Chapter IV

The Eternal Conflicts between Good Evil in *Ice-Candy-Man*

India was partitioned into two different countries India and Pakistan in 1947. There were clashes between India and Pakistan across borders; because of this communal conflict half a million people died. Twelve million people fled their homes and over a hundred thousand women were abducted, raped and mutilated. Ten thousand houses, shops and other establishments were set on fire. Every right-minded person alive at this hour was outraged at this brutality. Partition caused evil to the people. Bapsi Sidhwa at the time of the partition was an eight-year old girl living in Lahore. Recalling the nightmarish experience of those days Sidhwa beautifully narrates this story through the child character Lenny:

When I was a child living in Lahore at the time of partition, my maiden name was Bhandara, which sounded like a Hindu name. After most of the riots were over, a gang of looters came in carts into our house thinking it is an abandoned house. They were quite shocked to see us and my mother and everybody in the house. At that time our Muslim cook came out and said, “What do you damn people think you’re doing? This is a Parsi household,” and they replied, “We thought it is a Hindu household” and they went away. I decided to write a story about partition because this scene is vivid in my mind. (ICM 200)
She adds,

Another scene that haunted me was when I was a child. I was walking with my gardener to my tutor. The gardener just pushed a gunny sack lying on the road and a body spilled out of it. The man was young and good-looking. There was no blood just a wound as though his waist-line has been trimmed. These scenes and the fire all over Lahore were part of my memory. The fire was like blood coloring the sky. It was a fearful sight. The chanting of slogans again and again was something horrifying to my ears. It was a threatening noise which means danger to my family and my friends. So these emotions and images were in my mind and I wanted to write a story of Partition. (ICM 200)

Sidhwa’s third novel Ice-Candy-Man (1991) is a mysterious, wonderful and autobiographical novel. This novel is extremely a sensitive story. It deals with the themes of communal tension, use of religion as a way to define individual identity, territorial craving, political opportunism, power and love and brings them together in a very readable narrative. Historical truth is the backdrop of the novel. The author writes about the real incidents in the form of novel. The eternal conflict of good and evil is the major theme of the novel.

Using a child narrator named Lenny the novelist presents the kaleidoscopically changing socio-political realities of the Indian sub-continent just before the partition. Her humorous tone, subtle characterization, irreverence to established traditions and absence of histrionics, impart a specific charm to this novel. Sidhwa has given feminist touch to her character who moves forward despite many hurdles. She states that women are
always marginalized and she always protests against the violence. By observing the life of many women, she understands the limitations associated with women in patriarchal society.

Throughout the novel the child character Lenny appears as bold, courageous and strong who is not ready to succumb to the communal frenzy. She is inquisitive, daring, demanding and lively. She observes social change, human behaviour, interesting sidelight, opinion and occasionally makes judgments with the wonder of a child. The device of the child narrator enables Sidhwa to treat the holocausts of partition without morbidity. It also helps her maintain a masterful balance between laughter and despair. Lenny starts narration in her fifth birthday and ends after her eighth birthday. In the course of narration, she presents the panoramic views of existing social milieu.

Lenny’s mother is another significant female character who conforms to the traditional image of fidelity. She is faithful and serving wife who seems to be capable only of humoring things out of her husband. All the good qualities are associated with women by Bapsi Sidhwa. Sidhwa projects through Lenny’s mother that women should have a purpose in life which should be developed by them to the best of their abilities. Women need to liberate themselves from the constraints of ‘womanliness’ which will erase the existing discrepancies of their marginalization. Lenny’s mother and her aunt play the sterling humanitarian and heroic role of fighting for the lives and property of Hindus.

The novel opens with beautiful Ayah, an eighteen year old woman. Lenny’s constant companion is the Ayah and not her parents. The other characters close to her are her Godmother, and Godmother’s younger sister ‘slave sister’ and Lenny’s brother Adi, a
year younger than her. Lenny calls him Sissy. He goes to school. Lenny studies at home. Another companion of Lenny is her electric-aunt, a widow. The Ayah is central to the story and the object of everybody’s desire. In the words of Lenny:

Ayah is chocolate-brown and short. Everything about her is eighteen years old and round and plump. Even her face, full-blown cheeks, parenting mouth and smooth forehead curve to form a circle with her head. Her hair is pulled back in a tight knot. (ICM 2)

Sidhwa is a minute observer of society. She presents major and minor events of society. Generally a person is recognized by his language. The dresses adopted by the people are also reflective of his/her culture. Lenny therefore asks Ayah why she does not wear Punjabi clothes being a Punjabi. She replies that she cannot afford it because of her meager salary.

“Shanta Bibi you’re Punjabi, aren’t you?
‘For the most part’, Ayah agrees warily.
‘Then why don’t you wear Punjabi clothes?
I have never seen you in shalwar-Kamize’.

Though it has never strikes me as stranger before I’m so accustomed to Ayah only in a sari - I see the logic of her question and wonder about it”.

‘Arrey Baba’, says Ayah spreading her hands in a fetching sister, ‘do you know what salary Ayahs who were Punjabi cloths get? Half the salary of the Gaon Ayahs who wear saris! I am not so simple. (ICM 29)

The group of the beautiful Ayah’s admirers consists of the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs among others. Her admirers of beautiful Ayah are: the Hotel cook, the
Government House gardener, a sleek and arrogant butcher, the zoo attendant and Sher Singh. One of these admirers is the Ice-Candy-Man who plays different roles in the novel. His role is a key to all events. Ayah is a good character in this novel caught in the evil hands of Ice-Candy-Man. Ayah's charming personality and beauty exercises a type of hypnotic influence on Ice-candy-Man. He says that he loves her so much and he will take care of her. Ayah’s beauty fascinates Ice-Candy-Man profusely. Appreciating her beauty, he declaims another poetic outburst: “She lives to dance! And I to toast her dancer's grace! Princes pledge their lives to celebrate her celebrated face!” (ICM 2).

Lenny’s right leg has been affected by polio. Col. Bharucha, a surgeon is awesome, bald with pink skin like an English man. Lenny is brought to the hospital for her limp in one leg. In the first attempt, plaster on Lenny’s leg is removed but still she limps. Soon a new plaster is put over her leg. Lenny cries out of pain but her mother takes care of her. Dr. Bharucha’s surgery pains Lenny and she becomes bed-ridden. Col. Bharucha checks her and tells Lenny’s mother that her nerves are affected by the pressure. If she grows up she will be all right. “She’ll marry have children lead a carefree, and happy life. No need to strain her with studies and exams, “He advises: thereby sealing my fate.” Thereby, the question of education of the female-child is also touched upon by the author. Thus, deprived of schooling, Lenny is thrust more and more into the company of her Ayah in whose company she explores the multi-faceted world of Lahore.

