CHAPTER - II

THE 1947 PARTITION OF INDIA : A HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1 INTRODUCTION

The end of colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent marked the birth of two nations—India, and Pakistan. The sun did set in the never-sunset empire on the Indian soil. But the sunset with 'dusk' was followed by a 'tempest'. The triumph of a long awaited political transfer of power was accompanied by the tragedy of Partition. The division of the country which led to an unprecedented mass migration and barbaric violence has been a horrendous chapter in South Asian history. Since the aim of the thesis is to analyse the fictional representation of Partition, it is now worthwhile taking a bird 's eye-view of the process of the Partition—historical and political background—to get a proper perspective in interpreting the fictional narratives of Partition. Hence, the present chapter traces the events leading to the Partition— the genesis and the development of the idea of Pakistan (leading to Partition)—from the historical and political point of view.

However, the chapter is not an argument in favour of any of the complexities involved in the historiography of Partition. Instead, the focus is on a cursory view of the history of the movement for a separate Muslim nation. Besides, there is an humble effort made to have a look at three crucial issues involved in the Partition;
Communalism, Nationalism and Imperialism. The chapter is concluded with an analysis of the Partition, event as passed in to the chapters of history— the concerns of historical writings, their limitations, and history as fiction.

II. THE EVENTS LEADING TO THE PARTITION

"Every culture," writes Cecile Sandten, "is— in a broader sense and to a certain extent— characterised by hybridity."¹ No culture in the world perhaps remains unaffected and unmixed (pure). Due to diffusion and assimilation of cultural patterns for various reasons such as imitation, migration, invasion etc, most of the cultures have become heterogeneous. India, representing one of the oldest civilizations, is not an exception. This may be due to the flexible nature of the Indian soil. According to Salman Rushdie "Eclecticism, the ability to take from the world what seems fitting and to leave the rest, has always been a hallmark of the Indian tradition."² It is true that there is no other country in the world as heterogeneous as India is. It is a country of multi-ethnic communities and multilingual islands. History provides various reasons for the plurality of Indian culture; for example, invasions and immigrations of foreigners. The arrival of the Aryans, the Kushans, the conquest by the Arabs and other Muslim rulers, and the advent of European Colonial powers have made the cultural ethos of India one of the most mixed variety embedding many complexities.

It is very difficult to determine who were the original inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent. Pre-historical and Proto-historical interpretations have their own limitations. As the archaeological records show, "The earliest signs of community life in India are to be found in the valley of the river Indus."³ Thus begins the history
of India, and then it unfolds a series of invasions. First, the Aryans who were originally from central Asia, settled and became the natives of India. The acclimitization of the Aryan race into the Indian soil seems to be the first stage of assimilation in the making of Indian culture. Following the Aryans, Alexander, the Great, in his ambition to conquer the whole world, invaded some parts of India, which led to the influence of Greek culture. Then the Kushans also became one with the Indian culture. The invasion of the Arabs marks the beginning of the Muslim presence in India with which a new chapter opened in the history of India. The Arabs had trading and political motives behind their conquest. With the invasion of Sicunderkhan in 786 A.D., the Muslim life began on its horizon in Gujarat and Sind. From then onwards the impact of Muslim culture continued through the invasion of Mahamud Ghazani (1046 AD) and Mahamud Ghor (1112 A.D.). It reached the climax in the establishment of the slave dynasty in Delhi in 1206 A.D. by Kutub-ud-din-Aibaq and his successors—Balbun and Iltamish. Because of the continued dominance of the Muslim rulers after the slave dynasty—the Tughluqs, the Khiljies, the Ludhies and the Moghals who succeeded one after another—the medieval period in Indian history has been referred to by historians as "the Muslim India". It was during this period that Muslim settlements, and to some extent, the process of Islamization started in India. After this, Modern India witnessed the advent of the Europeans. With the arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British, Indian culture came under the influence of the west. Thus, the making of Indian culture took various strides over a long period of time due to the above said events. Lal Bahadur Varma illustrates the point with a significant metaphor:
Indian society was like a traditional Japanese house with only four outer walls, the internal space was divided according to need. If a guest arrived an additional room could always be created. But nobody was allowed to build a house next door. Muslims were certainly not the first to come to India as aggressors. But those who had come earlier— the Aryans (now converted), Greeks, Kushans, et al., merged into, even converted, the indigenous Indian society. Muslims not only refused to merge and get converted, they started converting the indigenous population.4

It is very interesting to notice that the eclectic nature of India absorbed the Aryans and the Kushans. They became part and parcel of India and complete Indian natives. But the case of the Muslims in India was different not only from that of the Aryans and the Kushans but also from that of the British. The British neither became the inhabitants of India nor did they create their own land like Australia. They remained complete foreigners. But the Muslims neither remained complete foreigners like the British nor complete insiders like the Aryans and the Kushans. Wilhelm von Pochhammer, a German author, rightly observes the place of the Muslims in India in his book India's Road to Nationhood:

While the Aryans and the Kushans came to India as an integral people, these Muslims came as a bunch of adventurers thrown together in a haphazard fashion (...).

Just as fixed boundaries were wanting, similarly a real citizenship was non-existent. The majority of the
native population was absolutely hostile to those of foreign origin and foreign religion. Till the very end of their rule they remained foreigners in the country.

The British also did not become 'natives' of India, but they had a homeland of their own. The Central Asiatic Moslems who came to India had no homeland. They were forced to look upon conquered land as their new homeland, although each day showed them that for the mass of the subjugated people they remained foreigners.5

Pochhammer's observation makes it clear that the so called 'eclectical' nature of India neither absorbed the Muslims like the Aryans and the Kushans nor did it make them complete aliens like the British. Hence, they remained inside foreigners. What compelled the Muslims to stay in India was that like the British, they had no other homeland for themselves.

The motive force behind the Muslim invaders was not only to plunder India but also to see India 'Dar-Ul-Islam'— an Islamic country. Hence, during the medieval period of Indian history the Muslim rulers persecuted the Hindus, either by forced conversion to Islam, which was very much against the Hindus' will, or imposing the Jizya, a special heavy tax only for the non-Muslims. The modus operandi adopted for Islamization was forceful conversion— "The choice of Islam or death"6, and another was "temptation being offered of worldly advantages."7 Finally what the Muslim rulers achieved was not their cherished goal of Dar-Ul-Islam; instead, an accommodation for Islam in India which complicated the future politics of India. This state of affairs led to a compromise between the Hindus and Muslims to live together side by side without losing
their distinctive identity as Muslims and Hindus respectively not only in their religion, ethics and language but also in politics and economics.

In the beginning the Muslim settlements were confined to the northern part of India especially Sindh, Punjab, Bengal and Gujrat. The reign of the Bahamani rulers, Adilshahi of Bijapur and Nijamshahi of Ahammad Nagar widened their territory so as to include south India also. Then the Muslims came to occupy their place as the largest minority in India. Today the Muslim population consists of approximately 19% of the total population of the country. And interestingly enough, India has the second largest Muslim population in the world, second only to Indonesia.

