



# Unveiling Nationhood and Historical Incidents in Salman Rushdie's 'Midnight's Children' and Khushwant Singh's 'Train to Pakistan'

Aditi Verma<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Dr. Kumkum Ray<sup>2</sup>, Dr. Rashi Srivastava<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MA English, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[umraoaditi@gmail.com](mailto:umraoaditi@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Head of the Department, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[kkray@lko.amity.edu](mailto:kkray@lko.amity.edu)

<sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, Amity School of Languages, Amity University Lucknow Campus, Uttar Pradesh, India

[rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu](mailto:rsrivastava5@lko.amity.edu)

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**Abstract**— History is the backbone of mankind. This research paper sheds light on the hidden aspects of Indian history through literary texts *Train to Pakistan* and *Midnight's Children*. This paper provides us the outcome of the partition of India and Pakistan; and the role of the political leaders after the partition. India gained its freedom in August 1947. The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between knowledge of the political historical fact of the partition and the features of national identity and postcolonial fear. Both novels depict themes of nationalism and historical events. The paper explores how both novels deal with the intricacies of nation-building, identity, and the effects of post-colonial India's partition. This paper seeks to emphasize the many viewpoints and thematic complexities that arise from these literary investigations of nationhood and historical consciousness by looking at the socio-political context and the individual travels of the characters.



**Keywords**— Partition, Post Colonial, Freedom, British, India, Pakistan.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The partition literature tells about human misery, their experiences, suffering, and how they dealt with the partition and its outcome. The collection of partition literature can rightly be said as 'The Saga of Pain or the Literature of Anguish'. It is also known as Riot literature. Partition literature gives us a description of all the historical incidents and everything that is related to them. It shows the visuals of terror. It shows how people managed to deal with the partition and how they dealt with their lives after the great migration. The partition of India is one of the most horrifying events in history. Kushwant Singh tried to depict the horror of the partition and the suffering of people. Kushwant Singh is recognized as an Indian novelist, historian, critic, and excellent observer. He himself was an

eyewitness to the terrors of the partition. When questioned once, he said, "Partition was a traumatic experience for me. I had gone to Lahore expecting to live there, to become a lawyer or judge; I was then brutally torn out and never really being able to go back. That was what put me into writing. I wrote *Train to Pakistan*." (Amir Ch. 3) Kushwant Singh creates a story around village life in Mano Majra, transforming it into a microcosm that symbolizes a large world.

Warren French says, "Singh's fable suggests a profound disillusionment with the power of law, reason, and intellect in the face of elemental human passions. Singh is a brilliant, sardonic observer of the world undergoing convulsive changes, and his novels provide a unique insight into one of the major political catastrophes of this country

“(French 818–20). Singh portrays the division of a unified country into Hindu Hindustan and Muslim Pakistan. Singh depicts the people belonging to minor areas having no knowledge of either freedom or even partition. There is stark realism in ‘Train to Pakistan’ and the great misery of the partition of India and Pakistan. The train to Pakistan was originally named Mano Majra. Trains represent groups of people traveling to different places. Millions of non-Muslims from Pakistan yearned for a journey to Hindustan.

Trains to Pakistan are appreciated for their uniqueness, even by Salman Rushdie. Amitav Gosh has considered it a classic. Suja Alexander, in her work ‘Personal Concerns Go Public in Train to Pakistan’ writes, “The beliefs that Singh had cherished all his life were shattered. He had believed in the innate goodness of the common man, but the division of India has been accompanied by the most savage massacres known in the history of the country. He had believed that Indians were peace-loving and non-violent. After the experience of the autumn of 1947, he could no longer subscribe to those views.” (Alexander, 44). Alexander brought Singh to light. Kushwant Singh shared his opinion about ‘Train to Pakistan’; he writes, “It is a masterly portrayal of peasant character and a skillful handling of a theme where pastoral peace rapidly moves to a tragic climax of communal massacres. It is refreshingly free from bias.” (Singh, 198)

