (Gandhi 284). The ideology of *satyāgraha* was also based on the idea of *āhiṃsa* (non-violence) and characterised by a careful analysis of the situation, public announcements of demands and non-violent demonstrations. For *satyāgraha* the actor had to be patient, respectful and willing to negotiate.

Although Gandhi’s anti-British sentiments only emerged when he returned to India, they soon intensified. In the first years after his return to India he did not act politically, but used his time for travelling and to understand the people and issues. Gandhi’s main concerns became the political situation of ‘Untouchables’, peasants, women and the impoverished members of India’s population. Gandhi was one of the first politicians who travelled through rural and poor areas of India trying to identify the needs of the general population. With time, he was able to mobilise a mass-movement and, with his leadership, the INC could really call itself an all-Indian party (Nehru 360).

Gandhi engaged a new strategy to gain *swarāj*. As a pacifist he introduced three plans for non-violent agitation. First, he introduced a ‘non-cooperation movement’. The main features of this movement were: to reject and return honours and titles bestowed by the British on Indians and, boycott the next election. Specific groups were also involved. Students should boycott British schools and universities, barristers resign from British law courts, and police officers and soldiers end their services (Kulke 295). The idea was that the British would be forced to leave the country if the Indian people were no longer cooperating with them. A second plan was to gain economic

independence from the British, because the colonial power controlled almost the entire economy on the subcontinent. It was argued that if the British could not gain economic profits, there would be no reason for them to stay in India. Therefore Gandhi promoted the production of Indian-made cloth and boycotting British cloth. Another product that should no longer be bought from British shops was alcohol, for both political and moral purposes. Gandhi's third plan was to encourage civil disobedience as soon as the colonial power starts to disintegrate. Civil disobedience was the complete boycott of foreign products, the refusal to pay taxes and the contempt for laws. Although Gandhi's ideology was aligned with non-violence, the movement took a violent turn and he was arrested in 1922 (Kulke 297). It became clear that *swarāj* would not be obtained soon.

After Gandhi's release from prison in 1924 the political scene had changed noticeably. The drift between Hindus and Muslims had increased and the non-cooperation movement had almost completely ceased. In the following years Gandhi's political engagement remained mainly in the background. Jawaharlal Nehru, who became India's first prime minister, was declared president of the INC in 1929 and 1930. In 1930, Gandhi started his most famous *satyāgraha* campaign: the 'Salt March'. His aim was to break Britain's monopoly on salt. Gandhi, together with his supporters, marched to the Indian Ocean in order to, symbolically, make salt from the sea and break the law. This movement had great influence on the whole independence movement and many people started to make their own salt and join the protest against the British (Edwardes 380).

Finally in mid-1930, the British government suggested a conference to discuss constitutional reforms in India. The 'First Round Table Conference' was held in November 1930 in London, but no delegates from the INC were present. For the 'Second Round Table Conference' Gandhi was sent as the sole delegate from the INC. Before he came to London, he concluded a political agreement with Lord Irwin, who was Viceroy of India at that time. According to the 'Gandhi-Irwin-Pact' the British government agreed to set a majority of all political prisoners free, while Gandhi agreed to discontinue his *satyāgraha* movement. Although this could have been a first step to mutual understanding, Gandhi and the INC were disappointed by the conference, since no significant concerns were resolved. Therefore, most central Indian politicians were not present at the 'Third Round Table Conference' (Menon, *Transfer* 50).

In 1934 Mohammed Ali Jinnah returned to India to participate yet again in local politics. When Jinnah left for England he was disappointed with the ideas of the INC

and Gandhi's ideologies. At the beginning of the 20th century he had been an influential politician and Muslim leader. Although he was initially a member of the INC and strong believer in an independent united India, he later joined the Muslim League. After his political turnaround he intended to re-organise the Muslim League and was elected as its permanent president. Although he was formerly known as 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity' (Ahmad 346), he began to advocate for Muslim identity. In contrast to the INC, the Muslim League had not yet become a popular political party. In 1937, Jinnah began speaking to larger audiences and changed from his Western fashion to traditional clothes and. Gradually the Muslim League attracted more members.

During this time Jinnah developed the idea of a separate country for Muslims. This thought was mainly influenced by two ideas. One of them was Choudhary Rahmat Ali's "concept of a separate Indian Muslim political entity", which he named Pakistan. He derived the name by drawing letters from the provinces that had a Muslim majority or close to it: Pnjab, Afghan Province⁵, Kashmir, Sindh and Baluchistan (see Ali 3). At the same time Pakistan can mean 'land of the pure' (consisting of *pak* 'pure' and *stan* 'land') in Persian (see Cohen 26). The second influential idea was the 'Two-Nation Theory', which provided the basis for claiming Partition. This theory argued that Hindus and Muslims could not live together in one nation, but each deserved their own state. Although Muslims and Hindus had lived together peacefully on the Indian subcontinent for several centuries, it was claimed that their differences were too prominent in order to guarantee a peaceful future. This theory had been developed by Muhammad Iqbal in 1930, but Jinnah made it into a political theory of a nation-state (see Cohen 28ff). In 1940, at a conference in Lahore, Jinnah explained his thoughts on a separate Muslim nation:

[...] it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality [...] The Hindus and the Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together and indeed they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. [...] To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built for the government of such a state. (qtd. in Moore 546f)

After Jinnah declared his idea about separate countries for Muslims and Hindus (together with the Sikh community) the political agenda for the Muslim League was

⁵ This province was also called North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and nowadays it is known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

determined. In the years leading up to Independence and Partition the INC and Muslim League diverged completely.

When Great Britain joined World War Two in September 1939, Viceroy Lord Linlithgow declared India's participation in the war without consulting any Indian politicians. The INC tried to negotiate India's independence after the end of the war, but Churchill did not consent. Therefore the INC ministries resigned in most provinces, which "deprived the Congress of all influence on the conduct of Indian politics during the war" (Kulke 309). In 1942, Churchill sent a delegation led by Sir Stafford Cripps to seek a compromise with Indian nationalist leaders, especially Gandhi and Jinnah. The so-called 'Cripps Mission' was a failure, since Cripps' task was mainly to promise dominion status and not complete Independence for India at the end of the war (see Talbot 35). The INC was disappointed and launched the 'Quit India Movement'⁶. As Talbot describes it, this was "the most serious threat to British rule in India since the 1857 revolt." (Talbot 35). Inspired by a number of Gandhi's speeches and ideas the 'Quit India Resolution' was passed. This resolution argued for an "immediate recognition of Indian freedom and the ending of British rule in India" (Nehru 477) and proclaimed acts of passive resistance and mass protests on a national level. The British immediately imprisoned almost the entire INC leadership until the end of the war and thus, contained this announced challenge (see Edwardes 381). This gave Jinnah and his Muslim League the opportunity to act more freely on their agenda.

In 1945, when the war was almost over, the situation in India gradually eased. At a conference in Simla, Viceroy Wavell met with influential Indian leaders to discuss a new plan for India's self-government, but, again, no general acceptance could be discerned. In Britain, Churchill lost the election and Clement Attlee became the new prime minister. As one of Nehru's friends, he was interested in the subcontinent's future and declared to help India gain independence. Attlee dispatched the 'Cabinet Mission' to India with the task of finding a solution for the transfer of power between England and India. Finally, the mission constructed a proposal:

[T]he establishment of an All-India Union government whose powers would be limited to defence and foreign affairs. All remaining powers were to reside in the provinces which would be free to form three groups: section A that included Madras, Bombay, the Central Provinces, UP and Bihar; and sections B and C that comprised the Muslim-majority regions of north-west and north-east India." (Talbot 40)

⁶ The 'Quit India Movement' is sometimes also known as 'August Movement'.

While the INC was in favour of a united India, the Muslim League preferred the second proposal. Nevertheless, Jinnah was still open to the idea of a united India as long as the rights of the Muslim population could be secured. In the course of the discussion of the Cabinet Mission's proposals it came to a temporary solution for a modified plan of a united India. As a result, the Muslim League felt excluded and rejected all proposals of the Cabinet Mission. Jinnah's reaction was to declare a 'Direct Action Day' on August 16th 1946. It was not clear what he intended, but in addition to several peaceful demonstrations in major cities, Calcutta became the scene of a violent riot. Hundred (some sources say thousands) were killed and parts of the city devastated by looting and fires (Kulke 319). There was no sign of intervention or offer to help from the side of the British during these three days of riot. After Calcutta had perceived this impact of hate between Muslims and Hindus, the violence spread to the rest of the country. Gandhi tried to re-unite India, but he failed. Mistrust and hatred had already penetrated the two religious communities superabundantly.

In February 1947 the British declared they would leave India by June 1948, but there was still no agreement about how to give India to the Indians. Lord Mountbatten was appointed 'Viceroy of India' and instructed to prepare the final transfer of power between India and Great Britain. The British had lost control when tensions between religious communities started to increase, but Lord Mountbatten had the reputation of being a decisive leader and it was hoped that he could settle Britain's withdrawal from India. While the INC and its leaders Gandhi and Nehru supported a united India, the Muslim League and Jinnah argued the case for two separate nations, India and Pakistan. Mountbatten and the British had to make a decision acceptable to everybody (Edwardes 384). Mountbatten first tried to persuade Jinnah to accept an independent Indian unity and offered him the position of the first Indian prime minister, but Jinnah did not renounce his wish for separation. It became clear that the Partition of the country was inevitable. Even Nehru started to accept that it was impossible to enforce a united country. He wrote:

Unity is always better than disunity, but an enforced unity is a sham and dangerous affair, full of explosive possibilities. Unity must be of the mind and heart, a sense of belonging together and of facing together those who attack it. I am convinced that there is that basic unity in India, but it has been overlaid and hidden to some extent by other forces. These latter may be temporary and artificial and may pass off, but they count to-day and no man can ignore them. (526f)

On June 3rd 1947 Mountbatten announced the date for Partition of the country and the final retreat of the British. The date he chose was August 15th 1947, which left less than two months for the final plans. The population panicked, because the borders of the new countries had not been decided yet. The violence between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs began, especially in the provinces of Punjab and Bengal. Many areas did not have a clear religious majority and people were unsure what to do. Although Jinnah's aspiration for a divided country was based on religious grounds he appealed to the populations of Muslim-majority regions to protect non-Muslims who had every right to stay in future Pakistan. On August 11th he explained in a speech:

You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State. (28)

He had “hoped for a large Pakistan containing a considerable non-Muslim population because that would guarantee that the Muslims left behind in India would not fall victim to Hindu majoritarianism” (Talbot 58). However, some of the provinces were divided⁷ and mass migrations of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs happened, because they were afraid of staying in a country with a different religious majority group. This and other consequences of Partition will be further discussed, in the following sub-chapter.

While the preparations for the transfer of power were in full swing, the issue of new borders was still unresolved. The man chosen for the task of drawing the boundary lines for the new nations was Sir Cyril Radcliff, who had never been to India. For drawing these new borders he needed to consider what religion was in majority in each district, as well as railway connections, river systems and the princely states. The princely states had been semi-autonomous states interspersed with the territories under British control. During colonial rule they had been allowed to deal with their own affairs in return for loyalty to the British Crown. Although the princes thought they could decide which country they want to join, the British did not allow them this choice.

On August 14th Mountbatten and Jinnah declared Pakistan's Independence in Karachi, while India's Independence was declared on August 15th 1947 by Mountbatten and Nehru in Delhi. Jinnah became Pakistan's first Governor General and is generally known as ‘Quaid-i-Azam’ (Great Leader), the founder of Pakistan. In independent India Mountbatten stayed as Governor General and Nehru became first Prime Minister. The

⁷ The provinces that were divided were Punjab and Bengal. Pakistan received East Punjab and West Bengal while India obtained West Punjab and East Bengal.

new boundary stayed a secret till after Independence and was announced only on August 17th 1947. Mass migrations and violence continued for several months and made the partition of India and Pakistan one of the most brutal events in modern history. Even 65 years after Partition, the consequences and effects are still visible and the mistrust between India and Pakistan has not abated. Three wars between India and Pakistan⁸ since Partition have increased the mistrust between the countries.

1.2 Social Dimension

Partition was not only a political circumstance, but mainly a “cultural trauma” (Kabir 180) for the population living in India at that time. A conglomerate of people with different cultures, languages and religions had been living on the Indian subcontinent for centuries. They had been neighbours, friends and colleagues and a mutual religious respect distinguished the Indian society. This unity was broken when the country was divided. “Twelve million people were displaced as a result of Partition. Nearly one million died. Some 75,000 women were raped, kidnapped, abducted, forcibly impregnated by men of the ‘other’ religion, thousands of families were split apart, homes burnt down and destroyed, villages abandoned.” (Butalia, *Silence* 35). It is impossible to imagine the horrors for most people on the subcontinent at that time. Partition was also a long time neglected in history writing and many stories have been forgotten. Therefore the freshly emerged research on Partition biographies and social studies is very helpful in order to understand this crucial era of India’s and Pakistan’s history.

It is important to note that the social history of Partition is mainly an oral history, transmitted from individual eye-witnesses. This also means that there is not one single memory about Partition, but a wide range of different stories. Especially the history of women’s experiences was only recently written down. The topic of women’s roles in Partition history will be further elaborated in the following chapters. Since the individual experiences are very important to grasp the dimensions of the impacts of Partition, several eye-witness accounts will be used in order to illustrate a variety of those experiences.

The political Partition of drawing new borders and creating independent nations did also subvert social harmony. As the countries were divided on the grounds of

⁸ The wars of 1947-1948 and 1965 focused on the disputed region of Kashmir. The war of 1971 about East Pakistan resulted in Bangladesh’s Independence.

religious matters, the population too became more aware of their (religious) differences. As Hartnack observes “whereas religious affiliation had hardly been a public feature in South Asia prior to colonial rule, suddenly religion began to play an essential role in South Asian politics.” (245). In one of Butalia’s interviews a man with the name Murdad remembers:

In the past Hindus and Muslims lived like brothers, and looked after each other. Even a big landlord would offer all kinds of help when a poor menial worker was getting married. [...] But when Partition took place, everything got turned upside down. [...] So they started hating each other. There was such harmony before this – the poor could enter a rich house and ask for lassi...

Now a line has been drawn, Borders have been demarcated. We are here and they are there. (*Silence* 231f)

Before Partition, there was not always a clear cut boundary between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and they had been living side by side for many generations. People with different religions had often shared religious holidays, festivals and customs. However, in the course of the independence movement and the emphasis on religious differences, people became aware of their dissimilarities and riots, based on religious affiliation, emerged (Hartnack 246, BBC).

It was no longer possible for members of different religious communities to live together and a vast number of people had to leave their homeland or were expelled from their houses. The unforeseen violence caused by riots and attacks constituted a prominent trauma for the populations and many people were also traumatised by the loss of their homeland, on which their families had often lived for many centuries. Even nowadays many survivors have the feeling that the country they had fled to and in which they could establish a safe new home was still foreign to them (Nandy 324).

Many mass migrations occurred especially in the provinces that were divided: Punjab and Bengal. Hindu minorities from East Bengal and West Punjab migrated to safer regions of the newly proclaimed Indian national state and Muslims from former Indian regions of West Bengal and East Punjab migrated to the recently founded state of Pakistan⁹. People used every means of transportation to leave for a hopefully better place: if families had enough money, they went by aeroplane or ship, others went by car or train, but the majority simply walked to the borders. Sometimes they had bullock

⁹ At that time Pakistan consisted of two parts: West Pakistan and East Pakistan, divided by several hundred kilometres of the Indian nation state. Nowadays West Pakistan is formerly known as Pakistan and East Pakistan, that gained Independence in 1971, is called Bangladesh.

carts, horses or camels to accompany them and help them carry along some possessions, but often people left only with a minimum of belongings.

Those caravans of migrating people were sometimes up to four or five miles long and are called *kalifas* or columns (Nandy 308). In some cases the *kafilas* were accompanied by police force or military sepoys¹⁰, who tried to ward the migrants from plunderers and marauders, but according to the masses of migrants those police forces were too small and could scarcely provide protection. A Muslim eye-witness describes the situation as following:

The column was guarded by a few military sepoys. It was ten or twelve deep, the women and children walking in the centre, flanked on either side by men. Groups of armed Sikhs stood about in the fields on either side of the road. Every now and again one of these groups would make a sudden sally at the column of Muslims, drag out two or three women and run away with them. In the process they would kill or injure the Muslims who tried to resist them. The military sepoys did not make a serious attempt to beat off these attacks. By the time the column arrived at Jullunder almost all the women and young girls had been kidnapped in this manner. (qtd. in Nandy 308)

Walking along with one of these *kalifas* was definitely not a safe way to travel.

The migrations started during the months of July and August, the hottest months on the subcontinent. Apart from attacks by hostile communities, many people died on their way because of a lack of food, water and hygiene. While the independent states of India and Pakistan had not established any humanitarian aid yet, the British tried to refrain from too much interference in Partition matters. Wajahat Husain, who was working as an army officer at that time, accompanied one of these caravans. He explained that there were no medical arrangements or transport arrangements and only very few troops, who escorted the migrants. People had to walk 15 to 20 miles per day and, after a short while, they got very exhausted (BBC 1:24:00). He further explains the people's despair:

First they used to start throwing their bag or whatever they were carrying, everybody, whatever little they had to carry. After three four days they used to gradually drop, and then they were left with just the clothes, shattered-tattered. And lastly, the mothers leaving their small babies. That was our biggest problem. And there were these crawling babies and, on the side of the road with these thousands and thousands of people just moving. It was a terrible sight. Terrible sight. (BBC 1:26:50-1:27:22)

Migrating by train was sometimes also very hazardous. Refugee trains, congested with people, travelling between India and Pakistan were also called 'trains of

¹⁰ A native of Indian employed as a soldier under European, esp. British, discipline. (OED)

death' (Menon and Bhasin, *Borders* 37). On the one hand due to the lack of hygiene, diseases could spread easily in those overcrowded trains and killed many refugees before they could reach their destination. On the other hand many of those refugee trains were frequently attacked by hostile communities, who killed every person on board. There are several reports of trains that reached their destination full of corpses¹¹.

In most cases people had already experienced violence and hatred in their ancestral villages or cities, before they actually migrated. They often did not know how to cope with this sudden rise of hatred and suspicion from their neighbours and, sometimes even friends. In many villages different religious communities had been living together for many generations and suddenly they started to turn against each other. It was repeatedly a surprising experience for the people that former friends and neighbours unexpectedly became their enemies. There are many reports of armed groups looting neighbouring villages and people with a different religious affiliation. Especially in provinces with no clear-cut religious majority, people often tried to expel or kill other communities, in order to establish this religious majority themselves and thus, to ensure that their ancestral villages will be on the 'right side' of the border. Since the exact demarcation was not announced until August 17th 1947 (some days after both countries had reached Independence) people lived in constant fear that their homeland will be given to the 'wrong country', where they would be a religious minority.

Apart from the communal violence, there are also many stories about members of hostile communities helping their 'enemies' and saving their lives (Nandy 317). Those 'selfless helpers' accommodated and assisted people, no matter what their religion was, and even defended them against their own religious community. Chaos had divided India's population, but some individuals and families were not impressed by the onward religious hatred and, nevertheless, supported people in need. Nandy quotes the eye-witness account of a Hindu refugee in Bangladesh:

My sister-in-law was heavily pregnant, and the tension suddenly brought on the labour pains. There was no shelter, but finally there was an upper class Muslim family who welcomed them in. The ... people were still the same; [...] She was [...] dressed in the dress and anklets [*paijeb*] of the daughter-in-law of the house... Her hair was rearranged too – she was made into a member of the family without hesitation. (317)

Many survivors remember one or several people who resisted the inter-communal violence. Although occurrences similar to the one described above happened, they were

¹¹ A very interesting novel about this topic is Kushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (first published in 1956).

an exception. Far more survivors remember a continuous upsurge of violence against their own religion. In the cities, mobs destroyed whole districts by looting and setting fire to them. Also in the villages, specific groups of people were expelled, looted and killed.

To avoid this hostility, mainly two possibilities existed: to flee from the homeland (as I have already described above) or convert to the enemy's (or a 'neutral'¹²) religion. Conversion was a legitimate mean to defend one's 'permission' to stay in a certain area, but many people preferred to either flee or being killed, before embracing another religion. Women did not often have a choice, because if they had been abducted they consequently were forced to convert.

The violence against women was especially atrocious¹³. Women did not only experience cruelty from their enemies, but often also from their own families. Violence against women from hostile communities involved, among others, abductions, rapes, mutilations and murder. Violence from within the family was seen as "permissible violence against women" (Menon and Bhasin, *Borders* 137) and mainly served to 'protect' the women's and the families' honour. A woman who was touched or raped by another man was regarded as dishonoured and consequently also her whole family was dishonoured. Therefore, women were either killed by their male relatives and husbands or committed suicide. It was believed that those women died an "honourable death", because it was prevented that they would fall into their enemies' hands and they were spared even more violence. In Butalia's book *The Other Side Of Silence* Bir Bahadur Singh, an elderly Sikh, painfully remembers the day on which his father and uncle killed all the women of the family:

[...] my sister came and sat in front of my father, and I stood there, right next to him, clutching onto his kurta¹⁴ as children do. I was clinging to him ... but when my father swung the kirpan¹⁵ (vaar kita) perhaps some doubt or fear came into his mind, or perhaps the kirpan got stuck in her dupatta ... no one can say. It was such a frightening, such a fearful scene. Then my sister, with her own hand she removed her plait and pulled it forward ... and my father with his own hands moved her dupatta¹⁶ aside and then he swung the kirpan and her head and neck rolled off and fell ... there ... far away. I crept downstairs, weeping, sobbing and

¹² A 'neutral' religion was, for example, Christianity. More or less every religion, except Hinduism, Islam or Sikhism, was a 'neutral' religion.

¹³ The fate of women will be shortly discussed in this chapter as it is important to understand the whole social dimension, but I will analyse the women's role during Partition in fiction in more detail in the following chapters.

¹⁴ A loose shirt or tunic worn by men and women.(OED)

¹⁵ The sword or dagger worn by Sikhs as a religious symbol. (OED)

¹⁶ A doubled or two-layered length of cloth worn by women as scarf, veil, or shoulder wrap. (OED)

all the while I could hear the regular swing and hit of the kirpans ... twenty-five girls were killed, they were cut. (163)

It was not seen as a crime to kill women in order to 'protect' them. A woman without male protection was defenceless and at the mercy of her attackers. A raped woman was regarded as dishonoured and could often not continue a normal life within her community. It frequently happened that those women remained outcasts of their own family, because they had been 'polluted' by another man and another religion.