The news of Lenny’s operation spreads in the small Parsi community of Lahore and she has visitors but she cries for Godmother. Lying on bed Lenny observes keenly the reaction of visitors and her parents. After some time, Lenny is allowed to be taken in a stroller outside her house. The author has also been affected by the same polio. Through
her vast reading she gained wonderful knowledge and she grew an excellent writer. As a child she has seen through her eyes the bloody partition.

A minor thematic subtext in the novel is the slow awakening of the child protagonist to sexuality and pains and pleasures of the grown up and to the particular historical disaster that overwhelms her world. That is why the narrator starts the narration with these words, “My world is compressed” (16). This statement made by Lenny can be interpreted in different ways but it is beyond doubt that the sentence contains the essence of the major theme of the novel. “There’s a new market for women’s writing - perhaps because women have more of their own money to spend and can choose to spend it on reading other women” (5), says Manjula Padmanabhan. Her view is relevant to the present situation of women in India. With the economic independence the whole scenario has changed; it has brought a lot of change in the system. Relationships are changing; man-woman relationship has taken a new dimension. Nisha de Cunha, author of several fine collections of short stories, cuts a mid-path and opines:

I would think that it is a combination of both — Indian women writers are happening and publishers have woken up to them. Nowadays, there are many more publishers who are ready to indulge and experiment with authors. (ICM 6)

It is observed that cultural conflict occurs because of a state of opposition, disagreement or incompatibility of to the value systems of two or more people or groups of people. Conflict is a common term in psychology which refers to the differences in the ideologies of the people, and their actions and ideas. Conflict can be between two people, two
groups and two countries, or even within one and the same person. It is observed that it is a clash or struggle between opposing forces in a crisis or at any stage of human life.

One of the most memorable creations in this novel is the Ice-Candy-Man whose versatility manifests in the numerous roles plays, from Popsicle-seller to Allah’s messenger. His subsequent transportation and penitence further attest to the chameleon like quality of the emotions of a people and their gods. Sidhwa had created in the character of Ice-Candy-Man as she herself has said, a shadow of the opportunist, vain, cool-eyed politicians. Sidhwa has done a wonderful job by providing multiple perspectives, in her novel to look at the differences. When winter comes, Ice-Candy-Man turns into a birdman and in the streets of Lahore, he is seen with birds. Rich ladies give him money for these poor birds to be freed. Ice-Candy-Man is a chatter-box and he can talk on any topic.

Ayah takes care of the helpless child Lenny like a sister. A portion of Lenny’s house is lent to Shankar who is newly married. Shankar’s wife Gita is seen welcoming him in the evening. The children observe this couple with curiosity. Gita is a good cook and a good story-teller. She is popular with children. The reader is now introduced to Hari, the gardner, Imam Din, the cook of Lenny’s house. Here one finds focus on the character of Imam Din. He is sixty-five years old. He is “tall, big-bellied, barrel-chested and robust”. Imam Din likes to play with children in his spare time.

Lenny keenly observes everything keen on her way to the village. There she meets children Ranna and his sisters Khatija and Parveen. This is the village Pir Pindo where Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims live peacefully. Villagers have assembled beneath a huge Sheesham tree to discuss the situation in other cities like Bihar and Bengal. They
feel disturbed over the news of Hindu-Muslim riots. The villagers blame the British
government for inaction in the wake of communal riots. The Chaudhry of Pir Pindo
assures them of the safety of every person in the village if riots break out. Later Lenny
and Imam Din return to Lahore.

Ayah has now two more admirers – a Chinaman and Pathan who are fascinated by
her feminine grace. They visit Lenny’s house daily to talk to her. Chinaman sells
embroidered bosky silks from door to door; the Pathan sharpens knives on his machine
powered by a pedal. In addition to the above mentioned admires, there is the Masseur
who has “invented oil that will grow hair on bald heads. It is composed of monkey and
fish glands, mustard oil, pearl dust and an assortment of herbs”. He courts the Ayah by
quoting the Urdu couplets of Ghalib, Mir, Zauq, and Faiz. Incidentally, the epigraph of
the novel is taken from Iqbal’s Shikwah. The poet complains to God about God’s
partiality in doling out rewards to the infidels and punishments to the loyal Muslims. Of
this group Ice-Candy-Man is a man of varied interests. He is a Muslim street vendor
drawn like many other men by the magnetic beauty of the Ayah. Lenny observes the
transition of the Ice-Candy-Man through the roles of an ice-cream vendor, bird seller,
cosmic connector to Allah via telephone and pimp.

One day, Ice-Candy-Man works alongside, and Ayah is inside the house. Lenny’s
mother shouts, “he is not the kind of the man to be allowed inside”. Ice-Candy-Man’s
habitual activity is to talk with others. He gossips about the newspaper news. He reads
Urdu newspapers and Urdu digest. Ayah never gives response to the Ice-Candy-Man’s
activity. From his appearance itself mother finds out that he is a dangerous man. Ayah
and Lenny were not aware of the dangerous behavior of Ice-Candy Man.
Lenny does not go to school. She goes to Mrs. Pen for her studies. Her house is
next to Lenny’s Godmother’s house on Jain Road opposite to Electric-aunt’s house.
Ayah accompanies Lenny to Mrs. Pen’s house. After tuition, Lenny goes to her
Godmother’s house for some time. That time, Mahatma Gandhi visits Lahore. She has
heard about Ghandhi’s non-violence. He is a man who loves women, lame children and
untouchable sweepers. Lenny goes to see Gandhiji with her mother. She is surprised to
see him because she has always taken him to be a mythic figure only. Gandhiji touches
Lenny’s face, she lowers her eyes. This is the first time she lowered her eyes before the
man. Gandhiji blesses them all and advises them to follow the enema-therapy. Lenny
fails to understand as to why people call him a saint. To her, he appears to be ‘half clown
and half-demon’.

In the novel Sidhwa presents her own opinions and beliefs about the personalities
and characters of Ghandhi, Nehru and Jinnah through the narration by Lenny. Sidhwa
seems to be giving her own opinion about Gandhiji though the brief portrayal of
Gandhiji’s character in the novel narrated by Lenny. In the novel the author gives the
description of the event when Gandhiji comes to Lahore wherein the author has focused
more on Gandhiji’s advices related to dieting and enema.