Salman Rushdie is an Indian, British, and American writer. Born in 1947, he often combines historical fiction with magic realism. His novel, *Midnight's Children*, is a blend of historic events and magic realism. He won the Booker Prize for ‘*Midnight's Children*’ in 1981. *Midnight's Children* is an imaginative story of a postcolonial country attempting to strike a balance between society and individuals. Rushdie's book operates on a number of tiers of reality, encompassing the factual, political, and personal. Rushdie reveals in an interview, “What made me become a writer was the simple desire to tell stories governed by the principles that stories didn't have to be true—horses were expected to fly, and so were carpets. I found that I was writing within a literature that for a long time had shaped an opposite view—a novel had to be mimetic, to imitate the world, the rules of naturalism and realism.” (Abraham 7) . Apart from being a postcolonial work, *Midnight's Children* is a historiographic metafiction as well. Saleem Sinai is the protagonist as well as the narrator of the novel. Saleem says that “I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country.” (MC 9) Saleem was born at the stroke of midnight on Independence Day.

## II. HISTORY

In August 1947, after 300 years, India got freedom. After World War II, Britain simply did not have the resources to maintain control over its most valuable imperial asset, and Britain's retreat from India was chaotic. The polarization of Muslims and happened during just a few decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but by the middle of the century, it had become so strong that many on both sides thought it was impossible for the followers of two different religions to coexist peacefully. The subcontinent was divided into two different nations: Hindu-majority Hindustan and Muslim-majority Pakistan. Bapsi Sidhwa writes in ‘Ice Candy Man’s’, “The earth was splintering, breaking into pieces beneath their feet, and so were their hearts“ . (Sidhwa 76)

At that point, one of the largest migrations in human history began. Communities that had coexisted for over a millennium on the Indian subcontinent engaged in terrible acts of sectarian violence against one another, with Muslims on one side and Hindus and Sikhs on the other. Mass kidnappings, forced conversions, killings, brutal sexual assaults, and other atrocities marked the horrific tragedy. Historical documents reveal that 14 million people migrated during the split. Out of which, 8.3 million people went missing during the division. Nisid Hajari says in *Midnight's Furies* pendowns that “gangs of killers set whole villages aflame, lacking to death men, children, and the elderly while carrying off young women to be raped. Some British soldiers and journalists who had witnessed the Nazi death camps claimed the Partition's brutalities were worse: pregnant women had their breasts cut off and babies hacked out of their bellies; infants were found literally roasted on spits”.(Hajari 22)

Under the English's divide and rule policy, they first captured the victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757. This fight was fought by the East India Company and Nawabs 5000 soldiers. Locals became more dissatisfied as a result of the company and its officials increasing their influence over them. The approach that the British imposed throughout India was not only to seize local authority but also to incite Hindus against Muslims from a sectarian standpoint. The British had consciously established the Muslim League and supported the demand for Pakistan since 1940. Gandhiji believed that if we want to achieve freedom from the English, then it is very important to maintain communal harmony. That is Hindu-Muslim unity, but this could not be achievable because the Muslim fundamentalists dismissed it and the nation of Pakistan kept on with the demand. The division of India and Pakistan is the outcome of factors like British rule, the Muslim League, Jinnah fundamentalist communal policy, and the Indian

National Congress. The Congress Party failed to address this communal problem. The Muslim League and Muhammed Ali Jinnah established the framework for an independent Islamic country. The division left the two nations with political structures that had no precedent or establishment, as well as economies in ruins.

In March 1947, the English Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, arrived in Delhi to end British rule in India, under which it was declared that India would be partitioned in August. Following that, a border committee was established under the direction of British attorney Cyril Radcliff, and on August 14, 1947, at midnight, Pakistan got independence and India got independence on August 15, 1947. India came into existence as a Hindu nation and Pakistan as an Islamic country. A significant migration occurred. Hindus and Sikhs moved to India from Pakistan, and Muslims moved to Pakistan from India. It was a massacre, which is hard to express in words. It is believed that during the division, around 2 lakh people were killed. Historian Patrick French demonstrates in "Liberty or Death" how much of the period's political turmoil sprang from the personality clashes between Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Muslim League's head, and Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi, and others.

