CHAPTER- IV

Pakistan as a Metaphor of Partitions in Kamleshwar’s

*(Kitne Pakistan) Partitions*

*Partitions (Kitne Pakistan)* is a thought provoking and compelling study that stresses the idea of establishing a “New World Order” that would be “free from divisions and disparities”\(^1\). The novel is distinct from other partition narratives since it treats the theme of partition at a macro level and is laden with philosophical overtones. Though the narrative captures the historic and political aspects relating to the partition of India, yet the grim global scenario wrecked by similar other partitions is also touched by the author. By bringing the global partitions within the purview of its study the novel enriches the theme of partition in literature as a whole. So, “*Kitne Pakistan*” is not merely a study confined to the plight of people who had endured the holocaust of 1947, but it is also “about people—people all over the globe—who have suffered injustice, oppression and dislocation of various kinds”\(^2\), writes Ameena Kazi Ansari.

In the novel the author has used the word ‘Pakistan’ as a metaphor to explain the multiple partitions that had been or are still taking place all across the globe on flimsy grounds of caste, creed, community, race, religion, language, nationality, etc. The theme of a segregated social order, therefore,
dominates the dense texture of the narrative, wherein the author poignantly talks about “A world of individualistic individuals and sectarian societies, who being gripped by the attitude of ‘I and You’ and ‘We and They’, seek their own good at the cost of the good of others and cause inter-group and intra-group conflicts”. The philosophy of Universalism-Humanism runs through the novel as an antidote to curb and cure the “infectious disease” of partitions, that is damaging the global harmony through the invocation of hatred, intolerance and communalism amongst the world citizens.

Kamleshwar has narrated the sequence of events in the novel through his protagonist, the adeeb (a litterateur). The adeeb “is a contemporary Everyman, a man of many parts and personae”. Besides playing several roles in the novel, the adeeb acts as an arbiter for the ailing humanity. He holds a court of mankind to hear the plight of all such victims who, in course of human history, have been subjected to injustice or oppression of any kind. He makes an ardent appeal to the victimised human beings saying, “Mine is a court of humanity, not a cowardly, paralysed legal system. My court is open to all victims of human tyranny ...”(87). Not only does he call the victimised people to his court, but also summons all such culprits, “those individuals who have in the past posed a threat to the few who wished to live in peace ...” (147). So, restoration of peace, harmony and goodwill remains the sole objective of the adeeb’s court through which he wants to establish, to use the words of Vijay Anand, the principles of “Universalism and Humanism” the world over. In a
bid to realise his dream of a united world “the adeeb finds himself travelling back through the centuries over oceans of blood, so that he may carry forward for posterity the enduring lessons of love, compassion, peace and hope.” Since the novel has a large canvas on which the author has tried to portray the history of mankind, referring back to several centuries in the past, the narrator in the novel carries no name. Commenting upon this peculiar feature of Kamleshwar’s narrative technique Ameena Kazi Ansari, the translator of the novel, writes, “Giving the protagonist a name would perhaps limit him to specific confines of name and place, both of which he is made to transcend in the course of the narrative.” Thus, Kamleshwar has intentionally kept the narrator of his novel anonymous to make him free from the confines of time and space. In addition to the adeeb, Kamleshwar has also used ‘Time’ as a narrator in some parts of the novel. He assists the adeeb in passing judgments on important historical personages. By adopting a surrealistic mode in his narrative technique the author makes the time of the 17th century, of 1857 and the Kalyug to appear in the court of the adeeb. Besides the presence of a galaxy of characters from history, the appearance of Culture (in the guise of a woman) and that of the three mighty rivers of the North (the Ganga, the Jamuna and the Chenab) in the adeeb’s court adds a further surrealistic charm to the narrative technique of the novel. Thus, various characters from the past appear before the adeeb as victims, offenders or as the witnesses of history to narrate their point of view in the court of humanity.
In *What the Body Remembers* Shauna Singh Baldwin too has made the use of a similar narrative technique by projecting Vayu, the Wind-God, as one of the narrators in the novel. Like the adeeb in *Partitions*, Vayu in *What the Body Remembers* too transcends beyond the barriers of time and space. “It was Vayu who swept the ground before Mahavir Jain, heard the first lessons of non-violence.... Ages later, Vayu saw a boy, Nanak, refuse the ritual black thread of his Hindu ancestors, commune with Muslim Sufis, then walk his own path.... Later, his breezes rode across Punjab at the shoulders of the Sikh warriors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh.... When Vayu skirts the doorway of the fairies at Pari Darwaza, a small village of mud and bricks scooped from the soil, he finds few Hindus there to call his name....”\(^9\) The lines quoted above throw light upon the transcendence of Vayu that flows, freely, from one age to another, from one place to the other and carries with it the redolence of the past into the present. Just as Kamleshwar has made an attempt through the adeeb to establish a link between the past and the present, similarly, Shauna Singh Baldwin has too tried to unite the two time spaces through the usage of Vayu.

So, besides having an impressive narrative technique Kamleshwar’s *Partitions* is a rich blend of history, politics and philosophy. Not only does it capture the past follies committed by man and the present politics of global partitions, but also reflects a philosophy of Universalism-Humanism for a resplendent future of mankind.
The theme of India’s partition has brilliantly been explored by Kamleshwar in *Partitions*. The novel provides a vivid description of India’s partition from historical as well as political point of view on one hand and visualises the plight of the common man, caught amidst the fury of partition violence, on the other. Through the presentation of some shocking and heartrending tales in the novel the writer has made an attempt to unravel the dreadful ambience of partition days. “For India, Independence came on August 15, 1947 as part of a package that included the partition of the British Indian territory on communal lines into India and Pakistan.” The establishment of two independent domains gave the reins of power to a few hungry for power politicians. Perhaps, it was the moment of joy for them, but for the common man it was a test of fire, a tooth and nail quest for survival. Tannu, a soldier, representing a common man in the novel; expressing wrath against the shrewd and selfish politicians decries, “Jinnah Sahib can get a mansion built in Pakistan that will be even more imposing than the one he leaves behind on Malabar Hill in Bombay” (48). Though the partition of India may have been a moment of celebration for a few, yet for a large section of humanity it came as a tsunami that wrecked their lives irreparably. The opening lines of Dickens’ *The Tale of Two Cities*, quite aptly, describe the state of affairs that prevailed at a time when the two nations celebrated their independence amidst the partition holocaust:
It was the best of times; it was the worst of times,