Another fate many women had to endure was abduction. Women who had been abducted were either sold and/or integrated into a different community, which involved the conversion to a different religion and the marriage to their abductors. They were separated from their families and communities and were commonly forced to live in the 'wrong' countries. After the painful aftermath of Partition subsided, organisations were founded in both countries, to recover missing women from the other side of the border. For several reasons this was a very difficult endeavour. First, many women could not be found, because nobody exactly knew what had happened to them. If they had been abducted, there existed no information where they had been brought to and with whom they were living. Second, if women were recovered, they often did not want to leave their current family, because of various reasons. A third problem occurred, when those recovered women were rejected by their paternal families, because they were believed to be impure and dishonoured. Then, those women had no longer any home and often had to live in refugee camps.

During that time, refugee camps were built on both sides of the borders. They sheltered many people, who did no longer have a home, but unfortunately there was often not enough space, food and medical supplies for the enormous amount of refugees. Refugee workers were very often also traumatised by the whole situation. It was a very difficult time for everybody on the subcontinent.

It is clearly visible that the Partition of British India into two separate nation states had a huge effect on the population. The socio-historical background of that time will be important for the analysis of the selected literature in the following chapters. Before an analysis can be started some important theories and ideas have to be explained. This will be done in the subsequent two chapters.

2. The genre of Partition novels

The previous chapter should have made it fairly obvious that the traumatic experience of Partition impressed South Asia's population immensely. Therefore it is not be surprising that many books have been written about this event, academic and literary. Broderick and Traverso remark about the artistic representation of trauma in general: "During the past one hundred years or so the depiction of traumatic historical events and experiences has been a recurrent theme in the work of artists and media professionals, including those in literature, theatre, visual art, architecture, cinema, and television [...]" (1). This quote highlights the general artistic approach towards traumatic events. However, this chapter concentrates only on the literary response to the trauma of Partition in South Asia.

Partition novels can be classified as 'historical novel', 'political fiction' or 'topical novel' (Shaikh 1), but in a South Asian context 'Partition fiction' or 'Partition novels' are categorized as a genre of its own, since the variety of fiction concerned with the topic of Partition is vast and multifaceted.

In South Asia the literary reaction to Partition occurred mainly in two phases (Sanga 244ff): an immediate response and a later response. Govind Nikhalani (qtd. in Sanga 244) differentiates these two phases by attributing an "emotionally intense" and personal character to the first phase and a more objective, reflective character with less emotional detachment to the second phase.

Novels and poetry about Partition have been written in indigenous languages (such as Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, etc), as well as, in English. Among some of the most important and famous Partition novels in English are:

- *Train to Pakistan* by Kushwant Singh (1956) that describes mainly the situation in a village, Mano Majra, where people first do not know much about Partition, but after the arrival of one of the so-called "trains of death", violence breaks out.
- *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie (1980) is probably the best known Partition novel, after it received the Booker Prize in 1981. It is centred on the protagonist and narrator of the story, Saleem Sinai, who was born in the night of India's Independence.
- *Ice-Candy Man/Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa (1988/1991) was later adapted by Indian-Canadian director Deepa Mehta as the film *Earth* (1998). The plot

revolves around a young Parsee girl who witnesses the growing violence and community hatred in her hometown Lahore.

- *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh (1988) is not primarily concerned with the events of Partition, but tries to explain how the death of a person in a riot is a “far-reaching consequence of this long-ago event of 1947” (Roy 114). This story is set in Bengal and thus describes the situation in that province (East Bengal became East Pakistan and later Bangladesh), while most Partition novels are set in Punjab and (West) Pakistan.
- *Azadi* by Chaman Nahal (1975) “depicts in photographic detail” (More 102) the period from June 1947 till Gandhi’s death in January 1948 “with reference to a Hindu family, as they journey from Sialkot in Pakistan to Delhi, the capital of India” (ibid. 102).

The most important works of fiction on Partition in other languages than English are: Saadat Hasan Manto’s short stories and his novel *Toba Tek Singh* (1955), Amrita Pritam’s *Pinjar* (The Skeleton 1950), *Tamas* (Darkness, 1974) by Bhisham Sahni or the autobiography *Ali Pur Ka Aeeli* (1961) by Mumtaz Mufti.

Since the struggles during Partition were mainly centred in Northern India most Partition novel authors originate from the Northern provinces and also their stories are concerned with the situation of this region. However, some Partition novels from South Indian novelists exist. In his book *The Novels on the Indian Partition*, More devotes a whole chapter to Partition novels from South India (160-209).

Although the majority of Partition novelists are men, several woman writers have written about this topic. Apart from the novels that are discussed in this paper, some important English language Partition novels by female authors are: *The Heart Divided* (1959) by Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, *The Night of the Seven Dawns* (1979) by Anita Kumar, *Shadows of Time* (1987) by Mehr Masroor, *Yatra* (1988) by Nina Sibal, *Meatless Days* (1989) by Sara Suleri, *The Raj* (1989) by Gita Mehta, *The River Churning* (1998) by Jyotirmoyee Devi, *Difficult Daughters* (1999) by Manju Kapur and *The Pakistani Bride* (2008) by Bapsi Sidhwa.

All the books I have introduced in this chapter deal with the theme of Partition either marginally or wholly and they only represent a selection of novels dealing with Partition.

After the introduction of this specific genre, the next chapter will focus on postcolonial and feminist theories that are important for the literary analyses in this diploma thesis.

3. Feminist Postcolonialism/Postcolonial Feminism

Feminism and Postcolonialism¹⁷ are two theoretical approaches that share some common features, mainly “the mutual goal of challenging forms of oppression” (McLeod 199). Feminism can be defined as “campaign[ing] against the political and social inequalities between men and women” (Longhurst et al. 82). Thus, feminism is concerned with the repeal of patriarchal oppression. The definition of postcolonialism is not exactly clear-cut, but McLeod states that: “postcolonialism may well aim to oppose colonialist representations and values” (41). He mainly highlights that postcolonialism involves critical readings of people from once colonised countries and their Diasporas, as well as re-reading texts produced during colonialism (40), but this critical involvement should question the ways in which colonialism and colonist ideas influenced those texts.

In postcolonial studies one subcategory is mainly concerned with feminist approaches. Rajan and Park define the combination of postcolonialism and feminism in the following way: It “[...] is an exploration of and at the intersections of colonialism and neo-colonialism with gender, nation, class, race and sexualities in the different contexts of women’s lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality and rights.” (53).

Although in academic literature this branch is mainly called ‘Postcolonial Feminism’ (Rajan) or simply ‘Postcolonialism and Feminism’ (McLeod), I believe that too many aspects fall into this category. Therefore it should be differentiated between ‘Postcolonial Feminism’ and ‘Feminist Postcolonialism’. I would argue that these two terms designate different approaches, which are often conflated in academic discussions. In this paper the second approach, ‘Feminist Postcolonialism’, will become very useful for the analysis of selected literary works, but, nevertheless, both approaches should be kept in mind.

¹⁷ In this paper the spelling of postcolonialism will be in this way, according to McLeod’s argumentation: “The hyphenated term ‘post-colonial’ seems better suited to denote a particular historical period or epoch, like those suggested by phrases such as ‘after colonialism’ [...] we will be thinking about postcolonialism [...] as referring to disparate forms of representations, reading practices, attitudes and values. These principally aesthetic phenomena can circulate across the historical border between colonial rule and national independence” (5f).

The first term ‘Postcolonial Feminism’ has a strong focus on the differentiation between ‘first world woman’¹⁸ and ‘third world woman’¹⁹ and how this so-called ‘third world woman’ can be represented (McLeod 213, Morton 71ff, Rajan 53ff). The western feminist idea of a ‘universal woman’ (Rajan 54) got rejected by women living in non-western countries. They thought it was impossible to equate all women of this world, because, depending on their origins, histories and cultures, they are occupied with different concerns. Western feminists believe that their gender qualifies them to speak for all women of this world, but they forget that culture and ethnicity also plays a substantial role for identity. This means that there exists no ‘universal feminism’, a feminism that can be applied correspondingly to every woman. Therefore, women from former colonised countries, need to develop their own feminism. It was criticised that first world feminists often try to represent these ‘third world woman’ and try to speak for her, thus disempowering them even further and repudiating their right for self-representation. (McLeod 197ff, Morton 71ff or Rajan 53ff).

‘Postcolonial Feminism’ poses questions like: What is the difference between ‘first world woman’ and ‘third world woman’? Do they have different concerns? Are western feminists qualified to speak for women from former colonised countries? What is the role of the academic ‘third world woman’ educated in the West?

The second term ‘Feminist Postcolonialism’ is more concerned with feminist ideas and representations within the context of (post)colonialism. As we have already seen at the beginning of this chapter, both postcolonialism and feminism share the goal to discover oppressions. In this second approach the scholar’s aim is to unravel reciprocal actions of (post)colonialism and feminism. An argument posed is that women in colonised countries experience a “double colonisation” (a phrase used by Petersen and Rutherford, qtd. in McLeoden 201). McLeoden (201) uses this term, in accordance with Petersen, in order “to refer to the ways in which women have simultaneously experienced the oppression of colonialism and patriarchy. [...] women are twice colonised – by colonialist realities and representations, and by patriarchal ones too.” Another argument is that the female perspective has been excluded from conventional history writing. Furthermore, female (written) accounts are retained in colonial archives

¹⁸ Women originating from so-called ‘first world countries’ or ‘developed’ countries; i.e. Europe, USA, Canada and Australia.

¹⁹ Women originating from so-called ‘third world countries’ or ‘developing’ countries. These countries are mainly former colonies that became independent in the course of the 20th century, e.g. countries in Africa, South American, the Middle East, South Asia and South East Asia.

and therefore difficult to access, because they were mainly recorded by elite social groups.

‘Feminist Postcolonialism’ raises the following questions: Does (post)colonialism oppress women, and how? If yes, are they additionally oppressed, i.e. ‘doubly colonised’? Is the (post)colonial domination different from the patriarchal oppression? How are women able to develop themselves in (post)colonial times? Do they have an agency²⁰? Do they have a voice?

The last question refers to an important essay within the fields of postcolonialism and feminism. In 1988 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, an influential Indian-American postcolonial theorist, published her essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, in which she questions the possibility of subaltern persons to articulate their concerns, i.e. she questions their ability to speak.

Spivak has borrowed and further developed the term ‘subaltern’ from Antonio Gramsci who used it interchangeably with ‘subordinate’ in the context of fascist Italy under Mussolini, describing politically unorganised rural groups of peasants (Morton 47f). ‘Subaltern’ therefore designates a person who is not belonging to the hegemonic class in a social system.

In 1982 Ranajit Guha founded the “Subaltern Studies Group” whose main aim was to recover and rewrite (Indian) history from a subaltern perspective, i.e. a non-elitist perspective (Chakrabarty 471). Among other influential scholars, like Ranajit Guha, David Arnold or Gyanendra Pandey, Gayatri Spivak had also been a member of this group.

At the beginning of *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Spivak criticises the work of poststructuralist thinkers, like Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, when discussing oppressed groups (often poor peasants in rural areas). Although both theoreticians have argued that a ‘sovereign subject’ does not exist, because human consciousness is constructed discursively, i.e. from positions outside of itself, they would find mainly notions of the ‘sovereign subject’ when writing about subalterns (Spivak 68, McLeod 218). Furthermore, they would see themselves, as intellectuals, privileged to represent those subalterns (Spivak 74, Morton 46).

²⁰ „agency“ can be defined as: “[...] socially determined capability to act and to make a difference. Agency has commonly been associated with notions of freedom, free will, action, creativity, originality and the possibility of change brought about through the actions of sovereign individuals.” (Barker 4)

Spivak's primary issue is whether subalterns have a voice to formulate their own concerns. She draws from the example of the ancient Indian ritual of *satī*²¹, in which the wife follows her deceased husband onto the pyre and immolates herself with his corpse. In this context, Spivak elucidates that a vast amount of colonial texts had been written about this topic and the British took this "barbaric"²² ritual as one of their main justifications for their "colonial mission" (Mani 127, Morton 63). Nevertheless, those texts were written *about* women and not *by* women. Additionally, legal measures were introduced by colonial men, *without* asking indigenous women, who were mainly affected by those laws.

In this example the woman is clearly subaltern and without agency. First, in writings about *satī* the woman's feelings and wishes are not considered. Only the woman's actions in this ritual are reported, but not how she feels or thinks about it. Second, by introducing laws that declare *satī* illegal²³ and prohibiting women from conducting this ritual, again, the female perspective on this topic was neglected²⁴.

Taking these considerations into account Spivak "[...] put together the sentence 'White men are saving brown women from brown men' [...]" (92). This sentence illustrates the 'double colonisation' of women, who are first oppressed in their own society (i.e. subordinate to 'brown men') and second subjugated by colonial rule (i.e. subordinate to 'white men').

For this paper the notion of woman as being subaltern is most interesting. Spivak claims that women in colonised countries are subalterns on the lowest level. For women it is not exactly important what class she belongs to, but she is automatically subaltern because of the notion of gender. Since hegemonic societies are almost always patriarchal, i.e. male centred, the woman is regarded as subaltern. Therefore, Spivak claims: "For the 'figure' of woman, the relationship between woman and silence can be plotted by women themselves; race and class differences are subsumed under that charge" (82). Drawing on the idea of 'double colonisation' that was mentioned earlier,

²¹ In the British context this is most often transcribed as "suttee" or translated as "widow immolation".

²² In most eye-witness accounts of *satī*, this ritual is condemned as "barbaric" (Fisch 386, 448, etc.)

²³ The ritual of *satī* was abolished by the British in 1829.

²⁴ There exists no agreement whether *satī* was committed out of free will or by coercion. Most probably both possibilities are valid. In some cases women were coerced to die with their deceased husband, because of economic or other reasons, in other cases women chose to immolate themselves of their own accord. Nevertheless, in the latter case, it is often questioned what 'free will' actually means. First, because the religious indoctrination of women started at an early age, convincing women of their subordinate status towards their husband and the religious merits they will gain by committing *satī*. Second, because the alternative was to continue life as a widow, which means that they had to lead the life of an ascetic, were rejected from their families and considered as outcasts from society (Sarasvati 100ff, Chakravarti, Chen).

Spivak argues further: “If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow” (83).

Most hegemonic history writings mainly concentrate on men and leave out women’s experiences. This is one of the reasons why it is not surprising that women are considered as ‘subaltern’. Spivak comes to the conclusion: “[t]he subaltern as female cannot be heard or read. [...] [t]he subaltern cannot speak” (104). Of course this is not meant literally, but the subaltern as female cannot be heard, because her words are counted as less important and the listeners do not know how to construe her words. Their voices cannot be heard, because they were not acknowledged in official historical discourses.

The female perspective of Partition history had not been (academically) researched until 40 to 50 years after this traumatic event. Only recently female scholars, especially Urvashi Butalia (1998), Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin (2000), took up the topic of female experiences during Partition. For their research they conducted a series of interviews with eye-witnesses and compiled them in their books as objectively as possible. Through this research the reader can get an overview and clear insight in the traumatic struggles some women had to suffer, but also how they have tried to come to terms with their past.

In their books the reader gets to know that women were not only excluded from historical discourses, because men are regarded as main actors of history, but they actually did not want to participate. The authors frequently report about women, who had never spoken about their experiences and who had to be persuaded that their stories were important and an integral part of South Asian history. Although it is true that conventional history most often tells only political and historical events conducted by a few historical key figures, mainly (male) elitist politicians and leaders, the (hi)stories of ordinary people and the consequences of those events on their lives is not considered in the main historical discourse. Therefore it is not surprising that nearly all historical research about Partition does not examine women’s experiences and stories.

Literary texts can be very important because they provide (postcolonial) writers with a different space to articulate subaltern women’s voices (Morton 55). As we have already seen, South Asian literature features a whole genre dedicated to Partition, in which the reader can sometimes get more personal insights. In novels it is often the case that a more direct approach is employed. Since many Partition victims did not want to speak or think about their experiences, literature is a comprehensive source about the

social conditions of that time. For authors of literary 'fiction' it is also sometimes easier to criticise certain conditions and write 'more freely' about politics and history. Menon and Bhasin comment on this observation: "Partition fiction has been a far richer source both because it provides popular and astringent commentary on the politics of Partition and because, here and there, we find women's voices, speaking for themselves."

(*Borders* 11f). In Partition novels stories of ordinary people are told and in many cases women form an integral part of these stories. In several Partition novels, especially those written by female authors, women are appointed an agency and a voice, with which they can actively participate in the historical discourse of Partition. We will analyse women's agency, their representation and involvement in Partition in the subsequent chapters.

The following analyses will be embedded within the theoretical approaches of postcolonialism and feminism. In regard to 'Feminist Postcolonialism' the analyses should help to uncover women's 'double colonisation', as well as to discover their agency and voice under the rule of colonialism. Concerning 'Postcolonial Feminism', the biography of the author will become a central focus of discussion. It should become clear that the representation of 'third world women' issues, mediated through these women writers originating in the 'third world', gives the reader clear insights into their concerns. Unfortunately there are no Partition novels written by western women, as far as my research has shown, and therefore, it is not possible to compare them.

Partition had an enormous impact on South Asian societies and evoked many different kinds of traumata. Society itself was deeply traumatized and it is handing on this trauma from generation to generation (i.e. intergenerational trauma), so that it still affects people today. This form of collective trauma has percolated deep into South Asia's populations and makes everybody a partaker in their countries' traumatic history. Hence, even today authors with South Asian origins (also those living in the Diaspora) can be regarded as partakers and are regarded as authentic mediators of their countries' and populations' traumata.

4. Women as victims

The first concept that will be analysed in this paper is the representation of women as victims in Partition novels. In chapter 1.2 it was already addressed that women had to suffer a variety of atrocities during Partition. Women were mainly regarded as the 'weakest link' by rival groups and, this was the reason why they were frequently the main focus of attacks. As the 'weaker gender', they had to be protected by their husbands and male relatives, but regularly those men decided their female relative's fate over their heads.

To illustrate the representation of women as victims in Partition literature I have chosen the novel *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa. But before starting to analyse this literary work, I will give a short introduction on specific female issues at the time of Partition.

4.1 Violence against women during Partition

Although Partition in general was accompanied by a huge wave of violence, the atrocities against women were probably the most horrible ones. Some of the aggressions against women were already mentioned above, but this subchapter should give a closer insight into the female hardships during this troubled time. This is particularly important, because history had always been written by men (and often also for men). Since women have not written about their (hi)stories as much as men did, there are certainly many chapters missing in our world's history. By trying to recover women's perspectives, these gaps should be closed and a more objective version of history should be attained.

Butalia and Menon/Bhasin are the richest source of women's stories during Partition. They conducted many interviews with eye-witnesses and academically researched this topic area. In their books they also explain what (personal) problems they encountered while enquiring about those sensitive topics and how they tried to report their findings in the most ethical way, i.e. treating their subject's stories with respect and being considerate.

Violence against women attributed to Partition violence happened mainly in the year 1947, but also in the following two years many incidents occurred. Here we should differentiate between two kinds of female victims: first, women who were traumatised

by violence from ‘outside’ (i.e. from other communities or religions) and, second, women who experienced violence from ‘inside’ (i.e. from their own family members or self-inflicted violence).

Violence from ‘outside’ occurred when communities of different religious affiliations attacked each other. In those incidences women from the community under attack, were subject to “stripping; parading naked, mutilating and disfiguring; tattooing or branding the breasts and genitalia with triumphal slogans; amputating breasts; knifing open the womb; raping, of course; killing foetuses” (Menon and Bhasin, *Borders* 43), as well as, murder and abduction. All those atrocities have a symbolic meaning in regard to the male’s logic of domination and subordination: to humiliate the women, her family or their community, to desexualize women, to mark them as ‘polluted’ or to highlight that their men were unable to protect them (Menon and Bhasin, *Borders* 44, Bacchetta 572).

In many cases death was preferred to those kinds of dishonouring atrocities. One form of violence from ‘inside’ was that many women committed suicide in order to avoid being tortured, raped or abducted by an enemy. Suicides were committed, alone or as groups, in a wide variety of ways: by self-immolation, drowning themselves in the village’s well, swallowing poison, etc. The other form of community-related violence, honour killings, was already described in Chapter 1.2.

In the aftermath of Partition the problem of missing and unprotected women became an important issue for the newly founded states (Butalia *Abducted*, Menon and Bhasin *Recovery*). According to the states’ law those women were classified into two groups: ‘Unattached’ or ‘Abducted’ (Menon, *Country* 44). The first category comprised single women who were dislocated, homeless or impoverished, as well as widows. Women, who were either separated from their families while fleeing or actually kidnapped or taken hostage by a rival community, belong to the second category. The states introduced laws and launched various programs in order to recover missing women and to provide basic necessities of life for ‘unattached’ women. Similar to the example of *satī*, discussed in chapter three, those laws and programs decided *about* women *without* taking the women’s opinions into consideration. Women’s bodies (and their sexuality) were treated as state’s affair and not as the women’s private matters.

In the whole course of Partition the majority of women were deprived of their voices and thus, their agency. First, their fate was determined by their own families or

their enemies and second, if they were either ‘unattached’ or ‘abducted’, laws regulated those women’s future.

Approximately 75,000 women were widowed during the war-like conditions during Partition (Butalia, *Abducted* 97). Those ‘Partition widows’ often had no supporting families and lived in refugee camps and later women’s homes. Organisations were initiated that helped all single women to continue their lives in the new nations by attempting to make them self-reliant. The state assumed the role of a protector and guide for those women (see Butalia, *Abducted* 100).

The figures of women abducted range from 80,000 to 150,000, depending on the variety of statistics (Forbes 224). In one of her articles Butalia, who had compared various sources, lists a more precise figure: around 33,000 Hindu and Sikh women were abducted in Pakistan (sometimes the number mentioned is 50,000 if Kashmir is also taken into account), and around 21,000 Muslim women were abducted in India (see *Abducted* 93). However, the actual numbers are unknown²⁵.

The governments of India and Pakistan passed a resolution to recover and restore abducted persons, which was known as ‘The Abducted Persons (Recovery and Restoration) Bill’. Women’s groups were founded and female social workers were assigned to recover and restore abducted women. The resolution also authorized “any police officer, not below the rank of an Assistant Sub-Inspector [...]” (Menon and Bhasin, *Recovery* WS4) to enter a house, when he believes an abducted woman might be kept in it and to take this woman to a camp, even against her will. For a definite decision on the status of a woman as abducted, and where she should be sent, the tribunal constituted for the purpose by the Central Government could be consulted (ibid.).

All in all, 9,362 women in India and 5,510 women in Pakistan could be recovered (Menon and Bhasin, *Recovery* WS 4). Similar to the numbers of abducted and widowed women these figures may not fully mirror reality.