However, their relationship had become so toxic by the early 1940s. Ali Jinnah was the most responsible for the division of India and Pakistan. He is the father of the nation of Pakistan. In the first constituent assembly of Pakistan in August 1947, he states, "You may belong to any religion, caste, or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the state.". Jinnah had declared himself a loyal friend of the English and protector of Muslim interests against Hindu supremacy. Jinnah did not promote the unity of the nation against the British hegemony. The British continue with the decide and rule policy.

Pakistani historian Ayesha Jalal declared partition "the central historical event in 20th-century South Asia." (Mourya 4) She writes, "A defining moment that is neither beginning nor end, partition continues to influence how the people and states of post-colonial South Asia envisage their past, present, and future." (Mourya4) Due to the massacre, the soil of both nations had turned red. The train known as the Samjhauta Express was running in both nations, full of dead bodies. According to the deadly legacy of India's partition, there were bodies of refugees on the railway that connected India and Pakistan. He called this train the "blood train." It is a disgrace to human existence to be released from the massacre of such defenseless and unarmed individuals. The Sutlej River was filled with the bodies of the refugees. Division does not mean that people

from all the Muslim communities were willing to go. Some Muslims consider India their birthplace, and they were willing to stay. The writer of the deadly legacy of India's partition, Nisid Hajari, states that "the subcontinent was rapidly transformed into riots and bloodshed. Not only people's houses were burned, but women and children were treated inhumanely. Even as women were raped and the body parts of children were cut off". (Hajari 64)

' Pak in Urdu means pure, and 'Stan' means place or land, so Pakistan stands for 'land of pure'. After division, there is the success of one country and the failure of another. "If India and Pakistan are to be judged by the decade following 1947, then India is a success and Pakistan is a failure. India in those years succeeded in holding all the territory left to it by the British, while Pakistan lost its more populous half, East Bengal, to a secessionist movement in 1971. India was governed by a form of parliamentary democracy, while Pakistan's efforts to maintain democratic reforms repeatedly failed to be replaced by military rule" (Lapping 138-9). The Congress Party remained influential in India. Nehru was appointed Prime Minister. When Nehru died, Indira Gandhi, his daughter, "soon routed the congress bosses who had brought her to power" (Lapping 140). She ruled the Indian Politics from late 60s until 1984.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Partition literature has several prominent works, such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Bapsi Sidhwa's *Cracking India*, Shauna Singh Baldwin's *What the body Remembers*, Dominique Lapierre's *Freedom at Midnight*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*, and so on and so forth.

In the speech at the prayer meeting Mahatma Gandhi states "I have heard that many women did not want to lose their honour and chose to die. Many men killed their own wives. I think that is really great because I know that such things make India brave. After all, life and death is a transitory game. Whoever might have died are dead and gone; but at least they have gone with courage. They have not sold away their honour. Not that their lives were dear to them, but they felt it was better to die with courage rather than be forcibly converted to Islam by the Muslims and allow them to assault their bodies. When I hear all these things, I dance with joy that there are such brave women in India." (Abidi 5) In the novel *What the body Remembers*, Shauna Singh reconstructs a narrative whereby subjectivities such as Partition may be perceived from the perspective of a woman. Novel deals with the difficult time of 1937 - 1947.

*Freedom at Midnight*, written by Dominique Lapierre. This novel deals with the shift of power from English to the Indians. This novel also visualizes the after effects of Independence and its complexities. One of prominent work of Partition literature, *Ice Candy Man*, written by Bapsi Sidhwa with the help of child narrator Lenny, writer shows the harsh condition during Partition. Lenny narrates the destiny of people in Lahore. Lenny states, "I feel such sadness for the dumb creature I imagine lurking behind the wall" ( Satya2). In this novel, Violence between Muslims and Sikhs escalated from large cities to little villages like Pir Pindo. Sikhs and Hindus left their houses behind and migrated to Amritsar. In *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Gosh deals with the historical movements such as the Freedom movement in Bengal, World War 2, Division of India and the Communal riots.

