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Holocaust and Partition: A Celluloid Test for History

A Thesis
Submitted for the Award of the Ph.D. Degree of
PACIFIC ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
PACIFIC ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
Udaipur
2016

"Holocaust and Partition: A Celluloid Test for History"
"होलोकॉस्ट और विभाजन: सिनेमा में इतिहास का निरूपण"

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CERTIFICATE

It gives me immense pleasure in certifying that the thesis entitled **"Holocaust and Partition: A Celluloid Test for History"** and submitted by **Ms. Vidushi B. Choksi** is based on the research work carried out under my guidance. She has completed the following requirements as per Ph.D. regulations of the University:

(i) Course work as per the University rules
(ii) Residential requirements of the University
(iii) Regularly submitted Half Yearly Progress Report
(iv) Published minimum of two research papers in a referred research journal. I recommend the submission of thesis.

Date: 04/10/2016

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DECLARATION

I, Ms. **Vidushi Choksi**, D/o **Shri Bhavesh Choksi**, the resident of 51, Pratishtha Awas, Sarelawadi, Ghod Dod Road, Surat (Gujarat) 395001 hereby declare that the research work incorporated in the present thesis entitled **"Holocaust and Partition: A Celluloid Test for History"** is my own work and is original. This work (in part or in full) has not been submitted to any University for the award of a Degree or a Diploma. I have properly acknowledged the material collected from secondary sources wherever required. I solely own the responsibility for the originality of the entire content.

Date: 04/10/2016 **Signature of the Candidate**

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Place: Surat **(Vidushi B. Choksi)**

CONTENT

CHAPTER – 1
Introduction

1.1 History and Cinema – Interdisciplinarity

History and Cinema as major disciplines of knowledge and study share a complementary yet an intricate relationship. "History" is a Greek word, which means enquiry, research, exploration or information. The Greeks were the earliest to define History. It was Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who gave us the idea that History is philosophy teaching by examples. Aristotle further suggests that history is an account of the unchanging past in the sense that human nature does not change, and that all activities that originate with the same intentions and motives differ only in the degree of details and not in their basic nature. Polybius and Thucydides think 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. Professor Findlay's view that, 'History is any sequence of events traced in their relations' introduces the new element that past events must be judged in their correct perspective. Professor Maitland has further improved our knowledge by saying, 'What men have done and said, above all what they have thought-that is History'. Renier has a new dimension to add when he says that history is the story of men living in societies. Lord Acton gave a different twist to history when he said, 'History is the unfolding story of Human freedom'. Turgot and Condorcet developed the idea of progress, a concept that heralded the dawn of true history, bringing unity and synthesis to history. But the most significant definition among all the Western scholars is that of Ernest Bernheim, who says, 'History is a science that investigates and presents in their context of psycho-physical causality the facts determined by space and time of the evolution of men in their individual, typical and collective activity as social beings'. This definition has touched on all fundamental activities of historical pursuit. It is a science because it embodies

systematized knowledge based on realities of life and about occurrences and happenings that have actually taken place, and not based on myth or imagination. (Collingwood, 1978)

Cinema as a document reveals something about the time in which it was made and released – it is also important to recognize that films often attempt to take on the role of the historian. As per Hayden White's suggestion that the work of the historian is not far removed from that of the story teller, then films – particularly those that adhere to principles of realism and verisimilitude – would appear to have the potential to be exemplary histories, promising and unrivalled ability to bring the past to life in a way that written histories cannot. However, there are problems with this simplistic view of the movies. Certainly, there is a strong case to be made for acknowledging the important role movies have played in creating and informing common understandings of history. Paul B. Weinstein summarizes the issue succinctly: 'think about which has made a greater impression on the mass consciousness, myriad scholarly studies of the Normandy invasion or Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*?' (2001) But does the fact that movies represent a more popularly accessible route to narratives about the past mean that we should grant the same status – as a form of valid knowledge about the past – to feature cinema as to scholarly written histories? One response to this question is to point out that, despite the widespread assumption that these supposedly rigorous, written histories possess greater objectivity than feature films, these histories are also the product of human agency and so are equally susceptible to distortion. However, the political perspective of the historian may be only one of several factors that can lead to a less-than-rigorous treatment of 'factual' data in all histories. The often tenuous relation between 'hard facts' and the historical narratives that are developed around them may be an effect of what Fredric Jameson has observed about history; that although history itself is not a text or a narrative it is something that is never encountered in unmediated form, and certainly not in a form that is immune to the influence of political ideologies.

Hayden White adopts a similar stance in his consideration of the relationship between 'facts' and the narratives woven around them. He makes a compelling argument that the historian's role is about more than simply recording chronological sequences of events:

> The events must be not only registered within the chronological framework of their original occurrence but *narrated* as well, that is to say, revealed as possessing a structure, an order of meaning, that they do not possess as a mere sequence.

And the process of providing this 'order of meaning' to the raw facts of history is one that inevitably possesses a political or ideological dimension.

Whether historical discourse is given material form in film or writing it is essential to acknowledge the role played by the historian in the construction of historical knowledge as he/she transforms the fragmented and de-contextualized events that we regard as the 'facts' of history into a meaningful narrative form. While both written and filmed histories are, therefore, inevitably susceptible to inaccuracies and outright distortion, it must also be remembered that feature films are created within a matrix of competing pressures – including the desire to be faithful to historical fact, as well as narrative considerations, economic pressures, genre conventions, political and regulatory pressures and so on – that may increase their vulnerability to historical inaccuracies when compared to scholarly written histories.

Notwithstanding the fact that these debates about the validity of feature films as a medium for rendering histories still continues, there remains considerable interest among the cinema-going public in films based on historical subjects as the success of films such as *Jodha Akbar* demonstrates. The disparity in popular influence between the two forms signals a continuing need to engage seriously with the historical film and to advance our understanding through constructive debate about the problems associated with this mode of

history-writing with film. The field of film and cinema history is complicated, and includes the technical, economic, aesthetic, and social dimensions of films, the biographies of filmmakers and also the 'history writing' role of certain films. (Gant, 2008)

Cinema has always played a momentous role in giving voice to the existential concerns and dilemmas of common people, tried and perplexed in our tragi-comic postmodern world. Films are cultural artefacts created by specific cultures, which reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment and a powerful medium for educating — or indoctrinating — citizens. The visual elements of cinema give motion pictures a universal power of communication. Classic cinema has invariably proved its worth by exercising a formative influence on the psyche of cine-goers. It has effectively tried to mobilize the sensitivity and sensibility of cine-goers. Classic cinema, like classic literature, incorporates a polyphonic narrative, that is to say, it projects reality from a multi-dimensional perspective. It does not merely invite us to enter a realm of enchantment and entertainment but also bring us face-to-face with the gruesome realities of ever-changing life. However, the commitment of cinema becomes doubly strengthened when it comes to projecting some of the most disturbing and controversial historical events. Such potentially dangerous historical events have unleashed a destructive wave of communalism, hooliganism, jingoism, violence, war, inhuman atrocities etc. Cinema, thus, plays a pivotal role in representing such unprecedented historical events authentically and objectively. Two of such committed cinemas that intend to re-create and represent Holocaust and India's Partition and its horrendous consequences are undoubtedly 'Holocaust Cinema' and 'Partition Cinema'.

One may come across certain perennial issues central to the making of Holocaust and Partition Cinema like –

1. How far cinema succeeds in recreating such untranslatable traumatic events like Holocaust and Partition?
2. To what extent cinema can give voice to erstwhile marginalized and oppressed subalterns or victims of Holocaust and Partition?
3. How far cinema succeeds in maintaining a concord between the empirical documentation of Holocaust and Partition and their aesthetic representation?

Mass murder is not a modern invention. History is fraught with communal and sectarian enmities, always mutually damaging and potentially destructive, often erupting into overt violence, sometimes leading to massacre, and in some cases, resulting in extermination of whole populations and cultures.

The term “Holocaust” (30 January 1933 – 22 November 1945) is derived from the Greek word ‘holókauston’, an animal sacrifice offered to the God in which the whole (‘holos’) animal is completely burnt (‘kaustos’). For hundreds of years, the word "holocaust" was used in English to denote great massacres, but since the 1960s, the term has come to be used by scholars and popular writers to refer exclusively to the genocide of Jews. The biblical word “Shoah” meaning "calamity" became the standard Hebrew term for the Holocaust as early as the 1940s, especially in Europe and Israel. The Nazis used a euphemistic phrase, the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" and the phrase "Final Solution" has been widely used as a term for the genocide of the Jews subsequently. Nazis also used the euphemism, *Leben unwertes Leben* or “Life unworthy of life” in an attempt to justify the killings philosophically.

The Holocaust was the genocide of approximately six million European Jews during World War II, a pogrom of systematic state-sponsored murder by Nazi Germany, led by Adolf Hitler, throughout Nazi-occupied territory. Of the nine million Jews who had resided in Europe before the Holocaust, approximately two-thirds perished. In particular, over one

million Jewish children were killed in the Holocaust, as were approximately two million Jewish women and three million Jewish men. Some scholars maintain that the definition of the Holocaust should also include the Nazis' genocide of millions of people in other groups, including Romani (more commonly known in English by the exonym "Gypsies"), Sinti, Soviet prisoners of war, Polish and Soviet civilians, homosexuals, people with disabilities, Jehovah's Witnesses and other political and religious opponents, which occurred regardless of whether they were of German or non-German ethnic origin. Using this definition, the total number of Holocaust victims is between 11 million and 17 million people.

The persecution and genocide were carried out in stages. Various legislations like removing the Jews from civil society, predominantly the Nuremberg Laws, was enacted in Nazi Germany years before the outbreak of World War II. Concentration camps were established in which inmates were used as slave labour until they died of exhaustion or disease. Where the Third Reich conquered new territory in Eastern Europe, specialized units murdered Jews and political opponents in mass shootings. The Third Reich required Jews and Romani to be confined in overcrowded ghettos before being transported by freight train to extermination camps where, if they survived the journey, the majority of them were systematically killed in gas chambers. Significant historical evidence points to the idea that the vast majority of Holocaust victims, prior to their deportation to concentration camps, were either unaware of the fate that awaited them, or were in disbelief of the information that they had received; they honestly believed that they were to be re-settled.

The Holocaust is a systematic, purposeful, non-emotional cold-blooded murder of people. Up to six million Jews were murdered wholesale not for what any of them had done but for how they had all been classified. The term' Genocide' was coined by Rafael Lemkin in his 1944 book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. The word 'Genocide' is derived from the Greek word 'Genos' which means 'of a natural group or tribe' and Latin word 'Cide' which

means ‘murder’. Nazi Genocide didn’t take place in a vacuum. Genocide was only the most radical method of excluding groups of human beings from the German national community.

In Asian Sub-continent, the end of the British Raj led to the birth of two sovereign nation-states: on August 14, Pakistan came into existence; the next day, India was born. This truncation, referred to as the Partition was a bloody and protracted affair, coming as it did at the end of intense political bickering and parlaying. The event played itself out over a year: roughly a million people were butchered in murderous riots that broke out all over a volatile northern India; as huge masses of terrorized people fled in search of security, 10 to 12 million lost their homes and became hapless refugees. Partition, as the underside of independence, remains a festering wound in the collective psyche of South Asia. So, if Partition history occupies the status of a collective trauma in the psycho-biography of the nation, then Partition cinema and literature are repositories of acts of cultural mourning.

The Partition of India was the Partition of British India on the basis of religious demographics that led to the creation on 15 August 1947 of the sovereign states of the Dominion of Pakistan (later the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the People's Republic of Bangladesh) and the Union of India (later Republic of India). The partition was promulgated in the Indian Independence Act 1947 and resulted in the dissolution of the British Indian Empire. The struggle between the new dominions of India and Pakistan which resulted from the partition displaced up to 12.5 million people in the former British Indian Empire, with estimates of loss of life varying from several hundred thousand to a million. The violent nature of the partition created an atmosphere of mutual hostility and suspicion between India and Pakistan that plagues their relationship to this day. Massive population exchanges occurred between the two newly-formed states in the months immediately following Partition. Once the lines were established, about 14.5 million people crossed the borders to what they hoped was the relative safety of religious majority. Nobody knows how many were

killed during Partition violence. Nobody knows how many were exactly displaced and dispossessed. What we know is that between 1946 and 1951, nearly nine million Hindus and Sikhs came to India, and about six million Muslims went to Pakistan. Estimates of death vary between two and three million.

However, it is worth reiterating that the 'heroes' in the Partition stories are not the rapists, the abductors, the arsonists, the murderers and the perpetrators of violence, but the men and women – living and dead – who provide the healing touch. The silver lining is that it is they who emerge as the beacon of hope in riot-torn cities; and it is their exemplary courage, counterpoised to the inhumanity of killers, that is celebrated precisely in the best of Partition literature and Cinema.

1.2 History through the Lens of Cinema

"The Camera is so refined that it makes it possible for us to shed light on the human soul, to reveal it the more brutally and thereby add to our knowledge new dimensions of the 'real'."

- Ingmar Bergman in "New York Times", 22 January 1978

The Polish cinematographer Boleslaw Matuszewski who worked with the famous film pioneers, the Lumiere brothers during the 1890s published a little booklet *Une nouvelle source de l'histoire (The New Source of History)* in the year 1898. In this text, he suggested that film could offer not only a source for historical research but a suitable medium for historical narration as well.