The restoration of women was in many cases not an easy task. It often took several months or years to find out about the whereabouts of a missing woman. By that time those women might have come to terms with their fates and their new lives. They might have born one or more children to their abductors and converted to another religion. It was also often the case that women were afraid of going back to their families. They feared that they would be rejected, because they had dishonoured their

²⁵ Menon on the other hand states that „[t]he official estimate of the number of abducted women was placed at 50,000 Muslim women in India and 33,000 non-Muslim women in Pakistan.“ (*Recovery* WS4).

family, community and religion. This was not only a fear, but true in many cases. Sometimes social workers or police officers made the women choose between their paternal family and their newborn children. It is also documented that pregnant women had to abort their children before being taken back to their family (Menon and Bhasin, *Border* 83). Another reason why women often refused to go with a social worker or the police was mistrust.

Those women were already deeply traumatised; they had been abducted, often raped and converted to another religion. It was extremely difficult for them to trust those social workers. One form of mistrust was the disbelief in safety. In Butalia (*Abducted* 95) the following statement from a woman to a district officer is reported: “How can I believe that your military strength of two sepoy could safely take me across to India when a hundred sepoy had failed to protect us and our people who were massacred?”. Another form of mistrust was reliability of these officers. Anis Kidwai, a social worker with Muslim refugees, remarks: “They [the abducted women] also had another fear. The people who wanted to take them away, whether they were friends or foe, how did they know that they would not sell them to others?” (Butalia, *Silence* 119).

Even though this recovery program was accompanied by many problems and doubtful situations the social workers and police had clear instructions, namely that abducted persons were to be returned to their families “whatever their own wishes may be”); their marriages were considered illegal and their children illegitimate; they could be pulled out of their homes on the strength of a policeman’s opinion that they were abducted; they could be transported out of the country without their consent; confined in camps against their wishes; have virtually no possibility of any kind of appeal [...]; and as adult women and citizens, be once again exchanged, this time between countries and by officials. (Menon and Bhasin, *Recovery* WS 10)

This ordinance denies any agency to the woman on her own behalf. It declares women as objects of men, officials and countries and they had to obey them. Menon and Bhasin (*Recovery* WS-9) criticise this conduct: “It was generally assumed that all abducted women were victims, being held captive, and wanted nothing more than to be restored to their original families as soon as possible.”

Of course, we should remind ourselves that these cases were the ‘worst case scenarios’. Sometimes women were also grateful that they were recovered and sent back to their paternal families. In the following analysis of Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Cracking India* we will have a closer look on the topic of abducted and recovered women.

4.2 *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa²⁶

The novel *Cracking India* by Bapsi Sidhwa is, undoubtedly, among the widest discussed and researched novels on India's Partition. It is definitely the most famous and important Partition novel by a South Asian woman writer. The book was originally published in Britain with the title *Ice-Candy Man* in 1988. In 1991 it was re-published in the United States with the modified title *Cracking India* (Sanga 61).

The story centres on a Parsee²⁷ family in Lahore at the time of Partition. The narrator, Lenny, is the daughter of the house. At the beginning of the narrative she is seven years old and turns eight when Pakistan becomes independent from India. On that day she coldly remarks: "I am Pakistani. In a snap. Just like that. A new nation is born. India has been divided after all. [...] Although it is my birthday no one has time for me." (150).

Lenny's parents are upper-middle class bourgeois and employ servants of multi-religious backgrounds, for example, their cook is Muslim and the gardener is Hindu. Lenny spends most of the time with her ayah²⁸ (a Punjabi Hindu girl), whose real name is Shanta (this name is mentioned only twice in the whole text 21, 38), but Lenny consistently calls her Ayah. Similar to this, many characters do not have proper names, but are called according to their professions or to some other characteristics, like Ice-candy-man, Chinaman, Godmother, Electric Aunt etc. In some cases this name is explained or is clear through the context, but sometimes the reader has to guess. This highlights the child's simple and naïve perspective.

Ayah is described as a beautiful and voluptuous eighteen-year old girl, who attracts men from every class, religion and background. While Ayah pushes the pram down the road to visit Lenny's godmother, the child observes:

²⁶ If not indicated differently, all quotes in this chapter are taken from the novel.

²⁷ The Parsees are a religious minority community, who originated in Persia/Iran and migrated to the Indian subcontinent after they were evicted by Arab invaders. Nowadays Parsees live all over the world, but the majority is still in India (and Pakistan). The Parsees had cultivated good relations to the British during colonial times. During the struggle of Independence and Partition, the Parsees remained mainly neutral. In *Cracking India* the family attends a formal meeting in which the community's political alignment is discussed: "I hope no Lahore Parsee will be stupid enough to court trouble," continues the colonel. 'I strongly advise all of you to stay at home – and out of trouble.' (45) [...] 'Let whoever wishes rule! Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian! We will abide by the rules of their land!'" (48). Since the Parsees did not participate in politics, they were not regarded as threat from the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities.

²⁸ A native-born nurse or maidservant, employed esp. by Europeans in India and other parts of South Asia (OED).

Up and down, they look at her. Stub-handed twisted beggars and dusty old beggars on crutches drop their poses and stare at her with hard, alert eyes. Holy men, masked in piety, shove aside their pretenses to ogle her with lust. Hawkers, cart-drivers, cooks, coolies and cyclists turn their heads as she passes [...] (12).

Through this beauty Ayah allures many admirers with whom she and Lenny often meet in Queen's Garden or restaurants. Among this group of admirers there are also men from different religions. As the political situation in Lahore starts becoming tense and violence rises, also this group of friends falls more and more apart.

The climax of the narrative is Ayah's abduction by a mob of Muslim men led by one of her former and most passionate admirers, Ice-candy-man. After Lenny gets separated from her Ayah she tries to find out her whereabouts, together with her cousin. Lenny feels lonely without her Ayah and also guilty of her abduction, because she is tricked by Ice-candy-man, whom she believed she could trust, and tells him where Ayah was hidden.

Towards the end of the story, Cousin and Lenny find out that Ice-candy-man had married Ayah and they live in the red light district of Lahore, where she allegedly is a professional dancer. Lenny's godmother, a very influential and powerful woman, visits Ayah and is, finally, able to extricate her from this situation. Ayah is brought to a camp for abducted women and, in the end, sent back to her family in Amritsar. Ice-candy-man is so madly in love with her that he follows her to India, because he cannot live without her any longer. This transformation from the shameless admirer to a mad kidnapper and later to the hopeless lover makes the figure of Ice-candy-man a very disputable character. Nevertheless, this paper is primarily concerned with the female representations and therefore Ice-candy-man will only be analysed in regard to Ayah's victimisation.

In *Cracking India* Sidhwa employs mainly female characters, while most male characters only have a minor role (with the exception of Ice-candy-man and, maybe, Cousin). It is also interesting to notice that women in general are not only oppressed, but several of these female characters seem to be rather empowered. Kleist (70), who has written an article about feminine power versions in this particular novel, identifies four instances of female authority: Lenny, as descriptive narrator; Ayah, as influential over men prior-Partition; Lenny's mother and aunt, as refugee helpers for abducted women; and Godmother, as nearly omnipotent with many social connections. While I agree with the last two notions, I do not completely acknowledge the first two examples as female 'power' or 'agency'.

Lenny's mother, aunt and her godmother have a privileged position through their economic and social status, as well as their neutral religion (all three of them are Parsee). Lenny's mother and aunt have the ability to help other women, who have experienced violence or have lost their family. They also help their Hindu and Sikh friends crossing the border by smuggling rationed kerosene.

Due to her social network, Godmother is able to find Ayah and helps her to leave Ice-candy-man. Throughout the story she is described as a dominant and strict person, ordering about her sister, who Lenny calls Slavesister, and maintaining her various social contacts. Although she is married, her husband does not get much attention in the narrative, clearly indicating that Godmother is the more dominant partner of this relationship.

Lenny, as narrator, does not exercise any power, but only narrates and describes her experiences during that time. She is virtually a typical disempowered figure: young, female and physically disabled²⁹ (see Kleist 71). In spite of that, her young age enables her to move around more freely. While societies on the Indian subcontinent tend to be more segregated, e.g. women and men do not mix as freely as in American/European cultures, children are not yet compelled to obey these social norms. Hai (396) compares Lenny's position with Victor Turner's 'liminal figure': "a not-yet-sexual, not-fully-classed being", through which she can get access to the adult's realms or servant's spheres and can move between different classes. At home she hides under the table and listens secretly to the adult's political discussion (69-74). By spending most of her time with Ayah and her friends, she gains knowledge of a variety of religious and political opinions that are different to her parent's attitude. Lenny is also allowed twice to travel with the family's cook, Imam Din, to his native village and experiences the actual hardships and tensions of people living in Punjabi villages. Throughout her first visit she observes the friendly relationships between Muslim and Sikh villagers, while during her second visit she notices the growing suspicion and tension between these two religious communities.

Cracking India can additionally be classified as a coming-of-age novel, because Lenny attains important (social, personal, sexual, religious) knowledge during that critical period of history (Mitra 30): "I learn fast. [...] I learn of human needs, frailties, cruelties and joys. I also learn from Ayah [her] the tyranny magnets exercise over metals. I have many teachers. My cousin shows me things." (29). As narrator she tells

²⁹ Lenny is limping because of a polio infection.

her own story and connects her outward observations with her personal experiences. Although she may not have agency, she clearly has a voice, which gives her possibility to report and comment on the personal and political conflicts and questions she encounters while growing up as a young Indian woman.

Ayah may have a kind of power over her group of men and is able to influence her admirers to achieve a certain goal or treat: a massage from Masseur (28), embroidered silk doilies from Chinaman (82) or pistachios and almonds from the Pathan (86). When violence starts to threaten Lahore's harmony and inter-religious hatred increases, she is also able to re-unite her admirers when a political discussion gets out of hand. She makes the men forget any political or religious differences when they are able to spend time with her.

“If all you talk of is nothing but this Hindu-Muslim business, I'll stop coming to the park,” she says pertly. “It's just a discussion among friends,” says Ice-candy-man, uncoiling his frame from the grass to sit up. “Such talk helps clear the air ... but for your sake, we won't bring it up again.” The rest of us look at him gratefully. (101)

This example shows that Ayah knows of her feminine influence on men. Nevertheless her female power remains within this limited scope and finally vanishes completely when she is kidnapped.

Far more prominent than the examples of female empowerment are the features of female victimisation and the subordinate role of women in the novel. I have identified two indirect indications for female subordination and two direct illustrations of violence against women. It is important to analyse all of them, because they show the variety of women's inferior roles in South Asia's society at that time (and, sometimes even today).

Lenny's mother was already mentioned as a female character exercising power throughout almost the whole narrative. Nevertheless she can only act completely for herself outside the domestic sphere. It seems that at home, her husband has full control. The reader also gets a short glimpse into her marital relationship and how she is (probably) dominated by her husband. At one time Lenny observes her mother trying to obtain some money from her husband in a rather playful manner (76-78). The scene seems somehow light-hearted and a comparison to the children's game 'hide and seek' may be suitable: Lenny and her mother aim to catch the father, who is running away with the money and tries to hide in the bathroom. Although her mother can finally get hold of some money, it seems to have been a greater struggle than the humorous scene

suggests. The reader can imagine that, as an upper-class 'housewife', Lenny's mother has many financial responsibilities (e.g. paying the servants, buying food and clothes, etc.), but is completely depending on her husband.

At one point, Lenny overhears her parents fighting (about money and her father's alleged affair) and a short remark by Lenny also suggests that her mother is beaten by her husband: "And closer, and as upsetting, the caged voices of our parents fighting in their bedroom. Mother crying, wheedling. Father's terse, brash, indecipherable sentences. [...] Although Father has never raised his hands to us, one day I surprise Mother at her bath and see the bruises on her body." (224). However, these incidences take only a small space in Lenny's narration. It can be argued that her mother's suffering as subordinate woman to her own husband, is still difficult to understand for Lenny. She is only seven to eight years old at that time, and this power play between her parents is mainly in the background and not too obvious.

Lenny is primarily occupied with comprehending and interpreting events that are more prominent, like the maltreatment of Papoo, the servant's daughter, who is only three years older than herself (21). Papoo, who lives with her parents in the servants' quarter, is constantly beaten and abused by her own mother. Lenny remarks that Papoo is "not like any girl I know" but "strong and high-spirited" (56), although her mother regularly insults and batters her. Papoo endures all this, knowing that as a lower class girl she has not many options.

Finally, she is married at the age of twelve to an "elderly and cynical dwarf" (199), while she is drugged by her mother with opium (200). Lenny can only imagine "the shock, and the grotesque possibilities awaiting Papoo" (199) after the wedding and also the reader can only imagine what kind of fate Papoo will have to endure: total submission, sexual abuse and exploitation together with violence would be the worst case. Mitra interprets rightly: "The story of Papoo's coercion into marriage reflects accurately the misfortunes of millions of sub-continental girls routinely married off before the legal age of consent." (28).

The custom of child-marriage is not directly connected to Partition violence, but had been a distinctive topic on the subcontinent from colonial times till today. Forbes (xi) mentions that in the Indian census of 1881 "seven percent of girls in eastern Bengal were married before age 10, and most were married by age 12". Even though this statement is about a specific province and time, it can be believed that the conduct of marriage for girls had been similar throughout the country.

Today this custom is legally forbidden, but still has not completely vanished. According to statistics of UNICEF from 2000 to 2009, the continent with the highest total number of child marriages (marriages below the age of 18) is Asia, and specifically South Asia. Although generally the prevalence of child marriage is declining (particularly marriages below the age of 15), it is still very common in poor households of developing countries.

Similar to the portrayal of Papoo's early wedding is a remark about Lenny's marriageability. While secretly drinking tea Lenny guiltily cogitates: "Drinking tea, I am told, makes one darker. I'm dark enough. Everyone says, 'It's a pity Adi's³⁰ fair and Lenny so dark. He's a boy. Anyone will marry him.'" (90). This quote shows that, already at an early age, Lenny is well informed about her prospects of marriage and how other people think about her. Also in middle and upper class families people start at an early age to contemplate about a girl's aspired marriage. While men can be married in almost any case women need to fulfil certain requirements, otherwise it is difficult to find a suitable husband for them.

On the rather dark-complexioned Indian sub-continent, especially women with fair skin colours are preferred as daughter-in-laws and wives (see Bakhshi and Baker e.g. 462). This is definitely an uncontrollable preference, since complexion is not acquired but hereditary. While in Western cultures women from an early age onwards have internalized an ideal thin body shape and try (struggle) to conform with that³¹, women in India (or other non-Western cultures) are more concerned with their skin colours. A fair skin is often associated with beauty in general (ibid. 459f). This usually applies primarily to women, although a trend shows that also men increasingly desire lighter skin (see Chadha). This may be only an indirect remark on the subordinate role of women in South Asia. Nevertheless, it contributes to the entire atmosphere of the narrative.

The most prominent feature of female victimisation in the novel is Ayah's abduction, after which she is presumably raped, and later coerced into prostitution, conversion and marriage to Ice-candy-man. Ayah's abduction is definitely the climax of the story and shapes the novel till its end. For Lenny (and for the reader) Ayah

³⁰ Adi is Lenny's younger brother. Since his appearance in the novel is not relevant to my analysis I have mentioned him only now.

³¹ Bakhshi and Baker (460) have also remarked that some Asian societies tend to conform to Western concerns of body weight and shape.

represents all abducted women during Partition (Feng 232), although other abducted women occur in the story (see below).

Ayah is not only Lenny's nanny, but she is also her companion and friend. Since Lenny is polio-struck she cannot go to school and throughout the whole book it is never mentioned that she has any friends of her age³². Ayah accompanies Lenny wherever she goes (to the doctor, to Godmother, to her aunt) and Lenny is always on Ayah's side (in the park, in various restaurants or in the servant's quarter). There is hardly any time when they are separated. This is the reason why Ayah's abduction has a major effect on the girl and shapes her understanding of (gendered) Partition violence.

After Ayah is gone, Lenny's goal is to find her again and bring her back. Although this goal is achieved in the end, the girl is shocked, because she does not find her "chocolate-brown" (12) Ayah with "full-blown cheeks" and "pouting mouth" (13), but the woman she encounters has "vacant eyes" (272) and "[h]er voice is harsh (273). Lenny who has thought that she would be overtly happy to be reunited with her Ayah can do nothing else than to "shift uneasily in [her] chair and stare at her" (273).

She has not expected her Ayah to be changed in that way. Lenny's imagination of what might have happened to her nanny, after she had been violently taken away from her, is very limited. She has a vague idea about the violence that happens in the city, because she had witnessed fires, riots and she had discovered the body of Ayah's former lover, Masseur, in a gunny sack near her home (185). Lenny's sexual knowledge is even more limited. Although she steadily acquires new knowledge (through Ayah, but mainly through Cousin), it is still very abstract to her. This is clearly illustrated in the dialogue between Lenny and Cousin, after he had found out Ayah's whereabouts:

"Ayah is just a dancer in the Hira Mandi ... The red-light district." Hira Mandi means Diamond Market. [...] I ask, "Where is this Diamond Mandi with the red light?" "Behind the Badshahi mosque. It's where the dancing-girls live." "And the diamonds? Who sells the diamonds?" I prod gingerly. "There are no real diamonds there, silly. The girls are the diamonds! The men pay them to dance and sing... and to do things with their bodies. [...]" My patience is wearing thin. Still, "What things?" I ask. (252)

Since Cousin seems to have a vast knowledge about what is happening in the red-light district he offers Lenny "to show [her] things" (252) and starts a puerile 'sexual assault'. Lenny, who fights back by hitting and screaming at him, slowly understands what Ayah's fate could be: "If those grown men pay to do what my comparatively small

³² Cousin and Adi are older and younger respectively and are her relatives. Ranna lives far away in the village and is Imam Din's (i.e. a servant's) grandson.

Cousin tried to do, then Ayah is in trouble” (253). Although she may be able to grasp the atrocities Ayah has to suffer, she is not familiar with the emotional effects this could trigger.

Generally, the reader does not know many details about Ayah’s experiences after she had been kidnapped. This can be explained with the viewpoint of the narrator. Since the book is written from a limited first-person perspective, the reader only knows as much, as the narrator does. Lenny knows only what she has seen or heard. While she knows exactly how Ayah was abducted, because she is present (and even participates, because she unravels Ayah’s hiding place to Ice-Candy Man, she knows almost nothing about the time after the abduction. Ayah does not want or is not able to talk about her experiences. Butalia (*Silence* 281) had observed that it was virtually impossible to procure eye-witness accounts from raped or abducted women, because they did not want to report their experiences due to various reasons.

Ayah’s body can be interpreted as representing the nation before and after Partition (Ray 126-137, Hai 411f, Didur 58f). In pre-Partition Lahore Ayah and her group of admirers signify religious harmony that used to be prevalent on the sub-continent (Didur 59). After Lenny gets aware of religious differences that are suddenly more obvious than before³³, she also notices that the group around Ayah, consisting of Muslim, Sikhs and Hindus, has not changed. While Lenny walks around in the park, she observes that suddenly all religious groups are keeping to themselves. When she returns to Ayah she is aware that “[o]nly the group around Ayah remains unchanged. Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsee are, as always, unified around her.” (105). Soon after this scene, Ayah can no longer maintain her harmonising power due to the increasing violence and advanced drifting apart of religious communities. Her Hindu and Sikh admirers decide to leave Lahore, and Masseur is murdered³⁴. The servant woman becomes cautious and suspicious after her lover had been found dead and most of her friends had

³³ „And I become aware of religious differences. It is sudden. One day everybody is themselves – and the next day they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink dwindling into symbols Ayah is no longer just my all-encompassing Ayah – she is also a token. A Hindu. [...] Imam Din and Yousaf, turning into religious zealots [...] Hari and Moti – the sweeper and his wife Muccho, and their untouchable daughter Papoo, become ever more untouchable as they are entrenched deeper in their low Hindu caste. [...] The Rogers of Birdwood, Barracks, Queen Victoria and King George are English Christians [...] Godmother, Slavesister, Electric-aunt and my nuclear family are reduced to irrelevant nomenclatures – we are Parsee. What is God?” (101f)

³⁴ Since Masseur is a Muslim in Lahore it is not exactly clear who murdered him and why. It is assumed that he is killed by Ice-candy-man (a fellow Muslim) due to jealousy. Since people were killed every day in riots, this would have been an easy way to get rid of a rival lover. This can be assumed, because Ayah favours Masseur and only tolerates Ice-candy-man (Bhalla 239).

fled Lahore (188). She also articulates the wish to go back to her parental family in Amritsar, but she has waited too long.

One day, a violent mob comes to the house demanding all the Hindus in order to satisfy their gory and perverse needs. The mob is outraged that the Hindu name Sethi, which is written on the door, belongs to a Parsee family. As a substitute for the unsatisfied blood shedding of upper-class Hindu blood, they demand the gardener and the sweeper's family, but they have already converted to Islam and Christianity respectively. Ayah is the last Hindu in the Parsee household, but she hides inside the house and Imam Din's blasphemous promise that she has already left cannot convince the mob. When Ice-candy-man emerges from the mob, acting like "a savior[s] in our hour of need" (193) and asks Lenny where her nanny hides from them, the little girl cannot lie to him and "from some foul truthful depth" (194) inside her, divulges the secret. Lenny herself is shocked that she cannot protect her Ayah and can only stand by and watch in horror when her nanny is taken away from her domestic field:

Her lips are drawn away from her teeth, and the resisting curve of her throat opens her mouth like the dead child's screamless mouth. [...] Four men stand pressed against her, propping her body upright, their lips stretched in triumphant grimaces. [...] her mouth slack and piteously gaping, her disheveled hair flying into her kidnappers' faces, staring at us as if she wanted to leave behind her wide-open and terrified eyes. (194f)

Although we can read the whole incident from Lenny's point of view, the reader does not know Ayah's side of the story. She is described as "screamless", because no sound comes from her lips, only her eyes can speak, because she is looking back with "terrified eyes".

The abduction of a Hindu servant by a violent Muslim mob can be interpreted as the Muslim 'Self' (i.e. Pakistan) violating the Hindu 'Other' (i.e. India). Menon and Bhasin (*Borders* 109) affirm this idea: "In the classic transposition, the woman's became the body of the motherland (Woman-as-Nation) violated by the marauding foreigner".

The woman-as-nation trope, which was already mentioned above, can be detected in Ayah's position to her friends and to her tormenters. In pre-Partition Lahore she is loved and treated equally by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. It was already mentioned in Chapter 1.2 that all religious communities lived together peacefully for many generations on the subcontinent. In the course of the independence movement,

which ended by dividing the country on the basis of religious differences, this harmony became unbalanced and culminated in despicable genocide and religious hatred. It was reported that neighbours and friends turned against each other in this turbulent time. This is also mirrored in *Cracking India*, because Ayah is not abducted by any Muslim mob, but by a mob that comprised, among others, her former friends and admirers.

When the boundaries are demarcated Ayah is suddenly on the 'wrong side' of the border. As a Hindu in Pakistan, she is annexed by the new nation state and its (male) inhabitants. When Godmother and Lenny recover her, it is found out that Ayah had married Ice-candy-man, converted to Islam and changed her name to Mumtaz. On the surface, she is imbibed by Muslim culture and religion.