The novelist ironically pleads for communal harmony between Sikhs and
Muslims. She reminds that the holy Koran is kept next to the Granth Sahib in the Golden
Temple. She states that Guru Nanak carried inscription from the Koran. She further
pleads that in fact the Sikh faith came into existence for the sake of creating Hindu-
Muslim harmony:
Don’t fool yourself…. They have a tradition of violence, says the wrestler. ‘haven’t you seen the Portraits of the sours holiday the dripping heads of butchered enemies?’ Shut up, yaar’, says Masseur, his face unusually dark with a rush of blood. It’s all buckwas! The holy Koran lies next to the Granth Sahib in the Golden Temple. The shift Guru Nanak wore carried inscriptions from the Koran…. in fact, the Sikh came about to create Hindu-Muslim harmony. (ICM 131)

Sikhs and Muslims have live together for years and years with unity. They helped each other in distress while living amicably in one and the same village. But the partitions of India and follow up communal riots have spoiled their relations. It is the main reason Sidhwa chooses a Parsi girl to narrate the story in the Ice-Candy-Man. It is the first partition novel from Parsi perspective. Thus, the author brings out the communal conflict in this novel. Sidhwa shows this socio-religious reality in the following words:

We will caste our lot with whoever rules Lahore,”? continued the Colonel. “If the Muslim should rule Lahore wouldn’t we be safer going to Bombay where ’most Parsis live?” Asks a tremulous voice weakened by a thirteen-hundred-year old memory of conversions by the Arab Sword. A slight nervousness stirs amidst the rumours. There is much turning of heads, shifting on seats and whispering. (ICM 39-40)

People of Lahore exchange their views freely on the political situation prevailing in the country. A wag proposes that they march to jail and enjoy the facilities. Bharucha, a doctor and president of the Parsi community in Lahore rebuffs his offer and warns against joining the struggle for power: “Hindus, Muslims and even the Sikhs are going to
jockey for power: if you jokers jump in to the middle you’ll be mangled in to chutney! (ICM 36). Sidhwa criticizes those who indulge in popular gossip and comments on newspaper accounts. Her characters such as the Masseur, the Government House gardener, and Sher Singh, like Hardy’s characters, play the roles of a commentator and interpreter. They exchange views about their masters and about the change in the political weather that takes place imperceptibly. Thus the reader gets the underdog’s view of society and the events leading to the Partition.

Ayah loves Masseur’s songs. Ice-Candy-Man loves Ayah for her blooming youth. The rivalry between Masseur and Ice-Candy-Man for Ayah’s favours; there is a far larger conflict between India and Pakistan regarding who should live where. There was rumour that Hindus were being murdered in Bengal and Muslims being killed in Bihar. The British Government was not taking any positive steps for controlling the situation. Once it is decided to divide Punjab between India and Pakistan, rioting starts. Things just fall apart, Muslims and Sikhs and their Hindu supporters become vengeful towards one another. After Master Tarasingh’s rousing address against the division of Punjab, the mob turns ‘maniac.” Even the police were targeted. And then there is towering inferno in Lahore. Lenny observes:

The whole world is burning. The air on my face is so hot. I think my flesh and clothes will catch fire. I start screaming: hysterically sobbing – how long does Lahore burn? Weeks? Months? (ICM 139)

Ayah’s love affair with Masseur, like that of the rose, ends in tragedy, because Ice-Candy-Man arranges his murder out of sheer, destroying jealousy. According to H. Coombes, “In a good writer’s hands, the image, fresh and vivid is at its fullest used to it
used to intensify, to clarify, to enrich—its use enhances the complex fullness of the whole (43).

Lahore is getting warmer day by day. Ice Candy Man finds his business prospering. By now it has become clear that India is going to be broken. Muslim League wants Pakistan for Muslims. Imam Din, the cook at Lenny’s house is worried over the news of communal riots and plans a visit to his village Pir Pindo. Lenny insists on joining him on his trip to the village. She still cherishes the memory of her earlier visit to Pir Pindo. On Baisakhi, they visit the Dera Tek Singh near the village. Dost Mohammad join them. They enjoy the mela and the feast. Now people apprehend trouble. One day the relatives of Imam Din arrive in Lahore to stay with him. They are accommodated in Servant’s quarters. In Lahore, people begin to move to safer places. Communal riots spread from towns to small villages like Pir Pindo. Military trucks arrive in Pir Pindo to evacuate Muslims to safer places but the Muslim peasants are confused. They can’t leave their homes, property and harvest all of a sudden. Mr. Roger’s mutilated body is found in the gutters. He was the Inspector of General of Police. This news sends shivers among the people of Lahore. Children including Lenny find it a strange incident.

The novel has presented the unbearable torture, bloodshed and countless deaths caused by conflicts for nation and culture. Muslims and Sikhs become enemies thirsting for each other’s blood. Hindus and Sikhs leave their houses behind and reach Amritsar. People hear announcements on All India Radio about the division of districts into India and Pakistan. The Parsee community in Pakistan is safe but still worried about its future. Muslim mobs attack Hindu houses.
Ice-Candy-Man is disturbed over the developments in the nearby areas. The Masseur's mutilated dead body is found in a gunnysack. The event of partition results in a series of images and events depicting human loss and agony. The demographic change in Lahore upsets Lenny. She observes: “Lahore is suddenly emptied of yet another hoary dimension: there are no Brahmins with caste-marks-or Hindus in dhoties with bodhis. Only hordes of Muslim refugees” (ICM 5).

Ayah’s mind is filled with the memories of Masseur. She often cries secretly. Lenny catches her wiping tears. She has stopped to receive visitors. Masseur’s death has left her a severe ache. A mob stops outside Lenny’s house and enquires about its Hindu servants. They ask about the Hindu Ayah Shanta but the cook Imam Din tells them about her fake departure. Ice-Candy-Man comes forward and asks Lenny about Ayah. Unconsciously and without being aware of the dangers and consequences involved, Lenny discloses her hiding. The angry Muslims drag her out of Lenny’s house. This shocks Lenny and she repents her truthfulness. A truth can also ruin one’s life, Lenny discovers.