Since the beginnings of dramatic film, narrativization of past events has been one of the most productive areas of film-making. Historical films have been made since the first years of motion pictures. The Edison Manufacturing Company, for example, shot several historical *tableaux vivants* (French word meaning "living picture"), including *Joan of* Arc (1895) and *The Execution of Mary, Queen of Scots* (1895). (Musser, 1990) We may even

argue that historical narration has accompanied many of the essential turning points of film history.

The professionals of historical writing, historians, have traditionally seen historical films as competitors, enemies that shape visions of history without any limits, and who have an enormous and unpredictable influence on the public. Between 1926 and 1934, historians often discussed film in the meetings of the International Congress of the Historical Sciences. This interest went so far that an International Iconographical Commission was established to deal with the problems of collecting film material for historical purposes. According to the Commission, historically interesting films were those "which record a person or period from the time after the invention of cinematography and without dramaturgical or 'artistic' proposes those films which present visual record of a definite event, person or locality, and which presuppose a clearly recognizable historical interest inherent in the subject matter." (Aldgate, 1979) As we can see, the historians of those days were not in the least interested in the feature film – and not ready to talk about historical films which were, to their minds, only dramatized, untrue fictions.

Not only the historians of 20s or 30s but also their successors even today have deemed that the only films of serious historical interest are documentaries, actuality films, newsreels, and other visual versions of newspapers. Film doesn't tell us only about the object of the cinematographer but it can tell us about the narrator of the film as well. Feature films, such as historical films, can give us information about the opinions and mentalities, ideas and visions, of that person – or of that culture – that has produced them.

The division of films into fiction films and documentaries should not be a matter of judging them as true or untrue, nor as a matter of dividing them into reliable or unreliable sources. Such divisions should be forgotten.

Fiction films, in short, can have validity for the historian's work. Audio-visual historical narratives are especially interesting because they are so much a part of our everyday historical environment. History exists as both memories and fiction. Of course, there can be different kinds of historical narratives, historical documentaries, historical films, and costume dramas.

To the question, what is a historical film? One may say that it is one of the categories of film-making, a film genre. We are used to characterizing films with such labels. There are gangster movies, musicals, horror films, westerns, science fiction films – and historical films. These genres are, in a way, strategies of the cultural existence of cinema; they are patterns of production and reception. Film scholars have often stated that there are no common criteria for such genres. Every genre has criteria of its own. For example, western movies have a typical arsenal of iconographic elements; they need hats and revolvers, saloons and open prairie scenery to be westerns. Musicals, by contrast, do not need such iconography. A certain mode of speech, the cinematic discourse (style) and the centrality of music are enough. Historical films differ from other film genres because they do not necessarily need certain iconographic elements, narrative structures, or basic themes. It is enough that the film is located in the past and that it displays its historicity.

In her book *British Genres. Cinema and Society 1930-1960* (1991), American film scholar Marcia Landy has pointed out that there actually can be some common themes in historical films. According to Landy, historical film has been a genre through which national film cultures have spoken to their national audiences. They have chosen their themes from national mythology, national identity, famous events of a nation's history, including the lives of great men and women, rulers and national heroes. (Landy, 1991) Many films have attempted to handle all of these national aspects, problems and even traumatic moments of national history.

Historical film is bound to represent some real historical events or characters. In his book *The Film in History*, the French film scholar and sociologist Pierre Sorlin argues, like Landy, that historical costumes, props and settings are not enough to point out the historicity of a specific film. According to Sorlin, this historicity can be shown by giving exact dates, e.g. through introducing titles or through a narrative voice-over. In addition to this, historical films can show their historicity by referring to common historical knowledge. (Sorlin, 1980) In other words, they reconstruct such events or show such persons that are known by the public. This common cultural inheritance seems to be a typical method in those historical films which draw their essence from the national history.

According to Jean Gili, the French film historian, there are three types of historical films – **1)** films that present real, historical persons in a real, historical context, **2)** films that show fictitious characters in a certain precise historical context and **3)** costume dramas that describe fictitious protagonists in an uncertain, imprecise historical context. In the first two alternatives, the starting point is a concrete historical situation.

Sorlin has stated that it is typical of historical films that they only describe the past in a linear way: historical films do not pose questions. (Sorlin, 1980) This is not quite true. Historical film can formulate questions even though it does not do that very often. For a historical film it is essential to have certain signs of historicity which prove the audience that it is really a matter of a historical reconstruction. But the reception of historical films is not a simple process of decoding signs of historicity.

It is easy to recognize a historical film when we deal with ancient spectacles and other epics. But how can we separate, for example, a historical film located in the 1940s from a film that is made during the 40s and tells a story of its own age? Is this not a problem? It might be possible to receive these films in the same way, but there is an important difference between the two. Historical film is a historical narrative; a presentation of a certain past event

or process. It is, therefore, a presentation of an object, to which the narrative itself does not belong. A film produced during the 40s can, perhaps, look like a historical narrative because it is a narrative from the past, but it is not a historical film in the same sense because it is an organic part of the history it is narrating. A historical film is a narrative presentation of past events, while a film from the past is only a source that tells us something of that past. We may say that both films tell us something but the nature of this telling is different. This confusion between the source-dimension and the narrative-dimension could perhaps be clarified by two heuristic concepts. The German historian, J.G. Droysen, wrote in his book, *Historik*, that sources can always be divided into 'Tradition' and 'Überreste', into tradition and artefacts. The film of the 40s is an artefact in its relationship to the 40s, and it should be used by historians as an artefact. The historical film located in the 40s, however, is a traditional source -if we want it to tell us something about the 40s, it is only a secondary source in its relationship to the 40s. We might, naturally, use it also as a primary source, in order to tell us something about how the 40s was seen later. Of course, a historical film is also an artefact. Whether this has meaning or not, depends on our perspective.

A film can also be interpreted as an allegory although it may never be intended to have such an implication. Let us ponder the case of the Richard Attenborough film, *Gandhi*, shown in Prague in Spring 1988. This film deals with the Indian struggle against the British colonial empire. In Prague, Gandhi was very popular. The local audience interpreted the struggles of the Indians in terms of their own political experience: the events in *Gandhi* were seen as an allegory of the struggle of the Czechoslovaks against the socialist regime and the political control of the Soviet Union, although the director, Richard Attenborough, can scarcely have had such implications in mind. Gandhi may be located both temporally and spatially far away from Czechoslovakia, but an allegorical interpretation gave it immediate

contemporary relevance. This example shows that the historical context of viewing should always be kept in mind. (Salmi, 1995)

History, we must remember, is organized, constructed and reconstructed in cultural products. We produce history for ourselves, not only in the form of monographs and dissertations but also in novels and films, advertisements and TV series. History is so important that it cannot be wholly left to the control of professional historians. (Ferro, 1988) Literature has a longer tradition than cinema in the formation of historical imagery, but we can surely find similar examples from the history of film.

It has sometimes been argued that academic historical research is superior to historical fiction because it does not only present some states of things in the past but can also assert something that makes it too distinct from other historical interpretations. This argument is absurd. There are at least 20 films having Emperor Nero as central character. (Solomon, 1978) The characterizations differ much from film to film, from a misunderstood poet to a merciless tyrant, from a child-like lunatic to a sexual pervert. The films certainly make assertions - but the difference from scholarly writing lies in the fact that we, as recipients, cannot know for sure which statements are presentations of historical knowledge and which statements are assertions of the film-makers. This problem confronts us always when we examine historical fiction: where is the boundary between knowledge based on research and that based on the film-makers interpretation or, let me say, imagination?

In spite of these ‘buts’, we cannot deny that films as historical narratives can articulate meaningful historical interpretations, sometimes even such interpretations that have not yet been written by professional historians. Historians say sometimes that novelists and film-makers have too much imagination to be able to write a correct work of history. We could, perhaps, put this vice versa: Historians do not always seem to have enough

imagination to represent all those choices that went into creating the flow of the past events. (Salmi, 1995)

Historical films trouble and disturb (most) professional historians. Why? We all know the obvious answers. Because, historians will say, films are inaccurate. They distort the past. They fictionalize, trivialize, and romanticize important people, events, and movements. They falsify History.

Film is out of the control of historians. Film shows that academics do not own the past. Film creates a historical world with which the written word cannot compete, at least for popularity. Film is a disturbing symbol of an increasingly post-literate world.

The historical film has been making its impact upon us (including serious professional historians) for many years now, and it is time that we began to take it seriously. By this it is meant we must begin to look at film, on its own terms, as a way of exploring the way the past means to us today.

Dislike (or fear) of the visual media has not prevented (some) historians from becoming increasingly involved with film in recent years, at least in the United States. Film has invaded the classroom, though it is difficult to specify if this is due to the laziness of teachers, the post-literacy of students, or the realization that film can do something written words cannot. Hundreds of historians have become involved, at least peripherally, in the process of making films: some as advisers on film projects, dramatic and documentary, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities; others as talking heads in historical documentaries. Sessions on historical films have become a routine part of major academic conferences, as well as annual conventions of professional groups like the Organization of American Historians and the American Historical Association. Reviews of films now are regular features of leading academic journals: *American Historical Review, Journal of American History, Radical History Review, Middle Eastern Studies Association*

Bulletin, Latin American Research Review. (*American Historical Review*, Vol. 93, December 1988)

All this activity has not led to a consensus on how to evaluate the contribution of the [historical] film to [historical understanding]. Nobody has yet begun to think systematically about what Hayden White has dubbed *historiophoty* – (the representation of history and our thought about it in visual images and filmic discourse.) (White, 1988)

The implicit approach of understanding historical films essentially sees the motion picture as a book transferred to the screen, subject to the same sorts of judgments about data, verifiability, argument, evidence, and logic that we use for written history. Involved here are two problematic assumptions: first, that the current practice of written history is the only possible way of understanding the relationship of past to present; and, second, that written history mirrors [reality]. If the first of these assumptions is arguable, the second is not. Certainly, by now we all know that history is never a mirror but a construction -that is, large amounts of data pulled together or [constituted] by some larger project or vision or theory that may not be articulated but is nonetheless embedded in the particular way history is practiced.

We may feel like asking the following questions to historical films – Does the historical film convey facts or make arguments as well as written history? Rather, the appropriate questions are: What sort of historical world does each film construct and how does it construct that world? How can we make judgments about that construction? How and what does that historical construction mean to us? After these three questions are answered, we may wish to ask a fourth: How does the historical world on the screen relate to written history?

It is difficult to talk about the historical film in the singular because the term covers a variety of ways of rendering the past on the screen (Written history, too, comes in different

subcategories, such as narrative, analytic, quantitative). It is possible to put history on film into a number of categories – history as drama, history as anti-drama, history without heroes, history as spectacle, history as essay, personal history, oral history, postmodern history - but to stay within reasonable boundaries, one can look into three broad categories: history as drama, history as document, and history as experiment.

If you say "historical film", history as drama is probably what comes to mind. Such films have been produced ever since motion pictures began to tell stories. Indeed, the "Historical" has been regularly produced all over the world, -in the United States, France, Italy, Japan, China, Russia, India – wherever films are made. Some of the most beloved motion pictures have dramatized history, or at least dramas set in the past. Among them are the kinds of works that have given the historical film such a bad reputation - *Gone with the Wind, Cleopatra, The Private Life of Henry VIII*. It has been suggested that history as drama can be divided into two broad categories: films based on documentable persons or events or movements (*The Last Emperor, Gandhi*) and those whose central plot and characters are fictional, but whose historical setting is intrinsic to the story and meaning of the work (*Dangerous Liaisons, The Molly Maguires, Black Robe*). (Natalie, 1987)

History as document is a more recent form than history as drama. Perhaps the first such film was Ester Shub's compilation film *The Fall of the Romanovs* (1924). In the United States, the historical documentary grew out of the social problem documentary of the thirties (*The Plow that Broke the Plains*), then was given a boost by the post-World War II patriotic retrospective (*Victory at Sea*), and an even bigger boost by public money, which has been funnelled by the National Endowment for the Humanities into historical films in the past two decades. In the most common form, a narrator (and/or historical witnesses or experts) speaks while we see recent footage of historical sites intercut with older footage, often from

newsreels, along with photos, artefacts, paintings, graphics, newspaper and magazine clippings.

Professional historians trust history as document rather more than history as drama because it seems closer in spirit and practice to written history-seems both to deliver "facts" and to make some sort of traditional historical argument, whether as a feature (*The Wobblies, Huey Long, Statue of Liberty*) or as a series (*The Civil War, Eyes on the Prize*). But a major problem for documentary lies precisely in the promise of its most obviously "historical" materials. All those old photographs and all that newsreel footage are saturated with a pre-packaged emotion: nostalgia. The claim is that we can see (and, presumably, feel) what people in the past saw and felt. But that is hardly the case. For we can always see and feel much that the people in the photos and newsreels could not see: that their clothing and automobiles were old-fashioned, that their landscape lacked skyscrapers and other contemporary buildings, that their world was black and white (and haunting) and gone.