During the modern period, with the arrival of the Europeans, particularly the British, the Hindu-Muslim relationship represents a series of ups and downs— both communal harmony and communal disharmony. The power politics of India was gradually transferred from the Muslims to the hands of the British, whose stay in India has witnessed different roles in different stages— from business to the 'white-man's-burden'. Right from the beginning there developed an antagonism between the British and the Muslims. As the Muslims believed the British had snatched away the throne from them, naturally the Muslims nursed feelings of grievance. At this stage the British favoured the Hindus. The Hindus welcomed western education whereas the Muslims resisted it. Owing to the impact of western education through the medium of the English language the process of modernization fostered the 'Renaissance' in India, especially among the Hindus. The establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885, social and religious reformations, the
National Movement for Independence etc, were the various manifestations of it. While the Hindus reaped the fruits of the 'Renaissance,' the Muslims remained aloof from it. In this development some of the Muslim leaders, especially, Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, an elite Muslim who belonged to a migrated family which took up service with the Moghuls, saw a threat to the Muslim community. They thought that the Muslims were lagging behind in comparison with the Hindus. Hence, Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan wanted to modernize the Muslims. He urged the community to feel the western flavour. It is important to know that Sir Sayeed's aim was to make the Muslims more Islam-conscious than broad-minded secularists. This seems to have been the first conscious step towards Muslim separatism.

Having set his goal Sir Sayed wanted to mobilize the Muslim mass through the establishment of institutions for the Muslim community. The most notable of his cherished institutions was the Mohamedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875. Later this came to be known as Aligarh Muslim University, which became a centre of the Muslim Renaissance. Further Sir Sayed carried out his mission by founding the 'Muslim Educational Council', the 'Indian Patriotic Association' (1888) and 'The Mohammedan' Defence Association of Upper India' (1893). Sir Sayed, perhaps, may have been the first Muslim leader in India to think in extreme terms of the Muslim identity. He asked the Muslims to be aloof from the Indian National Movement for Independence. His successor leaders Iqbal, Rahmat Ali, M.A.Jinnah and others continued the tradition set by Sir Sayeed.

The politics of colonial power also played its role in creating separatism between the Hindus and the Muslims. With their strategy
of ‘divide and rule’ the British changed their policy. After the ‘1857 Sepoy Mutiny’ they realized that the Hindu-Muslim conflict would determine the chances of their survival in India. Then, the British began to favour the Muslim community. The division of Bengal, separate electorates for Muslims were deliberate steps in pleasing the Muslim community. The Partition has been an on-going process in Indian history—right from the Partition of Bengal on 16th October 1905 by Lord Curzon till today’s Kashmir issue. The division of Bengal created lots of hopes among the Muslims. In fact, it created a taste for the demand for a separate state. The Muslims welcomed the Bengal Partition wholeheartedly and opposed the anti-Partition agitation launched by Bengali non-Muslims. “The nationalists pointed out,” write Grover and Grover, “that the scheme (the Partition of Bengal) was devised to divide the people on the basis of religion and put the Muslims against the Hindus.” And even Lord Curzon’s object “was not only to relieve the Bengal administration but also to create a Muslim province where the followers of Islam could be predominant.”

The separatism of the Muslims was later authenticated by the establishment of the “All India Muslim League” on 30th Dec 1906. This political organization of the Muslims has been a landmark in the history of the Pakistan Movement, because, in future politics it gave a platform for the Muslim leaders’ voice. And it became a hard nut to crack for Indian leaders striving for national unity. However, the aim of the Muslim League in the beginning was not a demand for a separate nation but:

1) To promote among the Muslims of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconceptions
that might arise as to the intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures.

2) to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Muslims of India and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government, and

3) to avoid hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League.10

In course of time the Muslim League underwent a radical transformation under many elite leaderships. It assumed an equal status with the Congress, and claimed for exclusive representation of the Muslim community. It tried to deflect India's road to nationhood by mobilising the Muslims against participating in the activities of the Congress. In its loyalty to the British Government the League opposed the Congress. It saw the welfare of the Muslim community in the continuation of the British Raj. The growing sentiment in favour of a modern democratic state fostered a sort of fear among the Muslims. The League thought that democratic rule means majority rule, which is *ipso facto* Hindu rule. Hence, after the 40's the League paved the way for two roads for two different nations.

Subsequent to a call for the Swadeshi Movement by the Indian National Congress, the Constitutional Reforms of 1909, which are also known as the Morle-Minto Reforms, brought about some changes in Indian administration, especially in the constitutional field. At this juncture a Muslim delegation with Sir Agha Khan as its leader demanded a separate electorate for the Muslims. Lord Morley,
the Liberal Secretary of State for India, first opposed the proposal and then, convinced by Minto, accepted it to please the Muslim community. The act of 1909 made a space for separate electorates for the Muslims. In the opinion of V.D. Mahajan, "Lord Minto was the real father of the communal electorates." If Curzon's Partition of Bengal on the communal base partly gave a territorial identity to the Muslims, Minto's separate electorate gave them a distinct political identity.

The framing of the constitution by the British assured a responsible government in India. During the second phase of the Congress (1905–1919), it was realised that the motto of its struggle should be 'Swaraj' or complete independence. Bal Gangadhar Tilak declared, "Swaraj is my birth-right." It was high time the Indian leaders to formulate the political nature of the Indian sub-continent. The task before them was to forge national consciousness in the country on the basis of unity. At this stage the most important step was to demand a space for the involvement of the natives at the high level administration. In this direction efforts towards constitutional reforms were made by both the British Government and the Indian leaders. After the 1919 constitutional reforms, the circumstances in England compelled the Conservative party to recommend India's readiness for any further constitutional development on 8th November 1927. This is known as the 'Simon Commission'. The 'Simon Commission' met with severe criticism as it did not have any native Indian as one of its members. It was boycotted by both the Congress and the Muslim League with the famous slogan, "Simon go back".

An effort, after this, was made by the Muslim League in this direction. The Calcutta session of the All India Muslim League in
December 1927 decided to appoint a sub-committee along with the working committee of the Indian National Congress and other Organisations to draft a constitution for India. At the same time it put forth some proposals in its own interests. Some of the more important of them were "the formation of a separate province of Sindh, introduction of reforms in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces." But this could not be realised. Following this, as there was no concrete plan of constitutional reforms to satisfy all sections of Indian society, in the month of February, May and August 1928 an all parties' conference was organized to finalise a plan which is popularly known as the 'Nehru Report', named after its principal author. The Report rejected the principle of separate electorates but accepted the Muslim demand for the formation of NWFP. Also it recommended the dominion status as the form of Government and reservation of seats for the Muslims in those states where they were in minority. But Jinnah opposed the Nehru Report and came out with his "Fourteen Points."13

It is very interesting to note that so far the historical forces no doubt were widening the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims, but there was no cry for a separate homeland for the Muslim community. It was poet Muhammad Iqbal who laid a solid base for the idea of a separate homeland. Percival Spear in his A History of India gives an account of Iqbal's role:

It was at this time that the poet Sir Muhammad Iqbal came forward in 1930 with a proposal for a separate Muslim homeland in the northwest. In his treasured poems and widely read philosophic writings he had
already provided a young Islam with an ideology more vigorous and acceptable than the Sayyid's rather dated occidentalism and Anglicism. Independence and self reliance were his theme. Islam was a dynamic religion whose secret was the progress of the soul towards freedom through constant striving. The west was sunk in materialism and would perish from the evils of its own inventions. Here was a message at once invigorating and apparently intellectual, something in tune with the urge to action of the time. Expressed in glowing and melodious verse, it gave new heart to the Aligarh class of Muslim and prepared him for the campaign which was to follow.¹⁴

Iqbal's map of a Muslim Province included only the north-west India, but not Bengal. And, more importantly, it "did not envisage," as Mushirul Hasan, a historian and an authority on Partition, records: "a separate Muslim state. He merely made out a case for provincial autonomy in Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan within the body-politic of India."¹⁵