#### IV. THEORETICAL ASPECTS

The supremacy of the British regime left a dark memory in the minds of the natives. East India Company was established in India for trade purposes, but soon things changed. "Seeking trade, not territory," but the situation turned differently. The British started establishing colonies. Western and Indian cultures came into the spotlight. Englishmen present their culture and education as very exotic, and the natives can't match their standards. "It required the aggression of nationalist traditions to break this pattern." Frantz Fanon's 'On National Culture' goes deeper into the psychology of the natives. By attacking the economy of the country, the British make natives feel that they do not have sufficient means to sustain their basic needs. The British make natives feel that God has cursed them and that they are inferior. In order to justify colonial supremacy, western intellectuals attached metaphors like fanaticism, superstition, beasts, and degraded humans.

Fanon asserts the implications of English supremacy and also the change fashioned by the English. Edward said he explores the relationship between orientation and occident. Orient and Occident differ from each other in aspects of power, dominance, complex hegemony, and supremacy. One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which orientation is viewed. The British won the Battle of Plassey, and they established their supremacy in India. They follow the idea of divide and rule. They started creating conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. The British promoted the idea of the partition of India and Pakistan. The British lost in World War 2 after starting to lose their colonies. In 15th August India got Independence. British left, but the third space was created in the minds of natives. Homi Bhabha presents the concept

that the third space does not have any concreteness of thought or action. The space of thirdness in postmodern politics opens up an area of interfection. In the novel 'Train to Pakistan' Despite being aware of the atrocities committed by the British, some individuals nevertheless held the opinion that the English provided India with a system and a structure that would never have existed in India. Natives suffer from postcolonial anxiety, third space, and self-doubt.

Iqbal responds to Meet Singh's question on why the English left India by saying that it was because they were afraid the nation would turn against them sooner. Iqbal says the English is "a race of four twenties" regarding Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code, which "defines the offense of cheating." Frantz Fanon mentions that, for the suffering natives and the repressed, colonialism kills the soul. The native loses his identity and sense of self because he can only see himself through the lens of white men. Natives start practicing western religion, food, language, and practices and reject their own culture. According to Fanon, they put a white mask over the 'black skin'. As a result of this duality, natives experience a schizophrenic situation.

Nationalism is an ideology. Salman Rushdie projects this imagination of the idea of nation. He writes, "After all, in all the thousands of years of Indian history, there has never been such a creature as a United India. Nobody ever managed to rule the whole place—not the Mughals, not the British. And then, at midnight, the thing that had never existed was suddenly free. But what on earth was it? On what common ground (if any) did it stand?" (Abraham 1).

In the series of essays on cultural studies, Stuart Hall persuasively argued for changing numerous identities by applying deconstructive tactics. The work of cultural studies explores the frightening intersections of national identity and race. Stuart Hall provides us with a glimpse into the intrinsically dark nature of English identity. "People like me who came to England in the 1950s have been there for centuries; symbolically, we have been there for centuries. I was coming home. I am the sugar at the bottom of an English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth—the sugar plantations that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are thousands of others beside me that are, you know, the cup of tea itself. Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom. This is the symbolism of English identity. I mean, what does anybody in the world know about an English person except that they can't get through the day without a cup of tea?" (Nayar 233). Stuart highlights the blackness at the heart of all English.

### **Henry Dorozio: A catalyst for nationalism in Post Colonial literature**

Henry Dorozio is an Anglo – Indian Poet, known for his radical thinking. He played a prominent role in the Bengal Renaissance. He advocated education for all, regardless of caste and creed. It was admirable how dedicated he was to India. Despite the fact that his own society would have disapproved of his mixed ancestry at the time, he decided to contribute something to India, which he refers to as his own home, despite being of Eurasian descent. He writes of India's magnificent history before colonization and how it was regarded and worshipped as a deity in his sonnet *To India-My Native Land*, but he also laments the fact that that splendour and that devotion are no longer there. He makes it his mission to rebuild India from its fallen state, and all he asks of the place he has chosen, which he refers to as his own nation, is "one kind wish from thee!"—the want to be acknowledged, acknowledged, and regarded as an Indian poet. He bemoans the reality that foreign powers dominate India.