History as experiment is an awkward term for a variety of filmic forms, both dramatic and documentary and sometimes a combination of the two. Included here are works made by avant-garde and independent filmmakers in the United States and Europe as well as in former communist countries and the Third World. Some of these films have become well-known, even beloved (Sergei Eisenstein's *Oktober and Battleship Potemkin*, Roberto Rossellini's *The Rise of Louis XIV*). Some have achieved local or regional fame (*Ceddo* by Senegal's Ousmane Sembene, *Quilombo* by Brazil's Carlos Diegues). Others remain intellectual and cinematic cult films, more written about by theorists than seen by audiences (Alexander Kluge's *Die Patriotin*, Trinh T. Minh-ha's *Surname Viet Given Name Nam,* Alex Cox's *Walker*, Jill Godmilow's *Far from Poland*).

What these films have in common (apart from lack of exposure) is that all are made in opposition to the mainstream Hollywood film. Not just to the subject matter of Hollywood

but to its way of constructing a world on the screen. All struggle in one or more ways against the codes of representation of the standard film. All refuse to see the screen as a transparent window onto a realistic world. At its best, history as experiment promises a re-visioning of what we mean by the word 'history'.

How Mainstream Films Construct A Historical World

History as drama and history as document are, in their standard forms, linked by this notion of the screen as a window onto a realistic world. It is true that the documentary - with its mixture of materials in different time zones, with its images of the past and its talking heads speaking in the present – often provides a window into two (or more) worlds. But those worlds share, both with each other and with history as drama, an identical structure and identical notions of document, chronology, cause, effect, and consequence, which means that in talking about how the mainstream film creates its world, it is possible to make six points that apply equally to the dramatic film and the documentary:

1. The mainstream film tells history as a story, a tale with a beginning, middle, and an end. A tale that leaves you with a moral message and (usually) a feeling of uplift. A tale embedded in a larger view of history that is always progressive, if sometimes Marxist (another form of progress).To put it bluntly, no matter what the historical film, be the subject matter slavery, the Holocaust, or the Khmer Rouge, the message delivered on the screen is almost always that things are getting better or have gotten better or both. A film about the horrors of the Holocaust or the failure of certain idealistic or radical movements may in fact seem to be a counter example. But such works are always structured to leave us feeling, "aren't we lucky we did not live in those benighted times? Isn't it nice that certain people kept the flag of hope alive? Aren't we much better off today?"

2. Film insists on history as the story of individuals. Either men or women (but usually men) who are already renowned or men and women who are made to seem important because they have been singled out by the camera and appear before us in such a large image on the screen. Those not already famous are common people who have done heroic or admirable things, or who have suffered unusually bad circumstances of exploitation and oppression. The point: both dramatic features and documentaries put individuals in the forefront of the historical process. Which means that the solution of their personal problems tends to substitute itself for the solution of historical problems. More accurately, the personal becomes a way of avoiding the often difficult or insoluble social problems pointed out by the film.
3. Film offers us history as the story of a closed, completed, and simple past. It provides no alternative possibilities to what we see happening on the screen, admits of no doubts, and promotes each historical assertion with the same degree of confidence.
4. Film emotionalizes, personalizes, and dramatizes history. Through actors and historical witnesses, it gives us history as triumph, anguish, joy, despair, adventure, suffering, and heroism. Both dramatized works and documentaries use the special capabilities of the medium - the close up of the human face, the quick juxtaposition of disparate images, the power of music and sound effect - to heighten and intensify the feelings of the audience about the events depicted on the screen. Film thus raises the following issues: To what extent do we wish emotion to become a historical category? Part of historical understanding? Does history gain something by becoming empathic? Does film, in short, add to our understanding of the past by making us feel immediately and deeply about particular historical people, events, and situations?
5. Film shows history as process. The world on the screen brings together things that, for analytic or structural purposes, written history often has to split apart. Economics,

politics, race, class, and gender all come together in the lives and moments of individuals, groups, and nations. This characteristic of film throws into relief a certain convention - one might call it a fiction - of written history. The analytic strategy that fractures the past into distinct chapters, topics, and categories. That treats, say, gender in one chapter, race in another, economy in a third. Daniel Walkowitz points out that written history often compartmentalizes "the study of politics, family life, or social mobility. Film, by contrast, provides an integrative image. History in film becomes what it most centrally is: a process of changing social relationships where political and social questions - indeed, all aspects of the past, including the language used- are interwoven." (Walkowitz, 1985)

6. Film so obviously gives us the "look" of the past - of buildings, landscapes, and artefacts – that we may not see what this does to our sense of history. So it is important to stress that more than simply the look of things, film provides a sense of how common objects appeared when they were in use. In film, period clothing does not hang limply on a dummy in a glass case, as it does in a museum; rather, it confines, emphasizes, and expresses the moving body. In film, tools, utensils, weapons, and furniture are not items on display or images reproduced on the pages of books, but objects that people use and misuse, objects they depend upon and cherish, objects that can help to define their livelihoods, identities, lives, and destinies. This capability of film slides into what might be called false historicity, or the myth of facticity, a mode on which Hollywood has long depended. This is the mistaken notion that mimesis is all, that history is in fact no more than a "period look" that things themselves are history, rather than become history because of what they mean to people of a particular time and place.

How Experimental Films Construct A Historical World

The only collective way to characterize history as experiment is as films of opposition: opposition to mainstream practice, to Hollywood codes of realism and story-telling, to the kind of film described above. Certainly most experimental films will include some of the six characteristics of the standard film, but each will also attack or violate more than one of the mainstream conventions. Among films defined as "history as experiment", it is possible to find the following: works that are analytic, unemotional, distanced, multi-causal; historical worlds that are expressionist, surrealist, disjunctive, postmodern; histories that do not just show the past but also talk about how and what it means to the filmmaker (or to us) today.

How does history as experiment contest the characteristics of mainstream film? Here are some examples:

1. History as a story set in the framework of (moral) progress: Director Claude Lanzmann suggests in *Shoah* that the Holocaust was a product not of madness but of modernization, rationality, efficiency - that evil comes from progress. (*Film-Historia*, 1992)
2. History as a story of individuals: Soviet directors in the twenties, particularly Eisenstein in *Potemkin and Oktober*, created collectivist histories in which the mass is centre stage and individuals emerge only briefly as momentary exemplars of larger trends (much as they do in written history). (Jorge Sanjines in *Power of the People*, Carlos Diegues in *Quilombo*).
3. History as a closed, uncontested story: Jill Godmilow in *Far from Poland* presents a history of the Solidarity movement through competing voices and images that refuse to resolve into a single story with a single meaning.

4. History as emotional, personal, dramatic: Roberto Rossellini made a series of sumptuously mounted but wholly de-dramatized films –including *The Rise of Louis XIV* and *The Age of the Medici* – in which amateur actors mouth lines rather than act them.
5. History as process: Director Alexander Kluge in *Die Patriotin* creates history as a series of disjunctive images and data, a kind of collage or postmodern pastiche. Juan Downey in *Hard Times and Culture* uses a similar approach in a study of fin-de-siecle Vienna. Chris Marker in *Sans Soleil* envisions the past as made up of disconnected, synchronous, and erasable events.
6. History with a "period look": Claude Lanzmann in *Shoah* tells a history of the Holocaust without a single historical image from the thirties or forties; everything was shot in the eighties, when the film was made. The same is largely true of Hans-Jurgen Syberberg's *Hitler-A Film from Germany*, which re-creates the world of the Third Reich on a soundstage with puppets, parts of sets, props, actors, random historical objects, all illuminated by back-projected images.

History as experiment does not make the same claim on us as does the realist film. Rather than opening a window directly onto the past, it opens a window onto a different way of thinking about the past. The aim is not to tell everything, but to point to past events, or to converse about history, or to show why history should be meaningful to people in the present. Experimental films rarely sanitize, nationalize, or reify the past, though they often ideologize it. They tend to make bits and pieces of our historical experience accessible, sometimes in all its confusion. Such films rarely claim to be the only or the last word on their subject; many hope to make us think about the importance of a subject ignored by written history.

Experimental films may help to revise what we mean by history. Not tied to realism, they bypass the demands for veracity, evidence, and argument that are a normal component

of written history and go on to explore new and original ways of thinking the past. Although such films are not popular, and although reading them can at first seem difficult for those who expect realism, their breakthroughs often are incorporated into the vocabulary of the mainstream film.

Reading and Judging the Historical Film

Our sense of the past is shaped and limited by the possibilities and practices of the medium in which that past is conveyed, be it the printed page, the spoken word, the painting, the photograph, the moving image, which means that whatever historical understanding the mainstream film can provide will be shaped and limited by the conventions of the closed story, the notion of progress, the emphasis on individuals, the single interpretation, the heightening of emotional states, the focus on surfaces.

These conventions mean that history on film will create a past different from the one provided by written history; indeed, they mean that history on film will always violate the norms of written history. To obtain the full benefits of the motion picture - dramatic story, character, look, emotional intensity, process that is, to use film's power to the fullest, is to ensure alterations in the way we think of the past. The question then becomes, “Do we learn anything worth learning by approaching the past through the conventions of the mainstream film? The (honest) answer from most historians who are honest about films outside of their area of speciality has to be: Yes.

A slight detour: it must always be remembered that history on film is not a discipline in which historians participate (to any great extent). It is a field whose standards historians may police but, with rare exceptions, only as onlookers. When the historians explore the historical film, it is history as practiced by others which raises the ominous question: By what right do filmmakers speak of the past, by what right do they do history? The answer is liberating or frightening, depending on your point of view. Filmmakers speak of the past

because, for whatever reasons - personal, artistic, political, monetary they choose to speak. They speak the way historians did before the era of professional training in history, before history was a discipline. Today, the historian speaks by virtue of this discipline, by virtue of special training and the standards of a profession. Filmmakers have no such standard training, and no common approach to history. Few, if any, devote more than a minor part of their careers to history; it is more likely that they are moved over the years to make one or two historical statements on film - (Though some major directors have devoted major parts of their careers to history, including Roberto Rossellini, Akira Kurosawa, Masahiro Shinoda, Carlos Diegues, Ousmane Sembene, and Oliver Stone.) One result: history on film will always be a more personal and quirky reflection on the meaning of the past than is the work of written history.

The haphazard nature of history on film, and the lack of professional control, makes it all the more necessary that historians who care about public history learn how to read and judge film. Learn how to mediate between the historical world of the filmmaker and that of the historian. This means that historians will have to reconsider the standards for history. Or learn to negotiate between the standards of historians and those of filmmakers. We will have to adapt to film practice in order to criticize, to judge what is good and bad, to specify what can be learned from film about our relationship to the past. The film world will not do this, for it has no ongoing stake in history (though some individual filmmakers do). The best the historians can hope for is that individual filmmakers will continue to create meaningful historical films that contribute to our understanding of the past. For only from studying how these films work can we begin to learn how historical film adds to our experience and understanding of the past.

Among the many issues to face in learning how to judge the historical film, none is more important than the issue of invention. Central to understanding history as drama, this is

the key issue. It is also the most controversial. It is the one that sets history on film most apart from written history, which in principle eschews fiction (beyond the basic fiction that people, movements, and nations occurred in stories that are linear and moral). If we can find a way to accept and judge the inventions involved in any dramatic film, then we can accept lesser alterations - the omissions, the conflations- that make history on film so different from written history.

The difference between fiction and history is this: both tell stories, but history tells a true story. But is this truth a literal truth, an exact copy of what took place in the past? No, no on the screen. But how about the printed page, is literal truth possible there? No. Think of it. A description of a battle or a strike or a revolution is hardly a literal rendering of that series of events. In such a description, some sort of fiction or convention is involved, one that allows a selection of evidence to stand for a larger historical experience, one that allows a small sampling of reports to represent the collective experience of thousands, tens of thousands, even millions who took part in or were affected by documentable events. One may call this convention Condensation too.

The point is this: however literal the image on the screen may seem, however literal its world, film can never provide a literal rendition of events that took place in the past. It can never be an exact replica of what happened (and neither can the printed page). Historical recounting must, of course, be based upon as much as we know about what literally happened. But due to the demands of space and time, the recounting itself can never be literal. Not on the screen and not, in fact, in the written word.

One reason for this is that the word works differently from the image. The word can provide vast amounts of data in a small space. The word can generalize, talk of great abstractions like Revolution, Evolution, and Progress, and make us believe that these things exist. To talk of such things is not to talk literally, but to talk in a symbolic or general way

about the past. Film, with its need for a specific image, cannot make general statements about revolution or progress. Instead, film must summarize, synthesize, generalize, symbolize - in images. The best we can hope for is that historical data on film will be summarized with inventions and images that are apposite. Filmic generalizations will have to come through various techniques of condensation, synthesis, and symbolization. It is the historian's task to learn how to read this filmic historical vocabulary.

Clearly, we must read film by new standards. What should these standards be? At the outset, we must accept that film cannot be seen as a window onto the past. What happens on screen can never be more than an approximation of what was said and done in the past; what happens on screen does not depict, but rather points to, the events of the past. This means that it is necessary for us to learn to judge the ways in which, through invention, film summarizes vast amounts of data or symbolizes complexities that otherwise could not be shown. We must recognize that film will always include images that are at once invented and true; true in that they symbolize, condense, or summarize larger amounts of data; true in that they impart an overall meaning of the past that can be verified, documented, or reasonably argued.

