

Partition of India: a Boon or Curse, with special reference to Women Struggle in Deepa Mehta's Film *1947: Earth*

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Abstract: Nationalism in India had grown as a form of movement which was fought against British colonialism for independence and power. However, the views on the country's partition are ambivalent. Deepa Mehta, an Indo- Canadian film director and screenwriter has reflected the condition of India during the pre- partition and partition phase. The movie *1947: Earth* was released in 1998, reminding the bloodiest history of India. The religious sentiment has been played as a trump card by the British colonizers resulting to bloodshed among the common people. The decision of the colonizers to divide British India into two parts India and Pakistan has ended up with bloodshed, dislocation and boundaries. Therefore, the paper describes the partition scenario of India and its aftermath through the film "*1947: Earth*" by Deepa Mehta. It also reflects the condition of women who had to face two battles, one with the colonizers and the other with their own society. The theory of new historicism, feminism and Bhabha's theory of otherness are to be applied here. Along with all these, the paper will showcase the eminent role of women both as a victim and a powerful one during the time of partition.

Key words: Partition, violence, nationalism, women struggle, bump lickers, colonizers

Films and literature are like mirrors of society that depicts and narrates the society through various characters, plots, incidents, actions and climax. Films reflect the upheavals of the society, movements, the transforming culture and traditional values of the society. Unlike fictions, films take less time and effects the viewers with both the audio and video presentation that involve multiple viewers. There are many films that are based on novels and thus it helps to get at least a gist of the society and the surroundings within a short period of time. Therefore, films provide a visual image with a story and dialogues through characters and actions. The novels recreated as films can be lined in a single track through adaptation. Adaptation is found to be followed since the time of Shakespeare who has brought dramas from page to stage in the 1600s. Eventually, film adaptations also took place and are done for the first time by Georges Méliés. The films can be said as a source to display literature even to the layman.

The film *1947: Earth* was produced by Deepa Mehta. She is a Canadian- Indian filmmaker who has produced her trilogy of films *Fire*, *Earth* and *Water* that is related to India before its partition and aftermath. Mehta's interest in films grew up after her Master degree when one of her friends offer her a part- time job at the Cinematic Workshop. Being raised in India and residing in Canada she has to face the issue of identity crisis. In order to show her nationality towards her birth place she presents her films based on India. She presents the dark side of the country as an eye opener so that the stereotypical ideas can be rectified. Most importantly she has witnessed the aftermath of the traumatic history of India- the partition. The struggle of women during that time is witnessed by her but somehow, she feels that the role of women and their reference is hazy in the stories of partition struggle. The majority of sufferers were women during the violence of partition as they were slaughtered and dishonored. Inspired at the presentation of women in the works of Mehta, Stefania Basset in the article *The Dislocated Woman in Deepa Mehta and Meena Alexander's Works* mentions that in her films Mehta portrays "the female body, with the ways in which radical and traumatic displacements affect women, leaving permanent marks on their bodies" (Basset, 1). So, with this note she presents one of her controversial at the same time successful films *1947: Earth*. The film thus originates from her personal interest as her father was also one of those people who had migrated from one place to another during that period. The impact of the Radcliff line giving birth to two newly independent countries has remained at present too. Though independence came finally but it cost to the country's partition. It had been considered as a boon by a group of people at the beginning. But in real sense, after the spread of the news of partition it had caused a great amount of trauma and suffering to the common people. Mihika Sengupta in the article *Unsung Women in Partition Cinema: A Critical Analysis* mentioned that "The divide and rule policy and the distribution of power among the ruling classes led to the fracturing of communities. lives lost, families divided, people uprooted from their own land, communal killings, bloodshed, abduction and rape of women- the repercussions of partition were and are heart- wrenching" (Sengupta, 2). Thus, the partition stories reflect the dreadful experience in the refugee camps, mobs, protests, etc. Mehta's movie *1947: Earth* delineates not only the physical torture because of the decision of partition but also the psychological impacts of partition on people. Infact, the impact of partition on minorities and marginalized people is also shown in the movie. Therefore, by presenting the movie from Lenny's narration who was a Parsee indicate that though the Parsee community decided to remain neutral in the partition matter but during the mayhem of partition they were also affected indirectly.