In 'The Fakeer of Jungheera' Dorozio writes, "My Country in the day of glory past / A beauteous hale circled round thy brow". He reminisces about the golden past. He fosters concern for India's independence like a real Indian nationalist. In the poem 'Freedom To The Slave' he states,

"success attend the patriot sword,

That is unsheathed for thee,

And glory to the breast that bleeds,

Bleed nobly to be free!" (22-25)

### **Train to Pakistan**

Kushwant Singh tried to show the terror of the division and suffering of people. *Train to Pakistan* portrays the tragic tale of the division between India and Pakistan. Singh aims to look at the tragic incident from the point of view of the people of Mano Majra. *Train to Pakistan* is an excellent, realistic, and tragic story following the division of India and Pakistan. Kushwant Singh gives an account of the summer of 1947. The author adds greater credibility to the story's narrative by using third-person narration. The novel starts by favouring no religion. The damage caused by the split started in the cities and spread to the small towns and villages. Muslims and Hindus used to blame each other during these times. The author writes, "Muslims said the Hindus had planned and started the killing. According to the Hindus, the Muslims were to blame." (Singh 1)

Singh writes, "The fact is, both sides killed." (Singh 10) The writer shows the days of pre-partition. The peaceful and brotherhood nature of the village is explained as follows: "There is one object that all Mani Manjarans,

even Lala Ram Lal, venerate. This is a three-foot slab of sandstone that stands upright under a keeker tree beside the pond. It is the local deity, due to which all the villagers—Hindu, Sikh, Muslims, or pseudo-Christians—repair whenever they are in special need of blessings" (Singh 10). There are only 70 families in the village, and Ram Lal is the only Hindu villager. Massacres were going on in the country, but Mano Majra was staying in peace and harmony.

The riots that originated in Calcutta swept into the north, east, and west, swallowing a sizable portion of the population. Muslims slaughter Hindus in East Bengal, while Hindus massacre Muslims in Bihar. Mano Majra has a Sikh, Muslim, and Hindu population. The characters of Hukum Chand, Juggat Singh, and Iqbal represent the three sides of division. A Hindu magistrate named Hukum Chand offers a Hindu opinion of the partition event. Juggat Singh is a Sikh rascal, and Iqbal's identity remains hidden throughout. "He could be a Muslim, Iqbal Muhammad... a Hindu, Iqbal Chand Or a Sikh, Iqbal Singh." Kushwant Singh's characters show a natural willingness to coexist peacefully with individuals of other religious beliefs. The caretaker of Gurudwara, Meet Singh, says, "Everyone is welcome to his religion! Here, next door, is a Muslim mosque. When I pray to my Guru, my uncle Imam Baksh calls to Allah" (Singh 1). Different religious groups pray in unison, "Ya Allah. Wah Guru". The closeness of the Gurudwara and mosque suggest peace and brotherhood among different religious groups. The author shows the villagers having no knowledge of either partition or even freedom. The villagers believe that after a while, everything will be normal and they will return to their own land. Kushwant Singh shows the weird behavior of the officers and police department.

Kushwant Singh writes, "It is a masterly portrayal of peasant character and a skillful handling of a theme where pastoral peace rapidly moves to a tragic climax of communal massacre. It is refreshingly free from bias. (Singh 198) " Three brick buildings can be seen in Mano Majra: the Hindu money lender Lala Ram Lal's home, a Gurudwara, and a mosque. There is an incident that leads to Lala Ram Lal's death. Mano Majra is indicative of the whole nation. The writer shows the love story between Juggat Singh and Nooran. Their love story symbolizes the peace and harmony between two religious groups. Division affected Mano Majra at both the individual level and the community level. Juggat Singh and Nooran are more touched at the individual level. The wall that separates them is a partition.. Due to her Muslim faith, Nooran is forced to travel to Pakistan, leaving their love story incomplete. Juggat Singh performs an act of kindness by giving his life in order to prevent a massacre.