And how do we know what can be verified, documented, or reasonably argued? From the ongoing discourse of history; from the existing body of historical texts; from their data and arguments which is only to say that any historical film, like any work of written, graphic, or oral history, enters a body of pre-existing knowledge and debate. To be considered historical rather than simply a costume drama that uses the past as an exotic setting for romance and adventure, a film must engage, directly or obliquely, the issues, ideas, data, and arguments of the ongoing discourse of history. Like the book, the historical film cannot exist in a state of historical innocence, cannot indulge in capricious invention, and cannot ignore the findings and assertions and arguments of what we already know from other sources. Like any work of history, a film must be judged in terms of the knowledge of the past that we

already possess. Like any work of history, it must situate itself within a body of other works, the ongoing (multimedia) debate over the importance of events and the meaning of the past.

A New Kind of History

Of all the elements that make up a historical film, fiction or invention has to be the most problematic (for historians). To accept invention is, of course, to change significantly the way we think about history. It is to alter one of written history's basic elements: its documentary or empirical aspect. To take history on film seriously is to accept the notion that the empirical is but one way of thinking about the meaning of the past.

Accepting the changes in history that mainstream film proposes is not to collapse all standards of historical truth, but to accept another way of understanding our relationship to the past, another way of pursuing that conversation about where we came from, where we are going, and who we are. Film neither replaces written history nor supplements it. Film stands adjacent to written history, as it does to other forms of dealing with the past such as memory and the oral tradition.

What, after all, are the alternatives? To insist that historians begin to make films that are absolutely accurate, absolutely true (as if this were possible) to the reality of the past? Not only is this impossible for financial reasons, but when historians do make accurate films (witness *The Adams Chronicles*), they tend to be dull as both film and history, for they do not make use of the full visual and dramatic power of the medium. A second alternative: history as experiment. But whatever new insights into the past experimental films provide, they tend, like written history itself, to give up large audiences that film is capable of reaching. A final alternative: to wish film away, to ignore film as history. But this would be to surrender the larger sense of history to others, many of whom may only wish to profit from the past. Worse yet, it would be to deny ourselves the potential of this powerful medium to express the meaning of the past.

It is time for the historian to accept the mainstream historical film as a new kind of history that, like all history, operates within certain limited boundaries. As a different endeavour from written history, film certainly cannot be judged by the same standards. Film creates a world of history that stands adjacent to written and oral history; the exact location of the understanding and meaning it provides cannot yet be specified.

We must begin to think of history on film as closer to past forms of history, as a way of dealing with the past that is more like oral history, or history told by bards, or griots in Africa, or history contained in classic epics. Perhaps film is a post-literate equivalent of the pre-literate way of dealing with the past, of those forms of history in which scientific, documentary accuracy was not yet a consideration, forms in which any notion of fact was of less importance than the sound of a voice, the rhythm of a line, the magic of words. One can have similar aesthetic moments in film, when objects or scenes are included simply for their look, the sheer visual pleasure they impart. Such elements may well detract from the documentary aspect, yet they add something as well, even if we do not yet know how to evaluate that something.

The major difference between the present and the pre-literate world, however obvious, must be underscored: literacy has intervened. This means that however poetic or expressive it may be, history on film enters into a world where scientific and documentary history have long been pursued and are still undertaken, where accuracy of event and detail has its own lengthy tradition. This tradition, in a sense, raises history on film to a new level, for it provides a check on what can be invented and expressed. To be taken seriously, the historical film must not violate the overall data and meanings of what we already know of the past. All changes and inventions must be apposite to the truths of that discourse, and judgment must emerge from the accumulated knowledge of the world of historical texts into which the film enters. (Rosenstone, 1995).

1.3 Rationale of the Proposed Research

The significance of proposed research lies in the fact that first of all it is inter-disciplinary, that is to say, it humbly attempts to contribute with some fresh and ingenious insights to two major disciplines of study and research – History and Cinema. Secondly, the proposed research will attempt to cover greater ground in terms of analyzing thematic issues and the representation of history in cinema which enhance the comprehension of complex historical events. Thirdly, its significance can also be well considered as per the fact that it would function as an 'Allo-history' against the 'meta-narratives' or 'grand narratives' of history, and thereby facilitate our comprehension of complex historical events such as Holocaust and Partition. Fourthly, the proposed research can be regarded as one of its kind because of its selection of two massive historical events taking place almost in the same decade, though in two different worlds within the world. Fifth, it would provide to be an important reference work to the researchers who wish to undertake interdisciplinary research particularly between 'History' and 'Cinema'.

1.4 Scope of the Proposed Research

1) The researcher will confine herself to the representation of history in cinema and thereby study similar thematic issues in the selected films.

2) The researcher will not consider literary narratives representing Holocaust and Partition as a part of her research.

3) The researcher will confine herself to the theoretical work only, that is to say, she won't include field work and surveys of any kind.

1.5 Review of Work Already Done on the Subject:

The uniqueness of the Holocaust makes special claims upon all who write about it, whether the writer is historian, author, or literary critic. Some would suggest that the nature

of this uniqueness demands silence: others insist on speaking from the distance; and still others would require that words mean something only if they are written by survivors. Although the story of the Holocaust cannot be told adequately by any literary or scholarly means, the event is the stimulus for a startling variety of articles, plays, novels, films and critical references. One of the most significant works on the theme of Holocaust is *Holocaust: A Graphic Guide* by Haim Bresheeth, Stuart Hood and Litza Jansz. It is a classic illustrated guide to the horrors of the Holocaust. With a trenchant text by Israeli filmmaker and critic Haim Bresheeth, this clear introduction looks at the continuing broader relevance of the Holocaust today. It is a powerful graphic guide that dissolves the stereotype related to the Jews, explains the causes and its relevance today. It places the Holocaust where it belongs at the Centre of modern European and world history. Haim Bresheeth and Stuart Hood along with Litza Jansz's outstanding illustrations bring a unique and unforgettable perspective to how we think about this most dark of shadows on human history. Another landmark text is *Hitler and the Holocaust: How and Why the Holocaust Happened* by Robert S. Wistrich. He begins by exploring the origins of anti-Semitism in Europe, and especially in Germany, and tries to explain how millions of Jews came to be killed systematically by the Third Reich. In the process of relating these events, he provides new and incisive answers to a number of central questions concerning the Shoah that have emerged over recent years: who, inside and outside Nazi Germany, knew that Jews were being murdered; how responsibility for the genocide should be divided between Hitler himself and ordinary Germans; and how historians have tried to make sense of the Holocaust. The book concludes by considering the legacy of Nazi crimes since 1945: the Nuremburg trials, the impact of the Holocaust on Diaspora Jewry (particularly in Israel and America), and the rise of neo-Nazism and Holocaust-denial. *The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust as Told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum* written by leading Holocaust scholar and the project

director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, this comprehensive book presents a historical survey of the Third Reich. Michael Berenbaum covers the pre-Hitler days to the aftermath of WWII. He draws upon a range of sources, including eyewitness accounts, photographs, and artefacts. *The Destruction of the European Jews* by Raul Hilberg is a comprehensive account of how Germany annihilated the Jewish community of Europe. It is the definitive work of a scholar who has devoted more than 50 years to exploring and analysing the realities of the Holocaust. Spanning the 12-year period of anti-Jewish actions from 1933 to 1945, Hilberg's study encompasses Germany and all the territories under German rule or influence. Its principal focus is on the large number of perpetrators - civil servants, military personnel, Nazi party functionaries, SS men, and representatives of private enterprises - in the machinery of death. Zygmunt Baumant's *Modernity and the Holocaust* examines what sociology can teach us about the Holocaust, but more particularly concentrates upon the lessons which the Holocaust has for sociology. Bauman′s work demonstrates that the Holocaust has to be understood as deeply involved with the nature of modernity. There are stories about the Nazi perpetrators, the passive bystanders, the innocent victims, and the heroic survivors etc. However, an attempt would also be made during this research to study the Holocaust in a comparative analysis to another equally destructive historical event the Partition of India, which may ultimately give the researcher new insights and which may open new avenues of conducting research.

The best of the literature that emerged in the wake of the Partition bears the imprint of the struggle to comprehend pain and suffering on a scale that was unprecedented in South Asia. The Partition Literature became a repository of localized truths, sought to be evaded and minimized by the dominant discourse on the Partition. These narratives offer insights into the nature of individual experience, and break the silence in the collective sphere. Trends in recent Partition research represent a shift away from the parleys and betrayals in the domain

of High Politics, towards an emphasis on the subalterns as both victims and perpetrators of violence, the instigation behind the widespread rioting, the resulting psychological trauma, and most importantly, the feminist concern with recovering lost stories of sexually violated and abducted women during the Partition. New Archives of survivors' memories are being created to supplement the available sources such as autobiographies and biographies, poetry and fictional accounts. (Ravikant & Tarun, 2002)

Some of the most scholarly and landmark works done on the theme of Partition are: Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar's *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*; Sekhar Bandyopadhyay's *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern* India; Yasmin Khan's *The Great* Partition; Mushirul Hasan's *Legacy of Divided Nation and The Partition Omnibus*; Suvir Kaul's (ed.) *The Partitions of Memory: The Afterlife of the Division of India*; Sucheta Mahajan's *Independence and Partition*; Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan's *The Communal Triangle in India*; Ritu Menon's (ed.) *No Woman's Land: Women from Pakistan, India & Bangladesh Write on the Partition of India*; Ritu Menon and Kamla Bhasin's *Borders & Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*; Gyanendra Pandey's *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*; Kavita Punjabi's *Old Maps and New Legacies of the Partition: A Pakistan Diary*; Ramakant and Rajan Mahan's (eds.) *India's Partition: Preludes and Legacies*; Satish Sabarwal's *Spirals of Contention: Why India Was Partitioned*; Bipan Chandra's *India's Struggle for Independence*; Anita Inder's *The Partition of India* etc.

Some of the landmark texts that highlight the interdisciplinarity between history and cinema are *History through the Lens: Perspectives on South Indian Cinema* by S. Theodore Bhaskaran; Susan Hayward's *Cinema Studies: The Key Concepts*; Jarek Kupść's *The History of Cinema for Beginners*; Marc Ferro's *Cinema and History*; Bhaskar Sarkar's *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition*; Farzana S. Ali and Mohammad Sabir's

Partition: The Trauma of Partitioned Lives... in Films and Fiction; Ashok Raj's *Cinema that Heals* and Mike Chopra-Gant's *Cinema and History: The Telling of Stories*.

The present research is an attempt at studying devastating historical events, namely, Holocaust and Partition from the grounds of ambivalence, hopelessness and suffering of the masses. It also aims to look at the representation of history in cinema and thereby to contribute in a humble way to the on-going trends of interdisciplinary research and reading history from below.

1.6 Research Gaps Identified in the Field of Investigation

Considering the fact that no substantial critical work has been done barring one or two books on Cinema made on both the historical events, an attempt would be made to contribute in a humble way to this on-going trend in research on Holocaust and Partition by analyzing Cinema made on both the massive events against their respective historical background.

1.7 Objectives of the Proposed Study:

1) The fundamental objective behind this study is to re-claim the history of people, who have been the victims of war and violence.
2) This research humbly aims at contributing to the on-going interdisciplinary research and debate between history and cinema.
3) It also aims at emphasizing the difference of approach employed by both history and cinema in depicting historical events and their implications.
4) This research will also focus on the interesting question-how far cinematic representation of history considered at par with history proper? Do they actually share a seamless, complementary relationship as major disciplines or simply exist as adjacent genres without bearing any effect on each other?

5) It also aims to find out that to what extent the cinematic representation of history can provide us with a rich corpus of historical material treated aesthetically when compared with history in proper sense. In other words, does history hold its traditional, canonical significance over other disciplines when it comes to the objective representation of truth?

6) It also aims to find out whether the cinematic representation of history rescue history proper from being unilateral, conclusive and hegemonic or it ultimately results in a distortion of history.

1.8 Research Methodology – Hypothesis and Assumption

At initial stage, I intend this research to be based on thematic concerns portrayed by cinema with reference to two larger historical events namely, 'The Holocaust' and 'The Partition'. However, at a later stage of research, I also intend to make a comparative analysis between history as a discipline concerned with objective representation of truth and the cinematic representation of historical events based on fact and fiction. It will also be an interdisciplinary research.

It is assumed that the deeper analysis of thematic concerns and cinematic representation of two major historical events – Holocaust that ravaged the European World and Partition that shook the whole of South Asia – will help us in relieving History from being hegemonic and unilateral and rather make it more consequential, interpretative and poly-vocal. It is also assumed that such a history based on cinematic representation shall not undermine the canonical significance of 'history proper'; rather it would function as a complementary narrative to create a comprehensive understanding of historical reality.

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CHAPTER 2
History and Cinema

2.1 An Overview of History

The Future is dark, the Present burdensome; only the Past, dead and finished, bears contemplation. – Geoffrey Elton

History is the result of the interplay of man with his environment and with his fellowmen. History is the living past of man. It is the attempt made by man through centuries to reconstruct, describe and interpret his own past. In modern times, particularly from the period of Niebuhr and Ranke, it has come to mean the attempt to reconstruct the past in "a scholarly fashion, striking to certain definite rules of establishing fact, interpreting evidence, dealing with source material, etc. (Sreedharan, 2004)

This meaning of the word *history* is often encountered in such overworked phrases as "all history teaches" or "the lessons of history." (Gottschalk, 1969)

History which is a record of unique events in the life of mankind is the stir and vibration of life. It is not only the conserving and understanding of what has happened, but also the completion of what has been going on at present. History in this sense is philosophy in motion. To exist is to change, to change is to mature, and to mature is to advance and make progress. History is the barometer to record this progress of mankind. To Napoleon it was 'the only true philosophy and the only psychology'. It is a drama in which God played the game, while man watched and learned. It is certainly a nerve-racking game to watch and learn, but man has indeed learnt to judge of things past, to improve upon things present and foresee things to come, so that he may know what to follow, what to appreciate, and what to avoid. Man looked at the wilderness of the past when he was brut and savage, and even as he looked he beheld a garden which could be created out of a jungle. He has an eye not nearly on the dizzy heights of the past but on the ditches and uneven surfaces as well, with the

intention of building a glorious monument for the future. The nature of history is too complex and its scope too vast, touching almost every domain of human activity.