The film *1947: Earth* is released in 1998 and casts Bollywood actor Amir Khan as Dil Nawaz, art- house actress Nandita Das as Shanta and Maia Sethna as Lenny. The film highlights the issues relating to the queries "why war is raged ..., why friends turn enemies, and why battles are invariably fought on women's bodies" (Mehta, 1999/2000). Mehta's films are controversial and challenging as she depicts the hegemony of the society directly in her films. Although Mehta later has accepted Canadian citizenship but her films are basically based on India and true Indian sensibility. Mehta was born and grew up in Amritsar, at the place next to the militarized border with Pakistan. She herself has witnessed the partition and the creation of two nations India and Pakistan. The intention of Mehta in presenting the film is to explore the separation and breaking apart of a diverse society with multi- culture and multi- language. She indeed tries to show the circumstances that

move the neighbors and friends to turn against one another. Through the movie *1947: Earth*, Mehta takes politics into its epic scale. She focuses here the havoc caused due to the partition of India affecting the lives of many individuals of both the divided nations. The chaos in the story is shown among the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Lahore. The basis of the film is adopted from the novel *Ice Candy Man* by Bapsi Sidhwa, a Pakistani American novelist. The novel is a semi- autobiographical piece where Sidhwa has expressed her past experience that has marked to be a great mark in the history of India before and after partition. Although there are a lot of dissimilarities with the novel in the film as it is not possible to assimilate all the facts and exaggerations of the novel within a film of two hours. Mehta focuses more in dramatic terms, setting and familial image within the large political and societal system. Sangita T. Ghodake in the article *Lenny's Initiation Into Life: Bapsi Sidhwa's 'Ice-Candy-Man' and Deepa Mehta's Movie '1947: Earth'* mentions that "The film *1947: Earth* covers the illustrations from the novel that depicts nationalism, religious riots, friendship, betrayal during the time of partition of British India" (Ghodake, 1). Mehta has highlighted the role of women in the film both as victim and as a powerful being whose voice remained unheard mostly. Mehta has presented the movie in the perspective of existentialism, social realism, feminism, cultural and cross- cultural encounter. The film executes full of emotional feelings mixed with innocence and violence. It takes the viewers back to the destruction of the country where all are once united but due to some catalysts and manipulations friends turned to foe. Getting independence from the British colonizers was the dream of every individual living in India. Nationalism is intact in every individual but it in a way the divide and rule policy make some leaders believe to be more effective. Hence, the film shows that how the place Lahore where the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are once friends has turned to be their soul enemies. The religious division is the worst thing happened during the time of partition for which the independence that has been gained after the struggle of almost one hundred years ended with death, rape and abandonment among the people of the same country. Thus, Mehta through the film explores the darkness behind the implementation of independence in India. Bilal Qureshi has perfectly said in the article *Elsewhere: The Discomforting Legacy of Deepa Mehta's Earth* that it is an intimate piece that ruptures and expands in stake as history intervenes (Qureshi, 79).

In the film *1947: Earth*, Mehta has very interestingly depicted the female characters as submissive one but having enough power to control her surroundings till the humanity exists among the people. The feeling of revenge, anger and hatred turns human beings to inhuman and like wild animals without having any mercy. In the film Shanta's character is found to have the power of controlling and resisting hatred among her friend circle till the time humanity exists in them. Mehta along with showing the women characters as a powerful one also has reflected the struggle of women during the time of partition of India. Thus, Subeshini Moodley in the work *Postcolonial feminisms speaking through an 'accented' cinema: the construction of Indian women in the films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta* attributes, "the refashioning of these women's identities assumes the form of rebellion, which in turn, is often manifested in the crossing of sexual frontiers through either inter-racial, inter- religious or pre- marital relationships (Moodley, 2). The hegemonic practices in the society are challenged by Mehta through the film especially for giving voice and expression to the unheard and untold voice of the women of both the nations- India and Pakistan. Through the movie she has visited to the most traumatic period of Indian history. She depicts here the changes of human behavior and relation due to communal riots and has also shown that how during the time of partition this religious clash has actually destroyed the calm and beauty of both the parted away nations. Rani Neutill in the study *Bending bodies, borders and desires in Bapsi Sidhwa's Cracking India and Deepa Mehta's Earth* mentions "Mehta's *Earth* stresses the violent reality of women's bodies as national metonyms" (Neutill, 74).