Menon and Bhasin have asserted that in the context of Partition women's bodies "became the respective countries" and were treated as "territory to be conquered" (*Borders* 43). This means that violence against women was equated with violence against the other country or religion. All the violent acts of abducting, mutilating, tattooing and raping women were conducted to demonstrate power over 'the Other'. But also the honour of men was offended by violating women, because "[w]omen's sexuality symbolises 'manhood' (Menon and Bhasin, *Borders* 43). And, since manhood symbolises nationhood, the violated women endangered unity and conformity of the new nation states. This is another reason why nobody was encouraged to talk about it.

Towards the end of the narrative Godmother and Lenny go to Hira Mandi to meet Ayah hoping to get to know her story, but she remains silent like so many of the affected women remained silent. The only thing Ayah/Mumtaz³⁵ asks from Godmother is to send her back to her family to Amritsar. First Godmother seems to remain in her conservative thinking, arguing that she must make the best out of her life, because "[w]hat's happened has happened" (273). Although Ayah/Mumtaz affirms that she is not mistreated by her husband, she justifies her wish: "But I cannot forget what happened" (*ibid.*). Ayah, as the symbol for the Indian (i.e. Hindu) nation, "cannot forget what happened" because she was marked by the Muslim Other. Also nowadays, politics of both countries are still affected by their past and people on both sides of the border share a collective trauma. Again and again Hindu, Muslim or Sikh fundamentalists

³⁵ The double designation is necessary here, because she has always been Lenny's Ayah, but was renamed Mumtaz by Ice-Candy Man. Lenny is in a precarious situation, she suddenly is no longer 'her' Ayah, but Ice-Candy Man's Mumtaz. In the book Lenny calls her Ayah only Mumtaz after she notices the enormous difference to her former self (272f). Lenny switches back to her former designation Ayah, as soon as she had articulated to leave her husband.

violently stir up religious emotions, which sometimes end in riots and killings³⁶. Every time this happens memories from Partition clearly emerge.

Even though Ayah is eventually rescued the reader is not informed about her future in India. Godmother reminded her that she needs to forgive everybody and make the best out of her situation, but Ayah/Mumtaz remains with her wish to go back to her family. She is conscious that her return might not be welcome but she assures Godmother: “Whether they want me or not, I will go” (274). First Ayah is brought to a refugee camp, in which she abides for some time, while ‘heart-broken’ Ice-candy-man guards her from outside and recites poems for her. Eventually she is sent across the border and Ice-candy-man follows her. This is the point when the story ends and the reader can only speculate about their futures. As we know from interviews with the women working for the recovery operations of both states, those abducted women who were recovered often did not have an easy life in their ‘home’ country. This was already described in the preceding subchapter.

In *Cracking India* several other cases of abduction are mentioned. Although it is only indirectly mentioned and Lenny always interprets her observations in a wrong way, the adult reader knows that Lenny’s interpretations are due to her naïve perception. When her mother “develops a busy air of secrecy and preoccupation” (182), leaving the house early in the morning and returning only late in the afternoon, the children are “bewildered” and want to unravel her secret. They get even more confused when Ayah tells them, that she has seen that the car’s trunk is “full of petrol cans”. Lenny, her brother and Cousin are shocked: “We now know who the arsonists are. Our mothers are setting fire to Lahore!” (184). Because of their childish imagination they cannot come up with any other explanation why their mothers would drive around Lahore with a trunk full of petrol cans. The reader of course is more than suspicious that this is the real explanation. For Lenny, who feels like an accomplice knowing of the alleged criminal secret of her mother, this is the ultimate truth. Not even Godmother, to whom Lenny’s bond “is stronger than the bond of motherhood” (13), can dissuade her by telling her the truth about her mother’s daring rescue operation for kidnapped women (251). Only Lenny’s mother herself can convince her that her perception had been wrong all the time. When, one day, Lenny accuses her of setting fire to the entire city, her astonished

³⁶ Major examples are: the Anti Sikh Riots in 1984 after prime minister Indira Gandhi was murdered by her Sikh bodyguards, the Ayodhya dispute in 1992 in which a Mosque was destroyed by Hindu activists and resulted in riots on both sides, a train burning in Gujarat in 2002 and communal riots between Hindus and Muslims, as well as the 2008 Mumbai attacks, allegedly carried out from Pakistani terrorists.

answer is “We were only smuggling the rationed petrol to help our Hindu and Sikh friends to run away... And also for the convoy to send kidnapped women, like your ayah, to their families across the border.” (254) Now, Lenny suddenly starts to get an insight into all the complications and struggles connected to Partition violence.

Another example of her child’s perspective occurs shortly after Ayah is kidnapped. Lenny, her brother and Cousin detect “mysterious developments [...] in the servants’ quarters behind the Hindu doctor’s house paralleling ours” (201). They decide to examine these developments and find “a padlock the size of a grapefruit on the gate”, a “Sikh guard” and the courtyard full of “village women” working with “apathetic movements to and fro” (ibid.). The conclusion on their findings is that it must be “a women’s jail (ibid.). Also in this case the reader can assume that the children’s conclusion might not be correct. After a short while Lenny’s mother employs one of the women from this “jail” as replacement for Ayah.

Hamida, her new ayah, explains to Lenny that this is a “camp for fallen women” (226). Since Lenny does not understand this designation she enquires further, but Hamida breaks out in tears. Therefore Lenny seeks clarification with Godmother, who explains Hamida’s situation to her:

“Hamida was kidnapped by the Sikhs,” says Godmother seriously. On serious matters I can always trust her to level with me. “She was taken away to Amritsar. Once that happens, sometimes, the husband – or his family – won’t take her back.” “Why? It isn’t her fault she was kidnapped!” “Some folk feel that way – they can’t stand their women being touched by other men.” It’s monstrously unfair: but Godmother’s tone is accepting. (227)

Although Lenny has already witnessed the abduction of Ayah, she is unable to imagine what this can mean for Ayah. Through her encounter with Hamida, she slowly understands what kind of violence and injustices women have to suffer. When she later talks with Hamida about her children, she gets to know that Hamida’s husband does not allow her to visit or see her children. Lenny is automatically on Hamida’s side (because she is a woman and she clearly sees the injustices): “I don’t like your husband,” I say. “He’s a good man,” says Hamida, hiding her face bashfully in her *chuddar*. “It’s my kismet that’s not good ... we are *khut-putli*, puppets, in the hands of fate.” (234). Lenny, with her child’s logic, has fixed her opinion on this issue already when she first sees the women in the camp: “I’ve seen Ayah carried away – and it had less to do with fate than with the will of men” (226). She does not believe that abduction is the women’s fate, but a decision of men. Therefore she does not understand Hamida’s attitude.

Hamida's attitude towards her desolate situation was very common among affected women at that time. Instead of condemning men or politics they often blamed their own destiny³⁷. As already described above, abducted and raped women commonly stayed silent about their past "as if the memory of the rape, the experience of abduction, was in some way shameful and had therefore to be relegated to the realm of amnesia" (Butalia, *Silence* 281, Hai 404). Most information about abducted or raped women come from eye-witness accounts of social workers whose task was the recovery of those women. The fates of many abducted or raped women were only preserved in those social workers' memories (Menon and Bhasin *Borders* 65-131, 167-203, *Recovery*, Butalia *Abducted*). This is one reason why fiction in general, and in this case *Cracking India*, is important to show their side(s) of history.

Although Hamida is only a minor character in the story the reader gets most information about the way abducted women were treated by the state, by society and by their families. I have already described that the women's camp appeared to Lenny like a women's jail, because of the "guard outside a high, tin-sheet gate, criss-crossed with wooden beams" and "[t]he servants evade questions as if there is something shameful going on" (201). From this observation it is clear that the women in this camp cannot move around freely, but are kept inside the camp's compound, guarded and hidden by its high walls. The camp is a converted building in Lenny's neighbourhood. We do not know how many people have knowledge about the existence of this camp, but as the passage shows, even those who know about it, do not talk freely about it. Those "fallen women" are treated as outcasts of society, confined to this camp, silenced and not part of the public discourse.

In my opinion Hamida's character is too much neglected in academic analyses of this book. The majority of essays concentrate on the most prominent abduction of Ayah or on other features of the narrative. However, I believe, that Hamida's case is an important fictional eye-witness account (Roy 76) that can help scholars on female Partition (hi)stories understand the difficulties and worries of abducted women, since almost no report of this group of women were transmitted in reality (see above). George (*Violence*, 139) also underlines the importance of literature for "[h]istorians and other social workers [...] as means of supplementing their historical analysis". In contrast to

³⁷ In Hinduism, Sikhism and Islam it is believed that a person has an inevitable destiny. It is also often believed that a person's deeds can influence his/her destiny, i.e. good deeds will guarantee a good future, while bad deeds will result in a bad future.

Ayah's story, which seems to be more artificial and artistically created, Hamida's story might be an example that more authentically mirrors reality.

Apart from the abduction of women, also other atrocities are described in the story. In one part of the book the reader gets a clear insight into the violence of the rural villages. The few pages on which attacks on villages are described are entitled "Ranna's Story" (207-220) and are embedded in the main frame of the novel. It is the only part of the novel that is not directly from the narrator's perspective, but it is an indirect third-person narrative of Ranna's experiences. Ranna is Imam Din's grandson who meets Lenny twice when she visits his village Pir Pindo. Ranna walks all the way from his village to Lahore, although he was badly wounded by a Sikh attacker and later tells Lenny his experiences. Lenny re-narrates his story in the novel, because it is integral for her understanding of Partition violence, but, since she did not experience it herself, she has to repeat Ranna's experiences.

In Ranna's narrative especially the killing, torturing and raping of women is described when his village, Pir Pindo, is attacked by Sikhs. The people of the village are already informed that enemy communities are going to attack neighbouring villages. Therefore, they make a thorough plan to defend themselves. The women plan to burn themselves collectively in the *chaudhary's* house: "Rather than face the brutality of the mob they will pour kerosene around the house and burn themselves. The canisters of kerosene are already stored in the barn at the rear of the *chaudhary's* sprawling mud house. The young men will engage the Sikhs at the mosque, and at other strategic locations, for as long as they can and give the women a chance to start the fire" (210). Ranna, together with all the other (male) children and some adults, hides in a secret room, but they are eventually detected. After the door is opened the Sikh attackers kill everybody inside. Also Ranna is hit and becomes unconscious, but is lucky to survive.

After he becomes conscious again and realises that he is alone, he flees from his village. All the men were killed and the few women who survived were together with the Sikh attackers. As a child, Ranna does not know much about rape, but he knows that something terrible is happening:

He knew it was wrong of the Sikhs to be in the mosque with the village women. He could not explain why: except that he still slept in his parent's room. "Stop whimpering you bitch, or I'll bugger you again!" a man said irritably. Other men laughed. There was much movement. Stifled exclamations and moans. A woman screamed, and swore in Punjabi. (214)

While Ranna is on the run from village to village he encounters many more atrocities. One might argue that as a child his lonesome flight is very risky, because he is completely defenseless and helpless, but he observes fast: “No one noticed Ranna as he wandered in the burning city. No one cared. There were too many ugly and abandoned children like him scavenging in the looted houses and the rubble of burnt-out buildings” (218). Butalia (*Silence* 195-233) also incorporated the topic of (orphaned) children in her book. As it is visible in this fictional work, which is also narrated by a child, the children of the time during Partition were also deeply traumatised during the struggles. They witnessed political changes, social changes and violence. Many children were orphaned or ‘got lost’ in the confusion of riots and migrations. It may be the case that those children did not exactly understand what was going on at that time, but it, undoubtedly, shaped their dreams, memories and futures; especially when they witnessed such extreme mayhem like Ranna:

No one minded the semi-naked spectre as he looked in doors with his knowing, wide-set peasant eyes as men copulated with wailing children – old and young women. He saw a naked woman, her light Kashmiri skin bruised with purple splotches and cuts, hanging head down from a ceiling fan. And looked on with a child’s boundless acceptance and curiosity as jeering men set her long hair on fire. He saw babies, snatched from their mothers, smashed against walls and their howling mothers brutally raped and killed. (218f)

Ranna describes that he observed the killings and tortures with curiosity and an accepting attitude, but this only happen because his mind is already jaded with all the violence he witnesses. It can be argued that children suffer more, because they are unable to protect themselves emotionally from the violence (Feng 232).

In general it is known that all these assaults against women and children had happened, but history books or historical accounts often leave out the social factors and present Partition mainly as a political decision. Although social history becomes more and more influential nowadays, the situation of women and children is still sometimes neglected. This is one reason why this novel (among others) is very important to reveal the social grievances of that time.

The representation of women in the novel can be interpreted according to the theories of postcolonialism and feminism that were introduced in chapter three. On the one hand, I will have a look at Sidhwa’s role, as South Asian woman writer, mediating female Partition experiences. On the other hand, I will show in how far the female characters of the novel have their own agency or voice.

In her well-known essay *Border Work, Border Trouble* Hai, rightly, classifies the novel as “postcolonial feminist text” (382). Sidhwa, as third world scholar living in the West³⁸ and writing in English, takes up the role of a mediator to present women’s struggles during Partition to an international audience. Sidhwa’s initial goal is to write a less biased and more objective account on Partition regarding politics (Roy 64), but she also accomplished a novel in which women play a major role and she “created a nuanced variety of feminine roles” (Kleist 79). This is especially important, because most female memories and accounts about that time are retained, lost or forgotten.

In Roland Barthes influential essay *The Death of the Author* he draws on Mallarmé’s attitude “[...] it is language which speaks, not the author; to write is [...] to reach that point where only language acts, ‘performs’, and not ‘me’” (143). This idea became very popular in recent times; nevertheless, I would argue that this approach is often too limited. I believe that the biography of the authors always shapes their stories in a specific way, even though it might not be always obvious. Especially in Partition fiction autobiography plays an important role. All authors who write about Partition either directly or indirectly experienced the actual event or its consequences. Generally it can be said, that Partition as a major historical event affected everybody on the Indian subcontinent. Partition is a collective and inter-generational trauma and writing about it is part of a collective accounting for the past. Relating to trauma Vickroy offers the assumption that “[t]estifying to the past has been an urgent task for many fiction writers as they attempt to preserve personal and collective memories from assimilation, repression, or misrepresentation” (1). Sidhwa affirms that the starting point of her novel originated in personal memories, but most of the narrative is fiction (Bhalla 223).

Therefore, *Cracking India* can be classified as “literary ‘eye-witness account’” (Gopal 75) relying on several autobiographical traits. Sidhwa chose the topic of Partition because it is an integral part of her own childhood memories (Roy 66). As a child she had witnessed the political and social upheavals going on in Lahore and the rest of the subcontinent (Bhalla 227). By introducing autobiographical elements to this fictional narrative, the author becomes more reliable according to historical representations. Rastegar produces the following argument: “Literature, particularly literature produced by those experiencing such events first hand, can fill the

³⁸ The differentiation between first world scholar and third world scholar in the Anglo-American academy is not exactly clear-cut (Hai 384, 418). In my opinion Sidhwa does not count as first world scholar, because she was educated in Pakistan and lived there for the majority of her life (from 1938 to 1983) and still visits South Asia regularly. Her cultural attitudes and experiences are definitely Pakistani (South Asian).

representational gap that political histories of such an event leave open” (26). It was already mentioned that Partition literature is often regarded as an integral supplement to conventional history, since many aspects had been neglected, especially the aspect of female experiences.

This is the reason why (third world) women writers are central in representing subaltern women in their works of fiction. Sidhwa gives her female characters a voice by writing about them. Although not all of them represent powerful characters they are given a voice by the author, because their disempowerment is (critically) represented. Before analysing Sidhwa’s relation to her characters I should answer the question whether South Asian women, in general, can be considered subaltern.

Sidhwa is a successful international author, lives in America since 1983 (she attained citizenship in 1992) and teaches at various universities. Considering these factors it is clear that Sidhwa cannot be regarded as subaltern. Nevertheless, she is neither in Pakistan nor in America part of the hegemonic society. Additionally to being a woman, Sidhwa belongs to the Parsee community, a minority group that consists of approximately 137,000 people worldwide of which 1,800 can be found in Pakistan nowadays (Eduljee, *Worldwide Population Figures*). As female Parsee she belongs to a minority group in Pakistan and America respectively. Moreover as a Pakistani female author she is also not part of the American mainstream. These aspects make her, in a specific way, subaltern. However, as an author she has a (narrative) voice, which can be heard internationally. Not only was her novel translated to several languages, but also adapted for the film *Earth* (1998)³⁹ by famous Indian-Canadian director Deepa Mehta.

Although ‘Feminist Postcolonialism’ claims that the third world woman is doubly suppressed, first by her gender and second by (post)colonial powers, the modern third world woman educated and/or living in the West has to break free from this conjecture. It must be noted that this ‘outbreak’ is not possible for all (third world) women. Spivak argues that the “subaltern cannot speak” (104), because as soon as the subaltern falls out of (constructed) alignment, she is no longer subaltern. I agree with this opinion; however, I would argue that subalternity always depends on the context. For example, if a third world woman is able to be heard, but only in her home country, she may still be regarded as a subaltern from an international viewpoint. It is possible

³⁹ Originally the film is part of a trilogy preceded by *Fire* (1996) and followed by *Water* (2005). Deepa Mehta is known for her social critical and sometimes provocative topics. In India *Earth* was released as *1947*. Bapsi Sidhwa and Deepa Mehta have worked cooperatively on the script.

that Sidhwa would have counted as subaltern in her past, but nowadays she has advanced to being a spokesperson for (subaltern) South Asian women.

Sidhwa's role, as a third world woman, is to authentically portray third world women's lives. The critique of third world feminists was mainly, that first world feminists would not represent them accurately. Since Sidhwa's roots are within the postcolonial realm, she can also be considered as truthful and authentic. Sidhwa's role as a woman is to clearly depict the female side of Partition history. Malik suggests: "As a woman, Sidhwa shares and understands Ayah's pain and humiliation [...]" (143), which implies that female victimisation is better described by female authors.

In this chapter I have analysed almost all female roles depicted in the novel. Only very few female characters are actually depicted as empowered in the novel: Lenny's mother, aunt and Godmother. Kleist remarks that "[b]y highlighting the independence action and influence of Lenny's mother, Sidhwa demonstrates that all women did not sit by, helpless or indifferent, as their fellow females were ravaged" (75). It is important that Sidhwa does not just employ a one-sided female representation, but she shows a whole spectrum of different ways women reacted to Partition. On one side of the spectrum are Ayah, Hamida and the tortured women of Ranna's story, and on the opposite side of the spectrum are Lenny's mother, aunt and Godmother. All the other women are somewhere in between. Lenny occupies (similar to the author as such) a mediator role. As the narrator she makes the voices of all women audible. Drawing on Spivak's idea, Hai describes Lenny as "'token subaltern' (who is taken to be a 'spokesperson for subalternity')" (414). Through Lenny Sidhwa can let all women tell their stories.

5. Women as freedom fighters

The opposite of women who were victimised were those women who actively participated in the nationalist/independence movement. Similar to the stories and memories of traumatised women, the historical impact of those brave women is also frequently neglected in conventional history. Since many women were not directly politically active, but were more involved in smaller organisations and resistance movements, it is often forgotten that they contributed a lot to the entire independence movement. Women were part of the Indian political scene almost from the beginning;

women already attended the fifth annual meeting of the INC in 1889 and from this time onwards women were always present in those meetings (Forbes 122). In the second half of the 19th century various social reformers, arguing in favour of women's rights, and some women's movements paved the way for an advanced female education and social reforms.

Many female freedom fighters were influenced by Gandhi and they were active as *satyāgrahis*, in the passive resistance movement and in *swadeshi*⁴⁰ causes. The traditional domestic role of women became slowly resolved and this influenced women's perceptions of themselves (ibid.). Women were not only actively participating, but they also recruited other women, organised and led smaller groups, demonstrated, picketed certain shops and went to prison. Of course not all women could freely choose to join Gandhi's group, but many women were prohibited to work for national causes by their parents or husbands. Nevertheless, many women also reported that they still joined the movement, against the wishes of their families. Other women made the experience that their husband and/or family supported them and cared for the household and children while they went out to fight for India's independence. It was definitely a time of upheavals in India, not only politically, but also with regard to emancipation.

Apart from Gandhi other political groups were more radical and were often part of wider underground organisations. Those organisations were mostly opposed to the INC. They believed that the INC was only an elitist party and would not act according to the wishes of the masses. Especially in Bengal (Thapar 90), women also participated in those movements and some cases of female revolutionaries or terrorists are well known. Referring to the revolutionary actions in Bengal, Bandyopadhyay remarks that female participation was almost non prevalent in the first phase (1902-1915), but only started to emerge in the late 1920s (31). Women supported those radical groups by "keeping house for them, spreading propaganda, collecting funds, hiding and transporting weapons, and even making explosives [...]" (Forbes 140).

I want to mention two famous examples from Bengal, so that it becomes clear what is meant by the designations 'female revolutionary/terrorist'. One example is Santi Ghosh who killed CGB Stevens, a British District Magistrate, together with her friend Suniti Chaudhuri in 1931. They were both imprisoned, although they had hoped for an execution to become the first female martyrs (Forbes, 140, Bandyopadhyay 33). The other example is Bina Das, a young college student, who attempted to assassinate

⁴⁰ Self-produced goods in order to non-cooperate with the British and boycott their imported products.

Stanley Jackson, the contemporary Governor of Bengal in 1932. She was sentenced to nine years of prison after this failed attempt, but remained politically active almost her entire life (Forbes 140).

Women's intention was not only to have an equal status like male revolutionaries, but also to recruit more people and to raise attention. It was believed that if a girl shoots somebody, people would grasp the importance of the group and may also join the movement.

In the following analysis of Qurratulain Hyder's *Fireflies in the Mist*, two of the main characters are active members of the Communist party and also participate in revolutionary and terrorist actions respectively. It should be examined in how far their political activities influence their gender identity.

5.1 *Fireflies in the Mist* by Qurratulain Hyder⁴¹

Qurratulain Hyder⁴² is a significant female Indian Muslim novelist and short story writer. Although she mainly wrote in her mother tongue Urdu, she also translated several of her fictional works to English. *Fireflies in the Mist* was first published in English in 1994, but it is a translation of the original novel *Akhir-ishab ke hamsafar*⁴³.

The story comprises four generations of several Bengali families, but is mainly centred on the life of Deepali Sarkar and three of her childhood friends: Rosie Bannerjee, Jehan Ara and Yasmin Majid, as well as Rehan Ahmed, who stands in several relations with most of the characters. His personality and development in the course of the story are interesting, but, in this analysis, he will only be investigated with regard to the female protagonists.