Sir Francis Bacon defines history as a discipline that makes men wise. Rousseau regards history as 'the art of choosing from among many lies that one which most resembles the truth'. Carlyle holds the view that history is nothing but the biography of great men, and that it is a record of human accomplishments, particularly of great souls. What history requires, according to Carlyle, is geniuses and not masses. Seeley says that history is past politics, and present politics is future history. (Ali, 1978)

We find in Francesco Guicciardini, Machiavelli's fellow Florentinian, the same conception. "Past events," he wrote, "throw light on the future, because the world has always been the same as it now is, and all that is now, or shall be hereafter, has been in time past. Things accordingly repeat themselves, but under changed names and colours, so that it is not everyone who can recognize them, but only he who is discerning and who notes them diligently.

In Condorcet's view, history demonstrated the fact of progress, and the study of history, by suggesting the direction such progress must take, made it possible for men, by the use of their reason, to accelerate progress. (Smith, 1964)

As regards the metaphysical sense of the present history, history for Hegel is the manifestation of mind or idea which is 'eternally present' and is 'essentially now', because for him 'Universal Mind' is immortal. Hence there is no past, no future, but only the present. Similarly Benedetto Croce, an Italian philosopher, believes that all history is present history for it 'vibrates in the historians' which is the present. Jose Ortega Y. Gasset, a modern Spanish philosopher, elaborates this concept by suggesting that past is not an abstract, an inert thing; it is a living force, which sustains the present. As the present has its roots in the past, we cannot comprehend the past if we do not understand the present. Therefore, for him

history is the science of the present. In other words, as Croce says that history, the justification of the present, is the only possible history. But Butterfield suggests that "real historical understanding is not achieved by the subordination of the past to the present, rather by making the past our present and attempting to see life with the eyes of another century than our own.

According to Jean Paul Sartre, a great existentialist philosopher of France, there is no history of the present since 'the present is not'. In his opinion the present is a perpetual flight from being. But he believes that man's essence lies in his past. Man first exists, and during his whole life he develops his essence, which becomes clear to him only at the moment of his death. Thus, for existentialists history can only judge the dead, and therefore it is an autopsy, a mortuary surgery. In history, past is a prey of the living. Elaborating existential concept of history, Raymond Aron suggests that Sartre does not interpret history as the development of spirit as Hegel has viewed it, nor does he envisage it as a progressive project of social action. Rejecting history as an evolution of total society, Sartre asserts that each individual chooses his own destiny, hence history has several meanings or we may say that the past is always in the state of suspense.

Karl Jasper comments that God alone can know historical reality authentically in its totality. It, in other words, means that historical reality is unknowable but it can be grasped only as historical knowledge. Taking clue from Collingwood, we may suggest that historical reality is a reality subjectively lived and re-examined in the imagination of the historian or it is internalization of the past in the form of idea. It is an experience, re-experience by the historian in imagination; it is knowledge transmitted through historical sources, artefacts and documents. This kind of history has a Janus Head, one following backward into the past and the other looking forward into the future.

According to W.H. Walsh, "philosophy of history as practiced by these writers, thus came to signify a speculative treatment of the whole course of history, a treatment in which it was hoped to lay bare secret of history once and for all. They display the qualities of speculative metaphysicians' boldness of imagination, fertility of hypothesis, zeal for the unity of phenomenon, and soundness of conclusion in the form of laws. Unlike the empirical historians, they do not display sacred concern for individual facts. The subject "philosophy of history," coined by Voltaire and the tradition set by Herder and Hegel, the two German philosophers of history, has fascinated many scholars and philosophers since then, and major contributions have been made to the subject by Marx, Spengler, Toynbee and Collingwood.

History, as E.H. Carr would like us to believe, is a continuous dialogue between the present and the past. The term 'meaning history', at best, is a point of view, which reflects material and moral circumstances of the age and also the period in which it is written.

Marx believes that the history is the history of society, and the history of society is the history of class struggle. According to Michael J. Oakeshott, history "is experience as a whole, conceived as system of past events." (Bajaj, 2002)

History may be seen, somewhat naively, as a collection of 'facts'. In other words, 'history' is a bedrock of objective facts and data which give credence to any empirical discipline. The facts and data of history must also have an internal consistency and coherence, which reflects *external* coherence. In other words, the coherence of the *representation* of history reflects the coherence of historical events themselves.

To write a history in the traditional sense is to construct a coherent narrative by weaving together parts of a culture with the thread of values, which must necessarily inform the whole. The historical interpretative process is therefore cyclical: parts inform the whole, which in turn must inform those parts. (Bajaj, 2002)

History is 'for' human self-knowledge. It is generally thought to be of importance to man that he should know himself: where knowing himself means knowing not his merely personal peculiarities, the things that distinguish him from other men, but his nature as man. Knowing yourself means knowing, first, what it is to be a man; secondly, knowing what it is to be the kind of man you are; and thirdly, knowing what it is to be the man you are and nobody else is. Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do; and since nobody knows what he can do until he tries, the only clue to what man can do is what man has done. The value of history, then, is that it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is.

The 'facts of history are present facts', and that history is 'the continuous assertion of a past which is not past, and a present which is not present' (Oakeshott), that 'all history is the history of thought' (Collingwood) and hence that 'all history is contemporary history' (Croce), because, since historical events can constantly be re-thought, they are not 'in time'.

The four propositions often put forward in support of the theory that history is an autonomous branch of study, irreducible in principle to any other, are the following:

1. Historical events are past events and hence cannot be known in the manner in which present events are known.
2. Historical events are unique and unclassifiable.
3. History describes the actions, statements, and thoughts of human beings, not the behaviour of 'dead matter' with which science is concerned.
4. Historical events have an irreducible richness and complexity.

History is essentially the study of the past; and, furthermore, as Professor Field has rightly emphasized, it is a presupposition of all historical thought 'that what happened in the past is absolutely independent of our present thinking about it'.

History is primarily concerned with human beings and what they have done. When the historian comes to ask why they did what they did, he sometimes answers by referring to

general laws of human response to specified types of situation; and sometimes by referring to what Professor Popper has called 'the logic of the situation', i.e. in terms of what it would be reasonable to do in such-and-such circumstances, and with such-and-such objectives in view. To say 'all history is the history of thought' is to recommend, presumably, that all historical explanation should be of the latter type. This recipe is not particularly convenient, since all human activity is not 'thought out' – it may be routine, skilled, or impulsive, for example: further, the behaviour of human beings *en masse* rather than *qua* individuals is not easily covered by it. (Gardiner, 1985)

The Dutch historian Huizinga admits that the most current meaning attached to the word "history" is "the story of something that has happened," and G.N. Clark, who will not admit that history is a story, goes a long way, nevertheless, in the right direction.

It is with an eye to the social function of history that instead of Pirenne's "faits et gestes – deeds and achievements," we shall say that history is the story of the experiences of men. These experiences are, of course, passive as well as active; men require the knowledge of what life has done to them, as much as they must know what they themselves did when faced with certain situations. We shall also accept Pirenne's view that history is concerned with men "living in societies" only.

Thus we have the following definition of history: it is the story of the experiences of men living in civilized societies. One may further remark about the word "story" which occupies such a prominent position in this definition. Every story contains an admixture of theory and of preconceived notions. Narrative is like gold: it can be used only in the form of an alloy. To say this does not imply that the additional element which turns the narrative into a story contributes to the performance of its major or social function, or that it is actually the more important part of the story. The historian is not entrusted with the task of explaining the past. But to tell the story as it should be told he must understand the events he narrates: he

must be able to explain them to his own satisfaction. A bare knowledge of the events of Napoleon's life is insufficient for the purpose of the historian. He must also know the place of these events in Napoleon's life, and their effect upon other events. (Renier, 1961)

According to R.G. Collingwood, the philosophy of history is concerned neither with "the past by itself" nor with "the historian's thought about it by itself", but with the two things in their "mutual relations." "The past which a historian studies, is not a dead past, but a past which in some sense is still living in the present." But a past act is dead, that is to say, meaningless to the historian, unless he can understand the thought that lay behind it. Hence, "all history is the history of thought", and "history is the re-enactment in the historians mind of the thought whose history he is studying."

The reconstitution of the past in the historian's mind is dependent on empirical evidence. But it is not in itself an empirical process, and cannot consist in a mere recital of facts. On the contrary, the process of reconstitution governs the selection and interpretation of the facts; this, indeed, is what makes them historical facts.

"History", says Professor Oakeshott, who on this point stands near to Collingwood, "is the historian's experience. It is made by nobody save the historian; to write history is the only way of making it."

History, then, in both senses of the word – meaning both the enquiry conducted by the historian and facts of the past into which he enquires – is a social process, in which individuals are engaged as social beings.

History, in Burckhardt's words, is "the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another." (Carr, 1961)

It is impossible to write any history without 'some' standpoint – and that means some philosophical or ideological standpoint. The only questions are whether or not we acknowledge that standpoint, and whether or not our choices have been consciously made.

History is differentiated by its nature of having the past as its exclusive subject matter. All historians have to do, therefore, is to find out what happened in that past, and then accurately record it – simply, in the word of Lucian in the 2nd century AD, 'laying out the matter as it is', or was.

According to Bernard de Fontenelle, "to amass in the head fact upon fact… that is what is called doing history."

History is not only a powerful discourse in its own right, as controlling 'knowledge' of the past, but, in its emancipatory role, is also centrally concerned with linguistic structures of the past. All history is 'fabulous', and that the very best is nothing better than a 'probable' tale, artfully contrived, and plausibly told, wherein 'truth' and 'falsehood' are indistinguishably blended together. (Southgate, 2001)

History is a shifting, problematic discourse, ostensibly about an aspect of the world, the past, that is produced by a group of present – minded workers (overwhelmingly in our culture salaried historians) who go about their work in mutually recognizable ways that are epistemologically, methodologically, ideologically and practically positioned and whose products, once in circulation, are subject to a series of uses and abuses that are logically infinite.

History is a discourse, a language game; within it 'truth' and similar expressions are devices to open, regulate and shut down interpretations. (Jenkins, 2003)

The word "history" vacillates between two poles: the story which is recounted (Historie) and what is produced (Geschichte). History is a form of this "uncanniness". It is neither an immediate given nor an a priori. It is a product of a scientific art. (Certeau, 1992)

According to E.H Carr, "History is progress through the transmission of acquired skills from one generation to another." (Gaddis, 2004)

The past itself is not a narrative. In its entirety, it is as chaotic, uncoordinated, and complex as life. History is about making sense of that mess, finding or creating patterns and meanings and stories from the maelstrom.

For every historian, what is at stake is what actually happened – and what it might 'mean'. There is an excitement to these precarious attempts to grasp the 'truth', a truth that might at any point be revealed as illusory.

History begins with sources. Another way in which history begins is with historians themselves: their interests, ideas, circumstances, and experiences. History has a beginning in sources, but also in the gaps within and between sources.

History leaves out human interaction and agency. The past presents us with an opportunity to draw lessons for considerations. Thinking about what human beings have done in the past –the bad and the good – provides us with examples through which we might contemplate our future actions.

History provides us with an identity, just as memory does for an individual. Studying history necessarily involves taking oneself out of one's present context and exploring an alternative world… To study history is to study ourselves, not because of an elusive 'human nature' to be refracted from centuries gone by, but because history throws us into stark relief. History allows us to demur, to point out that there have always been many courses of action, many ways of being. History provides us with the tools to dissent. (Arnold, 2000)

2.2 An Overview of Cinema

2.2.1 Cinema – The Not So Humble Beginnings

Persistence of vision is an ability of the human brain to retain images perceived by the eye for a brief period of time after they disappear from the field of vision. Persistence of vision was known since the time of the ancient Egyptians, but it is not until the mid 19th century when entrepreneurs exploit this phenomenon for its optical entertainment value. Toys

of various quality and complexity are produced, providing viewers with an illusion of movement. The *Zoetrope* (Greek life-turning) is one of the most popular.

Using multiple still cameras which capture consecutive stages of movement, Briton Eadweard Muybridge (1830-1904) becomes the first man in history to record continuous live action. It is called Series Photography.

In 1877, Muybridge helps the former governor of California Leland Stanford win a substantial bet when his series of photographs depicting a galloping horse prove that at one stage of motion all four hooves are off the ground. Expanding his studies of animal movement, Muybridge takes candid pictures of people performing athletic feats while nude. (Kupść, 2003)

In 1882, Etiemme-Jules Marey (1830-1904), a French physiologist, replaces Muybridge's multiple camera set up with the chronophotographic gun – a single camera capable of taking consecutive pictures of live action. Marey also designs a paper roll film to substitute for the clumsy photographic glass plates.