The film begins with Lenny describing her childhood in Lahore when she was only eight years old. In the book *Transnational Feminism and Global Advocacy in South Asia* Gita Rajan and Jigna Desai highlights Mehta's showcase of female gender stating "Mehta's translation of *Cracking India* into *Earth* not only flattens out the narrative by sticking to a predisposed Western narrative of the subjugation of Women in the Third World and the postcolonial feminist articulation of representing the ways in which nationalist movements particularly used women, it actually empties many of the characters of their actual *character*" (Ranjan and Desai, 84). The time was March of 1947 when the British Empire in India had started to collapse. From the very beginning of the film the division of the country into two nations- Pakistan and India is mentioned. Indeed it is highlighted that the division of the nation will scar its beauty forever. The Politics of British regarding the arbitrary line of boundary has created a massacre and, in the film, this has been presented since from the very beginning.

The film begins with Lenny breaking a plate and asked her mother if it was possible to break a country like she broke the plate. Lenny heard the topic from Shanta that indicates that Shanta is conscious about her surroundings and Lenny being a child has the potential to think about the stories she listens from Shanta. Lenny belongs from a Parsee family and so the family does not need to face any direct issue during that period. Their decision to remain neutral regarding the partition at times is not only dissatisfactory for Lenny's mother but for Lenny too. This is seen when in the film Lenny is found to be depressed and asking her mother regarding people's whisperings that says the Parsee are the bump lickers of the British. To this Lenny's mother replies very positively that while migrating from Persia to India, the Parsee promised that they would be like sugar "sweet but invisible". They are not bump lickers but mixes up with the color of whoever the rulers are because they are very less in the country and so they can't afford any loss. Regarding all this explanation Lenny gets the gist that the Parsees are not the bump lickers of the British but are actually invisible. This shows the intelligence of Lenny who cannot accept to be invisible and in a way throughout the whole film her participation in the entire scenario is found ardently. Lenny not only observes but also judges the things with her concern. The decision of the Parsee people to be neutral in the movement is also reflected to indicate their invisible and rare identity even in the contemporary society.

The scene then shifts to the Central park of Lahore where Shanta meets her admirers. The group consists of Hasan, the Malishwala, Dil Navaz or Ice Candy Man as called by Lenny, Tara Singh and many more. The unity in diversity that actually exists in the country among all before partition is shown by Mehta through this. But the parasite of partition and power can be understood to grow larger from their discussion. One of them says that Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Mountbatten are in good relation and supporting one another. To this Dil Nawaz responds with reluctance that then who will be supporting their leader Jinnah. Hence, the misunderstandings and communal differences is shown from this scene only to indicate about the following destruction to occur. However, at that time, Shanta resists the argument to grow more by showing her disappointment regarding the clash between Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs. Through Shanta, Mehta has shown that being a lady she has the power to stop aggression among her friends' circle at the same time has the ability to overpower them. On the other hand, the continuous enquiry of Lenny regarding their identity leads her mother to narrate a traditional story regarding the arrival of Parsees in India. Jay Wilder mentions in *Bapsi Sidhwa* that many years ago "an Indian prince sent Zoroastrian [Parsee] refugees fleeing from Islamic expansion a messenger with a glass of milk signifying that the Indian people were a united and homogenous mixture that should not be tampered with. In response, the Parsees dropped a lump of sugar into the milk, saying that they would blend in easily and make the culture sweeter. It followed that they were granted a home in India because Parsees neither proselytized nor entered into politics" (Wilder, 1998). So, she concludes that the Parsee people are like the same as they are very rare in British India. Moreover, they are like sugar in the milk whose presence is invisible but sweet to taste.