it was the age of wisdom; it was the age of foolishness,

it was the epoch of belief; it was the epoch of incredulity,

it was the season of light; it was the season of Darkness,

it was the spring of hope; it was the winter of despair,

we had everything before us; we had nothing before us,

we were all going direct the other way....¹¹

Sadly, for the common man this independence of two domains meant losing of home and hearth, friends and relations, land and property and even, at times, the loss of life. So, “Partition is a complex problem and besides the division of a country, it generates other consequences, which are catastrophic....”¹² In the narrative Kamleshwar has made an attempt to capture the sorrows of the common man through some fictional episodes (tales) that relate to Buta Singh and Zainab, Surjit Kaur and her comatose son; Salma, Vidya, Bafati and Tannu (Major Hasan). Through these tales one gets a glimpse of the torrid phase of partition that had brought loads of misery to the common man on either side of the frontier. Since each one of the characters in these poignant tales is a representative of the common man, therefore, the suffering borne by these characters signifies the sorrows of millions of partition victims. It is also worthy to note that most of the tales narrated by Kamleshwar are centered around female characters. Keeping the woman characters at the centre of his tales indicates author’s realisation of the fact that women were the
worst affected during the partition. Not only did they suffer on physical plane, but they also had to bear psychological pain on account of their gruesome experiences. Besides being the victims of inter-communal violence, intra-communal violence was also thrust against these innocent beings.

The tale of Vidya in the novel reveals how an innocent girl was abducted by two boys of her own community and how they used her “to satisfy their Hindu lust” (333). She lost her parents during the partition riots. Finally, she was left with no other choice than to take shelter in a Muslim Mewati family and to marry a Muslim boy. In the course of all these events she transformed from Vidya to Parveen Sultana and lost her identity as well as faith.

Zainab’s tale is equally tormenting. She was separated from her family during the process of exodus and was provided shelter by a Sikh, Buta Singh. The man proved to be an embodiment of goodness and despite the protest of his community he married Zainab, so as to guarantee her a respectable life. In the course of time, Tanveer was born to them. But, later much against her wishes Zainab was taken back to Pakistan. In a bid to bring back his wife, Buta Singh risked his own life and crossed over to Pakistan. However, the Muslim family was not ready to send the girl back at any cost. “Zainab is forced to keep quiet all the time and both her voice and choice are strangled.”13 The tale
comes to a pathetic end with the suicide of Buta Singh, who along with his little daughter jumps before a running train.

Salma’s tale brings forth the plight of uprooted victims that were dislocated on both sides of the border during partition. The girl belonged to a family of landlords of Bihar. During partition they crossed over to the Sindh province in Pakistan, but soon her parents, once again, decided to re-migrate to India. At that time, says Salma, “I was in my mother’s womb. Terrible riots were taking place in Bihar. Muslims were being massacred there” (92). Despite all odds her parents were determined to reach their roots. Perhaps, they felt that “in any case, they could not forsake their homeland” (92). So, the Muslim couple “preferred to go back to its roots for the sake of the future” (99). Quite a similar feeling of affinity to roots becomes evident in the novel through the character of one Major Hasan. When this army officer returns to his hometown Ganguli, from World War II after the Armistice has been declared, he feels pained to hear about the approval of the partition plan. Stressing upon the sense of love and longing he feels for his hometown Major Hassan says, “I have witnessed the macabre dance of death in the battlefield. When death came close, I remembered Allah and was reminded not of Mecca or Karbala, but of Ganguli” (49). In another touching tale Bafati, a middle aged Muslim, too expresses a strong sense of belonging to his roots and despite partition decides to stay back in India. When his Hindu friend, Kanhaiyya, urges him to move to
a safer destination he says, “I’m not going to Pakistan, whether the Koransharif or your Kishan Bhagwan in the Gita says so” (46).

Through these harrowing tales it becomes quite evident that though the partition had uprooted millions of people, yet it could not really break their bonding with their roots. This is an eternal truth that “every Muslim, whether he belongs to Spain, Turkey, Egypt, Indonesia or anywhere else, wishes to die on the soil of his homeland…”(93) and the same principle of affinity to roots applies to the other communities too. So, “to uproot themselves from the soil of their ancestors had seemed to them akin to tearing themselves, like ancient trees, from the earth.”

Thus, for a majority of the Muslims, who were forced to migrate over to Pakistan during the bloody days of partition, India still remains their homeland. While for thousands of uprooted non-Muslims their birth-land, now in Pakistan, still remains a sacred place the loss of which could perhaps never be compensated on Indian soil.

Through the tale of Surjit Kaur Kamleshwar has provided a pathetic description of the mass movement that came in the wake of partition. “This mass movement produced a large number of displaced people who needed to re-establish their homes, livelihoods, and kinship networks even while mourning traumatic deaths, sexual violence, missing family members, and the loss of accumulated material belongings.” As soon as the subcontinent split, into two unequal halves, Surjit Kaur “stepped out of her ancestral home in
Multan after giving her son a dash of opium. She was dressed for the occasion, resplendent in all her jewellery. She knew the rioters would target her jewellery and thus diverted, they would spare her son. When the jewellery was gone, they would rape her. Once again, they would leave her son alone” (317-18).