Ayah’s rape and disappearance from the scene and again her reappearance from the red light area show the complex situation women are placed in. After her rape, Ayah does not return to Lenny but becomes part of that group which South Asian Society believes is the fit place for degraded and disgraced women. During and after partition, many women who were not accepted by their families opted for red light areas. Clearly, woman’s identity, religion, and purity is not given any importance here. Hence, Ayah marries Ice-Candy-Man, not at her own will but as a rape victim with the choice.
Ice-Candy-Man takes her to Hira Mandi, the bazaars of prostitutes. Ice-Candy-Man’s mother was also a prostitute and Ice-Candy-Man becomes a pimp. He is found reciting Urdu poetry. The Ayah becomes a victim to the politics of rape and is violated and humiliated like countless other women at that time.

In Pir Pindo village, Sikh crowds attack the Muslim community. Imam Din’s family is in trouble but nothing can be done. There is confusion. Muslims in Pir Pindo village get killed and their women gang-raped. Children are butchered mercilessly. Ranna, the playmate of Lenny in Pir Pindo is also wounded and buried under the heap of dead bodies. After some time, he safely moves to other place. His journey of hide and seek has been dealt with in detail by Bapsi Sidhwa.

Sidhwa narrates Ranna’s ordeal of escape in fifteen pages. A little boy wounded and shocked, running for life finds suddenly himself suddenly alone in the world. Earlier, it had been decided that the women and girls of Pir Pindo would gather at Chaudhry’s house and pour the kerosene oil around the house to burn themselves. It is also decided to hide some boys and men in a safer place but nothing worked. Muslims is killed, women molested and children butchered. Only Ranna escapes and finds shelter in a camp in Lahore. When he reaches Lahore, he observes:

It is funny. As long as I had to look out for myself, I was all right. As soon as I felt safe, I fainted.” Before reaching the camp, Ranna had a tough time: “There were too many ugly and abandoned children like him scavenging in the looted houses and the rubble of burnt-out buildings. His rags clinging to his wounds, straw sticking in his scalped skull, Ranna wandered through the lanes stealing chapatties and grain from houses
strewn with dead bodies, rifling the corpses for anything he could use….

No one minded the semi-naked specter as he looked in doors with his knowing, wide-set peasant eyes. (ICM 162)

Later, Ranna was hoarded into a refugee camp at Badami Baug. Then “chance united him with his Noni chachi and Iqbal chacha.” Lots of small children were killed in this riot. Only Ranna escaped from the riot. Ranna becomes an orphan. From the story of Ranna, we learn that a lot of people were killed because of religious conflict. So religious is evil in this novel.

The Partition had a manifold impact on the life of the subcontinent; it signaled the breakdown of the bonds of love and peaceful existence as well as the failure of the inter-community networks to resist the bloodshed. So partition is considered to be evil. It had an intense impact on the relationship of various classes. To see Partition mainly as a matter of religious or communal conflict is to ignore the working of power dynamics in the subcontinent and the material forces shaping all the history in general. The violence also represents a crisis at the level of man and woman relationship. Throughout history, the violence done to women is the natural corollary to any religious, political or cultural conflict. As a Pakistani nationalist writer, Sidhwa has tried to expose the politics of the dominant western or Indian tradition of thought that arraign the trio the Muslim community, the Muslim League and Jinnah for the troubled waters of the history of the subcontinent. The author has fictionalized her childhood observations of the refugee camps to manifest the cost that women had to pay for partition. Sidhwa gives descriptions of burning Lahore in the novel that she witnessed during her childhood.
The flame covers two or three brick buildings in the bazaar and it’s hard to put out the fire. People are pouring into the lanes from their houses and shops. After a while, a fire brigade van arrives. Instead of water they pour fuel on the entire rows of the buildings on both the sides of the street which ignites in an incredible conflagration. People (Hindus) are running here and there and sometime they disappear in the smoke (136).

Ice-Candy-Man reports to his friends that a train from Gurdaspur has arrived in Lahore filled with murdered Muslims. He shouts, everyone is dead. Butchered are all Muslims. There are no young women among the dead. Only two gunny bags full of women’s breasts. Ice-Candy-Man exclaims, I want to kill someone for each of the breasts they cut off the Muslim women. He is tormented by the butchering of Muslim women. Men and Women are human beings apart from the religion. Taking revenge against human being is evil one.

The trauma of partition as narrated in the novel provokes horror. Merciless butchering, naked women’s parade, arson, cutting off women's breasts, rape, massacre and looting of belongings were frequent in the days of the partition. The Indian version of the partition portrays the Muslims in general and Jinnah in particular as the villains responsible for the vivisection of the subcontinent. Bapsi Sidhwa' attempts to put forward the other version i.e. Pakistani version of partition. Pleading for Jinnah and Pakistan, Bapsi Sidhwa says in her interview:

And I felt, in Ice-Candy Man, I was just redressing, in a small way, a very grievous wrong that has been done to Jinnah and Pakistanis by many Indian and British writers. They've de-humanized him, made him a symbol of the sort of person who brought about the partition of
India...whereas in reality he was the only constitutional man who didn't sway crowds just by rhetoric. (4)

In this novel, Sidhwa portrays a series of female characters who survived in a chaotic time of 1947 in India which can be registered as one of the periods of the worst religious riots in the history of human kind. Emotional turmoil, individual weakness, and barbarities of communal riots inflicted on women have been faithfully projected by Sidhwa. The whole story has been narrated by Lenny who relates the horrors of violence and her personal observation and reactions. She not only observes but analyses man’s degrading treatments woman. Women were raped and killed without mercy. This kind of cruelty and injustice is pointed out as an evil one.

Sidhwa narrates how women are reduced to the status of sexual objects and relates the peculiar disadvantages, which they are subjected to, Ice-Candy-Man is a saga of female suppression and marginalization. It projects realistically women’s plight and exploitation in the patriarchal society. It exposes how men establish their masculine power and hence fulfill their desires by brutally assaulting women. While as on the other hand, it poignantly depicts how women endure the pain and humiliation inflicted upon them.

Bapsi Sidhwa gives a realistic picture of the traumatic event of partition in Ice-Candy-Man. Since both the communities have already taken their positions, the festival of Holi becomes a blood-soaked festival. The type of communal harmony that prevailed before the Baisakhi of the year got shattered in the blood bath of Holi festival during partition. Horrible scenes are observed on both sides of the border. Marauding gangs of the Akalis subject the Muslims of Pir Pindo village that fell on the Indian side of the
border to mass slaughter. On the other hand, the Hindus and the Sikhs of Lahore undergo a similar harrowing experience. The tragedy reaches the climax when a trainload of corpses from across the border reaches Lahore. Ice-Candy-Man's relatives lie dead in a heap. Iman Din’s entire family has been butchered in Pir Pindo. Rana alone has survived to tell the gruesome tale.