As the film proceeds, the difference between the Hindus and Muslims is seen in the group of Shanta when one of them insults regarding the Hindu pundit. Therefore, in order to depict the declining situation of women, Mehta presents a small scene of a little girl named Pappu. She is the daughter of one of the servants in Lenny's house and is almost of the same age of Lenny. Pappu's father arranges her marriage with a person more than double of her age and is also a Christian dwarf. Indeed, Pappu's father has also decided to convert to Christianity. The innocence of the girl can be seen when in Pappu's marriage she feels drowsy during her marriage while everybody is busy in singing songs and dancing. In order to determine the depth of innocence in contrast to the parents' helplessness, Mehta has picturized this section of the story where females are found to be the foremost to be in danger in any riots. However, the song sung at this point "Banno rani tu hai sayani, hona hi tha, hona hi tha" meaning the beautiful bride, you are wise and you need to be wise. The song reveals the situation of women who are considered to remain strong and wise. Strong in this case indicates mental strength not the physical one at the same time she needs to be wise in order to manage the household condition wisely. By the song Mehta has also glorified the power of women that needs to be cherished. She has presented the pathetic turn happens in Pappu's life who is ignorant of everything happening with her. Her parents also could not find any better way only to survive in the country in case any war or chaos occurs. Thus, Mehta presents through this small section in the film to reflect the society and the mental condition of people before the partition along with the condition of women whose struggle has begun even before the massive war in the name of her future protection.

Eventually the situation worsened as the partition has been announced and an abstract line has been made called as Radcliff line as the boundaries between the divided nations. The distance among the group of friends of Shanta is also seen when Sher Singh and Tota Ram is found to indulge with one of their friends belonging from the Muslim community, who rather has insulted regarding the Sikh Gods. In the later part of the film Mehta presents how a lot of refugees have entered from Amritsar to Lahore leaving their properties and belongings only to save their lives. Dil Nawaz tries to keep himself away from the fights between Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs but his patience breaks down when he finds his sisters chopped to death coming from Gurudaspur by train. The train was full of dead bodies and four full bags of women breasts are left in the train. The level of hatred, dishonor and violence can be understood through such image where the women were not only dishonored, tortured and raped but also killed like animals. Thus, women had to struggle in every aspect during that time. Both inside the house or outside the house it was them who suffered and Mehta has highlighted this side by recalling the past incidents through the film. Dil Nawaz turns to be a violent person whose anger gets controlled only when he remains in front of Shanta and so he proposes her to marry him. However, Shanta rejects his proposal as she loves Hasan and when Dil Nawaz gets to know this he becomes a totally different person who gets involved in the murder of many of his known friends and neighbors. Deepa Mehta, here has presented women as a different one who resists the social norm by presenting the character of Shanta who gets physically intimate with Hasan before marriage. This shows Mehta's voice against the patriarchy that cannot resist one's desire and the woman body is considered here as a powerful one that celebrates the love. Mehta has not presented Shanta to feel guilty because of her physical relationship with Hasan, rather have always glorified the beauty of her body throughout the film. Mehta, in order to focus only on the issues of women have reflected the situation of women who are either been raped or molested and for that reason are not accepted by their family back. As the incidents are narrated by Lenny so Mehta is very conscious regarding her approach on critical things. So, it seen that out of innocence Lenny says Adi to have a visit to their next door where the refugees are settled and are called as "Giri hui aurat" meaning fallen women and this has been said to her by Yousaf. Adi corrects her by saying that they are actually raped, though Lenny could not find out the meaning of the term. There they meet a boy who explains that when the Hindus attacked his village he was lying with the dead bodies and so he got saved but later he finds his mother hung fully naked with the ceiling fan of the village mosques. Thus, the violence and the denouncing of human behavior after the partition is seen in both the nations and in every case the women are targeted foremost. Mehta though through the survival of those abandoned women sends the message that after so much of torture and even after their abandonment from their family for whom they sacrifice their whole life still have the power to survive and lead their living. Some of the women are seen with their children in the refugee camp. This signifies their moral power and determination to protect their children.