Though through a large section of his tales, Kamleshwar has strived to focus upon the plight of the women in particular, yet it would not be wrong to assert that partition brought a terrible disaster to all human beings. From old-folk to small children, from mighty grown up men to maturing adolescents everyone became its prey. “The religious cleansing and mass murder and migration that followed partition has probably no parallel in the history of the subcontinent.” Amidst this deluge the human values, the moral norms and the religious ideals were swept away like splinters. Finally, the innocent victims of this holocaust had no choice, but to passively submit before the political decisions of a few chosen ones and accept the divide as their fate. “We thought that perhaps that way, however painful it was, we might have some peace....” However, “Partition did not solve any problems, it fostered more. Communalism became entrenched in the politico-religious consciousness of the people.” So, partition of India was perhaps the murkiest phase in Indian history, whose haunting memories would remain fresh in the minds of thousands of its victims for ever and even their coming generations would also consider this catastrophe as one of those painful events that had brought with it the highest magnitude of human waste.
Since the pathos of women, during partition, had stirred the emotions of the author to a great extent, he has used his creative sensibility to explore the theme of 'women victimisation' at a broader level in the narrative. Kamleshwar “brings the women across the world under the ambit of his study, transcending all borders and boundaries.”\textsuperscript{19} The author believes that women had remained the prime sufferers in the course of all the partitions that had been affected in history so far. They paid a heavy price during all the fragmentations and the divide of 1947 was also one of them. He feels that all such victims had endured a similar pain in course of these partitions and perhaps a common query had been running through their turbulent minds, “What use now to be Hindu, Sikh, Muslim or Christian, what use the quom, the biradari, the caste, the compartments that order our lives? What do they do for us now, in time of chaos?”\textsuperscript{20} So, partitions taking place the world over have proved to be a greater bane for women in particular as compared to their male counterparts. Kamleshwar has not only cited several examples from history, but, amidst a wrecking world order, has also shown a sympathetic concern for the community of women.

Referring to the victimisation of women during the creation of Bangladesh the writer expresses a deep sorrow. When East Pakistan separated itself from the territorial bounds of Pakistan’s Islamic Republic a reign of terror was let loose. The Bengali women, most of them Muslims, became soft targets in West Pakistan at the hands of the fanatics hailing from their own religious
community. They ruthlessly abducted, molested, raped and murdered these Muslim Bengali women without any sense of compunction. “Islam has never preached hatred” (112), but paradoxically the followers of Islam indulged in the most abhorrent deeds during the divide of 1971. They violated every principle of religion, every norm of humanity and every code of a civilised social order while committing heinous crimes against these innocent women. During this lurid phase, it was not only the rioters who did the damage, but even the Pakistani soldiers also committed atrocities against women. Quoting one such incident, wherein an army officer commits rape upon a Bengali woman, Kamleshwar writes, “He tied her hands behind her back…. The officer now tore off her clothes, so that not a shred of cloth remained on her body… he thrust himself deep into her naked flesh a couple of times … ”(344). However, even then the victimised woman is not left free until she satisfies the lust of many other soldiers. After being raped by a gang of goons, hailing from her own community, the girl sordidly asks herself, “Who, after all, was the real enemy?”(345).

During the partition of Yugoslavia the Muslim women met a similar fate. Here their own compatriots, Serbs and Croats, had crossed all the limits of sanity while ravishing the innocent women. Expressing the woes of female victims in Yugoslavia Kamleshwar writes, “Muslim women are abducted and subjected to such humiliation and torture that even the Pakistani army’s maltreatment of Bangladeshi women during Bangladesh’s war of independence
pales into insignificance” (174). Kim Huk Sun of Korea was another such victim. At the tender age of 17 she was abducted by the Japanese soldiers from Beijing. Narrating her traumatic experiences, in the adeeb’s court, the girl says, “They raped me fifteen times a day without respite. I was conscripted into the Teesintai or ‘sex core,’ and became a ‘comfort woman’” (79).

So, partitions have always brought immense misery to women in all parts of the world. They have undergone some of the most traumatic experiences of their lives whenever man made divisions have come into play. Shockingly, majority of the offenders of such holocausts have gone scot-free after committing the most heinous acts. “A woman suffering the consequences of injustice is worse than dead” (78), writes Kamleshwar. So, these partitions have not only victimised the women physically and mentally, but have also destroyed their very existence as beings making them akin to the living corpses languishing and living in a dark social order.

Today, the problem of partition is raising its head almost in every corner of the world and is spreading like a contagious disease. “Our world being disordered and divided is a world of world problems,”21 says Vijay Anand. “The problem in the world is because of gaps—gaps at every social ladder”22 Kamleshwar has thrown a flood of light upon various such partitions that have come into being or are in the process of their realisation on account of gaps amongst human beings. He visualises these gaps in terms of race, religion,
caste, community, language, nationality, etc. and treats them metaphorically as ‘Pakistans’

In the narrative the adeeb traverses through the corridors of time to trace out the history and causes of various partitions and also to find out the culprits behind such partitions. In the course of examining these global divides, the adeeb begins with an analysis of partition of India and takes into account “the imperial interests of the British, coupled with Jinnah’s relentless advocacy of his case for Pakistan.”\(^23\) He holds the British responsible for evolving the communal politics in India. The strife between the Hindus and the Muslims became the root cause of country’s partition. This rift had, undoubtedly, been created by the British “to stall India’s liberation indefinitely” (282). Since the imperial masters were reaping rich dividends from the Indian soil the very idea of its independence came as a bolt from the blue for them. These “Europe’s infamous blue-blooded looters and profligates” (270) realised that “once India gained its independence the sun would set on the British Empire” (276) and thus, to retain their stranglehold over their colonial domain they made the two ethnic groups, the Hindus and the Muslims, battle against each other. The lines of enmity were drawn on ethnic grounds. The term “ethnic” stands for “people or a group that shares a culture, religion or language”\(^24\) However, instead of making the use of ethnicity for uniting the people the British used it as a tool for fracturing the social harmony of India. They targeted the religious sentiments of the two ethnic groups in particular “to bring about the partition of
India” (329). Way back in 1857, these imperialists had made a similar attempt
to build the walls of hatred between the Hindus and the Muslims on similar
lines of faith. A. Fuhrer, the Director General of the British Archeological
Survey of India, admits in the court of adeeb that historical facts pertaining to
the demolition of the ancient Ram mandir at Ayodhya were deliberately
distorted “as part of our changing policies, we had decided that in order to keep
the British government from collapsing, it was necessary to create rifts between
Hindus and Muslims …” (61). The adeeb fumes with anger against those
historians who have evolved their own histories and says, “History written in
blood and recorded under coercion can never be other than suspect” (195).
Hence, “this one incident of tempering with ‘history’ has cost thousands of
lives of innocent Hindus and Muslims so far.” Not only were the religious
differences exploited by the British Imperialists in 1857, but they repeated the
same practice in 1905 too. Lord Curzon told the adeeb that “through the
partition of Bengal, I had divided the Hindus and the Muslims” (328) strictly
on the lines of faith. So, the malpractice of dividing on ethnic lines was
repeatedly exercised by the British in India.