In 1887, George Eastman (1854-1932) appropriates the invention of celluloid roll film from the Reverend Hannibal Goodwin. Eastman begins to mass produce it in 1889, targeting the booming photography market.

Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931) fancies an added visual accompaniment to the music of his tremendously successful phonographic parlours.

William Kennedy Laurie Dickson (1860-1935), a young Edison Laboratories assistant is assigned to develop a camera which would be able to capture movement by allowing for more extensive sequences than the chronophotographic gun. Synthesizing Muybridge's and Marey's accomplishments, Dickson designs a motion picture camera which uses the Eastman celluloid stock. Edison patents the invention under the name Kinetograph (*Greek* motion writer). He hesitates, however, to apply the 17th century Magic Lantern principle of image

projection to motion pictures. His Kinetoscope apparatus allows only one person at a time to watch his short films through a peephole. In the meantime, a brilliant German film pioneer Oscar Messter (1866-1943) designs a movie projector which provides a steady motion of the film roll. In France, brothers Auguste and Louis Lumière (1862-1954; 1864-1948) develop the Cinematographe (*Greek* "motion recorder"), an apparatus which combines the functions of movie camera, film printer and film projector. (Kupść, 2003)

On March 22, 1895, the Lumière Brothers conduct the first successful projection of a motion picture, *Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory*. On December 28, 1895, the Lumières open the first movie theatre in history, showing several short films to a paying audience. Among the selected films is the amusing comic sketch, *The Sprinkler Sprinkled*, widely considered to be the first narrative motion picture ever made.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Thomas Armat (1866-1948), a young inventor, perfects a method of projecting the Kinetograph film shorts. In 1896, impressed by the new invention and success of the Lumières, Edison decides to abandon his own research and buys Armat's projection machine. He calls it Vitascope (*Greek* life-viewing). The first Vitascope projection for an audience takes place in New York on April 23, 1896, as one of the acts in a vaudeville bill. (Kupść, 2003)

A well established Parisian stage magician Georges Méliès (1861-1938) recognizes the illusionist potentials of the film medium. Between 1897 and 1913, at Montreuil, the first movie studio in Europe, Méliès produces about five hundred films, most of which he directs, photographs, and acts in. Méliès most popular work *A Trip to the Moon* (1902) is a thirty scene comical fantasy about the conquest of the Earth's satellite. Méliès calls his filmed scenes "tableaux." The shots are static, but the action within each tableaux, is full of movement. Some of Méliès' innovations include multiple exposure, slow motion, time-lapse photography, dissolves and hand-tinting of the film strip. Méliès' *The Magic Lantern* (1903)

becomes the first film to self-reflect upon cinema's origins and infinite possibilities. In 1917, 400 of Méliès' films were destroyed to produce boot heels for the French Army.

George Albert Smith (1864-1959), James Williamson (1855-1933), and Cecil Hepworth (1873-1953), the most innovative filmmakers of the 1896-1906 period, propel the medium toward new territories. Because of sophisticated editing techniques, Hepworth's *Rescued by Rover* (1905) remains the most well structured narrative film before D.W. Griffith's more mature work. (Kupść, 2003)

Highly impressed with the storytelling ability of Méliès and the editing rhythms of the English pioneers, a former Kinetoscope operator Edwin Stanton Porter (1869-1941) combines staged scenes with stock footage in his entertaining six minute film *Life of an American Fireman* (1903). Potter's innovation is development of parallel action – telling separate stories in a simultaneous, overlapping fashion. Explored further in Potter's most successful film, *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), parallel action becomes the foundation of narrative filmmaking. At the conclusion of the lengthy (12 min.) *Robbery*, a bandit fires his pistol directly at the audience. The viewers try to dodge the bullet in panic. A young unsuccessful writer and a former encyclopaedia salesman named David Wark Griffith (1875-1948) makes his leading man debut in Potter's *Rescued From an Eagle's Nest* (1907).

In June 1905, a comfortable permanent movie theatre is opened in Pittsburgh. It provides its nickel-paying customers with an hour-long program of motion pictures accompanied by live piano music. It is the first nickelodeon, a type of movie theatre which will soon mushroom all across America. (Kupść, 2003)

In 1908, in order to fight the rampant movie copyright piracy and curtail the anarchy of distributors, nine of the most vital film companies (under Edison's leadership) form the Motion Picture Patents Company. For the first time, film goes corporate.

In France of 1908, Société Film d' Art begins to produce films based on classical plays and novels. Despite the fact that these productions are basically a filmed theatre and possess no merit in terms of advancing the syntax of cinema language, film d' art becomes an international success. It proves once and for all that audiences will sit through a film over fifteen minutes long. (Kupść, 2003)

In 1906, the Frenchman Charles Patthé (1863-1957) begins a worldwide expansion of his thriving film industry. By 1908, in the U.S. alone, Patthé Frères distributes double the number of films produced by American companies. By 1918, over 50% of all movies are shot with Patthé's patents. One of the most gifted and prolific talents working for Patthé is Max Linder (1883-1923). (Kupść, 2003)

Between 1907-1913 in USA, mass migration of the East Coast based film companies to Southern California took place. Between 1905-1906 in Italy, Filotea Alberini (1865-1937) establishes the Cines Film Studio in Rome, which is responsible for the first Italian Costume film, *The Capture of Rome*. Turin's Ambrosia Films follows with *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1908), a movie which initiates the influx of historical spectacle. (Kupść, 2003)

After appearing in a string of Porter-produced one-reelers, Griffith moves to Biograph where he directs his first film, *The Adventures of Dollie* (1908), a blunt remake of *Rescued by Rover*. Producing and directing hundreds of short films, Griffith develops a unique sense of shot composition. (Kupść, 2003)

Crosscutting between the subplots in *A Corner in Wheat* (1909), does not go over well with the Biograph management. In his approach to actors, Griffith is just as specific. Angry at Biograph's reluctance to make feature length (multiple-reel) films, Griffith leaves the studio for an independent California company, Mutual/Reliance-Majestic. He takes his personal cameraman G.W. "Billy" Bitzer and his entire acting ensemble along for the ride. (Kupść, 2003)

After several feature-length movies, Griffith is ready to take on his own independent project, *The Birth of A Nation* (1915). Despite its blatant racism and historical inaccuracies, *The Birth of A Nation* remains a milestone cinematic achievement. (Kupść, 2003)

Thus, cinema finally gains artistic prestige and is universally proclaimed the most powerful medium of expression. (Kupść, 2003)

An important characteristic of cinema is its reproduction. Being a technically mediated art form, this could be mass-produced, reach a large number of people rather than an exclusive few. The technique of reproduction detaches the reproduced object from the domain of tradition. It substitutes a plurality of copies for a unique experience. This is possible because a film is a product of technology.

Every film has value as a document, whatever the seeming nature. This is true even if it has been shot in the studio. Besides, if it is true that the not-said and the imaginary have as much historical value as History, then the cinema, and especially the fictional film, opens a royal way to psycho-socio-historical zones never reached by the analysis of documents.

How can historians who are familiar only with print media use film; the language of which they are unfamiliar, as source material? Can an image be quoted? So cinema was not regarded as a source material by historians and it remains neglected and untapped.

Cinematic material that is available as an aid to historical research can be classified into three categories and the methodology for using each would differ:

1. Actuality material
2. Documentaries
3. Feature films including fiction films

Most of the filmmakers develop an audience image, which can be described as an internalized notion of the anticipated attitudes and preferences of the people who will see the

finished film. Being a product of commercial use the filmmaker handles subjects that are largely acceptable to a mass audience.

One has to learn to look at films and develop the ability to study them. The researcher should be familiar with the semiotics of films and be able to recognize the codes and the symbols. This of course, is related to the larger issue of visual literacy, of encountering images.

When a person is in the process of reading, one can stop after reading a few pages, contemplate that portion and then resume reading. Or you could close the book, do something else that demands your attention and then come back to the reading. But watching a film is quite different. There is no place for viewer interruption here. A film proceeds inexorably at the rate of twenty-four frames a second without waiting for you. The viewer does not control the progression. Moreover, the nature of cinema is such that one has to watch it in one stretch to get the full experience of film viewing. (Baskaran, 2009)

Cinematic narratives address the spectator in psychic terms, mirroring the most primal conflicts and desires and refracting all other levels of experience through that prism. (Baskaran, 2009)

In a technically precise sense, it is possible to argue that within the Metzian, 'exchange' between the agencies of 'release' and 'reception', the cinema is always about the present, always situated literally, in the present tense.

This faculty has over the years demonstrated its astonishing ability to literally render history itself, as 'Itihas' or 'Thus it was', as seen for instance in the power of both actual and stimulated documentary footage. (Vasudevan, 2002)

Some of the key issues that this raises for us are the ways in which films fit into our readings of history and the specificities of cinematic narratives of history. (Jain, 2014)

Rosenstone further argues: There are two ways of looking at the inventions of characters, dialogue, and incidents that are an inevitable part of the dramatic history film… not in terms of the specific detail they present, but rather in the overall sense of the past they convey. The rich images and visual metaphors they provide to us for thinking historically. You may also see the history film as part of a separate realm of representation and discourse, one not meant to provide literal truths about the past (as if our written history can provide literal truths) but metaphoric truths which work, to a large degree, as a kind of commentary on, and challenge to, traditional historical discourse. (Jain, 2014)

Thus, a 'history film' deals consciously with a certain past, although our opinions, as an audience, of its depiction of the past may differ from the intention and the practice of the filmmaker. (Jain, 2014)

The choice of representing history on the screen is also made by the filmmaker to articulate a 'new' language of desire vis-à-vis the cinematic apparatus itself. The historical film, in short, makes a distinct break with normative expectations of realism and transparency of the text and strains toward the grand, the opulent, the classical. (Jain, 2014)

These studies of history/historical films warn us against searching for a 'truthful' or 'accurate' rendition of the past. Rather, they reiterate that popular films have a unique relationship with history. (Jain, 2014)

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CHAPTER 3
Holocaust and Partition: The Final Solutions

3.1 Historical Overview of Holocaust

After Satan, Christians have no greater enemies than the Jews…. They pray many times each day that God may destroy us through pestilence, famine and war, aye, that all beings and creatures may rise up with them against the Christians.

- Abraham A Sancta Clara, Viennese Catholic Preacher (1683)

I hold the Jewish race to be the born enemy of pure humanity and everything noble in it. It is certain that it is running us Germans into the ground, and I am perhaps the last German who knows how to hold himself upright in the face of Judaism, which already rules everything.

- Richard Wagner (1881)

The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect: You have no right to live among us as Jews. The secular rulers who followed had proclaimed: You have no right to live among us. The German Nazis had at last decreed: You have no right to live.

- Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (1961)

The Holocaust was an unprecedented crime against humanitythat aimed at the annihilation of the entire Jewish population of Europe, down to the last man, woman, and child. It was the planned, deliberate policy decision of a powerful state, the Nazi Reich, which mobilized all of its resources to destroy an entire people. The Jews were not condemned to die for their religious beliefs or for their political opinions. Nor were they an economic or military threat to the Nazi state. They were killed not for what they had done but for the simple fact of their existence.

To be born a Jew, in the eyes of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime, meant that one was a priori not a human being and therefore unworthy of life. There were other innocent victims

of Nazi racial ideology: Gypsies, who were considered racially impure, were sent to the gas chambers; Russians, Poles, and other occupied peoples in Eastern Europe were reduced to slavery; even those ethnic Germans who were put to death until a public outcry moderated this policy. We know that under the Nazi regime, the SS, the *Einsatzgruppen* (the mobile killing units), the *Wehrmacht*, the Order Police, and the guards in the death camps practiced brutality on a hitherto unknown scale; that they mowed down row upon row of shivering, half-naked adults and smashed the heads of Jewish infants without pity or remorse; that they built a vast system of concentration camps and death camps, the purpose of which was the production of corpses on an industrial scale.

The central unanswered question is why? Why were Jews worked to death on senseless, unproductive tasks, even when the Reich was experiencing an acute labour shortage? Why were skilled Jewish armament workers killed in the camps despite the pressing military needs of the Wehrmacht? Why did the Nazis insist they were fighting an omnipotent "Jewish" power even as their mass murder of the Jews revealed the powerlessness of their enemy?

At the heart of this seeming mystery lay a millenarian *weltanschauung* (worldview) which proclaimed that "the Jews" were the source of all evils – especially internationalism, pacifism, democracy, and Marxism; that they were responsible for Christianity, the Enlightenment, and Freemasonry. They were branded "a ferment of decomposition," formlessness, chaos, and "racial degeneration." The Jews were identified with the fragmentation of urban civilization, the dissolving acid of critical rationalism, and the loosening of morality. They stood behind the "Rootless cosmopolitanism" of international capital and the threat of world revolution. In a word, they were the *Weltfiend* – the "world enemy" against which National Socialism defined its own grandiose racial utopia of a Thousand-year Reich.

In Hitler's genocidal, racist ideology, the redemption of the Germans and of "Aryan" humanity depended upon the "Final Solution" of the "Jewish question." Unless the demonic *Weltfiend* was annihilated, there would be no "peace" in a Europe that was to be united under Germanic leadership so that Germany could fulfill its "natural destiny" by expanding to the east to create *Lebensraum* (living space) for its people. The Second World War, which Hitler initiated, was simultaneously a war for territorial hegemony and a battle against the mythical Jewish enemy.