The time frame of the narrative spans four decades between the 1930s and 1970s, but memories and short narrative threads reach till the 1890s. Indicators of years are only sparsely dispersed throughout the novel and the narrative structure is sometimes intricate and interlaced. The story is mainly set in Bengal (first Indian Bengal, then East Pakistan and later Bangladesh), but short episodes also happen to be in Trinidad, England, Germany and India. Therefore this is one of the few novels that are mainly

⁴¹ If not indicated differently, all quotes in this chapter are taken from the novel.

⁴² In this paper the name will be spelled in this manner, although variations exist, like Qurrat-ul-Ain Haider.

⁴³ I was not able to find out the original year of publication of the Urdu novel, but Hyder received the Jnanpith Award for this novel in 1989 (Fayyaz). Therefore it can be assumed that she has also written the novel at that time.

concerned with the Bengali side of Partition history. Although Hyder herself was not a native of Bengal, but originated from North India and lived throughout her life in Delhi, Bombay, Pakistan and England, her knowledge of Bengali history and her descriptions of Bengali nature are on par with that of a native.

The novel is divided into three parts, which can be interpreted as introduction, climax and end. In the first part the histories of Deepali's and Rosie's families are narrated and the two girls start getting interested in the Communist Party. After Deepali fulfils her first assignment for the party she meets Rehan, one of the political Underground leaders, who falls in love with her. In the second part Rosie becomes a rebel and gets arrested. Deepali is wondering about Rehan's connection to Jehan (Deepali's childhood friend), after she found his picture in her room, and gets more detached from politics. Jehan is getting married at the end of part two. In the third part the reader gets to know the fates of all the characters after Partition. In this part also some of the character's children play an important role, since the protagonists of the former parts are already rather aged or dead. Hyder manages to bring together an abundance of details and characters into this novel.

In total contrast to the female representation as victims in *Cracking India*, most of the women in this narrative are independent and empowered. Deepali, Rosie and Uma Roy (another minor character) are politically active and Yasmin is artistically independent. Only Jehan Ara maintains a traditional domestic life of upper-class Indian Muslim women.

It is interesting to note that all the characters are members of different religious groups. Deepali and Uma are Hindu, Jehan Ara and Yasmin are Muslim and Rosie is initially Christian, becomes atheist and finally marries a Hindu. Although religion itself does not play a major role in the narrative, it is frequently mentioned. Similar to many Partition novels the representation of a multi-religious group mirrors the actual situation of the Indian subcontinent prior to Partition. While they all live in the same city at the beginning of the story, they are later scattered around the globe. Jehan Ara is the only one who stays in Dacca⁴⁴, but Rosie moves to New Delhi, Deepali to Trinidad and Yasmin to England and Germany respectively. They are no longer neighbouring friends and lose contact to each other. In the third part of the book the women are mainly connected to Deepali: they either write letters to her or visit her, and Deepali also travels and visits all of them. The breaking apart of Deepali's multi-religious group of friends

⁴⁴ Dacca is the former spelling of Bangladesh's capital Dhaka.

also symbolises the division of the multi-religious Indian subcontinent into religiously distinct nation states.

Since Deepali is the central character of the novel her representation will be first analysed. Afterwards Rosie's development is investigated, because she plays the most radical role and, finally, both of them will be compared to Jehan Ara's traditional position.

Deepali Sarkar is a young college student who is attracted to the left wing of the nationalist movement and gets engaged in an Underground Communist group. At the beginning she and her friend Rosie have their first political experiences together. Later, Rosie's and Deepali's political standpoints change and they go separate ways. Deepali's introduction to the Communist movement occurs through a comrade (Rehan) in disguise of a *Baul*⁴⁵, who wants to gather information about her uncle (36ff). Dinesh Chandra Sarkar⁴⁶, a former revolutionary, who was arrested in 1931 and hanged in 1933⁴⁷, (15) was her father's only brother. Throughout the story her engagement in revolutionary politics is several times explained as being rooted in her ancestor's activities, e.g. when she first meets Uma Roy to get information about a secret mission, Uma is perplexed about Deepali's interest in Underground politics: "[...] A sheltered girl like you - from where did you get this streak?" 'From my grandfather and uncle, I suppose,'" (39) Deepali answers without hesitation.

From outside, Deepali seems to be an unexciting, normal Indian girl, but her actions throughout the story show her rebellious nature. She lives together with her widowed father, her three brothers and her aunt in a mansion. She studies at college and is a renowned singer, frequently broadcasting in Bengal's radio stations (24), but her secret political activities are unknown to her family. The reader gets already to know that Deepali is a mysterious character on the first few pages, when she steals her aunt's expensive saris to sell them to a group of young men. At this point of the story it is unknown that she works for an Underground Communist group, but the action of stealing and secretly selling her aunt's belongings shows that Deepali might not be a typical traditional Indian girl (17).

⁴⁵ "Baul" designates a group of singing and wandering mendicants from Bengal. Their religion is a syncretism of Hinduism, Islam and folk religion (Schwerin 179).

⁴⁶ Deepali's uncle story is possibly based on the life of Dinesh Chandra Gupta, a Bengali revolutionary who fought against British colonial rule and was hanged in 1931 (munshigonj.com).

⁴⁷ In my opinion the year of his execution is 1933, because of several time designations throughout the book. Deepali tells Uma Roy about her uncle's execution: „It happened only six years ago.“ (36) and later she recalls this evening when she first meets Uma: „How timidly she had gone to Woodland that foggy December evening in 1939 [...]“ (160).

From the beginning onwards it is clarified what is not expected from a girl at that time, namely independence and raising one's voice against an elder, but Deepali does not live according to these expectations. After Deepali returns from a visit at Rosie's house her father and aunt want to know what where she had been and are shocked, because Deepali left the house without telling them: "You went off to see Rosie without telling me? Did you imagine I was dead? And I thought little Miss Muffet was upstairs, singing." 'You were meditating, Pishi Ma. How could I disturb you? [...]' 'Well, don't do it again,' said her father gently." (19). Later, her aunt remarks: "That's a modern daughter for you, making her father feel small and rubbing salt into his wounds. All my life, as God is my witness, I never once raised my eyes in the presence of my father, let alone talked back to him." (20). This scene clearly shows a generational conflict. While her aunt and father were brought up in a very traditional manner, Deepali does no longer live according to these traditions. She does not overtly rebel against her relatives, but acts in secret lying to her father, so that he will not get to know her real actions. When she and Rosie go to political Underground meetings she tells her father that she meets her friend for studying. This shows that her father has complete trust in her honesty of which she takes advantage.

Deepali is also able to deceive her father for several days. When she studies at Santiniketan (85) she receives a message from comrade Rehan to meet her in Bengal's countryside, the Sunderbans. Believing it is an urgent communist meeting she takes up all the struggles and difficulties to get there, although she is expected to return home. Before leaving she informs her father that she has to participate in a field study for her final year at college. Since she does not exactly know how much time she will need to spend for this meeting she concludes her letter with: "I'll come home as soon as I can. Don't worry. Your loving daughter, D." (98). This shows her free will and her individual decision-making. She does not even ask her father if she is allowed to participate in this (alleged) trip, but she only informs him about her own decision. This might strike a contemporary reader as rather unexciting action, but in the context of Indian women's lives (at the beginning of the 20th century), this was rather an exception than the norm. Although we know of many independent and self-confident Indian women, the majority of women in India still have to answer to societies/their elder's (traditional) expectations.

In the Sunderbans, Deepali does not find the expected gathering of communist leaders and comrades, but it turns out to be Rehan's plan to spend time with her,

because he has fallen in love with her. Deepali is also attracted to him, but more aware of their religious differences and therefore more careful in expressing her feelings.

Rehan believes in an independent united India:

“Always remember, there are two aspects of India, Hindu and Muslim, just as you have two or more aspects of your deities. At several points these aspects merge into each other, but we must not ignore their identities and must analyse them scientifically. They can coexist peacefully. Now, Lenin in his theory of nationalities...” (102)

His beliefs are based on the principles of communism. Deepali is bored by his “lectures” (ibid.) and it makes the reader wonder why she is actually interested in politics. They spend their time with a poor fisherman’s family, who care for them like their own children. This makes Deepali think about the poor people’s generosity though all the hardships. The two of them strive through the countryside educating the villagers about communism and explaining the movement to them (109). After they have spread enough political propaganda in the romantic countryside, they return to Dacca.

Deepali is also described as spy for the Underground movement. Instructed by her leaders she first gets to meet Uma Roy, a thirty-year-old Bolshevik, who is also known as “The Typhoon” (27). Uma can be interpreted as a role model for younger girls who are part of the communist movement. Although Uma is the daughter of a rich Hindu house, she was educated in England, where she came into contact with leftist ideas and returned to India as a communist. Her family enjoys a lot of respect in Dacca’s society and, therefore, “Uma’s flirtation with Communism could be disastrous for the entire Roy family” (28). In the course of the story it is described that Deepali’s contact with Uma resolves her idealized depiction: “So this is the famous Typhoon Uma, plain, plump, and prosaic. Deepali was disappointed. The next instant she scolded herself for her bourgeois romanticism. Shouldn’t have expected to meet a glamour girl. Uma Debi is not a parasite, she is the New Woman of Modern India...” (31). The concept of the ‘new woman’ in India emerged in the 19th century. In Forbes it is defined that those women “were part of a modernizing movement which sought to modify gender relations in the direction of greater equality between men and women” (28). A ‘new woman’ was always educated and sometimes they were allowed to marry later in order to complete their education first. Many of those women were active in encouraging parents to support their daughter’s education. Uma Roy can be seen as a ‘new woman’ because she pursued her education in England and is still unmarried. Deepali is disappointed because she has imagined an embodiment of the ‘new woman’

to look differently, but she reminds herself that the outer appearance should not play any role. Uma's role for the communist party is mainly described as a host for meetings and instructor for missions, like Deepali's assignment as spy.

In disguise of an ayah or servant woman named Kulsum Bano, Deepali is sent to the house of the Cantwells, a British family. Before she can go there for her mission, she has to prepare several arrangements herself. This shows Deepali as organiser and instructor, because she instructs Rosie to help her. Rosie, who knows the Cantwell family and their ayah, sends a letter to their house asking them for a leave for their servant. After they have agreed, Rosie suggests to them an ayah (=Kulsum Bano/Deepali) who can work for them temporarily. Uma asks Deepali's father for allowance to go with his daughter on a short holiday. This gives Deepali the opportunity to stay away from home for a few days and finish her assignment. It shows that Deepali and Rosie are fully qualified to work for an Underground group, because they fulfil these arrangements completely on their own.

When Deepali stays at the Cantwell's house in disguise, she has to act a perfect role, so that nobody will be suspicious. As a veiled Muslim servant woman speaking a local dialect nobody suspects her to know English and therefore, she is able to listen to the conversations and gather information. The outcome of this spy mission is a success, but is only stated briefly: "On January 9, 1940, the police sealed certain riverways and raided the hideout of Rehan Ahmed and his comrades. They were not there." (76). The reader only gets to know at the end of this chapter what the mission's purpose was: Deepali had to find out whether a strike against the communist Underground movement was planned and what the plan was, so that they were able to work against it.

During the whole scene at the Cantwell's house Deepali is never described as anxious or self-conscious, but it seems as if she is working thoroughly and exact like a professional. This may surprise the reader, because it is her first mission and it is, additionally, risky to move around in the enemy's house in disguise. It shows Deepali's full commitment to the Underground group.

An interesting scene, where Deepali's freethinker personality is opposed by a more traditional thought, appears shortly before Jehan Ara's brother is getting married. When Deepali arrives at her friend's house she first meets Jehan's father, Nawab Qamrul Zaman, a rich and educated landlord. Deepali engages him in a political discussion about India's state after Independence. While Deepali is in favour of a united India, the Nawab believes that the only solution will be a separate country for the

Muslims. As a Muslim he fears that the Muslim minority in India is likely to be overruled by the Hindu majority after the British have left (124ff). After a rather long discussion between the college girl and the landlord he remarks on her (political) knowledge:

“My dear,” he said gently, “I hadn’t realized that you had become so learned. It worries me. Girls shouldn’t become too clever, it complicates life for them. They become unhappy. I wouldn’t like Jehan Ara to join the university. Too much knowledge would unsettle her ... Now, run along and help her stitch the wedding dresses. That is our tradition – our fancy sewing is done at home so that girls become expert needlewomen. And that should be a young lady’s real interest. Needlework!” he chuckled. (129)

Although he does not oppose a discussion with Deepali it can be assumed that he does not take her completely serious. In his traditional thinking a girl should not be concerned with politics but rather with housework and sewing. In his opinion education for girls should be limited and it gets clear that he allows his daughter only a certain education, but too much, he believes, would not benefit her, but rather cause harm.

The idea that education could be a disadvantage for girls or her families was rather prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th century in India. Families often preferred less educated girls as wives for their sons. If a husband died before his wife she was blamed for his death, especially when she was educated. In her memoir and informative book about high-caste Hindu women, Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati remarks on the topic of female education at the turn of the 20th century: “[...] it is a shame for a young woman or girl to hold a paper or book in her hand, or to read in the presence of others in her husband’s house. It is a popular belief among high-caste women that their husbands will die if they should read or should hold a pen in their fingers” (127). This basic attitude towards female education is still reflected in the thinking of Jehan Ara’s father, although the story is set 30 to 40 years later than Sarasvati’s publication and, furthermore, in a Muslim household.

In contrast to Jehan Ara’s imposed seclusion and inexperience, Deepali is a restless wanderer and always eager for knowledge. She cannot identify with Jehan Ara’s and some other girls’ lifestyle. When she enters the “peaceful and idyllic” (130) *zenana*⁴⁸ after her political discussion with the Nawab and sees all the girls absorbed in their needlework Deepali notes: “All these young woman seemed nearly unconcerned

⁴⁸ In Islamic South Asia and Iran: that part of a dwelling-house in which the women of a family are secluded. (OED).

about the fate of the country or humanity” (ibid.). When she explains to them why she is too late, Jehan Ara is rather aghast, but one girl agrees with Deepali, Yasmin Majid. She is one of the few characters who say their opinion loud and bold, no matter whether people and society agree with her or not:

[to Deepali] “You were arguing with Abba?” asked Jehan Ara, taken aback. “Now, if our elders are wrong about something they ought to be corrected,” the girl who had been playing the harmonium said gravely. Deepali was surprised by her defiance. Jehan Ara laughed. “Deepali, this is Yasmin Majid, our new friend. A bit crazy... like you.” (131)

Although Yasmin does not belong to the group of female revolutionaries she stands out as ‘modern’ woman, because she decides her life on her own and leaves her parents, because they do not agree with her future plans. Yasmin is a privileged Muslim girl (similar to Jehan), but wants to become a famous dancer. She is “a bit crazy” (ibid.) like Deepali, because she does not believe in traditional obligations and defends her personal freedom. She believes in freedom of speech and always says her own opinion, which is in total contrast to the idea Deepali’s aunt had expressed (this was already quoted above), because she thinks that children should respect their elders and accept their decisions unsolicited. Although Yasmin reaches fame only post-mortem after she has led a tragic life in exile, her juvenile attitude and decisions stand out in the second part of the book.

When Deepali’s trust in Rehan declines (after she has found his picture in her friend’s room) also her political commitment diminishes. She severs all contact with Rehan and her participation in the communist party is no longer the centre of her actions. Later, the reader learns that she has been a member of the party all the time, but her political engagement was excluded from the narrative. When she meets him after a long time, in 1942, it becomes clear that she is well aware of politics, but she has also changed her tactics. Deepali is aware of the differences of men and women in Indian society, even in a communist organisation. When he wants to send her for a box of matches she retorts: “I am no longer your courier for the Underground. Sorry, wrong number. Besides, an Indian male, even when he calls himself a comrade, will always consider himself a woman’s lord and master...” (158). In his essay Bandyopadhyay considers women’s and men’s political motivation and position within the party: “Women revolutionaries joined the movement mostly as cadres. They were motivated more by a revolutionary impulse than by any cogent political thinking. While this was also true of the male rank and file, *women were definitely subordinate within the*

revolutionary organisations” (33, emphasis added). Deepali probably thinks that her political activity as a female member has less importance, although we know, nowadays, that female revolutionary participation was significant within the nationalist movement. Deepali further explains that she did not become a revolutionary/terrorist, because she “didn’t agree with their [her friends’] theory of revolution”, despite the fact she is “Dinesh Babu’s niece” (159).

Furthermore she explains her political detachment to Rehan with the following explanation: “One just cannot go on breaking the rules of middle-class society” (157). While Deepali has come to this conclusion already early, Rehan adopts the same attitude only by the end of the narrative. When Deepali meets him, more than thirty years later, she finds a former communist who turned to capitalism and Rehan justifies his lifestyle, because he believes that “to keep the lamp burning requires a great quantity of oil. [...] To remain consistently inside the sphere of misery and struggle requires a hell of a lot of courage. Those who do so are considered eccentrics or plain fools” (302). This already indicates that none of the revolutionary characters remain radical: Deepali and Rosie change their attitudes already quite early and Rehan later. This idea will be taken up again in the conclusion of this chapter.

Despite Deepali being the central figure of the story, Rosie Shrila Bannerjee is the main revolutionary. She gets introduced to the Underground movement by Deepali, but has initially the feeling of being less important. When Deepali needs her help for her assignment as Kulsum Bano, Rosie realises: “Now she was the leader, the guru, and Rosie her follower” (59). In the beginning Rosie is attracted by politics because she questions religion and her own religious identity.

Her father has converted from Hinduism to Christianity and is a respected “Black Padre” (48), of his community. He is not interested in politics, because he identifies himself with the British Christian ruling class (46). Her mother, Esther Giribala, converted to Christianity when she married. She has been a Brahmin’s daughter, married at the age of four and widowed at age six. When she lost her family in a flood she was mistreated by her in-laws and later fled to the landlord’s *zenana* as a servant woman. Later, when some men began to bother her, it was decided that she should be married. As a widowed Hindu she could not be married again and the Hindus did not let her convert to Islam, because they were afraid of Hindu-Muslim riots, therefore a Christian was chosen as her husband (47f). Rosie’s interest in politics helps

her to find answers to her personal dilemma (52), but it also draws her further away from religion (57).

Already at the beginning of her political engagement, Rosie is aware of the role female revolutionaries can play. In the story the most important historical female terrorists are mentioned, which consolidates the core of the narrative in terms of historical facts. It is worth to quote Rosie's knowledge about actual female revolutionary actions at length:

There were girl terrorists too. On April 22, 1930, when the government armory in Chittagong was attacked, one of the girls, Kalpana Dutta, was arrested. Pritilata Wadadar led the attack on Chittagong's European Club. Before she could be handcuffed, she killed herself. Two young girls, Shanti and Suniti, were transported to the Andaman Islands for life. They had assassinated the English district magistrate of Comilla. Beena Das shot at the Governor of Bengal. A number of high-ranking English officials of the province were murdered. Now Rosie daydreamed: Can't I also become a national heroine like them and atone for the servility of my community? (51f)

Among other female Indian revolutionaries, those mentioned by Rosie in the narrative are the best known historical examples. The last two cases were already mentioned in the introduction to the fifth chapter⁴⁹. The first two examples can also be found, e.g., in Forbes (140f) and Bandyopadhyay's essay, respectively.

That female revolutionaries were role models to young (Bengali) girls is also mentioned towards the end of the story. After Partition when Yasmin lives in London and Rosie and her children visit her, they talk about their youth. Yasmin later writes into her diary: "When I mentioned that as young girls our greatest ambition used to be to become heroines like Pritilata, Kalpana Dutt, and Kanaklata Barua⁵⁰, the girls asked me sweetly if they were famous film stars of our time!" (274). Similar to film stars nowadays, female revolutionaries were idealised by young girls of the nationalist movement.

Rosie and Deepali are actively working for the communist party, but when Rosie's parents find out about her political actions it seems that she withdraws from it completely. When her parents want to marry her, because she is already twenty-one (79), she is completely shocked, because she did not suspect her parents of arranging

⁴⁹ The orthography of Indian names often varies, because they are transcriptions from an Indian alphabet (e.g. Devanāgarī, Bengali, Urdu) to the Latin alphabet.

⁵⁰ She led unarmed villagers under the Congress flag and was gunned down by Indian police men. (Pathak 62f).

her daughter's marriage. Rosie does not agree with their choice and behaves counterproductively, and this is when her father remarks:

How had Rosie become so different from her own mother? Esther had seemed a picture of submission when called forth to meet her future husband. Rosie's eyes glowed with fiery rebellion. She looked like a silent Fury. Nowadays this stubbornness is called self-confidence.

Her father is surprised by his daughter's attitude towards the prospected marriage, and similar to Deepali's father finds himself in a generational conflict. Rosie does not let people decide about herself and rejects the chosen husband-to-be and thus, disgraces her parents. She is not aware that Mrs. Biswas (her husband-to-be's mother) had made inquiries about Rosie and found out about her political engagement. When Mrs. Biswas feels dishonoured because of the rejection of her only son she conveys all information about Rosie's secret actions that her parents do not know.

After this fateful evening her parents are not only devastated because of Rosie's disobedience according to the announced engagement party, but also because of her secret political activities. Her parents stop speaking to her and Rosie decides to quit co-working with the communists. Subsequently she tears up Deepali's letters and does not longer communicate with any of the comrades. Although her parents are still suspicious and frequently inquire whether she has "again joined the traitors" (153), Rosie seems to concentrate on her studies and negates her parents suspicion. She even tranquillises her father: "I'm a nationalist, but I am certainly against the violence that has broken out with this so-called Quit India Movement" (155). Only later this evening her parents find out that their daughter has run away and they suspect that she has been lying to them all the time (156).

Generally, it is surprising that Rosie has still anything to do with the communist Underground movement, because it is described that she withdrew from it almost completely. Rosie's rebellion starts after she differs from Deepali's and the party's politics. She comes by at Deepali's house with three comrades to return some of Rehan's books and to say goodbye. Rosie is very cold towards Deepali and does not want to talk to her. She explains to her friends: "[...] Exactly two and a half years ago, it was there that this grand lady made me take the oath of loyalty to my country. Little did I know then that she would turn into a British agent" (150). And Deepali counters: "I have not turned into a British agent, I am merely following the latest Party directive. We do not approve of the present outbreak of violence against the British" (ibid.). Throughout this discussion they do not come to an agreement. Later when the four

comrades leave “[T]hey turn toward the portrait of Dinesh Chandra Sarkar and saluted it” (151), which clearly indicates their revolutionary standpoint.

Rosie’s activity as a revolutionary terrorist is not directly narrated, but the reader only learns about it from her father’s shocked reaction, when he goes to Mister Barlow’s (an important British gentleman) house to ask for help. Even her father does not get the information of his daughter’s terrorist act and subsequent imprisonment directly, but through an article in the local newspaper (172). Later the reader learns about Rosie’s experiences in prison through a letter she writes to Deepali (208ff).