During the divide of 1947, besides exploiting the ethnic differences of
the people, the British also made an attempt to polarise the two communities on
political lines. Since these political manipulations also worked along the lines
of ethnicity they acted as a catalyst in sabotaging the feeling of fraternity
further. Jinnah became “a convenient instrumentality in the hands of British”26
The division of the Indian subcontinent was a shocking event and with its realisation not one, but many ‘Pakistans’ came into existence. Seeped in the mire of communalism, people engaged themselves in act of bestiality and barbarity thereby creating ‘Pakistans of hatred’ all over the place. Expressing grief over the split of this sublime nation, Todar Mal, the Finance Minister of Akbar, criticised the British Imperialists for establishing a nation “on the
abhorrent principles of animosity” (96). Recollecting the glorious past of India he stated in the court of the adeeb:

Turn back all the pages of Hindustan’s history. Read every page—the entire span of this nation’s history, has the country ever been partitioned? The Aryans never divided it.... Even after emerging victorious from the battle described in the Mahabharata, the Pandavas did not break up the kingdoms of their vanquished enemies into separate regions.... In 3 BC, Alexander swept in from Mesopotamia and defeated Maharaja Porus. But he did not seek to divide the land he had invaded into separate fragments. The Tartars and Huns who attacked it, refrained from doing so as well. When Mohammed bin Qasim arrived.... He too never thought of breaking up this land.... Even Ghorı, Nadir Shah and Abdali did not change its contours. Turks and Afgans came here as well ... they could very well have created another Turkestan or Afganistan in this country. The Mugal dynasty always acknowledged and accepted India’s unity and integrity. They did not create their own separate nations on its soil.... So, honourable sir, how did this country fall prey to partition—for the first
time in five-thousand-year-old history—at the hands of the merchant race of Britishers? (272-73)

So, through the query of Todar Mal, Kamleshwar throws light upon the vile practice of imperialism. The imperial powers of Europe have always strived for wealth, power and supremacy. For fulfilling their objectives they have indulged in all sorts of malpractices—including partition. A whole lot of partitions were affected by the imperialists on ethnic grounds. “The partition of India was one of four partitions by imperial Britain. The British also partitioned Ireland, Palestine and Cyprus on the ground that different communities could not live together,”31 writes Anita Inder Singh.

So, “India’s partition can’t be understood divorced from its global context.”32 When in 1947, India was being partitioned with a plea that “the transfer of minorities is the only lasting remedy for communal peace,”33 “parallel efforts to shape the map were underway across the world,”34 observes Sunil Khilnani. The idea of a nation state spread globally in 1930s and 40s. It was “one of the most chaotic, uncertain, and unnerving periods in modern history,” during which “war raged across Europe and Asia … to bring cultural and social identity into alignment with territory. The transition occasioned much bloodletting, and generated the terminology of genocide, ethnic cleansing, and of partition,”35 adds Khilnani. By the end of World War II, many of the colonial nations began to raise a voice for liberation of their respective
lands. It posed a severe threat to the imperial powers with respect to their existence in the colonial domains. In order to counter the rebellious acts of the colonial nations these imperial powers too began to promote and exploit the idea of building the nation states and acting in accordance with it partitioned many of their colonies on socio-cultural grounds. Since these imperial powers had convinced the people living in the colonised countries that partition was the only “reliable way of securing minority rights,” whereby “a minority could become a majority within its own borders,” soon after their retreat or defeat many colonised nations fragmented into bits and pieces. Ironically, the idea of establishing the ‘ethnically pure states’ was endorsed and exploited by those imperial powers which had themselves “ruled over culturally and socially mixed people” for years together. During these imperial divides it was not only that the lands were divided, but the people who had lived together for generations were also segregated from each other. Owing to the ill-intents of the imperialists, “Palestinians lost their homeland in 1948 with the birth of Israel. Some were forced to leave their homes, while others were cut off from their relatives because villages were divided,” writes Kanwalpreet, Similarly, a large chunk of Indian Muslims lost their homeland in India during the imperial divide of 1947. Whereas, in the course of the same divide almost an equal number of Hindus too lost their roots owing to the establishment of Pakistan. So, the real motif behind these imperial divides was neither to protect the rights of the minorities nor to ensure a peaceful coexistence. On the
contrary, they were simply affected to make the colonised countries weak and also to penalise them for revolting against the colonial masters.

Kamleshwar further adds that not only did these imperial powers introduce “the trend of deviating from the norms of economic equality and justice,” but also gave “birth to ruthless, exploitative materialism and competition” (283-84). The assistant of the adeeb fumes with the anger against these imperial powers and remarks, “They are nothing but thieves and robbers…. In their greed for wealth and power, they have changed their names and identities at the drop of a hat. All the royal houses of Europe … all were involved in the brutal oppression of the masses as they indulged in their lust and their taste for luxury” (269-70). Even Salim, the ruler of the Ottoman Empire, who was present in the court of the adeeb as a witness of the past, goes to the extent of labelling these imperialists as an irreligious race of traders. Decrying the profane behaviour of these traders he says:

They have dispensed with the Christian virtues of compassion, non-violence, remorse and mercy, only to replace them with barbarism, violence, ethnic arrogance and cruelty. Not in the entire history of mankind have so many killings taken place in the name of religions, as they have in the span of the barbaric history of western imperialism. (295).
So, these western imperial powers, which had established their colonies in one part of the globe or the other, “in their overwhelming greed for power and material gain” (295) brought doom and destruction to the world at large. By promoting and practicing an ideology of ethnic discrimination they alienated the world citizens irreparably. Showing concern over this drastic disintegration of human race Kamleshwar writes, “Our planet will become a graveyard, with each individual trying to establish a grave built out of his own ideology that he calls his Pakistan” (148). Hence the writer not only considers the imperial powers of Europe responsible for infusing the venom of hatred and intolerance amongst the world citizens, but also holds them guilty of wrecking the global harmony by dividing the nations as well as its people all along the lines of ethnicity.