The film ends with the pathetic death of Malish wala and the terrible betrayal of the Ice Candy Man. Hasan promises Shanta to move to Amritsar and then would tie knot with each other. But his soft nature is not been accepted even by his own community people and is killed mercilessly. Hari gets converted into Islam and Moti, the sweeper in Lenny's house converted to Christianity. The fire of revenge and hatred increased to such a level that Shanta is called by them as "Hindu Ayah". The cruelty exceeds to such a level that finally Shanta is taken away by the group of people who are led by Dil Nawaz. But in any situation Shanta never surrendered herself, she tried to fight back till her physical strength supports her. Thus, the film ends with a pathetic mode and violence that has destroyed the peace and beauty of the whole city. It has destroyed human relationships and has spread only death and separation. The exaggeration on women issues and their role during the period is an ideal fit for feminist explorations. Rani Neutill in the article *Bending bodies, borders and desires in Bapsi Sidhwa's Cracking India and Deepa Mehta's Earth* describes "Mehta does not fully represent women and men's bodies in their different forms of the agency the way that Sidhwa's novel does" (Neutill, 1). Indeed, she reflects multiple violence against women and stresses the violent reality of women's bodies.

Deepa Mehta projects her women characters especially Shanta and Lenny as a powerful being suggesting worthy ideas. Shanta's character is placed as a beautiful woman who is the focal point among her group of male friends with different religious believes in British India. She symbolizes the territory that is marked and divided and thus foregrounds an existing nationalistic discourse. Shanta experiences the love of a gentle personality named Hasan and also the love of an erratic and temperamental persona named Dil Nawaz. This refers her to have a power of attraction and control over the other. The depiction of her character also symbolizes India before partition for which people are fighting with one another. The same way, directly or indirectly Shanta's friends especially Hasan and Dil Nawaz are having a cold fight between them in the intention of owning her. Subeshini Moodley in the article *Postcolonial feminisms speaking through an 'accented' cinema: the construction of Indian women in the films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta* focuses that Shanta also has been seen to experience "the splitting of her being in the tension between these men" (Moodley, 98). In the film it is seen that as the peace of the country eventually leads to its destruction the same way Shanta's relationship with his friends lead to worsening. Mehta has depicted Shanta's character in such a powerful one that she has the power to control and so in the terrible situation of partition both Hasan and Dil Nawaz tries to tie knot with her to secure their future. Dil Nawaz admits to her that he can resist his animal like behavior and aggression in the communal riot only when Shanta remains near him. Hasan on the other hand decides to marry her by adopting her religion and taking her protectively to Amritsar. In both the cases, Shanta is seen to lead and both the male personalities are found to be dependent on her. Her bold and open friendship with her all male friends signifies her character to be stronger and challenging one. However, at the end of the film it is seen that due to Lenny's innocence Shanta has fallen as a prey into the hands of the communal riot groups. In this case she has been betrayed by Dil Nawaz who out of anger and revenge for not getting her shows his desperate intention of winning her. But till the end he could not gain her love and thus Mehta has shown the power of women and the purity of their soul that can never be destroyed. She shows that to overpower a women's body can be

possible but to win her heart is not possible till the time she permits for it. Shanta's body can be marked as the symbol of destruction indicating India during the phase of partition. Subeshini Moodley in the article *Postcolonial feminisms speaking through an 'accented'cinema: the construction of Indian women in the films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta* mentions that Shanta's capture can be related with the "violence, arising out of the strained political and religious relations of the country that is physically meted out on the bodies of women of the splitted nations" (Moodley, 100). In addition to all these, the name Shanta itself indicates shanti that means peace. The name is ironic in the sense as in the last part of the film it is on Shanta only where violence has occurred.