The reader is not informed about the actual happenings and what she was exactly rebelling against. Mr. Bannerjee asks Mr. Barlow to help his daughter, but Mr. Barlow merely replies: “if it is proved that Miss Bannerjee’s hand grenade killed somebody, she will be sentenced for life. I can do nothing about it” (172). Mr. Bannerjee’s visit at Mr. Barlow’s house coincides with the message of the death of Mr. Barlow’s wife in England. A bomb had killed Mrs. Barlow during the Second World War in England. Since Mr. Barlow is thunderstruck about the message of the death of his wife, Rosie’s case is no longer commented on, but he only assures Mr. Bannerjee to try to help.

In the following chapter, in a conversation between Rehan and Uma, more details about Rosie’s raid are revealed: They have attacked a police station at Isherde (177). Now, the scene at Deepali’s house becomes clearer, because they were planning a suicide squad, they have returned the books and said goodbye. In her letter Rosie writes that the other three comrades have died during the raid and she was badly wounded (208).

In her letter to Deepali, she writes about her imprisonment as a female revolutionary. This is interesting because very few accounts of those experiences exist. Nevertheless, even in her letter Rosie does not explicitly say what has happened and how she participated in the rebellion. She only writes that “[T]hey had thrown hand grenades at the police station” (208), hinting at her comrade friends that have been killed during this attack, but she does not “remember what happened afterward” (ibid.), until she “was handcuffed and lying on the stone floor of the women’s lockup” (ibid.). In the entire narrative there are only hints about her alleged responsibility for killing somebody, but she never tells actual details. In the same letter she reflects upon possible outcomes of her legal case without commenting on it: “[...] if it was somehow

established in the court of law that I was one of those who threw the hand grenades (which killed two policemen) I would be imprisoned” (210).

In general her description of imprisonment is emotionally detached and seems like an outsider’s description. She is not treated like a criminal as it would be expected, but the other women at the hospital and prison care for her and honour her for her actions. Rosie writes that, “there were a whole lot of girls imprisoned during the uprising” (211), which seems to mirror historical facts of that time (Thapar 89).

However, Rosie Bannerjee is soon bailed out by her lawyer’s brother, who has fallen in love with her and marries her. This ‘happy ending’ gives the story a surprising twist. Rosie ends her letter rather apologetically, questioning her decision on the one hand, but, on the other hand, she also justifies it as safe way out of the situation. She knows that she has not betrayed her political standpoint, because she does not sign a letter of apology, but she also does not stay too long in jail for a crime she might not even have committed (212). Rosie’s and Deepali’s moving away from active party politics to marrying and settling down will be taken up in this chapter’s conclusion.

Finally another character of this narrative will be briefly analysed, namely Jehan Ara. The daughter of a wealthy Muslim landlord stands in stark contrast to the two female revolutionaries, Deepali Sarkar and Rosie Bannerjee. She is described as a conservative girl obeying *pardah*⁵¹. Jehan even sees herself as the opposite of her two friends. After Rosie rejects the boy her parents have chosen for her, Jehan acknowledges her courage: “[...] You had the guts to defy and refuse. When my marriage is arranged by my father, I’ll merely bow my head and say yes” (91). The reader can assume that Jehan is not happy with her conservative role, because after this conversation she starts to cry (ibid.). Nevertheless, Jehan is portrayed as a traditional girl, who does not express her own opinion but behaves according to her relatives’ and society’s expectations, even if it afflicts her personal happiness.

Rehan, the male communist protagonist, is Jehan’s cousin and had been selected as her future husband. In the narrative this story is told of lying some years in the past. Rehan rejected the prospected marriage because Jehan’s family is very affluent and he cannot make a compromise with his political standpoint and her father did not want her to leave this wealthy domain. Although they loved each other, Jehan did not have the courage to turn her back to her father’s house. Later Rehan understands that the

⁵¹ The practice in certain Muslim and Hindu societies of screening women from men or strangers, especially by means of a curtain (OED).

situation for Indian women is still different to the one of European women: “I was forgetting that a conservative girl like her would not even dream of elopement. I had just come back from Europe and was agog with ideas of women’s independence” (193). After he had left Jehan and works again in the Underground movement he meets Deepali. In a conversation Uma compares Deepali’s strength to Jehan’s timidity: “And then you found the girl you wanted, brave and a real fighter, etc.” (ibid.). Again in this scene Jehan is compared to one of her friends and described as the total opposite. It is not clear whether Jehan prefers her own lifestyle or envies Rosie’s and Deepali’s freedom. She even questions herself, but cannot find an answer:

Rosie and Deepali were endeavouring in their own way, to achieve the ideal conditions for humanity. While I, Jehan Ara, Decoration of the World, sit and brood and knit booties. Should I have got out of here that fateful night with Rehan? Was it predestination that I didn’t go, or merely the result of my own sheltered upbringing?

It seems to be difficult for her to distinguish between her own wishes and the outcome of her education.

From all the girls of this narrative her story is the most tragic. She is married off to a much older man, because she is already ‘too old’ for a suitable marriage: “Jehan Ara was already twenty-six. An eligible bachelor could not be found so she obtained a widower” (222). She agrees dutifully to her parents’ choice, as she had already pronounced before. In her old age, she loses her son, due to a war between India and Pakistan in 1965 (270) and is finally murdered in the riots during the nation building of Bangladesh (288). She is pitied by Deepali who wanted to visit her old friend, but can only learn about Jehan Ara’s horrible fate.

In *Fireflies in the Mist*, Hyder is not interested in mainstream history and politics, but more in less known aspects and stories. Although the book is mainly concerned with Partition, Hyder shows the Bengali side of Partition, which is frequently subdued in Partition history. According to history writing the story gives priority to (female) revolutionaries and the marginal Communist Party in contrast to more mainstream women’s movement, Gandhi’s movement or the majority Indian National Congress (Sinha 44). Even the emotional focus of the story lies differently to other Partition novels, because the author does not want to foreground the brutality and inhuman effects of Partition, but the active participation of average citizens who thought they could help changing their country’s fate. Nevertheless, in the novel Hyder also portrays that nobody was spared from Partition’s consequences and even if people did not witness killings and riots, they still lost their friends and sometimes had to live in

exile. Their world broke apart and no revolution was able to change that. Sinha has analysed the novel in a similar way:

[...] Hyder opens our eyes to the loss of the Indian people suffered and are still suffering. Her main concern is the loss of a world where people lives [sic.] in harmony despite their social and religious differences, spoke the same language, studied the same literature, maintained cultural unity and struggled unitedly for the liberation of their motherland. (43f)

This is well expressed in the book. The characters belong to various religious affiliations and are connected throughout the first two parts of the book. However, after Independence they are not only geographically separated, but become also personally alienated.

In *Fireflies in the Mist* the prominent female representation can be characterised as rebellious revolutionary. As it was shown in this chapter, Deepali and Rosie both act and behave rather untraditional. The traditional female representation is embodied by Jehan Ara who is perceived as the opposite of her two friends. Qurratulain Hyder manages to employ a rich variety of different female roles in her narrative. She demonstrates that women were not only victimised and helpless during India's political transitional period, but they also actively participated.

While 'Feminist Postcolonialism' claims that women are doubly oppressed, Hyder counters this argument in showing that a group of women were not. As it was already described at the beginning of this chapter quite a number of women were working for the national movement and some of them were also active as revolutionaries. Bandyopadhyay even construes that at that time an "[A]wareness of the phenomenon that women are doubly oppressed in society was absent" (35). Of course this argument is only valid within the context of women's (political) movements.

Hyder does not only employ subaltern female roles in her novel, but also empowered women, who express their own opinion, live according to their own wishes and fight for a major cause alongside with men. Although Jehan Ara's traditional representation is ascribed mainly as the role of Indian (Muslim) women, it should not be forgotten that women like Deepali and Rosie⁵², who embody a rather non-feminine role, still existed and also 'made' history.

Women who chose to fight for their country and engage in the national movement did not perceive themselves as different from their male colleagues and they

⁵² Uma Roy and Yasmin Majid are also empowered female characters in the novel, but this analysis concentrates on the role of female freedom fighters and not empowered Indian women in general.

also encouraged other women to partake. Pritilata Wadedar who led an attack on a European Club and was shot dead while fleeing had a note with her that said: “I earnestly hope that our sisters would no longer nurse the view that they are weak” (Bandyopadhyay 32). In her diary she described her role in the attack as “to let the English learn and the world take notice that women of our country are no longer lagging behind” (quoted in *ibid.*). Women knew that their engagement in revolutionary politics could be a role model for other women and change the West’s perception of the suppressed (colonial/Indian) woman.

It can be argued that Deepali’s and Rosie’s self-determination vanishes towards the end of the narrative, because both of them marry and withdraw completely from politics. In the novel Rosie marries an affluent Hindu and moves to post-Independence India, while Deepali leaves with her father to Trinidad and marries another exile Indian, Barrister Sen. However it should be noted that the time frame of the last part of the novel is set after Independence. It is historically proven that many female revolutionaries did no longer participate actively in politics after India reached Independence (Bandyopadhyay 34). Many women felt disillusioned and disappointed after the prospected goal was reached and the British left.

While Rosie vanishes almost completely from the narrative and it is unknown why she is no longer politically active, Deepali’s frustration is expressed in her various encounters during her travels. She travels to Bangladesh and India to visit her former homeland and her childhood friends. The frustration about the situation in an independent India and independent Bangladesh respectively can be read between the lines in her numerous descriptions and encounters during the travels. At a festive ceremony in remembrance of her friend Yasmin Majid, a young journalist wants to interview Deepali as one of India’s former freedom fighters, but she refuses. He interprets her refusal with her dissatisfaction of contemporary politics: “she was one of those cranky, disgruntled freedom fighters, leftovers from the Raj, who find fault with everything in the present independent regimes of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh” (311). The word choice “leftovers” makes it clear, that she seems to regret bygone times.

Nevertheless, the withdrawal of politics does not automatically stand for their loss of personal empowerment. As it was already mentioned, Rosie married a Hindu man and loses contact with her own family almost completely, because her father could not forgive her to have chosen “an infidel” as husband. However, her father later

forgives her (more or less), because he is afraid to completely lose his daughter and his grandchildren, but it is already too late. Rosie has decided to move to India with her husband and chooses to avoid contact with her parents until their death. Deepali can be said to have chosen “personal happiness” (243) over politics. Although the reader is never actually informed about her emotional state, it can be assumed that she is rather satisfied with her current situation. Deepali’s attitude is rather practical when she talks to Rehan’s niece Nasira who becomes a revolutionary during Bangladesh’s national movement: “[...] yesterday’s rebels have joined today’s establishment. You are a present-day rebel – you may become part of tomorrow’s establishment.” (267). For Deepali it is an endless cycle of change: her uncle had been a revolutionary, then she joined the revolutionaries, and now that she is older the next generation is getting interested in the movement. Deepali feels that she was very similar to Nasira when she was younger herself. That is one of the reasons why it cannot be directly criticised that Deepali and Rosie are no longer politically active, because they are superseded by the next generation, Nasira.

The following two chapters will not deal with a specific female role, but will represent two possible roles for Hindu and Muslim women, respectively.

6. The Muslim Woman

The separation of the country, while the subcontinent gained independence, was based on religious affiliations. Nevertheless, Muslims are still the second largest religious group in India today. The states of Pakistan and Bangladesh (East and West Pakistan until 1971) were created for all Muslims of British India. Nowadays, approximately 165 million Muslims live in Pakistan (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and 150 million Muslims live in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics). Nevertheless, around 138 million Muslims, which is about 13.4 % of the total population, still live in the Indian republic (Census of India). This shows that not the entire Muslim population moved to the new nation states during or shortly after Independence.

Historically, Muslims came to India in the 10th and 11th century and ruled on the subcontinent for around eight centuries. This period is known as the Mughal Empire. Due to the enormous area of the country, geographical differences and various languages, a variety of different Muslim cultures coexist on the subcontinent (Kazi 4).

In some cases, individual Muslim communities adopted particular Hindu (or other) ceremonies or rituals. Hindu and Muslim culture had a long time to blend with each other in India. Muslims have been living together with Hindus and other religious communities for a long time and, hence, have made India their home (Kazi 5f).

Muslim families had been living for many generations on the subcontinent when the demand for India's independence and the creation of a separated Muslim country became inevitable. For most Muslim families India had been their homeland for many centuries. This is the reason why not all Muslims left to the areas of Pakistan or Bangladesh. In political discussions the Muslim community defines themselves not only in contrast to other religious communities, but they also broke up within their own community. While several Muslims were convinced of the new states and the division on the basis of religion, others tried to prove their loyalty to their home country, India, and opted for a united nation state. Women's movements were not directly affected by those political differences (Kazi 11).

In India, women's movements had started to emerge during the 19th century. At the beginning, these movements were mainly concerned with the rights of Hindu women, although some issues, like education and child marriage, were universal and did not apply to a specific Indian community (Lateef 10). Since Muslims are only a minority group in India, specific Muslim women's movements started to emerge later (Lateef 8). Some of the most important concerns for Muslim women in India were "the issue of female education, the age of marriage, the importance of a girl's consent to marriage, polygamy, a woman's role in marriage and *purdah*" (Kazi 7). The topics of *purdah* and marriage will be important for the subsequent analysis of the novel *Sunlight on a Broken Column* by Attia Hosain.

It should be noted that it is impossible to define Indian Muslim women in general, because within one country too many varieties of class, hierarchy, family background, customary practices and religious laws⁵³ exist among the Muslim community. In the following analysis the focus lies on women's representations in the Indian Muslim upper class.

⁵³ Islam itself is divided into followers of Sunni and Shia, but further distinctions are made through various schools of law. Among others, the four major schools of Sunni law are: Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi. The members of Shia order follow different laws.

6.1 *Sunlight on a Broken Column* by Attia Hosain⁵⁴

Attia Hosain's novel *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is a significant work of Indian English fiction and of Partition literature, because it is the first novel that describes the Muslim point of view on Partition (More 70, Shaikh 80), and, additionally, it is written by a female author. Published in 1961 it is the earliest novel of this analysis and only few women writers have written about India's Partition politics before Hosain.

The main focus of the novel is the effect of Partition on one specific aristocratic Muslim *Taluqdar*⁵⁵ family. Laila, the protagonist of the story, tells the story from a first person's limited perspective. The narrative's time span is around 1932 to 1952 (Shaikh 79) and the story is set in Lucknow, one of the major centres during the Mughal Empire.

The protagonist of the narrative is Laila, since the story is told from her perspective. At the beginning of the story she is a young girl of 15 (38) who has lost both her parents and is living with her paternal grandfather and her aunts. She and her cousin Zahra are brought up in an orthodox and traditional way, which means that they obey *purdah* and do not have many contacts to the world outside of their house. After her grandfather dies she is living under the custody of her uncle, who idealises a Western lifestyle and modern concepts of living. She begins to go outside of *purdah* and visits a girl's college and several social festivities. This is the time, when she meets Ameer, a relatively poor kinsman of one of her family's friends. They fall in love with each other and want to marry, but her conservative family is against this marriage for various reasons. Nevertheless, Laila decides to marry Ameer, although this means that her family turns against her. The end of the story is set after Partition and Laila, who is a widow by now, visits the house of her childhood again, which is turned into a refugee camp.

The book is divided into four parts and each part focuses roughly on different issues. In the first part Laila, an orphan girl, lives with her aunts and her cousin in the house of her paternal grandfather. The major topic of this part is her life in *purdah* and her connection to all the other female members of the household. The part ends with her grandfather's death and the marriage of her cousin, Zahra. In the second part Laila lives with her anglophile uncle Hamid, his wife Saira and their two sons, Saleem and Kemal. She is introduced to society and leaves *purdah*. At college several political discussions among her female friends arise, and the reader gets to know various perspectives on

⁵⁴ If not indicated differently, all quotes in this chapter are taken from the novel.

⁵⁵ A feudal landowning family (Sanga 141).

Indian politics. In the third part her cousins return to India, after they have studied in England. Uncle Hamid participates actively in politics and stands in contrast to his son's political ideas. Finally the family splits, and one of her cousins decides to leave for Pakistan. This part ends with Laila's decision to marry Ameer, which also splits the family, because her aunts are against this unorthodox marriage. The final part is set 14 years later, namely in 1952, in post-Independence India. Laila visits her native house and remembers the happy past of her childhood, while she reflects on the unstable present and unknown future. The reader also gets to know what has happened in these last 14 years and how Laila witnessed the troubles during the Partition as a widowed woman. Interestingly Ameer did not die due to the consequences of Partition and Indian politics, but he was sent to the Middle East as a soldier, where he was taken prisoner and killed (316ff). The story ends on a hopeful note, when Laila leaves the "empty house" (319) with Asad, a distant-cousin and also an important figure of the novel, with the words: "I have been waiting for you, Asad. I am ready to leave now" (ibid.).

Some of the major topics of the book are definitely the changing of the old orders (Shaikh 79), but also the Partition within the Muslim community (More 83), which is directly reflected in the breaking apart of Laila's family (Shaikh 93). The backdrop of the story is the struggle for Partition on the Indian subcontinent, while the focus lies on Laila's individual struggle to break free of tradition and conservative expectations.

In Laila's family various people, like her uncle and cousins, are politically very active. Also in college, Laila and her friends regularly discuss politics (124f). Although Laila knows a lot about contemporary politics, because she listens to political discussions among her family members and she also witnesses the riots and uprisings that were going on at that time, she is unable to express her own political standpoint. The novel is primarily concerned with Partition politics and many historical facts are included in the narrative, Hosain's protagonist, however, is not directly concerned with the politics of her country. For Laila politics is not as important as her personal struggle. Her major concern is her personal freedom and development (Malik 70). This can be seen by reference to the topics that are addressed in the narrative, e.g. *purdah* and marriage. It can be argued that Laila believes that independence from colonialism is equivalent with the renunciation of traditionalism and embracing modernism.

From the beginning onwards, Laila stands in contrast to her cousin Zahra. While Zahra is only educated at home and incorporates her family's conservative beliefs,

Laila's personality and education at an English college (due to the wish of her deceased father) make her question traditional practices and speak out her own opinion. In the presence of the two girls one of the servant girls (and Laila's former playmate), Nandi, is accused of having gone alone into the men's quarter. Uncle Mohsin, who is at the moment in their house to discuss Zahra's marriage, accuses her of having impermissible sexual affairs. When Nandi boldly replies that he is also just a man and would have liked to have an affair with her, uncle Mohsin hits her with his stick until Laila interferes (28). Her relatives do not welcome Laila's open protest (Malik 57). After this incident Laila is very upset, but is told to apologise to her uncle. In a conversation with Zahra the girls' different attitudes become clear:

„The insolence of these menials that she should have dared to talk to our uncle in such a manner, and in front of everyone, of all those servants! Laila, how could you have interfered? Aren't you ashamed?“
 „Yes I am. I'm ashamed to call him uncle. I'm ashamed that you have no pity because Nandi is a servant girl. Besides, I don't care what anyone thinks. I don't care.“ (29)

Although Zahra is approximately the same age as Laila, she believes in very traditional moral values. She blames her cousin's education for her behaviour:

„Do you know what is wrong with you, Laila? All those books you read. You just talk like a book now, with no sense of reality. The only cure for Nandi is to get her married quickly.“
 „The cure for a good girl is to get her married quickly; the cure for a bad girl is to get her married quickly. Do you think of anything but getting married quickly?“ (ibid.)

In the last chapter it was already mentioned that female education was sometimes seen as disadvantageous for girls, because they would get distracted from their 'principal duties', like being a good (house-) wife and caring for their children. Nevertheless, as the educated reader should be aware of, Laila's education allows her to have a changed (less conservative) perspective, to advocate her own opinion and to "explain her action" (Barvekar 198).

Additionally to her education Laila's position as an orphan should not be underrated. In contrast to Zahra, whose mother is responsible for her education (24) and transmits her values to her daughter, Laila does not directly have a guiding parent. This can be one reason why her opinions and thoughts differ from her cousin's ideas.

Interestingly, with regard to the topic of *purdah*, Laila does not question this concept of female seclusion. *Purdah* was primarily a phenomenon spread amongst the

Muslim community. In Muslim households the separation of an outer world and an inner world was very much in practice. In the context of Muslim women of Bengal Amin explains:

In nineteenth century Bengal, the separation of the private and public spheres among respectable Muslim families was spatially manifest in the division of the place of residence into an inner part (*andar*) and an outer one (*sardar*). This separation was physically more well-defined in the houses of the well-to-do *sharif* (that is, well-born, upper class gentry) families where the female members hardly ever ventured out of the *andarmahal* (inner mansion). (38)

Although Amin's study only covers the situation of women in Bengal it can be assumed that Muslim families all over India were living under similar conditions. It is surprising that Laila does not rebel against this tradition of female seclusion, since she opposes traditional values in general. It is part of her growing up and she does not question this way of living. Interestingly Zahra leaves *purdah* first, after she is married. However, she is only permitted to live an open and social life because she is a married woman. Laila, on the other hand, does not feel any compulsion or want to leave *purdah*. Even when Zahra suggests taking her to the reception of the Viceroy (147), Laila protests and tries to avoid going out in public (148). Against the reader's expectations, Laila prefers to stay within her well-known realm and does not want to break conventions. But Zahra introduces her cousin to society against her wishes. Due to the newness of this situation and her insecurity, Laila gets separated from her relatives, but is rescued by a charming young man, Ameer. After this premiere at a social event, the narrative is no longer confined to the secluded part of the house, but Laila's college and gatherings with friends are described. Although initially coerced, Laila is released from the restrictive tradition of *purdah*.

Another integral issue for Indian families is marriage. In the narrative two concepts of marriage are juxtaposed: arranged marriage and love marriage. The first one represents the traditional and conventional means for getting married. The parents of two families agree on the marriage of their son and daughter, respectively, and then inform their children about their decision. The second one represents the new and modern way of marriage. After a boy and girl fall in love with each other they inform their parents about their own decision to marry. The latter concept was not (and in many cases is not even today) socially accepted on the Indian subcontinent.

Contrasting Zahra and Laila, the dissimilarity between a traditional and modern marriage is presented in the narrative. Already in the beginning of the book her aunts

and uncles review Zahra's marriage prospects. They, unequivocally, arrive at the conclusion that a girl is never qualified to decide about her own wedding. Aunt Abida notes: "The girl cannot choose her own husband, she has neither the upbringing nor the opportunity –" (21). She mentions two factors why a girl is unable to choose a suitable husband: first, her upbringing, which consists of a moral sense of duty deriving from her parents and her education; and second, the lack of opportunity, because Zahra lives in *purdah* and therefore does simply not have contact with any young men.

The last notion is not completely true, because a restricted group of men, mainly relatives and some servants, have access to the *zenana*. One of those male relatives is Asad, a distant cousin living in the same house, who falls in love with Zahra. However, as soon as their love is discovered, Zahra's mother gets very angry. Laila is confused by this situation because she has not experienced (true) love yet and nobody can explain it to her or even talks about it. She remarks: "Nothing was said about what had happened that night, [...]. But that night had decided that Zahra would be married to the first suitable person, and Asad could no longer live happily in the house" (81).