Though the ideology of ethnic discrimination was initiated by the western imperialists a long time ago, yet divisions on similar lines continue to victimise humanity even today. “It is maintained that ethnic politics leads to geopolitics” in the course of which “the people are presented as ‘dehumanised pawns’ on the geopolitical chessboard of territorial rivalries,”39 writes V N. Datta. Unfortunately, ethnic politics is being played in a large part of the world today and owing to its influence the geographical territories of various nations are under a threat. Even today, innumerable “practitioners of partition” are engrossed in making manipulations “to align territory with ethnicity, culture, language or religion,”40 observes Anita Inder Singh. So, the western
imperialists didn’t only damage the solidarity of the world in the past, but the dark shadow of their evil ideology is lurking upon the present too.

In order to extend the theme of his study the writer makes his narrator, the adeeb, move from the past to the present. The adeeb analyses the conditions prevailing in the present and through several witnesses comes to know that the global ambience in the present is in no way better than that of the past. The author himself feels equally disturbed over the deteriorating contemporary conditions and writes, “But now, efforts are on to create Pakistans of hatred in every nation in the world. That’s what happened in Bosnia, Cyprus, the fragmented Soviet Union and the new Russian Federation. And it is happening in Afghanistan today. Using hatred as a prop, everyone is involved in creating new Pakistans against the interests of their own people” (83). Despite international laws and international peace institutions the things are going out of control. The ideology of viewing the world as a family “Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam” appears to be a distant dream. Since the people professing different ethnicities are not ready to cohabit within the territorial limits of a single nation, nations across the world are facing splits every now and then. Even today, “Partition has been demanded where at least two ethnic groups engage in armed conflict for possession of a particular territory,” writes Anita Inder Singh. So, ethnic strife have become a common feature in the contemporary world too, where, ironically enough, culture, language and religion have become the bones of contention amongst the human beings rather
than the binding forces. Kamleshwar observes that even after so much of the
damage to the humanity an impasse prevails in the world. People like Altaf
Hussain and Dr. Halepotha continue to raise their voice for further
fragmentations. Even after the partition of 1947 these parochial leaders are bent
upon creating more ‘Pakistans’. “How many Pakistans are to be born within
Pakistan itself?” (341) is the fundamental issue raised by the author through the
narrative. So, stressing his point of view in the court of the adeeb, Dr.
Halepotha says, “We, forty million Sindhis have been demanding the right to
self-determination…. Now, we want Azad Sindh, our own independent nation ...
” (145). Similarly, speaking on the behalf of Mohajirs, Altaf Hussain avers,
“Our mohajir brothers in Sindh Karachi want to create another Pakistan for
themselves” (341). Kamleshwar observes that people like “Altaf Hussain and
Dr. Halepotha have no right to drown the citizens of Pakistan in a river of
blood” (148). In today’s context, writes Kamleshwar, partition seems to have
become a never ending process. “So, how many more Pakistans are to be
created now…. The Saraikis of Punjab are demanding their own province ....
The Pakhtoons now clamour for their own Pakhtoonistan. Ataullah Mengal
demands a free Baluchistan” (341). Through the voice of the adeeb,
Kamleshwar further adds that we should “strive to prevent the impulses of the
heart from being transformed into weapons of destruction” (148).

Just like Pakistan is reeling under the threat of creation of many
‘Pakistans’, within its territory, so are many other nations of the world
confronting a similar problem today. Lamenting the grim global scenario Kamlaeshwar adds that the demand of a separate homeland ‘Sikhistan’ poses a threat to the unity of India, while the war raged for a ‘Tamil land’ by the guerillas of LTTE has come as a challenge to the integrity of Srilanka. In East Timor, massive riots are taking place to safeguard the solidarity of the nation that has come under a cloud due to the rebellious activities of some Christians who want a separate ethnic state for themselves. While the Kurds are endangering the communal harmony of Iraq, a fierce battle is on between the Hulus and Tutsis, poisoning the ambience of Rawanda. Sadly, “this is happening all over the world” (341). “While in the age of rulers, the dream of a peaceful world was a day-dream, in the age of commoners, it is a distant dream,” opines Vijay Anand. Thus, the contemporary world is passing through a grey phase, the reality of which seems to be reflected in the following lines of the eminent Victorian poet Matthew Arnold:

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night. (35-37)

The adeeb feels further depressed to notice that even religions have not been spared while making disintegrations. Using religion as a tool man has not only affected partitions at a global level, but has fragmented the entire social structure too. No doubt, religion is a benign force that binds the humanity
together through its tenets of love, peace and brotherhood. However, today man is using this force, both as a sword as well as a shield, to attack others and to defend his own misdeeds. He is trying to accomplish his vested interests by invoking conflicts in the name of religion. Unfortunately, Indonesia is witnessing a bloody battle in the name of religion today. Here the people of two distinct faiths, Christianity and Islam, are involved in merciless slaughter over the creation of separate religious states. The things are no better in Serbia, where the Muslims have started attacking the Christian Serbs to establish a separate Muslim State ‘Kosovo’ for themselves. As Anita Inder Singh observes, “In 2006, there was a speculation on whether Kosovo will be partitioned between Muslims and Serbs, or whether it will remain part of Serbia.”\(^5\) Despite several speculations Serbia has, somehow, managed to protect its integrity, but the question remains— whether the nation would be able to handle the fanaticism for long? Even if the nation succumbs to the demand of religious die-hards and allows the partition to take place, would it solve the problem? Perhaps, no! Since one partition lays down the foundation for the other, partitions can never prove to be good enough for providing a steady solution to any of the problems. The author is agonised to observe that “almost all European countries—Spain, Portugal, Holland, England and France—have unleashed bloody conflicts based on religious differences. They have transformed religion into a lethal weapon!” (295). Informing the adeeb about the religious carnage taking place in different corners of the world Dara Shikoh says, “It rains blood from Afganistan to central Asia to the Kurdish
regions of Turkey. Such showers also sweep across North Africa, Egypt and Saudi Arabia ...” (178). The words of Dara Shikoh left the adeeb high and dry. He stated that “It is the discrepancy between religion and reality that lays the foundation for many “Pakistans” that have no grounds at all for taking root” (196).