Geographical boundaries make up the division of humanity. Singh's characters do not wish to kill in the name of division. As Iqbal said, "Now with this partition, there is so much bloodshed going on that someone must do something to stop it." (Haque2). The underpinnings of India's split were not created by religious demography but rather by the slavish allegiance of religious fanatics. The omniscient narrator demonstrates that there are more ties and connections between the rioting factions than there are divisions. As Bhaktin urges the news for "diversity of languages," Singh suggests in the novel that "each ideology can hold more salience in particular circumstances" (Haque3) by compiling a variety of unique view points.

The trains are the focal point of Mano Majra residents daily lives. A train carrying the bodies of Sikhs and Hindus arrives from Pakistan, and this catastrophe changes people's lives as well as their harmonious relationships. "The village was stilled in a deathly silence" (Singh 100). The administration showed the seeds of communalism, but the outcome was division. In Mano Majra, the rate of death keeps speeding up. Seeing the bodies of men, women, and children in the Sutlej River is a horrible experience. The river, which appeared to be a sheet of paper, stood for violent acts. It seemed like human voices were pleading for help from the river. Again, the villagers saw a train full of dead bodies, but due to the rain, the woods are not accessible and everything is drenched. The bulldozer needs to dig up the corpses. Tales of torture, rape, and murder are being brought back by refugees from Pakistan. "Sikh refugees had told them of women jumping into wells and burning themselves rather than falling into the hands of Muslims. Those who did not commit suicide were paraded naked in the streets, raped in public, and then murdered" (Singh 142). One of the Sikh soldiers gathers people to engage in murders to seek revenge in response to the murders of Sikhs and Hindus in Pakistan. He said to kill "two muslimans" for each Sikh and Hindu. Meet Singh suggests that Muslims of Mano Majra do not have a connection with massacres in Pakistan. People planned to kill Muslim refugees, but Juggat Singh cutting the rope and losing his own life shows an act of kindness and humanity.

### **Midnight's Children**

Salman Rushdie was born on June 19, 1947, into a Muslim household in Mumbai. He is considered the most controversial and prominent author of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Rushdie places his characters against a real historical background. Rushdie was charged with blasphemy against Islam in several Muslim communities since it was said that the text severely disregarded the Prophet Muhammad. Rushdie was profoundly affected by 'The Satanic Verse'. He is compelled to travel with bodyguards, relocate

regularly, and live as a political exile whose head is valued at a million dollars. *Midnight Children* revolves around the birth of a nation and a child. The birth of the nation and a child go parallel in the novel. It is set in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The novel tells the political and historical scenario of India. The novel received critical appreciation and was regarded as a masterpiece. Beside being postcolonial writing, it's also a metafiction based on history. The use of magic realism is one of the characteristics of post-colonial literature. It is characterized as "a kind of modern fiction in which fabulous and fantastical events are included in a narrative that otherwise maintains the reliable tone of an objective, realistic report. The fantastic attributes given to characters—levitation, flight telepathy, telekinesis—are among the means that magic realism adopts in order to encompass the often phantasmagoria political realities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century" (Oxford Dictionary).

In postcolonial literature, the question of identity frequently arises. The nationalist movement addressed the concepts of blackness and negritude, which are evoked in *Midnight's Children*. *Midnight's Children* is a complicated novel that revolves around the story of Saleem Sinai. Saleem is the protagonist of the text. Saleem was born at midnight on August 15, 1947, at the time of partition and India's independence. A new nation was born in 1947, quite imaginary. Salman Rushdie depicts New India as "a new myth—a collective fiction in which anything was possible, a fable rivaled only by two other fantasies: money and God" (M. C150). The growth of a new-born infant, Saleem Sinai, is compared to that of New India. Saleem is encountered by several characters.

Rushdie accuses the nation as a whole, including the Prime Minister and other powerful individuals, of making mistakes and acting incorrectly after India's independence. "Guilt is a complex matter, for we are not all each of us in some sense responsible for—do we not get the leaders we deserve?" (MC 607). The novel is narrated by grown-up Saleem, who writes his unbelievable story before his death. In the beginning of the novel, the writer informs the reader that Saleem is handcuffed to Indian history. Saleem's remarkable fusion of political and biological nativity makes him the embodiment of Indian nationalism. Three blood drops released by the doctor are the metaphor of several streams. It resembles both the trunk of Lord Ganesh and the Quran's creation tale, which links drips of blood to the beginning of humankind. This incident reminds me of the 1919 massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. British soldiers stain the blood of Indians.