Another female character depicted with importance in the film is Lenny. Though she is a child of eight years but she has a great power of observation and analysis. Lenny is affected by polio and so is a lame of one leg but throughout the whole film she is never shown to be bothered with her leg. Rather she is the one who witnesses every activity of the characters, that is, the main information source. She is presented with great mental strength and confidence. Her sense of nationalism is also seen on her queries to her mother that if Parsees are the bump lickers of the British or if they are invisible. Her strong judgmental capability is also shown by Mehta when she requests her father along with her mother to stop Pappu's marriage at that tender age. Despite her younger age Lenny's character is presented by Mehta to be a strong one with her individual view point. However, depending on her age Mehta has not left to depict her as an innocent one who can be manipulated very soon. That is the reason that the Dil Nawaz could convince her to know about the hidden place of Shanta in the last section of the film. Hero worshipping is one the characteristics of childhood to adolescence period and this is seen in Lenny also who calls the Ice Candy Man as her hero. Thus, Subeshini Moodley in the article *Postcolonial feminisms speaking through an 'accented'cinema: the construction of Indian women in the films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta* highlights that Lenny can be said as "quite observant, intuitive and insightful being very attuned to the undertones of the anxiety that overwhelms the adults around her" (Moodley, 101). Later when she witnesses the killing of a Muslim person by the Hindu group after partition Lenny could not get a proper sleep. To feel the pathetic situation, she even has splitted her doll to see how it can cause pain to an individual. Finally, she cannot remove the scar of guilt from her as out of innocence and blind trust she has handed over Shanta to the communal riot. She finally realizes that the war is not only about land and properties but also about people going away from one another. Thus, through Lenny, Mehta has presented another female character who despite her young age is seen to have enough capability to judge and analyze things. Lenny's mistakes are to justify her immature age. Showkat Hussain Dar in the study *Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice Candy Man: A Feminist Perspective* describes that it is Lenny "who relates the horrors of violence and her personal observation and reactions. She not only observes but analyses man's lascivious and degrading attentions towards women" (Dar, 1).

The film infact highlights the theme of the partition that has always intrigued the filmmakers. The main aim of producing that scenario is to render the tragic events of the time according to the filmmakers' cinematic version. However, the circumstances of partition period and the harsh and haunting memory of the violence highlight basically the torture done towards the female gender. The psychological impact is described in an international journal by Nutan Garg in an article *Conceptualising the Holocaust of Partition: A Non- Partisan Perspective* that "the time preceding this trauma of partition and the rootlessness which its aftermath had created put a lot of psychological impact on the people who survived it" (Garg, 345). This is seen in the film *1947: Earth* when the conversation regarding the political leaders in the movie is found to be turning towards hatred and explosion. The group of friends of Shanta is the mixture of people belonging from various religions like Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Parsee. But whenever the discussion regarding partition arises from the beginning of the movie, the growing aggression among the group against the other religion is found to be increasing. In the first few minutes of the film Mehta presents the conversation between Hari, the gardener and the caretaker of Lenny's house. Hari says that flowers should not be cut at night as the trees sleep at that time. But the caretaker laughs and replies Hari that it is better to cut the flowers at while sleeping as that won't feel the pain then. The flowers in the scene symbolize people and cutting the flowers while sleeping signifies the violence that lead to bloodshed. In the first half of the movie, the scene that presents the dinner table discussion at Lenny's house reverberate the concept of marginalization by the colonizers towards the colonized country and its people. The partition politics is also hinted here when Mr. Rogers challenges about the coming misbalance of the country among its people. The reference of being affected by syphilis in the story narrated by Lenny's father symbolizes that until the British came there had been no syphilis. That means the British spread that disease in the country. The scenario indicated the British policy of the partition and separating the country and creating religious differences among its own people. Mr. Rogers also added that if the British quit India then Hindu, Muslim and Sikh would fight among themselves for power. These indicated how the colonizers had bowed the seed of hatred and separation through the divide and rule policy in the country. Eventually, after the partition the train full of dead bodies and bags full of women's breasts showcase the inhuman activity of people. The religious hegemony had grown in its extreme form. The common men thought that the partition could bring more freedom along with power but at last, it ended with bloodshed, loss of property and migration. Therefore, the film *1947: Earth* exposes the tug of war for power in the country leading to a massacre among the citizens. The situation has been perfectly referred by Mihika Sengupta in the research paper *Unsung Women in Partition Cinema: A Critical Analysis* that "the journey from the undisturbed protection of their homes to the refugee camps has been a dreadful experience. Partition led to migration and massacre in innumerable numbers" (Sengupta, 3).