Until very recently⁵⁶ marriages in Indian (Muslim) households were typically arranged by the parents of two families. As soon as a girl reached puberty and her menstruation began, she was "considered a truly 'sexual' being" (Amin 52) and plans for her marriage had to be made. Generally certain ideal criteria existed and a suitable husband was chosen on the basis of criteria, like class, caste, status, background, family, wealth, education, etc. Zahra's wedding is very traditional, which means that she gets to see her husband for the first time only after the actual wedding ceremony (114). Laila is very curious about Zahra's feelings and questions in how far (true) love really exists (115).

When Laila meets Ameer and falls vigorously in love with him she finally understands what Zahra's pain could have been like when she was ordered to forget Asad and marry an unknown man. However, Laila is different and she is ready to fight for her love. It was already cited above that she does not care what other people think about her, but she only follows her intuition. Ameer is conscious that his status and class would not be approved by Laila's family and is therefore afraid of losing her, but Laila affirms him: "Why do you keep talking of others? What about me? It is my life." (223). Still, she keeps questioning herself, if their love can have a future. She thinks

⁵⁶ It should be noted that no time frame can be defined for this phenomenon. Even nowadays marriages are often arranged, although the pattern of modern arranged marriages varies to the more traditional arranged marriages.

about another friend of hers, Sita, who was in love with Kemal, but did not agree to marry him, because her parents would have disapproved: "It cannot be that love must always, always be denied. What are we to do?" (ibid.).

They do not want to hide their love and elope. At the same time they are aware that their families would not agree to this marriage. This is why they decide to keep their love a secret until Ameer earns more money and, thus, may become more acceptable for Laila's family.

In the end, the secret love is detected and, as the two lovers had expected, is prohibited by Laila's family. Although her aunt and uncle do not follow a traditional Indian lifestyle, they still have conservative ideas with regard to marriage. While her aunt reacts with anger and refusal, her uncle is more open for a discussion, but he lectures her about all possible consequences this marriage may have for her (280f). He agrees to the marriage wish of his niece, however, she has to move out as soon as her education is finished. Laila approves of this consequence, because she no longer feels at home in her family house.

These two types of marriage, arranged and love marriage, symbolise two different attitudes, traditional and modern, and they are attributed to Zahra and Laila, respectively. It was already discussed above that the two girls represent these two values and stand in contrast to each other.

There is no general or dominant female representation in *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. Laila is the protagonist and her attitudes and values are definitely in the foreground, but many other female characters appear in the novel as well. Even though Laila's representation is not the only one in the novel she can be regarded as a future role model, while all the other female figures are part of the old world. In this sense Laila can be seen as representing post-independent India, while Zahra represents the colonial world. Several other women characters are allocated to one of these two categories or in between. For example Aunt Abida, Zahra's mother, also transmits traditional values, while Aunt Saira lives mainly according to a modern lifestyle.

Among Laila's college friends some interesting characters can be found. Interestingly this group of friends consists of women with various religious backgrounds and they represent a great variety of different religious standpoints: a rebellious Hindu (Nita), a radical Muslim (Nadira), an uninterested Muslim (Romana) and a neutral Anglo-Indian Christian (Joan Davis) (124ff). Laila herself can be classified as a moderate Muslim, because she believes in a united India and in non-

violence (More 83). Later, the group breaks up: Nita is killed during a demonstration in which she actively participates (163f) and Nadira marries Saleem and follows him to Pakistan, where she works as a social worker to help refugee women (300). The other two friends vanish from the narrative. Similar to the first two analyses, this multi-religious group of friends is only united in colonial India, but has to separate when the subcontinent is divided. This is analogous to the actual Partition of the subcontinent (Kabir 185).

Independence politics and Partition are a major topic of this novel and they occur in numerous situations. Almost all men of Laila's family are politically active. Uncle Hamid runs for the elections of a *Taluqdari* party, while his son Saleem is a member of the Muslim League. Asad, her distant-cousin, engages himself in the non-violence movement. However, the protagonist, Laila, does not participate actively in politics, but only experiences it. Shamsie has acknowledged, "that political opinions do not sit too heavily on the text, but are nevertheless expressed" (146).

Laila remains in India and experiences Partition, as a Muslim, from the Indian side of the border. Although she is a member of an aristocratic household and therefore, more privileged than the majority of the population, she remembers the riots and violence of Partition, in the fourth part of the narrative, as part of her personal trauma.

Historically, the Muslim minority population in India experienced many difficulties and threats at the time of Partition. They were regarded as traitors by the Muslims in favour of Pakistan, and as disturbers of communal harmony by the Hindus in India. Nevertheless, Laila accredits her Hindu friends for helping her during this difficult time. In a letter to Zahra she recalls her experiences:

I had known the fear of violence, murder, rape and mutilation, as hate-blinded revengeful men had streamed over the border and closer to that retreat in the hills. [...] Where were you, Zahra, when I sat up through the nights, watching village after village set on fire, each day nearer and nearer? Sleeping in a comfortable house, guarded by policemen, and sentries? Do you know who saved me and my child⁵⁷? Sita, who took us to her house, in spite of putting her own life in danger with ours. And Ranjit [...] drove us back, pretending we were his family, risking discovery and death. (304)

In this letter Laila expresses her anger, because she believes that Muslims in Pakistan had an easier life than Muslims in India. Zahra replies with a similar anger: "Do you think we did not have the same sense of duty on our side? Do you think the same things

⁵⁷ In the last part of the novel it is mentioned that Laila and Ameer have one daughter (273), but Partition happened after Ameer's death.

did not happen there? You are so prejudiced” (305). However, she does not go more into detail and therefore, again, no clear standpoint is transmitted in the narrative. It remains the reader’s task to decide whether Laila’s and Zahra’s experiences were or completely different.

In the same way as her multi-religious group of friends split up in the course of Partition, also Laila’s family splits. While Saleem and Zahra leave for Pakistan with their families, Kemal, Laila and her aunts and uncle stay in India (286ff). This shows an aspect of Partition that is frequently neglected. In most cases this historical event, in general, symbolises the split between the Muslim and Hindu/Sikh population of the Indian subcontinent into two separate nations. However, the stories of Muslims who decided to stay in India or Hindus/Sikhs who opted for Pakistan, are rarely known.

Not many novels about Partition were written shortly after the actual event and Hosain writes the first novel with a Muslim perspective on Partition. Even more preeminent is the fact that she has written the novel from the perspective of a Muslim woman, who lives until puberty in *purdah* and is, thus, evidently subaltern. Qadeer presents Hosain as a writer who “records the marginalized existence of woman in society” (129). Hosain represents this young woman as modernist thinker who does not give up easily her own opinion. While she restrains from taking a clear political standpoint, she neutrally reproduces all her observations and experiences and Hosain represents a vision of the possible ‘new woman’ of independent India.

For Laila the historical event of Partition also brings a change for her personal life. First, she is allowed to leave *purdah* before being married and second, she is able to fulfil her own marriage wish and finish her education. However, Partition also traumatises her, because her family is split according to ideological beliefs. Therefore she remains lonely (with her daughter), after Ameers dies, because her family is divided by a new national border.

In this analysis the idea about autobiographical traits that was firstly discussed in chapter four, will be taken up again. It is important to see the author’s personal connection to her narrative in order to acknowledge the relevance of the novel.

Attia Hosain was born in 1913 as a daughter of an aristocratic *Taluqdar* family in Lucknow (Sanga 141f). Her father died when she was eleven and her mother, who lived in *purdah* took over the running of the family estate. Hosain was the first girl from a *Taluqdar* family to graduate from university, but rebelled against her family by choosing her own husband (Desai *Introduction*, viii). Although she was never actually

involved in politics, her family exercised much political influence. On her lack of political involvement Hosain explains: “I did not actively enter politics as I was (and may always have been?) tied and restricted in many ways by traditional bonds of duty to the family” (ibid.). This explanation reminds one very much of Laila’s situation and her political neutrality. In 1947 Hosain and her husband and children left the Indian subcontinent for England, where she had been living until her death in 1998. All the key events of Hosain’s life are in some way reflected in the novel. Therefore *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is definitely based on autobiographical traits.

As a young Muslim woman in pre-independence India, Hosain was a remarkable person. She pursued her education and made her own decisions, similar to Laila, although she was ‘just’ a girl. This is one important reason why her novel is remarkable. It shows that apart from the major political resistance movements, women had to be active in many minor fights in order to achieve their personal rights. The novel shows that Partition was definitely a drastic event in South Asia’s population. However, it was not the only difficulty women of that time had to persevere. For women in South Asia, Partition was an event that affected their life in several ways, but their subordinate status in India’s society was an omnipresent issue they had to deal with. This is the reason why many Partition novels by female authors do not primarily deal with violence against women.

In the following analyses, it will be shown that this argumentation is not only true for Muslim women, but for Hindu women as well.

7. The Hindu Woman

Even women who were not victimised during Partition and who did not engage in politics, recall the events around 1947 as a tumultuous time. Partition was not always a direct reference point for riots and killings, but also affected people indirectly.

Although many middle-class and upper-class Hindu women did not encounter enormous troubles during the time of Partition, their life and thinking was influenced by the changes that took place. The majority of India’s population are Hindu, and during Partition, the Hindus in undisputed areas or areas with a Hindu majority were not extremely threatened by communal violence.

In the following analysis of Anita Desai's novel *Clear Light of Day* the main protagonist, Bim, is affected psychologically from the incidental effects of politics on her family. However, as it will be shown, her personality can still grow and she is able to lead her life according to her own wishes because of the incidents that happen during and after the country reaches independence.

Similar to the role of Muslim women, Hindu women were expected to adhere to several social norms. Especially in Hinduism and Indian culture, the practice of child marriage was very much prevalent and women's sexuality had to be controlled throughout her whole life. In general, women have always had a subordinate status on the Indian subcontinent. However, this began to change in recent times. As it was already addressed in the last chapter, women's movements started to emerge in the course of the 19th century. Especially topics like female education and the age and consent of marriage were discussed. The public discussion of topics concerning women paved the way for certain women to emerge as 'new woman' in postcolonial times.

The subsequent analysis will show that, although most women still lived according to traditional norms, there were also women whose decisions were not influenced by society's expectations. Bim is portrayed as an independent and strong woman who behaves sometimes in a rather unfeminine way. Although she also suffers because of her personal independence and lonesomeness, she is represented as role model for the (Hindu) women of independent India.

7.1. *Clear Light of Day* by Anita Desai⁵⁸

Anita Desai's sixth novel *Clear Light of Day* was published in 1980 and deals with the history of a family in Old Delhi before, during and after Partition. The most important characters of the narrative are the four siblings: Raja, Bim, Tara and Baba. Other significant characters are their aunt Mira, and their neighbours: a Muslim and a Hindu family, respectively.

The story is divided into four parts of near-equal length, but its structure is unconventional. The first and the last part give a stable frame to the narrative, because they are set in the narrative's present, the mid 1970s. The second part goes back in time and describes the memorable year 1947. In the third part the narrative's theme goes even further back in time, to the sibling's childhood days. As already mentioned the

⁵⁸ If not indicated differently, all quotes in this chapter are taken from the novel.

fourth part concludes, again, in the mid 1970s. In this kind of structure the present and its problems are first introduced and only later explained, when the story goes back in time. When the narrative returns to the present the reader is finally equipped with a complete knowledge about the characters and their lives and some struggles can, finally, be resolved.

Tara and her husband Bakul visit her family house in the course of their three-yearly visit to India. Tara has moved to Washington after her marriage, because her husband works there in the diplomatic office. They have two daughters, but they arrive a bit later in India and turn up in the narrative only in the fourth part. In Tara's ancestral home live her elder sister Bim and her younger brother Baba, who is mentally not fully developed. Her older brother Raja had moved to Hyderabad in 1947 to join their former Muslim neighbours and married their daughter, Benazir. Her sister Bim has finished college and is currently teaching girls at their former school.

The beginning part of the novel sets already its ghostly and uprooted atmosphere. Tara gets to know why Bim and Raja do not longer talk to each other, although they were almost inseparable in their youth. Bim is deeply hurt when Raja turns his back to the family and leaves for meeting the Ali family in Hyderabad. He had sent her a letter in which he behaves more like a landlord than a brother and this gives Bim the feeling of having lost her brother completely.

Then the reader gets to know the actual events of the year 1947. Their parents, who are frequently absent, because they prefer playing bridge at a club, die. Their mother dies in a diabetic coma and their father dies in a car accident. However, their parents' death is only marginally mentioned, because their presence never plays a vital role in the sibling's life. At the same time, they witness the upheavals between Muslims and Hindus in Delhi and they worry about the neighbouring family, because they are Muslims. Raja falls sick with tuberculosis and is confined to bed. Their aunt Mira Masi, who originally came to their house to help supervising the children, turns to alcohol and spends more and more time in her own room and her own world. Tara marries at a relatively young age and leaves the city with her husband. Finally, when Raja is healthy enough, he also leaves for Hyderabad, preferring to live with the Muslim neighbour family instead of his own family.

In the third part the reader gets to know the story of their widowed aunt, who had been a child bride and child widow and was subsequently exploited by their in-laws as house servant. In this part the birth of the youngest brother Baba is narrated and the

problems that overshadow the family, because of his developmental challenge. Tara and Bim are contrasted to each other, but there is also a strong focus on their relationship.

Finally, the story returns to the narrative's present. Tara observes her sister's social disintegration and pleads with her to forgive Raja and unite the family again. Before Tara and Bakul leave for Raja's eldest daughter's wedding in Hyderabad, Bim goes through an inner struggle, but, in the end she decides to forgive Raja, because time has healed her wounds. However, the novel has an open ending. Although Bim asks Tara to tell their brother to visit the family house, the narrative ends soon after Bim and Baba are alone again and visit a concert in their Hindu neighbour's garden. It shows that Bim has decided to unite the family, but it is not told whether it really happens or not.

The main theme of this novel is not the violence and riots that accompanied Partition, but the effects it has on one specific family. This traumatising, historical event is integrated into the narrative, but it is not the main focus. Thus, the story of this family gives a counter narrative to the prevalent history of the country. It is important to note that Partition did not only affect people who were victims of communal violence and riots, but also the upper and middle classes (Roy 88). In this sense it is clear that Bim's representation differs from the widespread images of victimised women. The use of Partition as a disrupting force that separates a family in a more sophisticated way than mere violence, is similar to Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. Also Bim's agency that increases in 1947, the main year of India's Partition struggles, is similar to Laila's increasing autonomy with the independence of the country. As it was already mentioned several women's movements were initiated during the 19th century and they were also very active during the independence movement. As Ray suggests "[T]he initial demands of freedom for women did generate certain changes in the status of women at the personal and political front [...]" (138) and this can be observed in the representations of Bim and Laila, respectively.

It is also similar to Hosain's novel that the two sisters, Bim and Tara, stand in contrast to each other. Additionally, their own past and present are also contrasted. While Tara as a child is described as timid, shy and "happiest at home" (157), Bim as child is more of a rebel, outgoing and very active in school (ibid.). Tara is also portrayed as romantic and full of imagination (120), Bim in contrast is more logical, analytical and knowledgeable (121). A frequently mentioned event of their childhood is a game called 'What will you be when you grow up?' (55, 112, 157). At that time Tara feels incredibly embarrassed, because her immediate answer is "*I am going to be a*

mother and knit for my babies” (112) while Raja and Bim want to be a hero and a heroine, respectively.

It is interesting to see that Tara’s idea of being a grown-up is so ultimately connected with being a mother and housewife. This shows that she has incorporated all the traditional values. Bim, however, is already as a child rebellious and believes that she can be the same as her brother when they are adults. Bim is recurrently portrayed as being on the same level as the men of her surroundings, but I will come to this point of analysis below. Towards the end of the narrative, the two sisters remember this play of their childhood again and evaluate what they have really made out of their lives. While Tara actually became a mother and married woman, Bim, obviously, did not become a heroine (157). It seems that Bim is depressed by this realisation. Although Tara can finally laugh about this childhood game, Bim seems to view her life as a failure. Tara fulfils society’s expectations perfectly and, thus, her representation is rather conventional. Bim, however, enters a different way of life, which is, definitely, not the norm in India (at that time). In this sense she might be regarded as a ‘heroine’, because she does not follow social expectations, but lives according to her own ideas.

Nevertheless, one interpretation is Bim as a self-sacrificing woman whose life is affected by external events beyond her own control (Ray 140). While she is on a romantic date with Dr. Biswas, she is constantly thinking of her family and feeling guilty, because she is having fun, while they are sick at home and in need of help. However, Dr. Biswas tries to remind her of also taking care of herself: “[...] But that is why I brought you out – oh yes, for the pleasure of taking you to hear this little orchestra, but also to give you a change. You can’t always be at home, nursing your family – you will fall ill yourself” (85), and later he remarks: “[...] you can’t be a slave to them. I can’t be a slave to my mother. We must be ourselves” (87). Nevertheless, Bim insists on going home at once. It is not exactly clear whether she really feels the need to stay at home the whole time, or she uses her family as an excuse to get away from Dr. Biswas. During a conversation with Raja it becomes clear that her primary goal is not getting married, but finishing her education (92). This is one reason why she does not take Dr. Biswas’s advances seriously. The other one is because she is not attracted to him and horrified by his mother (90f).

A more suitable way to interpret Bim’s untraditional way of life lies in understanding her actions and decisions as an embodiment of a kind of ‘new woman’. After both their parents die and their aunt turns more and more to alcohol, the (partially

almost grown-up⁵⁹) children are on their own. When Raja, the informal head of the household, falls sick with tuberculosis, Bim has to take care of the house and her relatives. She takes complete charge of things at home, nurses her sick brother, cares for her depressed aunt and takes care of her mentally challenged brother. Tara, who is the only one who could help her, leaves home and gets married. As soon as aunt Mira dies and Raja gets healthy again and leaves home as well, Bim takes up her college classes and becomes a teacher. She even turns down a marriage proposal of the doctor who regularly comes to help her with Raja and aunt Mira. All this happens in the historically decisive year 1947 and Roy has suggested that all these events within this short period of time enable Bim to “become[s] a type of the new, independent woman” (87). Roy defines this ‘new woman’, in the sense of Simone de Beauvoir’s notion, as a woman who does not need any male guidance and who can make decisions and live according to her own mind-set without depending on a man (ibid., Gupta 278).

What is especially impressive about this kind of ‘new woman’ is that she is a ‘self-made woman’, without (male) help and guidance. Tara in contrast is still very traditional, although they both grow up in the same household and visit the same school. This demonstrates that most of the attributes of a ‘new woman’ have to be self-acquired. In a conversation with Tara, Bim stresses that her father was absolutely not interested in supporting his daughters’ education, but she conducted it all by herself. Thus, Bim’s power and achievement gain value. Bim criticises her father’s disinterest and his traditional perception: “Father never bothered to teach me. For all father cared, I could have grown up illiterate and – and *cooked* for my living, or *swept*. So I had to teach myself history, and teach myself to teach” (155). She clearly explains her sister that all her achievements do not come from nothing, but because of her own will and hard work.

Bim is also an exceptional ‘new woman’, because she teaches other young girls how to become independent and self-assured. At her work in the local girl’s college Bim teaches history and advocates the idea of ‘modern woman’ to her students, as she explains to Tara: “I’m always trying to teach them, *train* them to be different from what we were at their age – to be a new kind of woman from you or me [...]” (ibid.). Despite her own feeling of having failed her ambitions, she still tries to transmit her ideology to the next generation. Especially in an independent India that has witnessed much violence during Partition and decolonisation, the concept of ‘new woman’ seems to be

⁵⁹ The ages of the protagonists are never mentioned, but the reader knows that Raja is already in college and Bim is almost the same age, while Tara is a few years younger and Baba is still a small child.

important for young girls. Gupta has analysed Desai's intention and comes to the conclusion that the author "appears indirectly to demonstrate that violence and oppression against women which [sic.] can be diminished if women are financially self-sufficient and self-assured" (277). Since the oppression of women had been prevalent in India for a long time, it is important that women in an independent India are strong. Additionally, in the 20th century the climax of violence against women was the process of dividing the Indian subcontinent. These are some reasons why the emergence of a new kind of woman is important. A nation with strong and self-confident women and mothers can become itself a powerful nation.

In her analysis Roy defines Bim's surrounding conditions, namely the events of Partition as an "enabling experience". She can act for herself and resume her studies to become a teacher, *because* her brother has left her alone. Raja's departure is directly influenced by Partition. The Ali family has left Delhi and fled to Hyderabad, because of Partition riots and the constant persecution of Muslims in India. In British India, Hyderabad was the biggest princely state, which was ruled by a Muslim maharaja. During Partition negotiations it was discussed whether Hyderabad would join Pakistan, become independent or stay within India (Cohen 29, Mahajan 192f, Talbot 54). Therefore many Muslims stayed in Hyderabad or went there. However, since its geographical position is in the middle of South India, which means that it has no border to other Muslim majority regions, it was incorporated into the Republic of India after Independence.

According to Roy Bim's agency is enabled and legitimised because of Raja's physical absence. This absence is the result of Partition and her emotional estrangement to her brother, due to a letter he sent shortly after he has left. She has no other person (man) to rely on, because her older brother prefers to join a different family and her younger brother is mentally challenged and she has to take care of him.

Gupta, however, believes that Bim's self-confidence, and not Partition, is the key to her achievement of being an independent and liberated 'new woman' (278). Bim's desire to be independent and lead an untraditional way of life exists already before the events of 1947. In a conversation with Tara about the marriage of their neighbour's daughters, who are approximately the same age as them, Bim holds the opinion that education is more important than an early marriage. When Tara is startled and asks what else there could be apart from being married Bim answers: "I can think of hundreds of things to do instead. I won't marry, [...] I shall never leave Baba and Raja

and Mira-*masi*, [...] I shall work – I shall *do* things, [...] I shall earn my own living – and look after Mira-*masi* and Baba and – and be independent” (140). With this goal in mind, Bim trains herself to be different from the traditional role model for women (Gupta 275). Since Bim makes this commitment before the decisive year, it should be clear that Bim mainly decides for herself and shapes her own future and is not (only) controlled by external events. It is Bim’s choice to stay unmarried and dedicate her life to her younger brother and educating young girls that define her as ‘new woman’.

In the narrative it is also suggested that Bim makes the best out of the situation, although she may have wished for a different future in her youth. After the two sisters remember their childhood and how Bim was more outgoing and interested in the outside world than Tara who preferred to stay at home, Tara is confused and talks to her husband, commenting on Bim’s situation: “[...] I felt, as if Bim had found everything she wanted in life. It seemed so incredible that she hadn’t had to go anywhere to find it, that she had stayed on here in the old house, taught in the old college, and yet it had given her everything she wanted. Isn’t that strange, Bakul?” (158). Bakul however suggests: “She did not find it – she made it.[...] She *made* what she wanted” (ibid.). It can be argued that, although Bim is confronted with events beyond her control, she makes the best out of her situation. Her personality is definitely an embodiment of this kind of ‘new woman’, however, the uncontrollable events of history and within her family, do not leave her many choices for her life and, therefore, she pursues her life in this specific way.