It was Chaudhuri Rahmat Ali, who seems to have been an heir to Iqbal in drawing up a blueprint for a separate Muslim state, for the first time gave the concept of 'Pakistan'— a land of the pure—which was intended to celebrate the Islamic way of life. Along with three other students at Cambridge Rahmat Ali published a small leaflet called Now or Never (1933) in which he coined the term Pakistan, taking 'P' from Punjab, 'A' from Afghanistan (NWFP), 'K' from Kashmir, 'S' from Sind and 'tan' from Baluchistan. The scheme of Rahmat Ali was different from the scheme of Iqbal in many respects. Rahmat Ali recommended three independent Muslim
Nations forming an alliance— in the North-west, Pakistan; in the North-East, Bang-I-Islam including Bengal and Assam; in the South, Usmanistan consisting of the state of Hyderabad. Whereas Iqbal's idea included provincial autonomy for the Muslim provinces within the Indian federation. It is also important to note that even during this phase the geo-political map of Pakistan remained vague. As Mushirul Hasan rightly puts it:

There was, after all, no blueprint of a future Pakistan in the 1930s, no Islamic flag, no visible symbol, no common platform, no shared goals and objectives. Rahmat Ali's scheme, nurtured in Cambridge, was an illustration of obscurantist political eccentricity. It caused much political embarrassment back home and was dismissed as 'chimerical' and 'impractical.'\(^\text{16}\)

However, Iqbal's and Rahmat Ali's schemes played no insignificant role in shaping the future map of Pakistan. They were political eggs, "which, however minute, others could incubate to produce a nation."\(^\text{17}\)

The communal representation with separate electorates, the failure of the 'Simon Commission' and the 'Nehru Report', the growing political position of the Muslim League under the leadership of M.A. Jinnah and, more importantly, the Congress Party's refusal to accept the Muslim League to be the sole representative of the Indian Muslim community— all led to a political impasse in the country. Congress's roadmap to Indian nationhood and the active participation of native Indians in the high level administration during the later 30s were challenged by the growing antagonism between the Congress and the Muslim League. The lack of mutual co-operation
between the two organizations led to the failure of ministry formation after the 1937 elections for the provincial legislature councils held under the Government of India Act 1935. The negotiations failed, because the Congress demanded for the merger of the Muslim League into the mainstream National Congress so that it could claim the representation of all the Indian communities. M. A. Jinnah read it as an anti-Muslim strategy and attacked the Congress as a Hindu Organisation. Thus, Muslim separatism grew stronger as the gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League widened more and more. In its efforts to speak for all India— as a representative of all communities— the Indian National Congress started the mass contact movement in 1937 under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The leaders of the Muslim League, especially Iqbal and Jinnah, urged the Musalmans not to come under the influence of the Congress.

In October 1938 the Sind Muslim League Conference at Karachi evolved a framework of constitution for the political independence of the Muslims, which included several schemes, notably— the scheme of Dr. Sayed Abdul Latif of Hyderabad (1939); the Aligarh scheme devised by Prof. Sayeed Zafarul Hassan and Dr. Mohammad Afzal Hussain Qadri; the scheme of Nawab Sir Mohammad Shah Nawaz Khan, which was published in a book called The Confederacy of India (1939); the scheme of Sir Abdoolla Haroon and the scheme of Sir Sikander Hayat Khan. Before the Lahore Resolution, a committee of the Muslim League examined all these schemes and the earlier schemes of poet Iqbal and Chaudhuri Rahmat Ali as well. But none of them was accepted.

The All India Muslim League's Lahore Resolution, which was later known as the Pakistan Resolution (23 March 1940), was a
turning point in the history of the movement for Pakistan. It impressed upon the Muslims that the demand for the creation of a separate state for Muslims was the right of every Muslim in India. Then, communal politics generated an intense heat and cries for a separate nation from all quarters of the Muslim community started reverberating. One day before the Pakistan Resolution, Jinnah outrightly preached his Two-nation-theory. He defined the Muslims not as a minority, but as a distinct nation. According to him:

Musalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homeland, their territory and their state. (...) It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian Nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither intermarry nor interdine together, and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes, and different episodes.
Inspired by M. A. Jinnah, on 23 March 1940, the Pakistan Resolution declared that "no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, the geographically contiguous units are demarcated in regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign."\(^{19}\)

On 1 July 1940 M. A. Jinnah put forward some suggestions to the British Government. These are known as 'Tentative Proposals of Jinnah' (1940). The main points of Jinnah's proposals were that the British Government should respect the basic principles of the Lohore Resolution of division of India. Without the consent of the Muslims in India, no constitutional scheme should be adopted by the British Government. And an equal share for the Muslims in India must be considered. Apart from this Jinnah asked for Muslim representation in all fields on equal terms with the Congress.\(^{20}\) This is how M. A. Jinnah tried to raise the status of the Muslim League to the level of the Congress. At this point of political development the Muslim mass accepted him as their leader.

During this period the British Government and the Indian leaders continued their efforts towards constitutional reforms. On 8\(^{th}\) August 1940 Lord Linlithgow offered a plan of the setting up of a constitution making body. This is known as the 'August Offer'. It assured sufficient safeguards for the minorities in any future constitutional change, which was wholeheartedly welcomed by the
Muslim League, but it was condemned by the Congress. Again, the question of representation—the Congress' claim to be a representative of all Indian communities and the Muslim League's objection to it—pointed towards a crisis. At this time Sir Stafford Cripps, a cabinet minister of Churchill's Government, was sent to India for solving the problem. This has been called 'Cripp's Mission' of 19th March 1942. He brought with him a draft declaration of the British Government of its intent to elect a body for the framing of a new constitution. But it was rejected by both the Muslim League and the Congress.

After the 'Cripps Mission' the Indian National Congress launched the 'Quit India Movement' on 8th August 1942 with the slogan, "Do or die". The Muslim League kept quiet and fully exploited the situation to mobilize the Muslim mass, while most of the Congress leaders were imprisoned. The Muslim League preached that the 'Quit India Movement' was launched to force the Muslims to surrender themselves to the Congress. The anticipation of democratic rule in India was thought to be the rule of the majority which would mean the dominance of the Congress over the Muslims. The Muslim elite leaders in all earnestness carried out the propaganda with the help of the press—The Dawn in English; Anjam. Jung, Inquilab, etc, in Urdu; Azad in Bengali. The campaign was also benefited by writers like Z. A. Sulari, the students of Aligarh university and the service of the Pirs and Ulemas. A committee of writers was formed and 'Pakistan literature series' published propagandist works. A book called It Shall Never Happen Again (1946) articulated the sufferings of the Muslims under Congress dominance. During the great political upheaval known as Freedom Struggle, the Muslim League tried to remain loyal to the British
Government. For instance, if the Congress condemned the British Government during the Second World War (1939-1945), the Muslim League supported it. During the later 30’s the League extended its branches; 90 in the United Provinces and 40 in the Punjab. It took severe action against the Muslims who had membership of both the League and the Congress. The use of ‘Bande Mataram’, Hindi as a compulsory language, Gandhiji’s Wardha Education scheme and Vidya Mandir scheme, and the Cow Protection Movement et al., were given communal colouring as anti Muslim activities. Even Gandhiji’s effort to achieve Hindu-Muslim amity was dismantled. Jinnah went to the extent of accusing Gandhi as an orthodox Hindu.