The theory of new historicism is found to be applied in the film by Mehta. New historicism is a form of literary theory that helps to understand the historical facts and incidents through literature and the cultural context included in it. The application of new historicism in the literary work acknowledges the time of both the author and the readers response that is influenced by the present environment and believes of the reader. As the film *1947: Earth* is based on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice Candy Man*, so the influence of new historicism is perfectly found in the film. Mehta has presented the film 1998 depicting the traumatic history of India. The presentation of the film and the characters are based on her perspective and depicted the whole partition scenario with modern use of technology. Describing openly the sexual affairs depict the film to be based on modern ideas. Moreover, in order to show the impact with modern analysis she has given more importance to the female characters in the film only to highlight their role in the society that is prominent in the past indeed. Thus, the theory of new historicism can be said to be applied here properly as it represents the historic description of India with its prevailing believes along with the depiction of modern look out to the earlier believes and prejudices.

The feminist theory is also found to be applied in the work. The feminist theory focuses most importantly on gender inequality and explores the themes like discrimination, oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, etc. Deepa Mehta through the film is found to highlight the feminist perspective by reflecting dominance and negligence of women. In this perspective, Bunty, Lenny's mother is seemed to be always indulged in household works. She has enough capability as she is seen to drive car and sharing ideas regarding business in the film. But her involvement in the business affairs is never shown, at the same time her repetitive disappointment towards her husband regarding the decision to remain neutral during the partition of India remains unheard by her husband, Rustom. Through her character Mehta has shown her feminist perspective that depicts the inequality existing in the society, thus demanding for the uprising of feminism. Again, Mehta has indicated the feminist perspective through Shanta who gets engaged sexually with Hasan negating the societal norms. In the beginning

indeed it is seen that Shanta enjoys to be flattered by her male friends and passes time with them in park or by having bicycle ride. This shows her different and challenging attitude towards the society that demands women to be shy and to remain within the four boundaries of the room. Shanta is found in the film as an independent woman who takes her life's decision by herself. She is a working lady who works as nanny in the house of Lenny and thus earns by herself. She represents the idea of women empowerment. Even at the end indeed the Ice Candy Man could not get her love although she has been taken away by the communal riots. Showkat Hussain Dar in the study *Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice Candy Man: A Feminist Perspective* attributes that Lenny as a narrator is found to recognize "the multifaceted trauma women had faced during the unsettling and devastating days of partition" (Dar, 4). In addition, Lenny's growing interest towards her opposite gender and her closeness with her cousin named Adi also breaks the traditional concept of girl. Lenny kisses Adi and even enjoys watching Shanta getting closer and spending time with Malish wala and Ice Candy Man reflects her breaking the ideas of traditional women who are considered to remain at home and learning only the household works.

Bhabha's concept of 'otherness' is found through the film in two aspects. In one case the idea of 'otherness' is found through the British who considers the colonized people to be other and in the other case among the colonized people the female gender is found to be considered as the 'other' by the patriarchal society. Mr. Rogers statement regarding the people of India as 'bloody Indians', 'fools' represent the concept of dominance and 'otherness'. It represents the notion of the colonizers towards its ruling country. Again, among the colonized people when Yousaf regards the refugee women as "giri hui aurat" that is, fallen women depicts the negligence of women's dignity in the society. Pappu's marriage with an old dwarf without letting her consent even without having any consent of her mother represents marginalization of female gender in the society.