So, the author feels terribly depressed to see that multiple ‘Pakistans’ are in the process of their realisation due to the utter failure of human beings in understanding the spirit of true religion. Today, “people cling to religion to serve their vested interests. But no one is willing to abide by its principles!” (216), writes Kamleshwar. Despite swearing in the name of divine religious philosophy, all communities have, overtly, flouted the very principles of religion. Today, the growing religious intolerance has become a grave problem. It has not only ended up in skirmishes and quarrels, but has acquired a much larger and lethal dimension. Owing to religious confrontations several nations, the world over, are facing a threat of extinction today. Therefore, stressing upon the need to establish global harmony and brotherhood Kamleshwar writes, “It is necessary to recognise that each religion is different; but it is far more important to understand that all religions share the common message of humanity” (171). He adds, “No religion is above human beings. Humans were born first; religion came later” (164). Since only “a few people understand religion correctly and still a fewer follow it sincerely” high walls
of mistrust and hatred have risen between the distinct religions. If these walls are not demolished in time the results could be alarmingly grave.

In *What the Body Remembers* Shauna Singh Baldwin has tried to deliver a similar message through the protagonist of her novel. Expressing concern over the disintegration of religions, Sardarji, the protagonist of the novel states, “If you build dams between all religions, Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, you create the emotional equivalent of hydrostatic pressure ... one fissure in any dam holding this pressure back is simply horrifying to consider.” Thus, religious strifes amongst human beings not only lead to partitions at a global level, but also result in the mutilation of humanity at large. “Because partitions have always been demanded, and taken place, in territories in which different communities are interspersed, they have been a recipe for armed conflict,” says Anita Inder Singh. Therefore, much blood is spilled in the course of these partitions and when such a bloodbath takes place in the name of religion the results are simply horrifying to consider.

The adeeb is further shocked to learn that infighting is going on between Iraq on one side Iran and Saudi Arabia on the other. “How can there be enmity between countries that share a religious faith?” (149), thinks the adeeb. So, he summons Saddam Hussain to his court to inquire about the cause of conflict between the co-religionists. Justifying his point of view Saddam states, “Shiite Iran is bent on establishing a regime that is opposed to Sunni Arabs. It wants to
appropriate Islam” (149). The reply of the Iraqi leader filled the adeeb with sorrow. However, it was not only the followers of Islam, divided on sectarian lines as Sunnis and Shias, that had agonised the adeeb, he was equally annoyed with the Hindus. “By asserting that individuals are born from different parts of Brahma’s body, they have established a faith, built on the differences between one human being and another” (93). So, Kamleshwar goes back in history and holds the Aryans responsible for disintegrating the Hindus through a rigid caste system. Such foul systems have not only distanced the people of the same faith and community from each other, but have also flared disputes amongst them. Thus, the problem of inter-religious conflicts is grave, but it becomes even graver when intra-religious confrontations begin to part the co-religionists, thereby, laying the foundation for the creation of many ‘Pakistans’ within the same faith and community. The adeeb lashes out against the fundamentalists for bringing disgrace to their religion as well as for polluting the global ambience by indulging in the acts of infighting. He adds, “Do you know what’s happening in Egypt, Tunisia, Turkey, Algeria, Somalia, Lebanon and Iraq? There, Muslims are pitted against Muslims! These conflicts are generated by fanatical zeal, not religion. A religion like Islam is battling its own zealots” (196).

So, through the voice of the adeeb, Kamleshwar seems to be cautioning the fanatics who are erecting the walls of hatred in every nook and corner of the world. The author also tends to propagate the philosophy of Universalism-
Humanism through the novel since he feels that “There never will be a world united by single religion” (196). In order to express the need of a universal religion the author uses the voice of his narrator and says, “You will continue to create one Pakistan within another. Caught in the web of such fanaticism, the world may only dream of a universal religion for all mankind” (196). Hence the author carries a dream of establishing a faith, what could well be described in the words of Vijay Anand as, “a New faith—free from parochialism and communalism.” Perhaps, believes the author, only such a faith could possibly harness the evil practice of partitioning humanity and “imbue the world with beauty and refinement through peaceful coexistence” (177).

Besides talking about the various religious strifes that are impairing the integrity of the world, the author also condemns the staunch religious organisations that have been dooming the world to destruction. In the narrative Kamleshwar refers to several organisations, such as— Algeria’s Islamic Front, Jordan’s Mohammedi Army, Tunisia’s Islamic Party, Kashmir’s Hizbul Mujahideen, Indian Union Muslim League, V. H. P, Bajrang Dal etc., that have violated the very principles of religion. The writer disapproves the role played by such organisations since they aim at alienating one community from the other in the name of religion. He holds the political leaders equally responsible for patronising such outfits. Today, with politics and religion trespassing into the territory of each other, the problems are aggravating all the more. On one hand the political leaders are misusing religion to acquire power, while on the
other religious fundamentalists are exploiting politics to strengthen themselves. Writing in this context Vijay Anand opines, “Most of the religions and Isms were meant to create a nobler and juster world but these were grabbed sooner or later by insincere and impure hands who diluted and destroyed these to serve personal and parochial interests.” The intrusion of politics into the realms of religion and vice versa has created turmoil in the social order, as a result of which the common man has been imbued by intolerance and abhorrence rather than by virtues of true religion. So, the political and religious leaders should act within the confines of their respective spheres. It would not only lead to the creation of a peaceful world, but the most complex problem of the day, i.e., the emergence of ‘Pakistans of hatred’ would too be curbed to a large extent.

