South Asian Partition Fiction in English

From Khushwant Singh to Amitav Ghosh

Rituparna Roy

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

Contents

Ac	Acknowledgements	
Introduction		13
	Theories of partition – why/when/ironies	13
	Historiography of the Partition	18
	Representation in literature	20
	The IE Novel – Gandhian whirlwind/partition preoccupation/	
	Punjab bias	21
	The six novels studied in this book	24
	Novels not selected for study	28
	Filling up a lacuna	29
I	Partition: The Holocaust	33
	Iconic status of Train to Pakistan	33
	Symbolic significance of trains	35
	The five events of the narrative	37
	Flaws/Jugga, and Singh's redeeming vision	44
	Manohar Malgonkar's A Bend in the Ganges	47
	Malgonkar's fascination with history	48
	Double-hero/pluralistic method	49
	The Hindu-Muslim question	50
	Revolutionary terrorism vs. non-violence	53
	The failure of both ideologies	61
2	Women during the Partition: Victim and agent	63
	The Pakistani version of the partition	64
	The Partition in Bapsi Sidhwa's novels	66
	Ayah's Circle, Ice-candy man and Ayah's abduction	67
	Gurdaspur and Lahore	72
	'Recovery and rehabilitation' – Hamida and Ayah	74
	Lenny's awakening consciousness	78
	Agency to women	79
	Anita Desai's Clear Light of Day	80
	Desai stereotyped	80
	Critics on the novel	81
	Clear Light of Day as a Partition novel	82

	Bim enabled Desai's revisioning of the traditional Partition narrative	87 87
	Desars revisioning of the traditional Partition narrative	6/
3	The making of a nation: Religion or language?	89
-	Midnight's Children: A watershed	89
	Two aspects of the novel's representation of history	
	usually missed	91
	Freedom at midnight: The moment of birth	92
	Bombay-Karachi-Dhaka	98
	1971 Bangladesh Liberation War	101
	Rushdie and Ghosh	108
4	Imagined communities: Questioning the border	111
	Proust and the anti-Sikh riots	111
	Midnight's Children and The Shadow Lines	112
	Four ways to read the novel	112
	Of borders and lost histories	113
	The Shadow Lines and the aftermath of the Partition	114
	Why Tribib got killed in Jindabahar Lane	118
	Meaninglessness of borders – colonial and post-colonial	
	perspectives of the nation	122
	Imagined communities	124
	Warring critics, and an author in denial	126
	Ghosh's real antecedents	128
Conclusion		131
	Three factors determining the thrust of the narratives	132
	Interflows of images/motifs	135
Gl	Glossary	
No	Notes	
Bibliography		163
In	Index	