Through the film, Mehta has clearly shown how women have to bear the pain of 'otherness' in both the sides- one from the colonizers and the other from the patriarchal society. Mehta has not left to indicate the idea of diaspora through the film. It is well said by Hamid Naficy in the article *An accented cinema: exilic and diasporic filmmaking* that "while exile can be characterized by duality and binarism, diaspora can be characterized by plurality, multiplicity and hybridity" (Naficy, 14). Hence, being a diasporic writer and producer, Mehta has represented the conflict of identity through the queries of Lenny. Mehta herself having a Canadian citizenship at present produces her most of the films based on India in order to keep her connected with her birth place. All these reflect her diasporic view that she has presented through the film by reflecting the Parsee family in the most important history of India.

Hence, to sum up, in the perspective of Dorothy Barenscott through the article *This is our Holocaust": Deepa Mehta's Earth and the Question of Partition Trauma*, it can be agreed that "Set in Lahore during the summer of 1947, *Earth* explores how the peaceful existence of one group of Hindu, Sikh, Parsee and Muslim friends is shattered with the impending partition of India" (Barenscott, 61). The film can be regarded as an experience of trauma, memory and history for both the divided nations. Narrating the story through a person belonging from other community despite Hindu, Muslim or Sikh provides the perfect witness to the historic upheaval. Again, selecting a female narrator regarding the whole traumatic history represents the power of female to speak and describe things according to her own perspective that is not been manipulated or controlled by anybody. In addition, Dorothy Barenscott through the article *This is our Holocaust": Deepa Mehta's Earth and the Question of Partition Trauma* also added that "this movie also troubles simple binaries between memory and history, and pronouncements of the end of the nation and its attendant national history, such as those made by Nora" (Barenscott, 66). *1947: Earth* can be said as a production of panoramic picture presented with melodramatic construction with domestic and societal images. Moreover, Sangita Ghodake describes in the article *Lenny's Initiation Into Life: Bapsi Sidhwa's Ice-Candy-Man and Deepa Mehta's Movie 1947: Earth* that the choice of the title stands for the "natural phenomenon of the almighty and the manmade interruption to it through horror of partition" (Ghodake, 67). The defeat of good virtues among the people indicates the deterioration of human society from civilization to barbarism. The film can be said as a reminder of a peaceful civilization that gets cracked and disturbed by certain pressures. Though the women had to bear physical and psychological torture but in the patriarchal society women sacrifices are rarely exaggerated. Hence, Mehta through the film has primarily reflected women's role and their struggle in the traumatic history of the nation. Subeshini Moodley through the article *Postcolonial feminisms speaking through an 'accented' cinema: the construction of Indian women in the films of Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta* states that Mehta's film "rebels against their oppression through the exploration of their [women] sexualities and the reclaiming of their bodies" (Moodley, 23). In order to depict the parasitic deterioration of the people out of certain political manipulation and the urge for power, Mehta shifts the focus away from the leaders and rallies to a small group of friends consisting of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh community that eventually parts away due to the communal hegemony. The film can be regarded as an historical drama referring the remarkable history of India that is glorified in one side because of its independence from British colonialism but on the other side depicts full of grief, sorrow and bloodshed. Moreover, Mihika Sengupta in the article *Unsung Women in Partition Cinema: A Critical Analysis* explains that "It is only through the written works of literature and the cinematic representation of/on the partition that we, their successors or the next generation of people can understand and re-live the sufferings and loss of family, life, belongings that took place during the unfortunate event" (Sengupta, 15). In this sense, Mehta's creation of the film and decorating it according to her perspective is praiseworthy and very efficient. However, the pathetic dishonor of women was prominent but their voices are never heard due to the societal dominance that judge the women not by their soul but by the purity of their body. So, the women struggle during partition was hardly discussed. Hence, Mehta has highlighted more on this aspect of the partition struggle and tries to increase the volume of those unheard sacrifices during the traumatic history. The independence of India along with its partition and creation of two new countries as India and Pakistan was though celebrated but actually left the scars of betrayal, torture, suffering, abandonment, violence, migration and enmity.

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