Now, Ice-Candy-Man becomes revengeful. The revenge becomes the major motivation for him and his friends. This may be one of the reasons why he abducts the beautiful Ayah and keeps her in the brothels of Hira Mandi. By portraying this unusual event, Bapsi Sidhwa wants us to realize that even the passion of love is powerless against religious bigotry. The power of religion is tremendous, even Gokhale has exhibited the power of religion that can exercise on men in her novel Gods, Graves and Grandmother. This is the reason why Ice-Candy-Man abducts the woman he loves. He ill-treats his beautiful beloved Ayah to avenge himself. It is in this sort of surcharged atmosphere that the Akali Leader, Master Tara Singh, visits Lahore. While addressing a big congregation, he shouts:

We will see how the Muslim swine get Pakistan! We will fight to the last man! We will show them who will leave Lahore! Raj Karega Khalsa, aki rahin na koi! (ICM 7)

Master Tara Singh's address is greeted with the roar of 'Pakistan Murdabad! Death to Pakistan! Sat Siri Akaal! Bolay se nihal! '8 the Muslims, in turn shout: We’ll play Holi-with-their-blood! Ho-o-o-li with their blo-o-o-d! (ICM 9)
At this stage of absolute disorder of communal amity, the Parsis of Lahore maintain a safe distance and act as the Messiah of the Hindus and the Sikhs trapped in the burning the city. Lenny’s mother and her aunt play a humanitarian role and protect the lives and property of the Hindus. She explains the reason why they have smuggled the rationed petrol thus:

We were only smuggling the rationed petrol to help our Hindu and Sikh friends to run away... And also for the convoys to send kidnapped women, like your Ayah, to their families across the border. (ICM 10)

After the abduction of Ayah by the Muslim mob, Lenny remains sad and dejected. She is shocked over the betrayal by Ice-Candy-Man. She finds him to be a changed man. The day he saw the mutilated bodies of his Muslim brethren, he became a different person. His beloved Ayah becomes a Hindu for him. “They drag Ayah out. They drag her by her arms, stretched taut, and her bare feet that want to move backwards – are forced forward instead.” This sight proves to be traumatic for poor Lenny and she repents telling the truth to Ice-Candy-Man. She is guilt-driven: “For three days I stand in front of the bathroom mirror staring at my tongue. I hold the vile, truth-infected thing between my fingers and try to wrench it out: but slippery and slick as a fish it slips from my fingers and mocks me with its sharp rapier tip darting as poisonous as a snake. I punish it with rigorous scouring from my prickling toothbrush until it is sore and bleeding.” This act of Lenny shows her sense of guilt.

Lenny’s world is populated by other deprived female characters. Papoo is the daughter of Muccho, the sweeper woman, who considers her to be a nuisance and a curse. The ill-treatment of Papoo by Muccho runs through the novel like a malevolent strand.
Muccho is a victim of a patriarchal society which has engendered a fierce self-hatred in her, which manifests itself in violence against her daughter whom she sees as an extension of herself. Papoo finally is married to a middle-aged dwarf. This is the ultimate wound she inflicts not just on her daughter, but also on herself. After Papoo’s marriage, Lenny feels lonely without Ayah. By now Lenny has become mature both in body and mind.

Despite her mother’s ill-treatment, Papoo displays a remarkable resilience. She is “broken” when her family marries her off to an unappetizing older man. Papoo is drugged with opium at the time of the ceremony to suppress her revolt. Lenny curiously studies Muccho’s face during the wedding ceremony and is startled to find a pretended smile on her lips. The sketch of Muccho suggests that women themselves are unconsciously bound by their conditioning and saddle their daughters with a repetitive fate, treating marriage as a panacea of all ills.

The story of Papoo’s forced marriage reflects accurately the misfortunes of millions of sub-continental girls married off before the legal age. It also draws our attention to ways of sub-continental society in general conceived at the subjugation of women, affording societal consent to sexual enslavement. It is especially ironic that Papoo’s mother is the primary agent of her daughter’s plight. Papoo’s life is left to the readers’ imagination. We assume the worst; in all likelihood, she will have to endure continuing violence, both sexual and physical. No voices are raised in protest against the coercion of marriage on young girl; indeed, the marriage is attended and celebrated by the extended family and the community at large. Muchoo as a mother should marry her child at the age of eighteen not below it. She spoiled the child’s life and herself. The dire
consequence that follows child marriage is, she becomes vulnerable to domestic violence. Child marriage is an evil one. It spoils the future of the child education and the growth of her mind.

Even though Sidhwa has created empowered female characters in Ice-Candy-Man and has given to the story a female perspective from Lenny’s point of view, she has also shown to the reader the reality lived by women in India. We see a society where sexual objectification and exploitation of women is part of the routine, a society where young girls like Papoo are mistreated and married off to old men, a society where women are not seen as individuals but as bodies men can possess, a society in which young boys like Cousin see as normal the sexual abuse of women and make fun of it because it is the example they have been given, a society in which men like Imam Din, “the-Catcher-in the-kitchen”, have a position of respect, a society where women are blamed for being women, blamed for being abducted and raped, and blamed for bringing dishonor to their families.

Lenny’s Godmother is the strongest representation of female power in the novel. She loves Lenny, she has established a network of espionage in Lahore. She has information from each corner of Lahore. One day, Lenny’s cousin comes with the news that he has seen the Ayah in a taxi dressed like a film actress. After few days, Lenny too sees Ayah in a car. Now she tells everyone about it and the search for Ayah begins. One Monday, Lenny visits her Godmother’s house to tell her about the Ayah. She is told about the Ayah’s husband’s visit to Godmother’s house in the evening. Lenny finds it difficult to wait for the evening. At six o’clock, the bridegroom of Ayah arrives. He is none but Ice-Candy-Man, now dressed in flowing white muslin. He recites a verse from
Urdu poetry and greets every one. He informs that them she is married to him and has
been accepted in the family of dancers. Godmother scolds him for ill treating Ayah and
let her be raped. But he confesses: I am a man! Only dogs are faithful! If you want
faith, let her marry a dog.” But Godmother reacts wildly by saying: “You have permitted
your wife to be disgraced! Destroyed her modesty! Lived off her womanhood! And you
talk of princes and poets! You’re the son of pigs and pimps!”