In 1944, C. Rajagopalachari came out with a formula to find a solution to the crisis. This, known as ‘Rajaji Formula’, had been approved by Gandhi, and to some extent accepted the creation of a separate land and asked the Muslim League to support the Congress for the Independence of India and in forming a provisional government. Also it recommended the setting up of a commission to demarcate the areas in North-West India and North-East India where the Muslim population is in a majority, on the basis of plebiscite to decide the separation from Hindustan. M.A. Jinnah rejected the formula, but the only point he appreciated in the ‘Rajaji Formula’ was that it provided for a separate state. It also met with severe criticism from the Sikh community. In the aftermath of the ‘Rajaji Formula’, Gandhiji went to Jinnah; the Gandhi-Jinnah talks in September 1944 however failed. And following this, negotiations were held between Bhulabhai Desai, the leader of the Congress party in the Central Assembly and Liaquat Ali Khan, the deputy leader of the Muslim League in the Central Assembly. This, known
as 'Liaquat-Desai Pact' (1945), too failed, as Jinnah declared that he did not know anything about it. Thus, all the efforts to bring about a compromise between the Congress and the Muslim League were futile exercises.

Lord Wavell, who became Viceroy in 1943 and continued upto 1947, played an important role in deciding the turn of events in Indian politics. In the opinion of Wilhelm von Pochhammer, "To Viceroy Wavell must be given the credit of having taken a more active part in the final stages of British rule in India than the leaders of the Liberation Movement. Three times he took the initiative in trying to resolve the tangle. His first initiative led to the Simla Conference of June/July 1945, the second to the elections of 1945-46, and the third compelled the parties to come to a final decision." On 25th June 1945 Lord Wavell called a conference at Simla to resolve the complexities. The Congress chose two Muslims from the Congress party out of its quota to the executive council of the viceroy. But Jinnah contended that all the Muslim members of the council must be chosen by the Muslim League. With this the Simla Conference failed, too.

At this time dramatic changes took place in Great Britan. The Labour party came to power, with Atlee succeeding Churchill as the Prime-Minister. Wavell brought the political crisis in India to the notice of the Government and convinced it that since the British Government was fed up with the situation, the best way was to cut itself off from India as soon as possible. Hence, in March 1946 the Atlee Government sent a Cabinet Mission which consisted of three Cabinet members—Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India; Alexander, the Naval Minister; and Cripps, the Minister
for Trade. The aim of the cabinet mission was to call upon the Indian leaders to frame a new constitution and hand over political administration to the Indians. The Cabinet Mission stood for the unity of India, but protecting at the same time the interests of the Muslim community. Hence, it devised a three-tier state structure comprising a central government, the regional unions and the provinces. According to the plan, India was to be divided into three major regions—section A consisting of Madras, Bomay, U.P., Bihar, C.P., and Orissa; section B consisting of N.W.F.P and Sind; section C consisting of Bengal and Assam. And it proposed for that the central government be in charge of foreign affairs, defence and communication. The British created such a plan through the Mission that, in the words of Wilhelm von Pochhammer, “Everybody could deduce from it whatever suited him. Jinnah could see Pakistan in it, though ‘artistically wrapped’. The Congress could see in it the undivided India which it hoped to inherit from the British. (...) The pre-requisite was that Indian politicians should accept office as responsible ministers in the Government that was to be formed.”

The creation of two Muslim majority provinces and the full autonomy to the provinces anticipated the vision of Pakistan for the Muslim community. Hence, the Muslim League accepted the plan. But the Congress opposed it as the grouping of the provinces came as a package, not to be altered. The Congress Government was functioning in N.W.F.P. which would go to section B and the Hindu majority province of Assam would go to Section C. The Congress was not ready for this. Therefore, it partly accepted the plan and demanded the grouping of the provinces should not be compulsory. This made the Muslim League withdraw itself from the plan on 29th
July 1946. Having decided to give up ruling over India, Lord Wavell persuaded the Congress to enter the Interim Government. Accordingly on 2nd September 1946 Jawaharlal Nehru took oath as the first Prime-Minister. The Muslim League joined the Interim Government to spoil it rather than to co-operate. Meanwhile under the leadership of M.A. Jinnah, the Muslim League observed the Direct Action Day on 16th August 1946. As Margaret Bourke-White, an American eye witness to the event, observes:

Jinnah's Press conference at his Bombay home on Malbar hill, in late July 1946, marked the public turning point. (...) Jinnah intimated--rather badly--the coming of Direct Action Day. Two and a half weeks later this day touched off a chain of events that led, after twelve explosive months, to a divided India and the violent disruption of the Great Migration.24

The effects of a call for the observance of Direct Action Day, which started with the massacre of Hindus at Calcutta, created a state of civil war in India. Jinnah gave a battle cry "Lekar rahenge Pakistan, Larke lenge Pakistan". He also declared, "This day we bid good-bye to constitutional methods. (...) Today we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it."25

The demonstration in favour of Pakistan triggered off a wave of communal frenzy, which swept most parts of India. The state of Nokhali was the worst. Muslims killed Hindus and vice-versa. As a result the Interim Government too fell to the ground. After this two significant things happened. First, Lord Mountbatten succeeded Lord Wavell as the Viceroy. Second, Atlee's Government gave June 1948 as the deadline for the transfer of power to India. When Lord
Mountbatten landed in India the situation had already reached the state of anarchy and Partition seemed the only solution to the problem of India. Even the Congress, which stood for the unity of India, compromised with the situation, and the leaders were tired and fed up with the state of affairs. They were caught between the fury of Direct Action Day and the time limit fixed by the British Government. It was a great period of transition. The British, who had lost interest in the administration, ignored the maintenance of law and order. The choice before the leaders was between Partition and the continuation of the impasse. Finally, the proposal calling for Partition was accepted. Then, the modus operandi was spelt out in the V. P. Menon plan, which contained the rules and regulations regarding the process of the Partition. According to the plan the provinces of Punjab and Bengal were to be divided to create a separate state—East Pakistan and West Pakistan. To seek the opinion of the mass the issue was placed before the Legislative Assemblies of both the provinces on condition that if any one of the Assemblies voted in favour of Partition, both the provinces were to be divided. The question of NWFP was to be decided on the basis of referendum— the opinion of people expressed through vote. And the same was to apply to the Muslim dominated district of Sylhet (Assam). Finally, the Legislative Assemblies of Punjab and Bengal voted for Partition. The referendum in NWFP went in favour of joining Pakistan and the district of Sylhet also decided to join Pakistan. As soon as the plan was prepared, Mountbatten broadcast it on June 3. This has been known as ‘the June 3rd plan’. A boundary commission was set up under the chairmanship of Cyril Radcliff to decide the geographic territory of both the countries. Till then the creation of Pakistan had been a vague idea; it began to
take physical shape now, but the common people were in total confusion, as they were unprepared for the effects of the event.

On July 4th, 1947 the Independence of India Bill was introduced in the British Parliament and was passed by a simple majority. The Act formulated on July 18th, made provision for the Partition of the sub-continent into two sovereign states. Pakistan celebrated Independence on 14th August 1947, and India on 15th August. Thus came to an end, the more than 200 years of colonial rule in the subcontinent. At last the sun did set over British India at the cost of bloodshed and disruption of millions of lives, the great tragedy which goes down in the pages of history as the Partition.

III CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS— COMMUNALISM, NATIONALISM AND IMPERIALISM: THE ROLE OF IMPORTANT LEADERS.

The Partition is such a complex historical process that it is very difficult to arrive at a final conclusion and dismiss the discussion on it in a few statements. Because, there are various theories about the Partition propounded by different schools of thought. History needs revising as new documents are discovered and a new line of thinking is initiated. Hence, the Partition is still an unsettled debate.