Adding another dimension to the theme of partition, Kamleshwar focuses upon a couple of such fragmentations that came into effect through the intervention of international organisations in the name of peaceful coexistence. Writing in this context Anita Inder Singh observes, “In 1991, the end of cold war saw the multiple partitions of Yugoslavia. Bosnia was one of the new states to emerge from Yugoslavia. Bosnia—a republic in which Serbs, Croats, and Muslims were all minorities—was partitioned,” once again, into Serbia and Croatia through an international treatise. A similar division took place between the Jews and the Palestinians in Israel. In the name of mutual settlement Palestine agreed to provide Jews the right to live in Israel and the Jews considered Palestinian’s claim over the Gaza Strip and West Bank.
Kamleshwar sees these divisions as clever manipulations and perhaps, as the most convenient ways of creating ‘Pakistans’ in the contemporary scenario. Since such settlements have been enforced by the international organisations, in the name of securing the rights of minorities by guaranteeing them an ethnic state of their own, a potent voice for affecting similar other fragmentations has risen from different parts of the world too. It is worth mentioning that today “more than ninety percent of the world’s states are multiethnic.” So, if this process of fragmenting nations, leading to the creation of ethnically pure states, goes on unabated the world would soon be a witness to an uncountable number of ‘Pakistans’. “Partitions have never produced ethnically pure nation-states in the literal sense of an alignment of territory and ethnicity or religion,” writes Anita Inder Singh. Thus, to dream of ethnically pure states would be like living in a fool’s paradise. “Today India has a larger Muslim Population than Pakistan, which was created as a Muslim homeland on the Indian subcontinent. All partitions have left mixed communities on both sides of post-partition international borders,” adds Anita Inder Singh. So, the attempts made by the international organisations, to create a peaceful coexistence by way of affecting partitions through the establishment of ethnic nations appears to be not a very viable practice.

By extending the ambit of his study Kamleshwar has also made an attempt to correlate the problem of global partitions with the upsurge of terrorism in the world. He believes that the tendency of creating more and more
‘Pakistans’ has escalated through the stupendous rise of terrorist outfits in various parts of the world. In the narrative the author focuses upon several such outfits that have posed a gruesome danger to the unity of human race. He states that while the ULFA extremists are causing the damage in the North East parts of India, the Naxalites are adversely affecting the South; while some Muslim outfits are terrorising the Kashmiri Pandits in the North, the propagators of ‘Khalistan Movement’ are intimidating the natives of Punjab. The author adds that, owing to terrorism, the international scenario has also become equally bleak. In Srilanka, the LTTE has spread the reign of terror, while Taliban has shocked the humanity in Afganistan; Kurds are posing a threat in Iraq, while Gamal-Islamiya is bent upon destroying the ancient civilisation of Egypt. Though by using the peace keeping forces attempts are being made to crush such terror invoking agencies, yet peace has not returned. The assistant of the adeeb informs the arbiter of humanity that “a huge heap of Pakistani soldiers lay dead, killed during their peace mission in Somalia” (140). So, using the armed forces for the restoration of peace does not seem to solve the problem. As Raymond William, a British pacifist leader, once said, “To overcome militarism, we will have to fight against much more than militarism; to achieve peace, we have to fight for much more than peace.” Therefore, the use of peace keeping forces is not sufficient to counter the problem of terrorism. This evil practice that is spreading its tentacles day by day, dividing humanity in the name of religion, race, caste, creed, community or otherwise, needs be to curtailed by way of peace than by the use of power. So, “In a world beset by
exploitation, injustice and inequalities”, where “a thousand kinds of suffering are spawned every moment” (224), there is a dire need not only to follow “the rational motto ‘Live and let live’, but also the moral motto ‘Love to live and live to love.’” Perhaps, by inculcating the spirit of love, tolerance and harmony amongst the zealots and terrorists the creation of ‘Pakistans’ could be averted.

So, by using ‘Pakistan’ as a metaphor, Kamleshwar has analysed the theme of partition through several dimensions. In the narrative the writer has explicitly examined the partition of various nations that had taken place either through the vile practice of imperialism or due to the misuse of religion or politics; either through the manipulations of international organisations or owing to the rise of terrorism. Not only has the metaphor ‘Pakistan’ solely been used to indicate the territorial disintegration of nations, but it has also been applied to symbolise the gulf between the human beings on account of their hatred and intolerance towards each other. Hence, ‘Pakistan’ as a metaphor signifies the division of human beings on many socio-ethnic grounds that has become evident at international, national or even at the lower levels of territorial bounds. The author has not only analysed the issue relating to the creation of ‘Pakistans of hatred’ in the novel, but has also made an ardent appeal to the ailing humanity to restore amity and goodwill amongst themselves so that no more ‘Pakistans’ may come into existence.
However, the author feels tormented to see that man has not learnt a lesson from his past blunders. Even today, “a mad race is on in the world’s laboratories to produce the most horrifying weapons of death and destruction” (352). “Predators prowl everywhere” (37) and it seems that yet another dark chapter is in the course of being added to the annals of history. It is quite unfortunate that despite having so many painful partitions in the past man is least bothered to rectify his present. Kamleshwar believes that since our past is inextricably related to our present, therefore, the study of the past is a must to improve the present. Writing in this context he says, “I only wish to analyse and understand that bit of the past which casts a dark shadow on the present, laying the foundations of hatred and revenge in many Pakistans” (166). Thus, for the author the past carries a significant value and he reckons it as a guiding force for a bright future. Giving a similar opinion the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India, in its judgment on realism and documentary value of the novel Tamas, also upheld that “It is out of the tragic experience of the past that we can fashion our present in a rational and reasonable manner and view our future with wisdom and care.”

Kamleshwar also feels that the common man doesn’t approve the creation of ‘Pakistans’, for him peace is the greatest virtue. It is only a handful of political leaders, religious die-hards, terrorists and troublemakers who, being obsessed by unflinching urges, are damaging the peace and harmony of the
world. Unfortunately, the common man is paying a hefty price for the misdeeds of a few. In the novel Vidya, Salma, Zainab, Surjit Kaur, Shahin, Buta Singh, Major Hasan, Baftati are a few such characters who represent the voice of the common man—who only desires peace and goodwill rather than separate territories on the global chart. Though Kamleshwar has provided a name only to a few of the victimised characters in the novel and has primarily woven his fictional episodes around those very characters who were affected during the divide of 1947, yet the plight of these characters can be correlated to the plight of all the other victims as were affected thorough different divisions in different parts of the world. In *What the Body Remembers*, the protagonist of the novel, Sardarji, providing voice to the feelings of the common man, disapproves the idea of fragmenting the world saying, “Who would want to live behind the borders of some Sikhistan when the world is so much smaller today....”