Salman Rushdie claims that the origin of the Indian nation is "an extra festival on the calendar, a new myth to celebrate... a country that would never exist except by the

efforts of a phenomenal collective will, except in a dream we all agreed to dream... India, the new myth—a collective fiction in which anything was possible—a fable rivaled only by the two other mighty fantasies—money and God" ( Abraham 1) .Saleem's life is tied to Indian history in an inseparable way. Salman Rushdie portrayed that even after India gained independence, the operations of the leaders were the same as under British rule.

Saleem explains that the widow sought to locate all of Midnight's offspring in order to castrate them and prevent them from procreating. Salman Rushdie portrays Indira Gandhi as having "hair parted in the Center of the snow White on one side and black as night on the other, depending on which profile. She presented herself; she resembled either a stoat or an ermine. Recurrence of the Center: Parting in History" ( MC 558). Rushdie writes that "the emergency had a black part as well as white." Imprisoning all of Midnight's children provides them with the with the opportunity to unite against Indira Gandhi. "Let widows do their worst; unity is invincibility! Children: We've won! ( MC 610) ." In the novel, partially through the perforated sheet, Dr. Adam Aziz initially encounters Naseem Ghani. It was not until the day of their marriage that Naseem revealed herself to Dr. Aziz. This is metaphorically significant since Dr. Aziz's limited vision of Naseem represents a partial history. Analogously, a perforated sheet filters the history that is provided to us as well. The day the world war ended coincided with Aziz's first meeting with Naseem. Ahmed and Amina Senai buy the home of William Methwold; this symbolizes the transfer of authority from an English to an Indian. On the same day that Ahmed and Amina Senai took ownership of the home, the British Raj gave India and Pakistan full sovereignty over the country. Even after gaining possession of the house, Amina Senai remains dissatisfied since she is unable to make any changes. This suggests that even in an independent country, a lot of the things that occurred during British control will still occur.

Saleem's life is a metaphor for India. When country splits into two, there is a rupture in Saleem's body: "I have begun to crack all over like an old jug that my poor body, singular, unlovely buffeted by too much history, subjected to drainage above and drainage below, mutilated by doers, brained by spittoons, has started coming apart at the seams." ( MC 260) . Saleem's private life is a continual reflection of the political unrest in India.

## V. CONCLUSION

History looks like a favourite subject of the Post colonial authors. The examination of nationalism and historical events in Midnight's Children and Train to

Pakistan reveals that both texts offer insightful analyses of the difficulties associated with forming an identity and survival against the turbulent background of India's Partition and independence. As Jawaharlal Nehru said, "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes which but rarely in History, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul at a nation long suppressed, finds utterance." ( Mondal 4). Both the novels portray the turbulent times of India history.

In *Midnight's Children* , Saleem becomes the metaphor for India. Novel is set in the post colonial period. Rushdie explores the hidden actions of political leaders after Independence. Rushdie depicts the problems an individual faces in forming an identity in Post colonial time. The Novel shows a complex story along with magic realism. Salman Rushdie links the dot between personal history and the larger historical narrative. The Protagonist shows the role of nation in forming the identity of an individual and it's consciousness.

On the other hand, *Train to Pakistan* is a brilliantly realistic story set in the background of India's partition. Khushwant Singh pictures life before and after the partition. The novel depicts the suffering of people in a tragic way. Religion becomes the region of conflict. The nation turned into a battlefield; everyone was killed, be it Hindu, Muslim, or Sikh. As Salman Rushdie writes, "Partition is a take of treachery, horror, and despair, and also one of courage, heroism, and ultimate triumph." ( Rushdie 44) . *Train to Pakistan* depicts the massacre and horror of the division of India and Pakistan.

Both novels depict the significance of history in forming the nation's direction. Both novels differ in their style and methodology, but both novels depict the trauma of colonialism and the division of the Indian Subcontinent and its effect on people.

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