Despite her environment and surrounding events, the most important factor for Bim’s behaviour is her character and her free will. Additionally, it can be argued that Bim is not influenced from outside, because she has no guiding parent or traditional role model. The children’s parents are frequently described as absent, either going to the club or playing bridge with their friends. Their only person of reference is aunt Mira, who was widowed at the age of fifteen, and who becomes “the tree that grew in the centre of their lives and in whose shade they live” (110). However, the children believe that she has absolutely no qualifications as a wife or as mother (ibid.). In this sense it can be argued that Bim and her siblings grow up almost as orphans. Bim’s lack of parental guidance enables her to live and act according to her own mind-set. This is similar to Laila in *Sunlight on a Broken Column*, who is an orphan, and, therefore, less indoctrinated with traditional values than her cousin Zahra.

Although Laila is also described as a 'new woman' because she decides for her own and breaks with traditional female role models, she is, nevertheless, described as a feminine kind of woman. Bim, however, almost transcends the gender boundary and is frequently described as having a nearly masculine behaviour. This is another factor that influences Bim's status as untraditional woman.

Her most masculine behaviour is the physical replacement of her male relatives: her deceased father (Gupta 275), her absent older brother and her mentally challenged younger brother. Bim is, therefore, the head of the household and responsible for an income. Untypically to the traditional role of the Indian woman as housewife, Bim is fully settled in working life. For Bim, working does not only enable her to pay her bills and care for her brother, herself and the house, but it fulfils also one of her initial goals, namely to be financially independent.

As head of the household, she is also in charge of all other affairs, like the marriage of Tara. Traditionally, marriages are primarily arranged and settled by the fathers of the respective groom and bride, but it comes rather natural that Bakul asks Bim for permission to marry Tara. Bim, as an already modern woman, is primarily surprised that he asks for her permission at all and comments: "I don't think you need to ask anyone – except Tara. Modern times. Modern India. Independent India" (81) and agrees to his proposal. With this remark Bim obviously connects the idea of an independent and modern India to the position of women as becoming modern and independent. The only masculine role Bim does not (officially) assume is her father's part in his insurance business. She instructs Baba as official business representation and to regularly attend meetings. But, it is known that her brother is mentally challenged and, therefore, it can be assumed that this business representation is mainly a farce and Bim is really in charge. Towards the end of the narrative this is shown when Bim decides to sell the company and she explains that it is alone her decision, because nobody else is concerned with the business (160). This means, that Bim has not only the complete household, but also the family business in full control.

Apart from Bim's acquisition of different masculine roles, she is also frequently described as behaving in a rather unfeminine way or as being equal to men. One example is Bim's habit of smoking, which is very untypical for women in South Asia, even today. Especially in the presence of strangers this habit gets much attention. In the final scene, when Bim and Baba attend a concert in their neighbour's garden, a girl notices Bim smoking and remarks surprised to her mother: "Look, Ma, a woman is

smoking!” (179). Notwithstanding, in the presence of her relatives and friends this unfeminine habit is never mentioned as being exceptional. When Tara observes her older sister smoking in the company of some men, she reflects on the attractiveness of a woman smoking and on the flirtatious aspect of smoking:

There was that little sensual quiver in the air as they laughed at what she said, and a kind of quiet triumph in the way in which she drew in her cheeks to make the cigarette catch fire and then threw herself back into her chair, giving her head a toss and holding the cigarette away so that a curl of smoke circled languidly about her hand. Tara thought how attractive a woman who smokes is: there is some link formed between the man who leans forwards with a match and the woman who bends her head towards that light [...] (36)

The habit of smoking is also associated with independence, i.e. being unmarried. Tara further thinks about the difference between herself and her sister and their behaviour: “Tara did not smoke and no one offered her a light. Or was it just that Tara, having married, had rescinded the right to flirt, while Bim, who had not married, had not rescinded?” (ibid.). Smoking does not only define Bim as independent woman who is allowed to flirt with men, but it also lifts the barrier between men and women and puts them on a more equal level. Smoking in this sense can also be interpreted as a rebellion against the traditional role of Indian women (Swain 57, Ray 139).

An instance in the narrative, where the difference between men and women is highlighted, is an anecdote from the sisters’ childhood. While their brother Raja is outside, Bim and Tara put on his trousers and act as if they were boys. It is then, when they have a revelation why men are superior to women:

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

It is also during this episode that Bim finds her brother’s cigarettes and by feeling “rich and superior and powerful” she starts smoking (133). This feeling of being superior or being equal with men (George *Alienation*, 161) is important for Bim as ‘new woman’: an urban, single, independent and self-assured woman (Gupta 277).

Sanga draws our attention to an interesting aspect of Bim’s depiction of combining femininity with male characteristics. She concludes:

Combining both intellect and sensitivity, she [Bim] transcends the stereotypical binary opposition of the sexes to approximate in human terms Desai’s literary ideal of the Ardhanarishwara, the androgynous Hindu mythological figure who

embodies the union of Shiva and Shakti, of male substance and female energy” (71).

Ardhanarishwara is a Sanskrit word and literally means ‘Lord/God who is half woman’. As already observed by Sanga, it describes a depiction of the unification of the Hindu God Shiva and his companion Parvati or Shakti. The right side of the figure is male and the left side is female and it is believed that “[T]he symbolic intent of the figure [...] is to signify that the male and female principles are inseparable” (Abd 95). The figure appears to be androgynous and according to a myth this is the original form of all humans created, before God Brahma separated men and women into distinct entities, so that they were able to create further human beings themselves (ibid.). In the sense of Sanga’s interpretation Bim combines female power and male substance. Bim represents “the new Indian woman” (Swain 57), who has the “desire to dress and smoke like men” (ibid.) and, thus, “revolts against the traditional image of the Indian woman” (ibid.). It can be said that she embodies a rather masculine representation, but she needs a female energy for conducting this representation and sustain this way of living without any help.

In *Clear Light of Day* Desai indirectly criticises the Indian system of patriarchy and women’s subordinate roles within this hierarchical system. Therefore, Desai can be considered a feminist postcolonial author (Sanga 70). Although she does not primarily address struggles of the ‘third world feminism’ (George *Alienation*, 159), she positions Bim’s modern thinking in contrast to Tara’s traditional life. Bim “is the symbol of the emancipated woman, the forerunner of the emerging Indian women with her liberated womanhood” (Swain 58). While women in a conservative Indian society are commonly not part of a decision-making process, Bim is understood as ‘new woman’ only because of the decisions she makes.

8. Conclusion

The women of the analysed novels are all represented differently, and this shows that there exists a wide spectrum of female roles in Partition literature. While women are frequently degraded as stereotypical victims in the general context of Partition (hi)stories, this diploma thesis made an attempt to elucidate the diverse female representations employed by South Asian women writers.

As it was elaborated in the theoretical part of this diploma thesis, women were firstly almost completely excluded from the historical discourse of that time. Later, when the interest in specific female experience emerged, the dominant role in which females were represented was the women as a victim of violence. Especially underprivileged women were often portrayed as the real losers of Partition. However, what this diploma thesis demonstrates is that women were not only one big homogenous group, but there existed all kinds of different responsibilities and challenges for women at that time. Nowadays, we need to be aware of this wide spectrum of women's roles. This is the reason why (Partition) literature is important, because it expresses the more personal side of history. Additionally, female Partition literature voices the personal (hi)stories of women and is thus able to comment on a commonly neglected aspect of South Asian history.

Although women are (indirectly) portrayed as being subordinate in a solid patriarchal system in the selected novels, there are only few characters that are directly victimised in the course of Partition violence, namely Ayah, Hamida and the women in Ranna's story in *Cracking India*. All the other female characters are employed in different, sometimes even emancipated, roles as it was already analysed in the preceding chapters.

These female representations include:

- freedom fighter (Deepali and Rosie in *Fireflies in the Mist*)
- refugee helper (Lenny's mother and aunt in *Cracking India*)
- 'new woman' (Laila in *Sunlight on a Broken Column* and Bim in *Clear Light of Day*)
- 'traditional woman' (Papoo in *Cracking India*, Zara in *Sunlight on a Broken Column* and Tara in *Clear Light of Day*)
- 'modern woman' (Godmother in *Cracking India* and Uma Roy in *Fireflies in the Mist*).⁶⁰

Most of these representations are strong, independent and modern women in contrast to the more tradition-oriented female characters. This highlights that Partition and the independence movement was not only accompanied by violence against women, but also enabled many women in pursuing personal aspirations.

⁶⁰ This list is a rough classification of various female roles in the analysed novels and it should be noted that also other female characters occur in most novels that were not analysed in this diploma thesis and that might fit in one of these categories.

With regard to Feminist Postcolonialism it can be concluded that all South Asian women writers of this analysis give their female characters a voice, because they do not only write about female issues, but let their female characters speak for themselves. In this way they are able to address a wide variety of female roles and topics. Since they have chosen to write in English, they are able to reach an international audience and, thus, can spread South Asian women's issues widely. In their novels they do not only portray women as passive victims of patriarchy and Partition violence, but in most novels, women are described as being active and accomplishing their individual self-realisation. In most novels this female agency is easily recognisable, but even if it is not obvious it exists. For example, Ayah in *Cracking India* seems to be the most victimised protagonist of the analysed novels. However, when she is recovered from Godmother and Lenny, she clearly decides for herself that she wants to leave Ice-candy-man and return to her family, although he treats her in an acceptable way and she is aware of the possibility that her family might reject her. In a conversation between Godmother and Ayah/Mumtaz this becomes clear:

„I want to go to my family.“ [...] Does he mistreat you ... in any way?“
 Godmother asks with uncharacteristic hesitancy. „Not now,“ says Mumtaz. „But I cannot forget what happened.“ [...] „What if your family won't take you back?“ she asks. „Whether they want me or not, I will go.“ (273f)

Especially the last statement “Whether they want me or not, I will go” shows Ayah's (limited) agency, which allows her to demand something for herself in contrast to being subjugated to everybody's wishes, desires and ideas.

Why is it important that these novels are written by female authors or even by South Asian women writers? First, as I have already mentioned in the introduction to this diploma thesis, women writers often position female protagonists at the centre of their stories. Thus, (hi)stories are shown from a female perspective, which is frequently left out in conventional history. Second, women writers may be more proficient in presenting female experiences. As Malik observes:

Women, writing of/about women are naturally better attuned to comprehend/identify or to delve deep into the subtler shades of feminine experiences because of their sensibility as women. They articulate the voice of the fragments which rarely finds space in master/male narratives. (53)

Although male writers employ women characters, these women are mostly not the active subjects of the narratives and, additionally, male authors neglect many female experiences during Partition (ibid.).

In this sense women do not only add the female side of history to Partition literature, but they often write about marginalised aspects that give the whole topic a new perspective. In many cases women writers deliver a counter narrative of Partition history because “[T]hey provide alternative discourse, not necessarily subverting the other narratives. Rather, adding a new dimension to Partition as a process by adopting a differential gaze [...]” (Malik 54).

With regard to Postcolonial Feminism it is important that these novels are written by South Asian female writers, because they are the most authentic to represent female Partition experiences. Of course, the question about authenticity is always debatable, but in a postcolonial feminist context only ‘third world women’ who have the experience and knowledge about life in a (post)colonial environment, are qualified to write about the lives of other ‘third world women’.

The selected authors of this diploma thesis were all born in British India and they all experienced Partition at some stage of their lives. Hosain (born in 1913) had already her own family, Hyder (born in 1928) was a young woman, while Sidhwa (born in 1938) and Desai (born in 1937) were still children in the historically decisive year of 1947. Interestingly they all chose to leave the Indian subcontinent at another point in their lives and lived in England and America, respectively. Desai, Hosain and Hyder grew up in India, and Sidhwa grew up on the other side of today’s border, in Pakistan. Sidhwa remained most of her life in Pakistan and Desai in India, before they left for America. Hosain, as a Muslim in India, chose to leave for Britain in 1947. Hyder, first went to Pakistan, then left for England, before she, finally, settled again in India.

For these authors the personal experience of Partition was often the primary trigger to write about it. This is also the reason why all of the selected novels, except of *Fireflies in the Mist*, have autobiographical traits (Malik 54, Kabir 178). The similarity of Sidhwa’s and Hosain’s own life with the narrative and the female protagonists of their novels is obvious and was already described in the respective chapters. In the case of Desai this parallel is not immediately recognisable. However, as Desai says herself in an interview: “[It’s] *Clear Light of Day* is certainly the most autobiographical of all my books because it’s the house and the garden and the neighbourhood that I grew up in” (Demas 31).

I am not aware of autobiographical traits in Hyder's novel, but since academic literature in English on the author and her novel is extremely rare, I cannot claim to possess full knowledge about it.

The connection to the author's personal biography is already one aspect of what almost all novels have in common. Although the focus of this diploma thesis is to demonstrate the differences between female representations in Partition novels, I also want to briefly discuss their similarities. The two most obvious similarities have also been already mentioned, namely they are written by South Asian women writers and they all have female protagonists. Interestingly they all portray either young women (Deepali and Rosie, Laila, Bim) or children (Lenny, Laila, Bim) who are coming of age in the course of the narrative. The process of growing up and finding their own identity is linked to the birth of the new nations and the struggle of various religious identities.

With regard to Partition, all novels mention several historical details about the political situation in South Asia at that time. This focus is very clear in *Fireflies in the Mist*, which centres on the revolutionary movement and the Communist party in Bengal. In *Cracking India* Ayah and her admirers, as well as Lenny's parents conduct political discussions, and also in *Sunlight on a Broken Column* politics is frequently discussed, because Laila's cousins and uncle are actively involved in politics. Although *Clear Light of Day* does only deal with Partition marginally, historical events, like for example Gandhi's assassination and Partition riots, are part of the narrative.

All novels deal with the situation on the subcontinent before and after Partition. Interestingly, they all stress the religious harmony before Partition and the traumatic division of the religious communities after Partition. However, this religious harmony, which was definitely existent, is sometimes romanticised or slightly exaggerated. Drawing on the good relations between religious communities that were prevalent in colonial India, all narratives, except of *Fireflies in the Mist*, describe at least one instance of cross-religious help, which means that people of a specific religion were helping people with a different (sometimes 'hostile') religious affiliation. This phenomenon was already described above, in chapter 1.2 as part of the "social dimensions" of Partition. While in *Cracking India* Lenny's mother and aunt are Parsee and help recovering abducted Hindu and Muslims women, Laila in *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is helped by her Hindu friends during the riots. In *Clear Light of Day* Raja is accepted by a Muslim family and marries their daughter.

The theme of Partition is particularly stressed in all novels, because they feature an additional partition to the political division of the country and population. It should be noted that this supplementary partition, which is of course induced by the political Partition, is often the main traumatic event of the novels. In *Sunlight on a Broken Column* and *Clear Light of Day* the family is divided, while in *Fireflies in the Mist* the original group of friends is split by border, religions and ideologies. In *Cracking India* Lenny's loss of Ayah is the most prevalent event in the narrative. This reoccurring theme of Partition is also mirrored in some other instances in the novels.

Although the selected novels share these features, their female protagonists do not share the same representations, but they portray a wide variety of female concerns, issues and roles. In this sense, these postcolonial, South Asian women writers add more aspects of female Partition experiences to history, as well as literature, and they let women of different religions, classes and ages speak about themselves and their (hi)stories.

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Zusammenfassung

Diese Diplomarbeit beschäftigt sich mit dem Thema der Repräsentation weiblicher Rollenbilder zur Zeit der Teilung von Indien und Pakistan in Romanen südasiatischer Autorinnen. Nachdem Frauen anfangs fast komplett aus der Geschichtsschreibung der indisch/pakistanischen Unabhängigkeit ausgeklammert wurden, wurde ihnen später vor allem die Rolle des Opfers von körperlicher Gewalt zugeschrieben. Erst allmählich wird bekannt, dass Frauen auch eine Vielzahl anderer Erfahrungen hatten zu dieser Zeit.

Da konventionelle Geschichtsschreibung meist hegemonial männlich besetzt ist, wird die weibliche Sicht oft unterdrückt. Deshalb wird in dieser Diplomarbeit auf fiktionale Romane zurückgegriffen. Diese Romane sind eine wichtige Ergänzung zu den sonst wohl bekannten politischen und sozialen Ereignissen von damals. In der südasiatischen Literatur werden diese Romane einem eigenen Genre zugeordnet, das man als *Partition Literature* oder *Partition fiction* bezeichnet.

Im ersten Teil der Arbeit wird zuerst ein historischer Abriss der Geschichte Südasiens wiedergegeben, um den historischen und sozialen Hintergrund der ausgewählten Romane zu erklären. Anschließend werden verschiedene postkoloniale und feministische Theorien vorgestellt, anhand derer die ausgewählten Romane analysiert werden sollen. Hier ist vor allem Gayatri Chakravorty Spivaks Aufsatz *Can the Subaltern Speak?* von Bedeutung, sowie die Idee der Doppelkolonisation (*double colonisation*) von Frauen und die Frage ob der Feminismus der Ersten Welt (*first world feminism*) berechtigt ist Frauen der Dritten Welt (*third world women*) zu repräsentieren.

Die Analyse der Werke erfolgt im zweiten Teil der Arbeit. Hier sollen vor allem die Unterschiede der weiblichen Repräsentationen hervorgehoben werden. Außerdem wird auf die Frage eingegangen ob die ausgewählten weiblichen Protagonisten, als Subalterne, sich selbst vertreten können (*agency*) und für sich selbst sprechen (*voice*) können. Im Bezug auf autobiographische Züge der Autorinnen wird außerdem gezeigt, inwiefern diese südasiatischen Frauen in ihren Romanen komplexe und vielfältige weibliche Rollen repräsentieren und ihre Texte dadurch für ein breiteres Publikum zugänglich machen.

Die Romane, welche zur Analyse herangezogen wurden, sind: *Cracking India* (1991) von Bapsi Sidhwa, *Fireflies in the Mist* (1994) von Qurratulain Hyder, *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961) von Attia Hosain und *Clear Light of Day* (1980) von Anita Desai. Um zu einem aussagekräftigen Ergebnis zu gelangen war es wichtig, dass auch

die Autorinnen der gewählten Romane unterschiedliche Frauenbilder repräsentieren. Sie unterscheiden sich nicht nur in ihrer Nationalität (nach der Teilung Britisch Indiens), sondern auch in ihrer Religionszugehörigkeit und manch anderen Faktoren. Die Frauen, die sie in ihren Romanen beschreiben, sind häufig eine autobiographische Reflexion, in jedem Falle aber individuelle Porträts von selbstbewussten, modernen Frauen, die von sich selbst und ihren Erlebnissen und Emotionen erzählen.

Lebenslauf

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Staatsbürgerschaft: Österreich

Schulische Laufbahn

- seit SS 2009 Bachelorstudium **Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens und Tibets**, Universität Wien
- seit WS 2004 Diplomstudium **Anglistik und Amerikanistik**, Universität Wien
- 2009 **TEFL Zertifikat** (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)
- 2006-2008 **Prager Fotoschule**
- 1996-2004 **Bundesgymnasium & Bundesrealgymnasium**
Franz-Keim-Gasse Mödling mit Schwerpunkt Informatik
Matura im Juni 2004
- 1992-1996 **Volksschule Karl Stingl**, Mödling

Unveröffentlichte Wissenschaftliche Arbeiten

- „The Limited Agency of Widows in Deepa Mehta's *Water*“, BA Arbeit (Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens und Tibets). 2012: 1-51.
- „Black, White or what else? The Problem of the Mulatto's identity in Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*“. 2012: 1-11.
- „E.T. ... mil gaya (I found ... E.T.) Science-Fiction film remakes in Bollywood – A comparative study of *E.T.* and *Koi...mil gaya* (I found... someone)“. 2012: 1-24.
- „Invisible? – The Depiction of Women during Partition“. 2011: 1-40.
- „‘switch karna’ – Code-Mixing of English in South Asia and the role of identity“. 2011: 1-24.
- „Ambedkar vs. Gandhi – Politische und persönliche Gegensätze“. 2010: 1-19.
- „Muhammed Ali Jinnah – Der Mann hinter der Teilung Britisch Indiens?“. 2010: 1-21.
- „Mystisches Nepal – Geschichte des westlichen Tourismus in Nepal im 20. Jahrhundert“. 2010: 1-14.
- „Gothic mother – Mother-daughter relationships in Gothic novels“. 2010: 1-8.
- „Satī – Das Ritual der Witwenverbrennung in Indien im postkolonialen Kontext“. 2009: 1-25.
- „Representation, Consciousness, Transitoriness. An Analysis of *The Picture of*

Dorian Gray by Oscar Wilde“. 2009: 1-11

Berufliche Tätigkeiten

10/2012 - 02/2013	Universität Wien – Tutorin für Indologie
05/2012 - 08/2012	BILLA – Kassiererin, Regalbetreuung
10/2011 - 08/2012	der Pauker – Englisch Nachhilfe für Einzelschüler
10/2011 - 02/2012	Universität Wien – Tutorin für Indologie
08/2011 - 01/2012	IKEA - Kassiererin
07/2011 - 09/2011	TU Wien – pixmeaway – Dateneingabe, Internetrecherche
02/2011 - 03/2011	startup – Buffetbetreuung für Cirque du Soleil „Corteo“
11/2009 - 02/2011	InterContinental Hotel - Catering Service & Kongressbetreuung
09/2010 - 12/2010	Manpower - Catering Service
11/2009 - 07/2010	per4mens - Promotion von Canon Fotoapparaten
10/2004 - 12/2008	Starbucks Coffee Austria
	2008 Assistant Store Manager
	2006-2008 Shift Supervisor
	2004-2006 Barista
08/2003	P&P Eiscafé , Hamburg, Deutschland - Eisverkäuferin

Sonstige Kompetenzen

Sprachen:	Muttersprache:	Deutsch
	Sehr Gut:	Englisch
	Anfänger:	Hindi, Urdu
		ÖGS (Österreichische Gebärdensprache)

Computer:	Microsoft Office, Apple OS X Mountain Lion Textverarbeitung, Tabellenkalkulation, Erstellen von Präsentationen, Adobe CreativeSuite
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Kurse:	Sprachkurse in England, Schottland, Irland, Australien, Frankreich, Photographie und Adobe InDesign
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Führerschein:	B
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Soft Skills:	Effizienz, Selbstständigkeit, Fairness, Organisation, Verantwortungsbewusstsein, Führungsqualifikationen
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Interessen:	Reisen, Malen, Lesen, Photographie, Tanzen
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