Sidhwa has managed to create very powerful female characters in a context where
we would expect the prototypical passive and submissive women. As Kleist argues:

The strongest-and most subversive-examples of feminine power in the
novel stem from women who are able to completely step outside their
traditional domestic roles and utilize their community connections as a
source of influence. Both Lenny’s mother and Godmother demonstrate the
power gained through economic status- both women are upper-class and
educated-and both proactively exert influence and make changes in the
lives of those around them. (70)

Thus, in spite of being in a war context, where women are seen as passive
subjects that must be protected from the enemy, we can see how Lenny’s mother and
Godmother takes advantage of their Parsee and upper-class position to play an active role
during the conflicts generated by the Partition.

Ice-Candy-Man weeps and cries but asserts that now he will make her happy by
all means. Lenny has been listening to all this. She is angry with Ice-Candy-Man to such
an extent that: “There is a suffocating explosion within my eyes and head. A blinding
blast of pity and disillusion and a savage rage. My sight is disoriented. I see Ice-Candy-Man float away in a bubble and dwindle to a grey speck in the aftermath of the blast.”

Ice-Candy-Man stands there with Jinnah-cap in his hand and “his ravaged face, caked with mud, has turned into a tragedian’s mask. Repentance, grief and shock are compressed into the mould of his features.” Then, Godmother plants a visit to see Ayah, now Mumtaz after her marriage.

In the novel Ice-Candy-Man, Sidhwa depicts how inter-community marriage between the Hindu Ayah and her Muslim admirer, Ice-Candy-Man, becomes a mode of expression of the communal passions of partition. Initially the Ice-Candy-Man is a part of the frantic mob which kidnaps Ayah and keeps her in the brothels of Hira Mandi. Later he falls in love with her. He repents and attempts to make amends. He forcibly marries Ayah, changes her name to Mumtaz, and recites love poetry to her. But love is shown as powerless when compared with cultural influence.

Bapsi Sidhwa also depicts the feeling of insecurity arising out of cultural differences. Almost all the protagonists and major characters in her novels are on a quest to attain security. Lenny insists on going with godmother to Hira Mandi. They reach Hira Mandi in a tonga. They are led in a well-decorated room with the fragrance of sprinkled flowers. Ice-Candy-Man brings his Mumtaz, the Ayah dressed as a bride before them. Lenny is shocked to see sadness in Ayah’s eyes. Lenny observes:

Where have the radiance and the animation gone? Can the soul be extracted from its living body? Her vacant eyes are bigger than ever: wide-opened with what they have seen and felt… She buries her head in
me and buries me in all her finery; and in the dark and musky attar of her perfume. (ICM 172)

Leaving Ayah with godmother and Lenny, Ice-Candy-Man goes to fetch tea. Ayah weeps, and pleads humbly with the Godmother to let her remain single. Without male’s company, Ayah’s amorous adventures become central to Lenny’s perceptions. She spent her childhood under the care of her loving Godmother and the young Ayah, “They have shamed her, Not those men in the carts-they were strangers.... but I’m certain of her humiliation” (102) Godmother asks her to think over it against but Ayah (Mumtaz) insists of going back to her relatives in Amritsar. The visitors return after assuring Ayah that she will be rescued.

Bapsi Sidhwa wants to convey the message that humanism is more important than communalism. Women may belong to any religion but after all they are also human beings, and so why should they silently bear all the victimization? The author brings out dual representation of female power in the character of Ayah. At the beginning, we see the power of her irresistible attractiveness and how she manages to keep a group of men from different ethnicities united around her. Then, her power is completely lost when she is kidnapped and transformed into a dancing-girl, abused by her friends and admirers such as Imam Din and Sharbat Khan, and married to Ice-Candy-Man, completely losing her power of decision. Nevertheless, conveying an encouraging message by doing so, Sidhwa decides not to finish the story that way. Ayah is finally given back her voice and she is able to express her desire to go with her family in Amritsar, and more importantly, she is given hope for a better future. As Kleist defends:
Sidhwa presents a uniquely gendered perspective of Partition. Moreover, Sidhwa’s novel provides a comparatively inclusive view of the diverse feminine roles during Partition, roles in which the female characters are not entirely empowered nor entirely victimized.” (Kleist 70)

In *Ice-Candy-Man*, we find very powerful female characters who are restrained by their social and cultural environment. They find themselves in a context of a patriarchal society, where they are not given equal rights and are forced to live a dutiful life at home which prevents them from being totally in power of their lives. Sidhwa succeeds in representing both this impossibility for most women to be completely powerful and at the same time their rejection of remaining passive and obedient.

Lenny’s cousin asks her about Kotha and her impression of it. Lenny understands Kotha to be a place of dancing girls. But now Lenny also understands that “the potent creative force generated within the Kotha that has metamorphosed Ice-Candy-Man not only into a Mogul Courtier, but into a Mandi poet. No wonder he founds poetry as if he popped out of his mother’s womb spout rhyming sentences.”

After her visit to Hira Mandi, Godmother contacts the government machinery. One day a police party comes to Hira Mandi and takes Ayah away from Ice-Candy-Man. She is put at the recovered women’s camp on Warris Road which is well-Guarded. Ice-Candy-Man visits the camp to see his beloved but is beaten up badly by the Sikh sentry. Now Ice-Candy-Man has become a dejected, wandering lover searching for his lost love. He has acquired a new aspect: “that of moonstruck fakir who has renounced the world for his beloved. “Ice-Candy-Man places flowers for Ayah over the wall of the camp every
morning and his “voice rises in sweet and clear song to shower Ayah with poems.” This routine of offering of flowers and singing of love songs continues for many days.

Sidhwa portrays the evil that happens to these women. Even Ayah is rescued by Lenny’s Godmother and sent to her parents in Amritsar. Through the Godmother the author depicts good things in this novel. Godmother donates blood to the people and orphans to sustain their life in this world. Thus the author illustrates that both good and evil come in man’s life.