H. V. Hodson in his The Great Divide looks at the Partition as a triangular issue among Britain, Pakistan and India. Accordingly, there are at least more than three points of views in the historiography of the Partition. Mainly it includes writings from the three nations involved in it; imperialist— Percieval Spear, Penderel Moon, H. V. Hodson, Vincent Smith and others; India— R.C. Mujamdar, V. D. Mahajan, Mushirul Hasan, Bipan Chandra, Panikkar and others; Pakistan— I. H. Qureshi, M. D. Zafar, Mumtaz
Hasan, Ali Tayyeb and others.\textsuperscript{28} Besides, there are other writers such as Domnique Lâpiere and Larry Collins, Wilhelm von Pochhamer, Margaret Burk-White and others, who belong to nations which were not directly parties to the process of Partition. All these different writings throw light upon different aspects of the Partition. But it is not possible to arrive at the complete truth and objectivity. With a few exceptions most of the studies are biased. Pointing at a single community, a group of leaders and in fact, to a single history, in creating the holocaust would be unfair, for it “was the result of a very complex interplay of forces.”\textsuperscript{29} One can identify the interplay of three forces for the convenience of the study. They are Communalism, Nationalism and Imperialism. These three forces were interrelated and influenced each other in the culmination that was Partition. As rightly pointed out by Khwaja A. Khalique, the political history after the foundation of the Indian National Congress “was shaped by the multilateral interaction between the forces of British imperialism, the Congress and Hindu and Muslim communalism.”\textsuperscript{30} However, an in-depth analysis of these three forces needs a separate study. Hence, within the scope of the present thesis the roles of individual personalities and parties behind Communalism, Nationalism and Imperialism are focused upon as “their acts of omission and commission made it (the Partition) a \textit{fait accompli}.”\textsuperscript{31}

\textbf{COMMUNALISM}

First, Communalism; it has acquired different shades of meaning as intellectual debates all over the world and in the media have given much importance to it. Generally, Communalism refers to differentiating people on the basis of religion. Bipan Chandra et
al., define Communalism as "the ideology of a religion based socio-political identity (...)."\textsuperscript{32} As an ideology it involves politics based on religion. However, Communalism cannot be equated with religious practice and beliefs. It is the mingling of religion with politics for non-religious motives. In the present discussion communalism is used in the sense of the use or exploitation of religion to achieve a vested interest. The argument put forward for the creation of a separate state for the Muslims on the basis of Islam was more of a political nature, involving economic and psychological considerations as well, than a religious one, but religion was used for that.

According to K.N. Panikkar Communalism is a "modern phenomenon" and it "emerged during the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and then intensified during the 20\textsuperscript{th} century."\textsuperscript{33} Bipan Chandra et al., identify three stages in tracing the rise and growth of Communalism. They do not name the first stage, and call the second stage "Liberal Communalism", and the third "Extreme Communalism". Further it is concluded that during the third stage "communalists put forward the theory that Muslims and Hindus constituted separate nations."\textsuperscript{34} It is apparent that one of the reasons for the creation of Pakistan was Communalism. Khwaja A. Khalique thinks that it "was the logical culmination of a long standing communal divide."\textsuperscript{35} The genesis of the communal divide between Hindus and Muslims can be traced back to the colonial state. The differences in their ways of life always prevailed. In spite of this both the communities had no difficulty in accepting the rise of a free nation, comprised of both, because they had shared a long history. In the beginning they waged a war against the British jointly. For them religion was not a barrier. But the political power-game necessitated communal divide. For
political purposes religion was also employed as a factor emphasizing the different identities of Hindus and Muslims. May be, as V.S. Naipaul thinks, "politics is combined with religion in Islam." Moreover, the infrastructure of the colonial society was congenial for its growth. The socio-economic differences between the communities and the vested interests of the elite-leaders contributed to the great divide. As Asghar Ali Engineer says, "Pakistan was not a creation of religious bigotry: it was a creation of the modernists among Muslims." The most important of among those who shaped the destiny of Pakistan were Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Iqbal and M. A. Jinnah. Different historians trace the communal divide to different periods. But the beginnings of a conscious communal awareness among the Muslims may be seen in Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He was the first modernist muslim who saw a great threat to the Muslim community when the Muslims remained aloof from Western education, whereas the Hindus reaped the fruits of it and found jobs under the British Raj. The Muslims of those days resented British rule as they believed that the Europeans had snatched the throne away from them. For Syed Ahmad Khan it was a negative development, for he feared that his community would lag behind. His aim was to bring about the Muslim Renaissance in India. He sought to create awareness among the Muslims by giving a clarion call to them to join hands with the British and withdraw from the Indian National Congress. He urged the community to keep away from the activities of the Congress by dubbing it a Hindu organisation. He carried out his propaganda successfully with the help of British officials and the institutions he had founded exclusively for the Muslims. Ahmad Khan is historically important in the development of separatist politics of the Muslims in India. Though he was
extreme communalist, his contribution to the divide was not small in measure.

"The creation of Pakistan, which involved the partition of erstwhile India," says Harbinder Pal Singh, "was the achievement of a single man, namely, Mohammed Ali Jinnah." It was M. A. Jinnah who fully exploited Islam for political ends. The phase of moderate communalism gradually passed into the phase of extreme communalism with the emergence of Jinnah. Accordingly, he it was who translated the dream of Iqbal and Rahmat Ali into a reality.

Jinnah played the most prominent part in the whole drama of the Partition. In the beginning he was a statesman who had a secular-elitist view of politics. Neither Muslim-communalism nor the minority interests obsessed him. He was a staunch supporter of Hindu-Muslim amity. For instance, witness his speech in the 1924 Muslim League summit at Lahore:

The advent of foreign rule and its continuance in India is primarily due to the fact the people of India, particularly the Hindus and Muslims, are not united, (...). I am almost inclined to say that India will get Dominion Responsible Government the day the Hindus and Muslims are united.

But ironically the same man turned an exponent of the Two-nation-theory, "Musalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation, and they must have their homelands, their territory and their state (...)."

It is very clear that a thoroughly westernized lawyer started his career in India as a secular nationalist but ended up a parochial
communal leader. At one time a secular statesman and supporter of the Hindu-Muslim cause, all of a sudden he became a petty politician, almost an obstinate personality. It was a paradox of the time that the man who had never read the Koran and practised the Islamic way of life became the Father of "The first truly Islamic state since the days of the prophet and his close companions." It is perhaps for this reason that H.V. Hodson calls him "An enigmatic figure." It would be intriguing but difficult to find a categorical explanation for the reasons why Jinnah did so. There were no doubt some political developments which led to his transformation. By the time Jinnah came to India after becoming a barrister, a separatist identity of the Muslims had already found its roots watered by his predecessors. The time was congenial for the Muslim community to accept him as its sole spokesman. His growing position as the Muslim mass leader—Quaid-e-Azam—might have laid on him the obligation to fight for his community. And the rest is politics. Jinnah could not feel at home in the Indian National Congress. He could not accommodate himself there vis-a-vis the dominance of M.K.Gandhi, Nehru, and Sardar Patel on the Congress. Moreover, the Congress neglected him. Aijaz Ahmad rightly accounts for how the Congress' attitude led Jinnah along the line of separatism:

People like Jinnah, (...) found themselves increasingly sidelined and alienated. The advocacy of partition and Pakistan during the 1940s was for a leader such as Jinnah in some senses a reaction of fury against the frustrations accumulated through a life-time in which he had sought to combine the two prongs of his own
conviction: the generality of "Hindu-Muslim unity" which he often described as his life's mission, and the specificity of what he used to call the "Muslim interest". But, then in losing commanding figures such as Jinnah, Gandhi's Congress also lost increasing proportions of the modern Muslim middle class, which came to believe that its career opportunities would be far greater in a brand new country of its own (...) 43

Then, the conflict between the personalities grew more over the question of representation. The Congress wanted to stand for the whole of the Indian people including the Muslims, but Jinnah wanted a separate representation for the Muslim community. Notice Jinnah's statement in 1939:

I have seen the report of the interview given by Mr. Gandhi to Mr. H.V. Hodson, and it's quite clear that he maintains the preposterous claim of the Congress that it is the "only body that can deliver the goods on behalf of the people of India," and indulges in platitudes and talks about the history of the Congress and its ambition to become "All representative of the entire nation." He says that it is a worthy ambition, in keeping with its best tradition, and that "if you study the Congress, you will find that, since its inception, the congress has sought to serve and represent all sections of the country equally."