Similarly, Akbar Ali in *Blood Brothers* condemns the practice of partitioning the world on communal lines. When his son M. J. Akbar asks him the reason for his re-migration to India, despite the fact that a separate homeland exists for the Muslims in Pakistan, Akbar Ali replies, “There were too many Muslims in Pakistan.” So, the assertion of Akbar Ali not only ridicules the partition of 1947, but also reveals that the common man has never applauded the practice of partitions. Historic revelations indicate that people have always cherished the spirit of freedom rather than the ideology of being fragmented through walls. “There was much jubiliation when the Berlin Wall dividing East and West Germany was demolished and Germany became one nation.”

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courage of the people to break through the Wall was a celebration of the spirit of freedom." Similarly, when the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road was laid opened, after about five decades of partition, a Pakistani passenger crossing over the LoC exclaimed, “I am really happy.” So, the common man wants to “escape to freedom” by demolishing all such barricades that, owing to parochial interests of a few, have confined him within the bounds of defined territorial limits. Perhaps, he realises that “real peace will come when there will be no LoC” and when the offenders responsible for creating ‘Pakistans’ will sternly be dealt with in the court of humanity.

“While we can endlessly quibble and quarrel over what happened, why it happened, who was responsible etc., there is a need to look towards the future.” Since “future generations are affected by the world we create” (74), therefore, after analysing the horrid past and viewing the havoc-laden present the author feels concerned about the future. From the past observations it becomes quite evident that “as long as religion, race, caste...” will “continue to hold mankind in thrall ... this planet will continue to witness the birth and evolution of ... ‘Pakistans’, (181-82). So, in order to overcome the man-made barriers of religion, race, caste, community, nationality, etc., there is a dire need to explore a force that could unite the humanity as a whole. Since the author considers “the refusal of people to live together in harmony” as “a crime against humanity” (174), she floats an idea for establishing harmony amongst the world citizens. The idea aims to unite the people by making them
understand the significance and strength of culture. Kamleshwar believes, “Culture is not restrictive by nature. It is liberal, comprehensive. It celebrates not decay, but continuity of life” (175-76) and most significantly, because the “culture can never be segregated” (127), so it can certainly prove to be a binding force for bringing the fragmented humanity together. Depositing faith in the power of culture the author states, “For years, Afganistan” remained “exposed to the influence of Hinduism and Buddhism” (126). Both the cultures left their indelible impact on its soil. Even today, when Afganistan has become an Islamic nation and its international boundaries have been re-defined its cultural link with Hinduism and Buddhism has not been broken. Culture withstood the shocks of time in Afganistan, but remained intact. Neither was it defeated on parameters of religion nor was it affected through the demarcation of international frontiers. Referring to the unifying power of culture the author adds that “the area between Delhi and Garh Mukteshwar is dotted with villages.... Residents of a few such villages converted to Islam.... Despite their conversion, these Rajputs and Brahmins have not disowned their cultural roots. The same is true of the Mewati Muslims settled as far west as Alwar in Rajasthan. They may be Muslims today, but they retain their cultural ties and traditions” (175). No doubt, writes Kamleshwar, “the roots of culture lie in religion, but with the passage of time, culture liberates itself from the shackles of faith and takes on a humanitarian aspect” (93-94). So, by adopting a humanitarian aspect the culture extends its sphere to bring people of different faiths, castes and communities within its ambit and unites them together.

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“Cultural assimilation is imperative, because it respects the value of life” (176).
This assimilative power of culture raises a ray of hope in the troubled mind of
the author and he appeals to the disintegrated humanity “to appreciate the
humanitarian roots of mankind” that lay in culture, without the knowledge of
which they “will never be able to understand the cause of all the sorrow and
suffering in this world” (74).

Kamleshwar seems to be strongly asserting through the novel that
“Partitions do not resolve problems, but create more.” So, the universal dream
of ‘heaven on earth’ can be realised by demolishing the ‘Pakistans of hatred’
that have distanced human beings from each other. “The need is to bridge these
gaps to create a wall-free wonderous united world,” avers D.S. Verma. The
philosophy of Universalism-Humanism, that aims to preach the ideology of
universal peace, love and brotherhood, could only bring solace to the suffering,
staggering and segregated humanity. The author deposes a firm faith in the
principles of this philosophy and, thus, propagates the idea of a united world
through the assimilative power of culture. Ironically, Kamleshwar delivers the
message of universal peace and harmony in the novel through a blind
mendicant, Kabir, who being “the archetype of unity and hope” takes a pledge
to exterminate hatred and violence from this world. Acting as a custodian of
culture he decides to travel across the globe spreading the message of goodwill
and amity so that no more damage is done to humanity on account of the
creation of ‘Pakistans’. Thus, the author concludes the novel on an optimistic
note and visualises a positive picture of the future world—a world that could aptly be described through the following lines of Rabindranath Tagore:

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;\(^9\) (1-4).
Notes


4 Kamleshwar, *Kitne Pakistan* (Hindi), trans. as *Partitions*, by Ameena Kazi Ansari (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2006) 181. All subsequent references to the novel are to the translated edition and have been incorporated in the text.


7 Kamleshwar, *Kitne Pakistan* (Hindi), trans. as *Partitions*, from the jacket of the book.

8 Ansari, “Translator’s Note” in *Partitions*, translation of *Kitne Pakistan* (Hindi), ix.


10 M. G. S. Narayanan, “The Third Accused”, *India Today* August 31, 2009:37


13 Chopra, Partitions Stories, 238.


19 Chopra, Partition Stories, 237.

20 Baldwin, What the Body Remembers, 429.


25 Chopra, Partition Stories, 224.

27 Subrahmanyam, 10.


30 Tully, “Not One Man’s Folly”, India Today: 41.


33 Khilnani, 32.

34 Khilnani, 32.

35 Khilnani, 31.

36 Khilnani, 31.

37 Khilnani, 31.


40 Singh, The Partition of India, 3.

Singh, The Partition of India, 2.


Singh, The Partition of India, 2.

Anand, Universal Man and United World, 92.

Baldwin, What the Body Remembers, 402.

Singh, The Partition of India, 3.


Anand, 79.


Singh, 3.

Singh, 2.

Singh, 2.

Quoted in Anand, Universal Man and United World, 70.

Anand, 72.


Baldwin, What the Body Remembers, 390.


64 “Road to hope,” (Regional Potpourri) The Tribune April 8, 2005:8.


68 Chopra, Partition Stories, 240- 41.