Thus, inspired by a feeling of humanism, the Parsis shake off their passive neutrality and become the agents of leading-process. This humanitarian act on the part of Lenny’s mother, her aunt and her Godmother is highly commendable. Another major issue pertaining to the Parsi paradox during the period of the Indian struggle for independence is --- whether they should support Swaraj or they should be loyal to the British. This is brought out in Ice-Candy-Man. The incident of the Joshan prayer to celebrate British victory at the fire temple in Lahore is neutral manifestation of the Parsi community. The Parsis fear the partition of India and consequently are in a fix as to which community they should support. The Parsis’ meeting at their temple hall in Warris Road is significant. It expresses the insecurity of the Parsis not because of communal antagonism, but the apprehension of their status at the departure of the British. Col. Bharucha, the President of the Parsi Anjuman Lahore, considers home rule as a struggle for power, and warns his fellow Parsis:

No doubt the men in Jail are acquiring political glory... But this short cut to fame and fortune is not for us. It is no longer just a struggle for Home Rule. It is a struggle for power. Who’s going to rule once we get Swaraj?
Not you: says the colonel pointing a long and accusing finger at us as if we are harbouring sinful thoughts. “Hindus, Muslims and even the Sikhs are going to jockey for power: and if you jokers jump into the middle you’ll be mangled into chutney!” (ICM 36)

And he also warns them to be cautious and says: “There may be not one but two - or even three - new nations! And the Parsees might find themselves championing the wrong side - if they don’t look before they leap!” (ICM 37).

One day, Lenny learns that Ayah has been shifted to her family in Amritsar there. Ice-Candy-Man has also followed her across the Wagah border into India to pursue of his love. At last even Ice-Candy-Man becomes good. The author makes all the characters in arbitrarily in a perspective. The novel contains a number of poignant scenes along with violence. The novel is a masterful work of history as it relates political events through the eyes of a child. *Ice-Candy-Man* has also been called as multifaceted jewel of a novel. The novel deals with the bloody partition of India through the eyes Lenny growing up in a Parsee family, surviving through female bonding and rebellion.

Sidhwa as a novelist, talks of emancipation of women. Hence, the novel ends on a positive note. Women strive to come out of their plight and finally move forward from their degraded and tormented state to start their lives afresh. This is sheer technical brilliance – possibly only in the art of a writer who is aware of the different nuances of feminist studies. Sidhwa highlights how the political and religious conflict of into the 1947 partition divides people into religious identities. The protagonist observes how the people in her neighborhood, immediate and distant, suddenly become conscious of their religious identities. The entire tragic novel is based on religious discrimination and
cultural disparity. It is noted that there is chaos leading to a great upheaval in political
and social life. It results in some kind of negative energy giving rise to wave of hatred,
malice and ill-will.

Here author portraits the picture of the hungry lion. Bapsi Sidhwa shows symbolic
feature of foreshadows the lust for blood and the murderous cruelty with which people of
different communities will treat one another at the time of Independence and Partition.
With these personal nightmares of Lenny, Sidhwa successfully sets the stage for the
striking details of real violence in public life of Indian subcontinent.

The partition theme in Ice-Candy-Man has been acknowledged variedly by many
critics and magazines. In The New York Liberty Journal, it has been commented in the
following words:

The originality and power of Sidhwa’s splendid novel on the partition of
India and the subsequent communal violence derived from her choice of
protagonist; Lenny, an eight-year-old Parsee girl from Lahore, a spectator
living in the midst of, but apart from, the rising tension among Hindus,
Muslims and Sikhs…. (13)

Bapsi Sidhwa has presented that the millions of victims of the Munda revolt and
the Partition of 1947 pay a terrible price for freedom and that price would leave its bitter
imprint for years to come. All the characters in the novel have experienced a sense of the
loss of identity in their own motherland. Through the novel Ice-Candy-Man, it is
observed that every character or community wanted to organize or reconstruct the socio-
cultural life on the proper lines, for it was already disintegrated. It is noted, in the final
analysis, how and why conflict has been a major part of their life and existence. The
study, however paves the way for the unity of man and the federation of the world through the Hegelian processes of human development i.e. the thesis, juxtaposed by the antithesis, and resulting, finally, into synthesis of culture.

This multi-dimensional novel evoked a very good response from the critics and won many accolades for the author. Khushwant Singh, the celebrated author of *Train to Pakistan*, one of the most powerful accounts of Partition, commends Sidhwa: “*Ice-Candy-Man* deserves to be ranked amongst the most authentic and best (books) on the Partition of India”. Another noted Indian woman novelist Geetha Hariharan finds a contemporary relevance in the novel as she comments: “Sidhwa captures the turmoil of the times, with a brilliant combination of individual growing-up pains and the collective anguish of a newly independent but divided country.” Sidhwa’s work, particularly the dehumanizing effects of communalism, she movingly reveals in *Ice-Candy-Man* is painfully relevant to our present day India.

Depiction of Partition may be Pakistan-oriented but she is above the narrow parochial nationalism, as she writes from the perspective of a marginal community in a conflict of dominant communities. Moreover, she writes from a gynocentric perspective voicing the concerns of women in the subcontinent (B. Singh 364). Sidhwa’s central concern is the condition of a Hindu Ayah and her sufferings at the hands of the Muslim community or lover, i.e., *Ice-Candy-Man*. Paranjape quotes Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz that the novels of Bapsi Sidhwa are “Ruthlessly truthful, deeply perceptive, she tells her story with rare courage, frankness, and good humour” (82). *Ice-Candy-Man* is one of the most sensitively written, comic-tragic accounts of how a little girl saw relationships between Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs slowly turn sour and then erupt into a pillage and
mass slaughter of innocents on either side. Ice Candy Man deserves to be ranked as amongst authentic and best on the partition of India.” (n.d., n.pag.) Thus, Ice-Candy Man presents a fictional account of Partition from different perspectives -- Parsi, communal harmony, Pakistani and feminine. Neither the readers, nor the critics can call it just a piece of fiction. It can be considered the depiction of human sufferings of Partition far more effective than many other books falling in the same category. Instead of polluting the earth by burying it, or wasting fuel by burning it, we feed God’s creatures. The soul is in heaven, chatting with God in any case...or broiling in hell like Mini’s will (114).

The novel, however, has strong female characters to balance their male counterparts. They are conscious of their desires and also assertive about their independent handling of situations. Lenny, the child narrator; Mrs. Shethi – Lenny’s mother--- for whom social grace is more a bondage than pleasure; God Mother, who has deep understanding of human psyche and exhibits the ideal feminist strength; Muccho and Pappo, who consider marriage as the only remedy of all the problems and are unknowingly bound by their lower financial condition and above all these Shanta, Lenny’s 18 years old Hindu Ayah occupy more than half space of the novel. Shanta is different from other females of the novel. Though too young in age, she is quite transparent regarding her desires. She is fully aware of her sexual charm. But the charming woman in her breaks down when the Ice-Candy-Man helps the Muslim mob to abduct her and forces her into prostitution. Especially, she considered him to be not only her admirer, but also a passionate lover. This act can be considered as exploitation of female sexuality. From Amrita Pritam to Sadat Hasan, Manto to Bhisham Sahni to Bapsi Sidhwa, there would hardly be any work based on partition that would not reflect the
maltreatment of women in one or the other way. For instance, in Manto’s short story “Khol do”, a Muslim girl is repeatedly seduced by Muslim soldiers. The bewildered girl cannot even differentiate between the seducers and her father. In Pritam’s Pinjar, the Hindu girl Pooro is abducted by a Muslim and is forced to marry him. This changes her identity from Pooro to Hamida. Sidhwa’s Ayah faces problem of abduction, rape and also loss of identity. Her name is changed from Shanta to Mumtaz. This one tragic event changes the course of her life. It murders her spirit similar to Sahni’s Tamas which is a short but blood-boiling narration of a Hindu girl raped till and even after her death.