Mr. Gandhi is mainly responsible for having destroyed that ideal and the tradition of the Congress, since he has captured it. It is all very well for Mr. Gandhi to say that the Congress would love to be absorbed by
the Muslim League if the Muslim League cared to absorb it, or to absorb the Muslim League in its turn so far as the political programme was concerned. Is it not absurd on the face of it to set the Muslim League the task of absorbing the Congress, the Congress being mainly a Hindu body with a majority of four to one? Mr. Gandhi is quite safe and he knows that the result will be that the Congress will absorb the Muslim League, and he can well afford to talk in this strain. 

This kind of Jinnah's clash with the Congress led to the political impasse. In fact, all these factors must have influenced M. A. Jinnah. However, it is unfair to put the whole blame on Jinnah. He was as much a product of historical forces as of his personal whims and fancies in politics. To quote Lal Bahadur Varma, "The heroes and villains will appear less heroic or villainous and more as an instrument of history. While making history they will appear also as the product of history." But Jinnah's philosophy remained parochial. There was an inherent flaw in his "Two-nation-theory". The division of the country on the basis of religion sounds ridiculous, for it is highly unthinkable in the Indian sub-continent as it is a nest of several different communities scattered all over it. Jinnah's theory neither solved the minority problem nor put an end to communal disturbances. It remains silent about the remaining Muslims in India. Hence, as J. Bandopadhyaya says, "the Indo-Pakistan boundary represents the political division of a single geographical, ecological, economic and defence unit, with all the resultant incongruities, anomalies and irrationalities." 

Also, it is very important to note that socio-economic causes worked along with the political cause in determining the fate of a
separate state. “We must try to understand,” writes Asghar Ali Engineer, “the genesis of communalism in a deeper sense. It is as much a structural as a political problem. In the political sense it was the divide and rule policy of the British which generated it, and in the structural sense it was generated not only by the limited capacity of the colonial economy to grow but also by a keen competition for jobs and political positions and sinecures between the two major communities of India, i.e., Hindus and Muslims.”

As rightly put by Engineer, the Muslim mass was attracted by economic interests such as job opportunities in a newly created land for the Muslims. Other factors which complicated the situation were the growing Hindu-communalism and the nascent ‘Hindu’ Raj. They created “the politics of hatred, fear psychosis and irrationality.”

The growing Hindu organizations like the Hindu Mahasabha and the R.S.S. created a sense of fear among the Muslims. For instance, Golwalkar, one of the R.S.S. leaders, cried:

The non-Hindu peoples in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture, i.e., they must not only give up their attitude of intolerance and ungratefulness towards this land and its age long traditions but must also cultivate the positive attitude of love and devotion instead— in one word, they must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment— not even citizen’s rights.
The Ghost of the Hindu Raj haunted the Muslim psyche. It was thought that the democratic rule of the future world mean the rule of the majority. They feared the dominance of the Hindu majority. Thus, communalism has been one of the causes of Partition. The modernist elite leaders made use of religion for their political ends.

NATIONALISM

The term Nationalism means a "strong feeling of love and pride in one's own country" and "a desire for political independence by a nation that is controlled by another." It is an ideology which binds the people of a country together. In the Indian context, the peoples' 'Strong feeling of love and pride' towards India as a nation and 'desire for political independence' was expressed for the first time during colonial rule. But whether India was a nation or not till then is still a debatable topic. The concept of 'nation' (English word) has political connotations. Wilhelm von Pochhammer thinks that 'nation' refers to a "community arising from a common political consciousness which feels that it is one unit and acts like one". In this sense India as a political entity had never been a nation though the concept of 'Rashtra' and 'Jambudwip' had a few rulers reigning over major parts of it under a single dynasty. The Indian subcontinent attained its nationhood over a period of years only under colonial rule. The nature of India's political unity was, like Shakespeare's Caliban, shapeless. It was under the impact of British imperialism that the spirit of nationalism rose in the breasts of Indians. The spread of modern education through the English language, the rapid development of means of transport and communication, the role of journalism, the changing socio-economic structure etc fostered the feeling of nationalism.
The strategy of nationalism, which was partly a colonial legacy, was used to drive out colonial rule from India. What Caliban says in reply to Prospero in *The Tempest* is a relevant metaphor for it:

Caliban: “You taught me language; and my profit on’t
Is, I know how to curse; (...)”52

The Indian National Movement, launched by the Congress, has been a landmark in Indian history as it was “One of the biggest mass movements modern society has ever seen.”53 Here it is important to note that the Indian National Congress for the first time mobilized all the Indian masses in its resistance to colonialism. As Sucheta Mahajan says:

The task of the national movement was twofold—structuring classes, communities and regions into a nation and securing independence from colonial rule for this emerging nation. While the national movement succeeded in building up a national consciousness sufficient to wrest freedom, the process of the nation-in-the making remained incomplete and the Congress, the party of the national movement, failed to keep the country united.54

Though the goals of the Congress in the beginning were obscure and unclear, later the attainment of ‘Swaraj’ or self-government became its sole motto. The task of the attainment of Swaraj met with many challenges. One of such challenges was the growth of Muslim communalism. The parallel growth of nationalist spirit under the Congress and communal spirit under the Muslim League entirely in an opposite direction resulted in a political deadlock during the
40s. The Indian National Congress stood for a separate homeland necessitating the unity of India whereas the Muslim League stood for the division of the subcontinent.

The reasons for the antagonism between these two forces were obvious. The Indian National Congress was based on democratic principles and it popularised democratic ideas and institutions in India. This led the Indian Muslims to think that the would-be democratic India meant majority rule— that is, the dominance of the Hindus, which they did not want. The fear of the Hindu Raj was intensified with the growth of Hindu communalism and the ideology of the Congress. "Anti-British agitation carried out by the Congress," writes Tariq Ali in his Can Pakistan Survive?: The Death of a State, "was, in fact, heavily overlaid with Hindu symbolism and mythology (...), the Congress leaders chose to conduct the movement by utilizing Hindu anthems and the worship of Hindu Gods."55 This tinge of Hinduism in the Congress sowed the seeds of suspicion among the Muslims. And it was increased as the Congress refused to accept the Muslim League as the sole representative of the Indian Muslims in the interest of its claim to represent the whole of India. This led to a misunderstanding between the leaders. The elite leaders, especially Jinnah, were under the impression that the Congress was not allowing the Muslim community to grow. Moreover, there was personality clash between the leaders. One leader could not tolerate another leader's growing stature and influence. Later Jinnah was ignored by the Congress. As Aijaz Ahmad puts it:

People like Jinnah, (...), found themselves increasingly sidelined and alienated. The advocacy of Partition and Pakistan during the 1940's was from a
leader such as Jinnah in some senses a reaction of the fury against the frustrations accumulated through a lifetime (...). But, then, in losing commanding figures such as Jinnah, Gandhi's Congress also lost increasing proportions of the modern Muslim middle class, which came to believe that its career opportunities would be far greater in a brand new country of its own (...).56

To give another example of personality clash; when the Cabinet Mission wanted to hand over the administration to Indians, it decided to appoint an Indian as the Prime-Minister serving under the Viceroy until the Indian Independence Act would come into effect. At that time Nehru was supported by Gandhi, as against Sardar Patel. "Jinnah at first refused to co-operate, and (...) allowed a League member to enter the government, not to co-operate in its working but to sabotage it from within"57 Apart from its failure to check the growing communalism, the Indian National Congress went on accepting communal safeguards favoured by the British. It is also worth noting why the Congress accepted the Partition. Sucheta Mahajan refers to the Congress leaders' rationale for accepting the Partition. The reasons were:

1) Partition reflected the popular will and it was the only 'way to be free'.
2) It was thought as a temporary settlement.
3) It would end communal violence.
4) It was thought as an alternative to balkanization and civil war.
5) There was no other option.58

Ironically enough, the Partition was worse than a civil war, communal violence. It was because of the inherent flaw in the
execution of the National Movement which was partly responsible for the Partition.