War made the Holocaust a concrete possibility. The victories of the Wehrmacht brought millions of Jews under the heel of German power for the first time. The task of annihilating them in cold blood was delegated by Hitler to the SS, under *Reichsfuhrer* Heinrich Himmler and his closest subordinate, Reinhard Heydrich. As early as 1939, a so-called euthanasia program, directly responsible to Hitler and the Führer Chancellery, had been initiated to eliminate nearly ninety thousand ethnic Germans who were deemed "unfit to live" because they were physically or mentally "defective." This program, halted temporarily in 1941, proved to be a training ground for the "Final Solution." In late 1941, its personnel, apparatus, and experience in killing by poison gas were transferred to death camps in Poland to be used against the Jews.

The Holocaust required more than an apocalyptic ideology of anti-Semitism in order to be implemented. It was equally the product of the most modern and technically developed society in Europe – one with a highly organized bureaucracy. The streamlined, industrialized mass killings carried out in death camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau and Treblinka were of a form unknown in European and world history. But millions of Jews were also killed by the Germans and their helpers via more primitive, "archaic" methods in Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. The Einsatzgruppen and police battalions hunted down Jews and executed them in gruesome pit killings, in forests, ravines, and trenches. Russians, Poles, Serbs, and

Ukranians, although not earmarked for *systematic* mass murder, were also decimated in large numbers. Three million Soviet prisoners of war died in German captivity.

But before Hitler, racist anti-Semitism had not made great in roads in Germany, though it was far from negligible. Anti-Semitism had been much stronger and more influential in Tsarist Russia, Romania, or in the Habsburg Monarchy and its successor states, especially Poland, Slovakia, and Austria. Germany before 1933 was still a state based on the rule of law, where despite long-standing prejudice Jews achieved remarkable economic success, were well integrated into society, enjoyed equal rights, and decisively shaped its modernist culture.

Hitler's rise to power would not have been possible without the carnage of the First World War, the traumatic impact of German military defeat, the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles, the economic crises of the Weimar Republic and the fear of Communist revolution. Anti-Semitism, while central to Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, Himmler, Jules Streicher, and other Nazi leaders, was not the main vote-getter of the movement. But once racist anti-Semitism became the official state ideology of the Third Reich, reinforced by an extraordinarily powerful propaganda apparatus and a barrage of anti-Jewish laws, its impact was devastating.

It is, however, important to realize that the receptiveness of Germans (and other Europeans) to the demonization of the Jews owed a great deal to the much older tradition of Christian anti-Judaism. The Nazis did not need to invent the images of "the Jew" as a usurer, blasphemer, traitor, ritual murderer, dangerous conspirator against Christendom, or a deadly threat to the foundations of morality. Both secular rulers and Christian churches had ensured that (until the French Revolution) Jews were pariahs in European society, condemned to positions of inferiority and subordination. Racism had been used in Catholic Spain in the

fifteenth century, for example, to justify the removal of even converted Jews from public functions and positions of economic influence.

The Protestant Reformation, especially in Germany, brought little improvement in the status of the Jews. Martin Luther's anti-Jewish diatribes would moreover become a contributing factor in the complicity of so many German Protestants with Hitler's deeds during the Third Reich's anti-Semitic persecutions. Catholics, too, were increasingly implicated in anti-Semitic political movements in France, Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and other European states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During the Holocaust, many Catholic clerics, like their Protestant counterparts, were often indifferent or even hostile to Jews. The deep ambivalence of the Vatican and the Christian churches cannot, however, be understood without taking into account the long-standing "teaching of contempt," which had deep roots in the New Testament itself and in the teachings of the Church Fathers. Nazism, though ultimately determined to uproot Christianity, built on the negative stereotypes about Jews and Judaism that the churches had disseminated for centuries.

The Germans did not carry out the Holocaust, although under Nazi rule they were undoubtedly its spearhead and driving force. When it came to killing Jews, they found many willing collaborators and "helpers" among Lithuanians, Latvians, Ukranians, Hungarians, Romanians, Croats, and others. Austrians (who had been annexed to the German Reich in 1938) formed a wholly disproportionate number of the SS killers, death-camp commandants, and personnel involved in the "Final Solution." Even official France "collaborated" eagerly, not in the killing of Jews but in their deportation eastward and in the passage of draconian racist legislation.

The Holocaust was a *pan-European* event that could not have happened unless millions of Europeans by the late 1930s had wished to see an end to the age-old Jewish

presence in their midst. This consensus was especially strong in the countries of east central Europe, where the bulk of Jewry lived and retained its own national characteristics and cultural distinctiveness. But there was also a growing anti-Semitism in Western Europe and America, tied to the hardships caused by the Great Depression, increased xenophobia, fear of immigrants, and the influence of fascist ideas.

This hostility was evidenced by the unwillingness of British and American decision-makers to undertake any significant rescue efforts on behalf of European Jewry during the Holocaust.

The Jews of Europe, on the eve of the Holocaust, found themselves in a trap from which there appeared to be no escape. They were faced with the most menacing and dangerous enemy in their history – a dynamic power in the heart of Europe that openly sought their destruction. Its influence was felt in neighbouring states, especially to the east and southeast, which were passing laws of their own to restrict Jewish rights and pushing for their removal or emigration of their Jewish populations. Moreover, the three million Jews in Communist Russia were cut off from the rest of the Jewish world; yet the identification of Jews with Bolshevism had become a highly dangerous political myth that would eventually fuel the mass murders carried out by the Nazis and their allies on the eastern front after June 1941.The Jews of Palestine were still a relatively small community under British control and faced with a hostile Arab majority. The Zionist movement, while growing, was too fragmented politically and fractious to be effective.

The Nazi myth of the Jews as a well-organized, international power with clearly defined goals and common "racial" interests could not therefore have been further removed from reality. The Jews were in fact disorganized, relatively powerless, and lacking in solidarity or any agreed political agenda. Before and during the Holocaust they did not have a state, an army, a common territory, or a flag, let alone a coherent organizational centre'

Except in rare cases, such as Denmark, Finland, Italy, and Bulgaria, the Jews would more over be cruelly disappointed by the lack of solidarity shown to them by most of their Gentile neighbours once the dark night of persecution descended upon them. Even more bitter was the ease with which the protection of European states and governments was withdrawn and their rights were sacrificed as if they were absolute pariahs, beyond the pale of civilization. Hitler's war thus found many Jews trapped and virtually defenceless against a ruthless enemy bent on their total destruction in a world largely indifferent to their fate. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Holocaust is what we call the Nazi attempt to destroy European Jewry. It was part of a vast operation in genocide which, between 1939 and 1945, caused the following deaths:

Jews	Between 5 and 6 million
Soviet Prisoners of War	Over 3 million
Soviet Civilians	2 million
Polish Civilians	Over 1 million
Yugoslav Civilians	Over 1 million
Men, women and children with mental and physical deficiencies	70,000
Gypsies	Over 200,000
Political Prisoners	Unknown
Resistance Fighters	Unknown
Deportees	Unknown
Homosexuals	Unknown

Shoah – the Holocaust – was a case of genocide. It was intended by Nazis to be "the final solution" of what they saw as "the Jewish problem." The stated aim of the Nazis was to

make the territories under their control *Judenrein* – cleansed of Jews. It was therefore an extreme case of "racial cleansing." Its ideological basis was anti-Semitism. The word "anti-Semitism" was invented in 1879 by a German racist called Wilhelm Marr (1818-1904). (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

The eminent historian of the Holocaust, Raul Hilberg, summed up in three steps the centuries it took to build the railway to genocide:

First step: the process begins with Christianity's ghettoization of the Jews after failing to convert them.

Second step: the process continues in secular Europe when the Jews emerge from the ghetto and are perceived as an economic threat, for which reason liberal assimilation fails.

Third step: the Final Solution arrives with the "scientific" theory of the Jews as not only racially inferior, but as a menace to the purity of "Aryan" blood.

In *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Raul Hilberg writes, "The German Nazis, then, did not discard the past; they built on it. They did not begin a development; they completed it. In the deep recesses of anti-Jewish history we shall find many of the administrative and psychological tools with which the Nazis implemented their destruction process. In the hollows of the past we shall also discover the roots of the characteristic Jewish response to an outside attack." (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

The Holocaust also has more universal lessons: it reminds us that xenophobia, racism, and anti-Semitism can lead to group violence and atrocities on an unimaginable scale; and that any society – however culturally, scientifically, and technologically advanced – can become totally criminal once it loses its ability to distinguish between right and wrong. The Holocaust underlines the danger of trusting in the idolatry of power without ethical restraint. It drives home the lesson that each individual is responsible for his or her own conscience and

fate. It is a warning from history that obeying orders can be no excuse for criminal acts. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Jewish Holocaust was unprecedented – as compared to other genocides – because it was the planned, deliberate policy decision of a powerful state that mobilized its resources to destroy the *entire* Jewish people. In this diabolical aim, the Germans were almost successful in Europe, and only their military defeat prevented its gruesome completion. By 1945, two thirds of European Jewry had been wiped out by the Nazis, leaving only a remnant of the ancient Jewish culture that had existed on European soil for nearly two millennia. One of the more remarkable aspects of this mass murder was that Jews never constituted any economic, political, or military threat to the German state. On the contrary, had there been a Nobel Prize for passionate identification with German language and culture before 1933, the Jews would surely won it. (Wistrich, 2003)

The German "Jewish question" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was precisely a case of amalgamating false perceptions, stereotypes, and delusions from many sources: Christian anti-Judaism, neo-Romantic mysticism, and a racist obsession with Jews and other "aliens" that assumed a special virulence in Nazi ideology. Hatred of the Jews could encompass every conceivable sexual frustration, social anxiety, jealousy, animosity, bloodlust, and greedy instinct that Germans were otherwise unable to exorcise. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Jews were accused of having deliberately encouraged the mixing of races, as well as inventing doctrines of democracy, which could only destroy the foundations of human culture itself. For the Nazis, the world had to be liberated from such "evil" principles so that mankind could return once more to its pristine natural order. Thus the planned, systematic eradication of Judaic values was the necessary prerequisite of the physical annihilation of the Jewish people. (Wistrich, 2003)

A major racist propagandist was Theodor Fritsch (1852-1933), whose *Handbook on the Jewish Question* was familiar to the young Hitler in Vienna before 1914. (Wistrich, 2003)

After 1918, with the breakup of the Ottoman, Russian, Austrio-Hungarian, and German empires, the map of Europe changed irrevocably. Independent nation-states such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, and the Baltic states emerged or were restored. Most of them contained numerous ethnic and religious minorities as well as sizable Jewish populations. These nations spawned fiercely exclusivist ethnic nationalism and increasingly illiberal authoritarian regimes, deeply suspicious of Jews as "outsiders". Not only were Jews still regarded as "different" and as having group loyalties of their own, but they were seen either as unwelcome economic competitors or as dangerously subversive radicals. In Poland, Romania, and Hungary (which between them contained 4.5 million Jews in the 1930s), harsh quotas were soon introduced to restrict Jewish attendance at universities. Jews found themselves squeezed by government fiscal policy, subject to discrimination in employment, and vulnerable to effects of the Wall Street crash and the Great Depression of the 1930s. The subsequent impoverishment of the Jewish masses reinforced the effects of hostile legislation and nourished the increasingly nationalist and anti-Semitic climate that sought to exclude the Jews as much as possible from economic life. (Wistrich, 2003)

Nazi policies towards the Jews were to be swiftly and cruelly dashed. Hitler's accession to power marked the end of Jewish emancipation in Germany. In the next six years, a whole century of Jewish integration into German society and culture would be comprehensively and brutally reversed. On 1st April 1933, the German government officially proclaimed a one-day economic boycott of Jewish shops and businesses, organized by the fanatical Julius Streicher.

For German Jews, it was, however, a tremendous shock to suddenly become the targeted victims of the government – inspired hate and to be turned into hostages whose

safety would henceforth be conditioned on the "good behaviour" of their co-religionists in the outside world.

Separate laws disbarred 1,400 lawyers as well as 381 Jewish judges and state prosecutors. By the end of 1934, 70 percent of all Jewish lawyers and 60 percent of all Jewish notaries had been dismissed. By mid-1935, more than half the Jewish doctors in Germany had been removed from their profession. Within less than 5 years, the medical purge became total. (Wistrich, 2003)

Nearly 10 percent German Jews had already fled the country by the end of 1933, mostly to neighbouring France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Holland, though these lands were themselves in the grip of economic depression, and the Jewish refugees were not exactly welcomed. Moreover, as refugees, they had to forfeit much of their property, which had been confiscated by the German authorities, making immigration much more difficult. The Nazis clinically judged that the more destitute Jewish refugees appeared to be, the more of a burden they would become on potential host countries, thereby stirring up anti-Semitic sentiments there. Nevertheless, about 2,00,000 Jews left Germany within the first six years of Nazi rule, and another 82,000 immigrated from Austria in 1938. Out of all these Jewish refugees, the largest single group (132, 000) found new homes in the United States; 55,000 Jews immigrated to British-controlled Palestine, 40,000 to England, 20,000 to Argentina and Brazil; 9,000 went to Shanghai, 7,000 were accepted in Australia, and another 5,000 in South Africa. But the absolute figures are deceptive unless one takes into account the size, population, and resources of the host countries.