Ice-Candy-Man can be considered the expression of the Parsi perspective of partition. Sidhwa vividly presents the threats and insecurities that forced Parsis to side the ruling party, which so-ever may be. Col. Bharucha advises them to go for neutrality and to look before they leap. He also says, “Let whoever wishes rule! Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian! We will abide by the rules of their land” (39).

From this it can be perceived that in Sidhwa’s novels Parsis are shown living and sharing not just the traditions but also political loyalties of different and distinct communities. Sidhwa writes of how the community provided humanitarian relief to the sufferers. Lenny and her Godmother help Ayah return to her people at India. It is a humane act by Parsis during the Partition days. Sidhwa tries to suggest that they, Parsis, did not remain passive spectators, but helped the needy and the troubled, without compromising their neutral role in the Partition tragedy. According to Novy Kapadiya, “Ice-Candy Man is a novel of upheaval which includes a cast of characters from all communities... so a multiple perspective of Partition emerges as viewed by all the affected communities” (35).
This novel, full of brutal reality and naked truth, gets an eight year old Parsi girl as the narrator. Actually this experiment makes it easy for Sidhwa to show all that what happened without any religious or age biases and ethical order. Lenny hides nothing. She narrates of all that she observes, whether about Ayah, about Ice-Candy-Man, her cousin, her parents, the national leaders or the riots. She proves a transparent narrator.

Githa Hariharan also comments in *Economic Times* that Sidhwa has captured "the turmoil of the times, with a brilliant combination of individual’s growing up pains and the collective anguish of a newly independent but divided country. Seen through the prism of a marginalized minority girl-child, it focuses on the deteriorating communal climate in pre-Partition days. "Lenny's naiveté, her privileged position, and her religious background lend her version of Partition a quality that other novels about this tempestuous period in Indo-Pakistani history lack. Protected by her religious background and her parents' status, Lenny is not directly affected by the contumelious situation of Partition days, but she keenly observes and comments on the events happening around her.

*Ice-Candy-Man* also includes several comments on contemporary political figures. Sidhwa has presented the Pakistani perspective regarding these figures and almost all the major contemporary Indian political figures are either caricatured or presented in an unfavourable manner. During the interview with David Montenegro, Sidhwa comments:

The main motivation grew out of my reading of a good deal of literature on the partition of India and Pakistan…What has been written by the British and the Indians. Naturally they reflect their bias. I felt after I’d
researched the book been unfair to the Pakistanis. As a writer as a human being, one just not tolerate Injustice. I felt whatever little I could do the correct an injustice I would like to do, I have just lets facts speak for themselves and through Research I found out what the facts were. (18)

*Ice-Candy-Man* includes among all of the ingredients, a brilliant sense of humor as well. Sidhwa explains, “Laughter does so many things for us. It has the quality of exposing wrongs and getting rid of anger and excitement. The novel deals with a wide variety of topics including several analyses of Sidhwa’s subtexts on male/female authority issues. The novel calls to recollection the pain of old, caked wounds so that they may finally be healed. As the other title of the novel, *Cracking India* suggests, to crack India is at once to divide, to dismember, as it is to perceive what lies below and within. The scenes of devastation accompanying the partition are shown without excessive comments; the horror is permitted to reveal itself. The inner realities and the historical backdrop are commented on driving home the combination of violent contradictions, distortions, and heroism that pervade the novel. Sidhwa, at her best, goes beyond the tragedy and horror of the partition to record instances of courage, of compassion, of sacrifice, and of honour. In Lenny’s mother’s determined efforts to recover “Fallen” women, in Godmother’s attempts to secure the freedom of Ayah, in the generosity of Imam Din, and in the stoicism of Hamida one perceives the humanity of the two nations that have been scarred but not destroyed. The novel lacks the experience of so many of the recent Indian and Pakistani novels, “but it remains an authentic and compelling work, one whose success serves to reinforce the notion that realism is not a thing of the past.” (10)
The *Ice-Candy-Man* is a politically motivated novel. Sidhwa admits this in a conversation:

> The main motivation grew out of my reading of a good deal of literature on the partition of India and Pakistan.... What has been written by the British and the Indians. Naturally, they reflect their bias. And they have, I felt after I’d researched the book, been unfair to the Pakistanis. As a writer, as a human being, one just does not tolerate injustice. I felt whatever little I would do to correct an injustice I would like to do. I don’t think I have just let facts speak for themselves, and through my research I found out what that facts were. (36)

Similarly, she confuses the burning of Lahore with the celebration of Holi——a spring festival which would have taken place some months earlier. The introduction of such tricks of memory shows how thoroughly Sidhwa understands her young narrator, and makes her a more rather than less reliable witness. The signposts or references in this novel are necessarily limited because Lenny does not understand much of what she hears. Lenny herself says:

> Obviously he’s quoting this Bose (Sometimes he quotes Gandhi, or Nehru or Jinnah, but I’ am fed up of hearing about them. Mother, Father and their friends are always saying” Gandhi said this, Nehru said that. Gandhi did this, Jinnah did that. What’s the point of talking so much about people we don’t know? (29)

*Ice-Candy-Man*, in the true sense of the term, successfully attempts to bring to the central stage the suffering of the female protagonists. The novelist with her realistic
presentation gives them identity and all the female characters are the victims of the society affected by evil forces that have been blinded by fanaticism and fundamentalism. Sidhwa portrays the evil that happens to these women. Ayah is recovered by the Godmother. Through the Godmother the author depicts good things in this novel. Godmother donates blood to the people and orphans to sustain their life in this world. Thus author illustrate that both good and evil come in man’s life. In all her four novels, the author focuses on the eternal conflicts of good and evil. The final major chapter is an analytic composition on the novel which explains the eternal conflicts between good and evil in the novel *An American Brat*