The key figures in the Indian National Congress were Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. If Nehru was a secular statesman with a pragmatic vision, Sardar Patel was a die-hard nationalist, and Gandhi was a man of principle. Gandhi transcended all the barriers and narrowness, especially of political hegemony. He was such a personality that he hated colonialism but not individual British citizens. He had "a noble view of man and religion."59

M.K. Gandhi replaced Tilak as a mass leader in the anti-colonial struggle. When he assumed the leadership of this struggle there were a plethora of challenges before Gandhi; such as untouchability and growing communalism. By the time he came off the growth of communalism had reached its climax. He firmly believed that the future of India lay in mutual co-operation between the Hindus and the Muslims. He once said:

The first thing is that politics has divided India today into Hindus and Muslims. I want to rescue people from this quagmire and make them work on solid ground where people are people.60

That is why, along with his war against untouchability, Gandhi undertook to play the role of a Messiah of Hindu-Muslim amity. Throughout his career he worked hard to achieve it. During the Khilafat movement he strove to promote harmony between the two warring communities.

So far as the division of the country was concerned Gandhi's stand from the beginning was clear. He outrightly opposed the idea behind the Two-nation-theory. He declared:
If the Congress wishes to accept partition, it will be over my dead body. So long as I am alive, I will never agree to the partition of India. Nor will I, if I can help it, allow, the Congress to accept it.\textsuperscript{61}

He even preferred civil war to Partition. But most of 'the popular' opinion about Gandhi in connection with the division of the country is that Gandhi was partly responsible for the Partition. Even Imperial historians like Penderel Moon uphold this view.\textsuperscript{62} However, it is a misreading of Gandhi and a historical fallacy. If Jinnah is an enigmatic personality as far as the Partition is concerned, Gandhi is the most misunderstood personality. Says Chittabrata Palit, "He has been viewed as the father of Hindu nationalism and, therefore, militating against the Muslims. The Hindu fundamentalists, on the other hand, looked upon him as a betrayer of the Hindu cause and a promoter of Muslims."\textsuperscript{63} From this observation it is clear that Gandhi was hardly understood by Indians in a proper perspective. It was partly because, people did not make sense of Gandhi's idiom. His way of talking in terms of Hindu symbols and myth got him dubbed as a staunch Hindu; at the same time his respect for the Koran and care for the Muslim community made the Hindu fanatics express their venom and fire against him. In fact, it even killed him. But Gandhi's use of the religious idiom was far from being a parochial view. He believed that genuine religion should bring people together rather than separate them. Palit rightly points out this aspect of Gandhi:

To him Ishwar was the same as Allah or Ram, and Rahim was the refrain of his most favourite song, which began with the praise of Raghupathi Ram. His Ram Rajya
was similar to a moral utopia and had nothing to do with the kingdom of Ayodhya.\(^6^4\)

Gandhi loved each and every creature, but could not tolerate injustice. In spite of his faith in combating violence by love, he became at last helpless in respect of the division of the country. The political situation of the day went beyond his control. He was sidelined by his followers in the Congress. When the nation was degraded to barbaric killings and mob violence, Gandhi forgot his sense of triumph over the long awaited dawn of freedom and went to riot-hit areas to soothe the wounds of the victims of Partition.

However, Nehru and Patel’s attitude to the Partition differed from that of Gandhi. Though initially both of them stood for a united India, they later yielded to the Partition formula, because of the uncontrolled communal riots and their own personal hegemonic ambitions in the game of power politics. As the day of freedom came nearer Gandhi was neglected by them and they were itching to seize power for themselves. In this connection B.R. Nanda writes, “It hurts him (Gandhi) to see that he was unable to carry conviction with his closest colleagues and even with the rank and file of the Congress. It has been suggested that he was isolated and even betrayed by Nehru and Patel who were “avid for power.”\(^6^5\) The Nehru-Patel solution to the political deadlock of the time was not in tune with Gandhi’s. Gandhi asked Mountbatten to leave it to Jinnah to form the government, but Patel and Nehru did not approve the idea. There was the question of power-sharing which did not materialize. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad writes in his *India Wins Freedom*:

When I met Mountbatten the day after Gandhiji talked to him; he told me that if the Congress accepted
Gandhiji’s suggestion, Partition could still be avoided (...). Unfortunately this move could make no progress as both Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal opposed it vehemently. In fact, they forced Gandhiji to withdraw his suggestion. Gandhiji reminded me of this and said that the situation now was such that Partition appeared inevitable.66

Moreover, there was a split in the Congress itself on account of the rivalry between Nehru and Patel. Azad recommended Nehru as his successor to the presidency of the Congress. Gandhi did not oppose it. At this time, as Leonard Mosley writes, “Patel had to sit back and watch his rival once more take the presidency from him—and this time at the most important moment of all. He never forgave Azad for the events of 1946. He moved away from Gandhi whose devoted disciple he had always been.”67

Thus, it was in the end the political wrangling for hegemony which determined the fate of Partition. But Nehru was a secular nationalist. He had great expectations about India’s future. He agreed to the Partition, because the Congress was exhausted. It was eager to settle the matter as early as possible. The communal riots worsened the situation. More importantly, Nehru believed that the Partition would be a temporary arrangement; soon there could be a union. But at the same time it is worthwhile mentioning what Jayaprakash Narayan said about Patel at this juncture. According to him, “Patel could have kept India united somehow, if he had been at the helm of affairs.”68

Thus, when the National Movement tried to demarcate the boundary of India’s nationhood replacing colonial rule, the Muslims naturally asked for their share. At this time the failure of the Congress, and the contest over power sharing led to the Partition.
IMPERIALISM

Though the growth of extreme Communalism and the drawbacks of Indian Nationalism were partly responsible for the Partition, one cannot ignore the mischievous role played by British Imperialism. Colonialism and Imperialism are generally interchangeable notions. But the crux of the former is an economic one, whereas the latter's is a political one. Imperialism "is also often equated with the exercise of any form of political control or influence by one political community over another". And "The need for colonies was often argued in economic terms." Both are complementary and involve monopoly in economy, politics and culture. In a way Imperialism is an extension of colonialism. Here Imperialism is used in the sense of "British world Politics."  

The colonial system of Imperialism was begun in the 19th and early 20th century. The roots of British Imperialism are to be traced in colonial trade. In the beginning the Europeans had the purpose of business and a sense of adventure, and for them colonies were a source of economic exploitation—mines for raw material and markets for selling goods as well. Gradually, trade was replaced by politics. The economic exploitation was replaced by the 'white-man's-burden' theory in order to continue their dominance. One of the characteristic features of Imperialism, according to Lenin, is that it "opposes all progressive and peace loving forces." It is well known to the world that the strategy used by Imperial politics in colonial societies to continue their monopoly was the 'divide and rule' policy. It happened in almost all the colonies— the whole of Africa and most of Asia. Hence, what one of the characters in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* says equally fits into the Indian context:
The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on things that held us together and we have fallen apart.72

The British consolidated their position by creating fissures in colonial societies. Edward W. Said puts a view that "imperialism permanently scarred and distorted Indian life."73 In India it created differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. It is also said that the British did not create divisions; the divisions existed among the natives. This seems to be the notion of the pro-British school of historians. But it is true that in spite of differences in their way of life, the natives had no trouble living a shared community life. There prevailed a general communal harmony. The differences between the two different communities were as natural as the differences within the community. But it is also true that Imperial politics exploited the existing differences, and played them up. The first step in that direction was their census-survey. Many British anthropologists and other academics carried out researches in order to understand the native mind, which would make their ruling easy. This kind of official work differentiated people by their religion. Hence, during the colonial era the graph of the Hindu-Muslim relationship represents a series of ups and downs. At the time of the '1857-Revolt' both the communities fought together against the British Raj. The Muslims looked upon the British as their enemies, as the British had taken over from them as rulers. At that time the British favoured the Hindus. Later the Muslims replaced the Hindus
when the tendency among the Hindus to resist colonial rule became apparent. British policy framers realized that their success depended upon creating a gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims in India. Khwaja A. Khalique explains how the British played one against another:

The shift of administrative power and wealth from Muslims to Hindus naturally bred ill will and heart burning among Muslims against Hindus. This was further aggravated by the British government, which openly sided with the Hindus against the Muslims. An instance of this was provided in 1842, when the governor general, Lord Ellenborough, while restoring the gates of the Somanath temple said, 'The insult of 800 years is at last avenged'. He believed that the best way of restoring 'equilibrium between the two religions was to bring the Mohamadans to their senses'. Such an outburst by a Viceroy could only have been motivated by the British desire to create discord between Hindus and Muslims and to play one against the other.74

"It would be far too simplistic to suggest," says Tariq Ali, "that Muslim communalism was merely the result of British intrigue."75 The British officials, such as the principals of Aligarh college—Beck, Archbold and Theodore Morrison—tried to widen the divide between the Hindus and the Muslims. They influenced leaders like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Principal Beck helped the Muslim community to establish institutions. He was responsible for the establishment of Mohammedan Defence Association of Upper India in 1893. The task assigned to him was to win the confidence of the Muslims and keep
them away from the Congress activities. According to V.D. Mahajan, "Principal Beck tried to separate the Muslims from the Hindus and ultimately succeeded in his object." And then, as Tariq Ali says, "Mr. Archbold acted as a broker between the Muslim gentry and the Viceroy." In fact, the British were partly responsible for the Two-nation-theory, and the establishment of a separate party for the Muslims. In 1932, Sir Theodore Morrison wrote an essay highlighting this issue:

The Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations as different from each other as any two European nations: Muslim civilization could not survive under an 'alien' government—especially a democratic government which tended toward standardization of citizens; the Muslims should rest assured that they were not alone in their concern for the preservation of their characteristic civilization.

The very concept of division was popularized by British politics. The division of Bengal province in 1905 was one such conscious step. The real purpose behind the Bengal Partition was to please the Muslim community and to create among them the feeling of safety under the British Raj, though the British Government let it be known that it was an administrative necessity. In the opinion of Khwaja A. Khalique, "The partition of Bengal on 16 October 1905 not only gave a boost to political consciousness among Muslims but also a blow to Hindu-Muslim amity."

Imperial politics used the press also as its platform in its task. *Dawn* and the *Muslim League Weekly*, were financed by the British. During the Moplah revolt of 1921 (Moplahs were Muslim peasants in Malabar where the landlords were Hindus) the police targeted the
peasants but the British press gave it a communal colour, though it was an agitation over tenancy rights. Then the British Government went on giving communal concessions to the Muslims. Again to satisfy the needs of the Muslim community, Lord Minto favoured the Muslim demand for a separate electorate. The famous communal award of 1932 by Prime Minister Ramsay Mac-Donald was also “in keeping with the British policy of divide and rule.”

During the final stage of the transfer of power the British Government played a crucial role. It fixed the time—June 1948—as the deadline to withdraw the British administration from India. This not only made the Partition inevitable but also hastened it. The Indian leaders were left in total confusion. The announcement of the Partition plan and the unplanned strategy of the Boundary Commission led to the holocaust of masses unprepared for the transplantation. In the end the British Government lost its interest in maintaining law and order. As Sucheta Mahajan explains it:

If state force alone could ultimately subdue fascist communalism, why did the British not use it? Why did communal fires blaze and British officers stand idly by? (...). The main reason for their indifference and even callousness was that they no longer had any stake in India. Their future was not linked with India any more.

Thus, three historical forces—Communalism, Nationalism and Imperialism—were instrumental for the Partition of India.

IV CONCLUSION

All this is written history. There is an unwritten history of the Partition which is the human aspect. The Partition was both a political and a human problem. The reading of the historiography of Partition
shows that the main concern of historical writings is to record what happened at the level of high politics. It narrates the course of political events, the rise and fall of the leaders. It is more a story of Viceroy, Princes, and elite leaders than the story of common human suffering. Its preoccupation is with forces that caused the tragedy and possible steps which could have averted the Partition. But it is the fictional representation of events which holds up the mirror to its human dimension. The Partition affected life at various levels. Politically and geographically the subcontinent was divided and personally families and persons were departed. As Urvashi Bhutalia writes, "But partition was not only a division of properties, of assets and liabilities. It was also (...) a division of hearts. It brought untold suffering, trauma, pain, violence to the communities which had hitherto lived together under some kind of social contract. It separated families across an arbitrarily drawn border, sometimes overnight, and made it practically impossible for people to know if their parents, sisters, brothers, children were alive or dead. And these aspects of the partition—how people coped with the trauma, how they rebuilt their lives, what resources, both physical and mental, they drew upon, how their experience of dislocation and trauma shaped their lives, and indeed the cities and towns and villages they settled in—find little reflection in written history." All these, however, find their expression only in fictional narratives. The task of the fiction-writer is not only to be vibrantly alive to politics but also to recreate it artistically. The fictionist has a dual role to play; as a historian and as a creative writer. Since the writer is dealing with a historical event he/ she is circumscribed by facts but at the same time he/she has to go beyond that to find out the whole truth. His/her creation is an amalgamation of fact and fiction. Hence, his/her subject is not only
political history but also the human story. We should remember that "history is a story of things worthy of being remembered, reminding us that all and sundry events do not constitute history, and that only unique, significant and remarkable happenings would figure in it." Both the historian and the fictionist aim at truth. But the ways of achieving the truth are different. As Aristotle clearly puts it:

(...) it is not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen, what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophic and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. (emphasis added)

In fact, from Aristotle to Hayden White, whose Meta-history brought about revolutionary changes in our thinking of history, the philosophy of history has undergone a change. Yet history is history, just dry bones. What catches it in flesh and blood is fiction.

Thus, it is evident that an understanding of the Partition remains incomplete unless fictional aspects—imaginative reconstruction of the epoch making event—are taken into consideration. The study of fictional representations paves the way for a fuller understanding of the catastrophe. Hence, the forthcoming chapters are devoted to a study of the Partition novels.
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