Palestine, as the "Jewish National Home" designated by the League of Nations, appeared for the first time to be an increasingly realistic prospect for many German Jews. By then, alternative options were shrinking fast. Jewish immigration to Palestine was indeed initially encouraged by the Nazis as a way of making Germany *Judenrein* (free of Jews). The

Third Reich even signed a ("transferred") agreement with the Zionist leadership of Palestinian Jewry (the Jewish agency), which permitted Jews to take out a portion of their capital in the form of German goods. This much-criticized deal enabled thousands of German Jews to immigrate to Palestine, where they significantly strengthened the Jewish community through an influx of educated manpower and technical and organizational skills. Although, the new immigrants received only a portion of their money, they were nonetheless better off then if they had immigrated to other destinations, where no such arrangements were in place. Above all, their lives were saved, since they were physically farther removed from the Reich than those in neighbouring European countries were.

In the economic sphere, Hitler proceeded slowly against the Jews in the early years of Nazi rule, following the expert advice of Economics Minister Hjalmar Schacht. He was well aware of Germany's financial vulnerability and the vital importance of overcoming mass unemployment. Hence, government legislation mainly targeted small Jewish traders and professional people rather than Jewish-owned banking houses, department stores, and companies that were important to the German economy. Nevertheless, by 1935, about one quarter of all Jewish businesses had been dismantled or "Aryanized" at knockdown prices. It was only after June 1938, when the German economic recovery had been fully achieved, that the systematic disposition and expropriation of Jewish property was finally undertaken. This definitive elimination of the Jews from the German economy obliged about 1,20,000 Jews to leave the country, almost penniless, within just more than one year. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Nuremberg Race Laws of September 1935 were a kind of compromise between these counter wailing pressures. The laws "for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour" formally stripped the Jews of their remaining rights as citizens. (Wistrich, 2003)

Toward the end of 1937, with full employment achieved, the drive to completely eliminate Jews from the German economy was noticeably accelerated. Not by accident, this

coincided with the resignation of Schacht from the Economics Ministry, followed in February 1938 by the removal of Neurath as foreign minister as well as the sacking of War Minister von Blomberg and the chief of the Army High Command, Werner Freiherr von Fritsch. At a stroke, the Chancellor had rid himself of the last remaining representatives of aristocratic conservatism in high positions, thereby gaining full control over the armed forces and foreign policy.

A month later, Hitler annexed his former Austrian homeland. Vienna, with its prosperous community of nearly two hundred thousand Jews, quickly became a model for the rapid forced emigration of Jewry from the Reich. After a particularly violent and brutal campaign of intimidation, Jews were forced by the SA to scrub the pavements of Vienna with small brushes, watched by crowds of jeering spectators. Jewish businesses were expropriated with electrifying speed, and Jewish homes shamelessly looted by Austrian Nazi thugs. The Austrian tradition of anti-Semitism (which had moulded the young Hitler thirty years earlier) flared up again with an intensity that caught even the invading Germans by surprise. The hysterical reception accorded Hitler on his triumphant return to Vienna in March 1938 provided the catalyst for this unprecedented outpouring of repressed hatred against the Jews.

The Austrian model of radicalized anti-Jewish measures was immediately adopted in Germany itself. A full-scale "Aryanization" of the larger Jewish firms was initiated by Hermann Goering, the overseer of the Four-year Plan, as part of the broader policy of accelerated rearmament. A decree of 26 April, 1938 obliged all Jews to report their total assets; in June 1938, drafts for the obligatory “aryanization” of Jewish businesses were already in place. The mood in party circles and in the country was becoming more violently hostile to Jews. *The Time’s* correspondant noted that even in Berlin, hereto “the most tolerant German city in its treatment of Jews,” slogans such as “Germans must not buy from Jews” or “out with the Jews” were becoming visible. Storm troopers were seen picketing Jewish shops

and roughly handling their owners. A campaign of arrests led to about one thousand Jews being taken off to concentration camps, originally established in 1933 for political opponents. The flood of anti-Jewish legislation, the expropriations of businesses, and the general aggression of the regime had inevitably produced a new wave of Jewish emigration from Nazi Germany that began to alarm the democratic countries. (Wistrich, 2003)

In October 1938, 17,000 Jews of Polish origin hereto residing in Germany found themselves brutally expelled en-masse by the Nazi authorities. Dumped along the Polish-German frontier in appalling conditions, they were refused entry by the Polish government. Having previously rendering them stateless, Poland had already demonstrated its desire to rid itself of its Jewish citizens.

The Nazis unleashed an unprecedented orgy of ferocious anti-Jewish violence and terror across Germany, euphemistically referred to as *Kristallnacht* (Crystal Night) after the crystal-like shards of glass from the shattered windows of Jewish shops across the land. All over Germany, more than four hundred synagogues burned, while more than 7,500 businesses and other properties owned by Jews were looted and ransacked. At least one hundred Jews were murdered, many more injured, and thirty thousand summarily packed off to concentration camps, where they were to suffer unspeakable indignities.

The pogrom had been incited and masterminded by Propaganda Minister Goebbels. It was he who had made the initial incendiary speech on 9 November in a Munich beer hall (commemorating the failed Nazi putsch of 1923) after news had come of Vom Rath's murder. He called the diplomat's death the first shot in a new war between the Germans and Jews. His diaries reveal not only that the Führer was informed of every step but that Hitler explicitly wanted to make the Jews pay for the damage and to expropriate their businesses. Hitler's immediate concern was that the pogrom should be given the appearance of being a "spontaneous" expression of popular wrath against the Jews. (Wistrich, 2003)

Kristallnacht was the most violent public display of anti-Semitism seen in German history since the Crusades. It also proved to be a significant turning point on the road to the Holocaust. Undoubtedly, the lessons that the Nazi leadership drew in its aftermath brought about a shift in its methods of persecution. At a marathon session in Goering's offices at the Reich Air Ministry on 12 November 1938, it was decided to levy a fine of one billion marks on German Jewry for what was styled its "hostile attitude" toward the German Reich and its people. After announcing the fine, Goering added cynically, "Moreover, I have to say once again that I would not wish to be a Jew in Germany." The participants apparently felt that the public degradation they were inflicting in making Jews pay and even apologize for the huge damage caused by the Nazis, was not enough. Goebbels, Goering, and Heydrich took turns during the meeting in fantasizing about additional humiliations: that Jews should wear personal insignia, that they should have isolated compartments in trains or be forced to give up their seats to Germans, that they should be placed in forests alongside animals they resembled, and so on. Goebbels suggested expelling Jewish children still in German schools, banning Jews from all public places, and imposing curfew restrictions. In the following month, the more concrete suggestions were promptly agreed to by Hitler; the momentum of the anti-Jewish campaign had indeed increased. (Wistrich, 2003)

Nazi policy had clearly been radicalized by *Kristallnacht*. In its wake, all Jewish business enterprise, freedom of movement, and social intercourse with Germans was brought to a virtual end. The scale and impunity of the violence had stigmatized the Jews, even more than before, as a pariah people, to be degraded at will, placed outside the ranks of society and the universe of moral obligation. Their existence on German soil was being torn up by the roots. Excluded from using public transport, from going to concerts, theatres, cinemas, shopping centres, beaches, and park benches and even from owning a dog, German Jews were not merely outcasts at the end of 1939: they were *socially dead* people. They could even

lose their driving licenses because their presence on the roads might conceivably offend the "German traffic community." Three years later they would be obliged to wear the yellow stars that were to definitively seal their pariah status. (Wistrich, 2003)

Between 1933 and 1939, Nazi policies on the "Jewish question" had been influenced by many contradictory currents within the German state and society, as well as by forces beyond it. Although the Jews were perceived in unwavering terms by the Nazi leadership as a deadly "enemy" to be isolated and removed from Germany, there was as yet no clear plan to exterminate them physically. In retrospect, one can see that the measures of economic boycott, legal exclusion, and defamation had been carried out with some caution compared to the avalanche that followed. The Nuremberg Race Laws had marked an important advance in realizing the Nazi Party program, but they had not shattered the institutions and will to live of German Jewry or the foundations of its economic existence. At the same time, despite their massively discriminatory character, the racial laws did not encounter any significant opposition from the conservative elites, the churches, the business circles, the intellectuals, or the mass of the German population. Thus it would seem that at least until November 1938 (and possibly beyond) there was public consensus on the "Jewish question" within which the Nazi regime still operated.

The increasingly visible movement in 1938-1939 toward the more radical policy of expelling Jews entirely was an important qualitative change in this situation. The German invasion of Poland immediately resulted in the sadistic humiliation of Polish Jewry (Orthodox Jews often had their beards and sidelocks ripped off) and the murder of some seven thousand Jews in the first three months of the campaign. On 21 September 1939, Heydrich set out the guidelines of SS policy in his instructions to the *Einsatzgruppen*. He distinguished between the “final aim” and the stages leading toward it, beginning with “the concentration of the Jews from the countryside into the larger cities.” The points of

concentration were to be cities with rail junctions “or at least located on railroad lines." He also ordered each Jewish community to set up a Council of Jewish Elders, an administrative body consisting of authoritative personalities and rabbis who would be responsible "for the exact and prompt implementation of directives already issued or to be issued in the future." (Wistrich, 2003)

Ghettos had been established throughout Poland from the end of 1939. The largest of them all was the Warsaw ghetto, which suffered from obscene overcrowding, holding as many as half a million Jews at its peak. Sealed off in November 1940 by barbed wire from the rest of the city (though there was an active smuggling route), the population was packed into 1.3 square miles, compared to the area of 53.3 square miles inhabited by fewer than one million Polish Christians. The gates to the ghetto were guarded by German, Polish, and Jewish police. Inside this living hell, Jews were forbidden to keep cash or merchandise. They lived in complete economic isolation from the outside world. When pressed into forced labour, the Jews were paid nothing or else a tiny sum, usually insufficient to buy even a loaf of stale bread. In the largest ghettos, Warsaw and Lodz, about one quarter of the Jews died from disease, starvation, and the inhumanly harsh conditions. The Nazis spuriously claimed that they had created the ghettos to prevent the spread of epidemics, but their insidious propaganda goal was to mark off the Jews as people who were not only different but physically degenerate. By starving them, they could ensure that reality resembled the stereotype, even as they decimated them. (Wistrich, 2003)

The common cliché that Jews did not resist their persecutors and simply went "like sheep to the slaughter" is neither an accurate nor a fair description, though in its original context the phrase was intended by the Jewish Resistance more as a call to arms. When presented as a blanket criticism, it overlooks the extraordinary lengths to which the Nazis went in disguising the genocidal intent of their policy toward the Jews. The perpetrators

deliberately encouraged false hopes and the illusion that compliance and work might be the salvation of Jewry.

The Jewish population, to a much greater extent than any other, had the terrifying experience of being hunted down like wild animals. To make matters worse, they found themselves – at least in Eastern Europe – in a generally hostile and anti-Semitic environment. Even in the event of escape, Jewish men were still marked by circumcision, often easily identified by their beards and facial features or else by their distinctive garb. Despite these great obstacles, Jews did subsequently rebel in the ghettos of Warsaw and Bialystok, in the death camps of Treblinka, Sobibor, and Auschwitz, and took up arms with the partisans wherever they succeeded in escaping their tormentors. (Wistrich, 2003)

The resurgence of Germany and the destruction of the Jews had been organically related processes in Hitler's mind ever since the "catastrophe" of November 1918. They had been framed in eschatological terms as a kind of cosmic war of the forces of light against the fiendish powers of darkness. "There is no making pacts with Jews," Hitler had declared in *Mein Kempf* ", there can only be the hard either-or." Pointedly, he warned his audience in the Munich beer cellars on 27 February 1925, "Either the enemy will walk over our corpses, or we will walk over his." In this life-and-death fight against the satanic forces of evil, Hitler liked to pose as the chosen redeemer of the Germanic *Volk* (and of the entire non-Jewish world), conducting a millenarian struggle for salvation. When Hitler spoke of rescuing Germany, the "Aryan" nations, and European civilization from crucifixion by a "diabolical Jewish world-enemy," he did not flinch from comparing himself to the Christian saviour, blasphemous though such an allusion must appear in retrospect. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Nazi Holocaust had begun on Soviet soil and was directed initially at the three and a half million Jews living there, including the recently annexed Baltic states. One of its most striking features there was its openly public character, so different from the secretive

way gassings were later conducted in the death camps of Poland. As the Wehrmacht struck more deeply into the Soviet Union, the Jewish death toll mounted rapidly. According to Raul Hilberg, by the end of 1943 the Germans had succeeded in killing close to two million Jews within the Soviet Union, mostly by shooting them in pits close to their homes. Only in the Soviet Union "did the Germans and their helpers repeatedly shoot down hundreds of thousands of unarmed Jewish men, women, and children in broad daylight. Despite this high visibility, the Soviet regime was not interested in publicizing more than the barest details, as it was determined to cover up the evidence of extensive collaboration with the Nazi invaders by "peaceful Soviet citizens." (Wistrich, 2003)

In January 1941, the Iron Guard carried out a savage pogrom in Bucharest in which 170 Jews were murdered. The following month, Romania entered the war, and its legions were soon involved in horrific massacres of Jews in the east, especially in the Crimea and southern Ukraine. In Odessa alone, Romanian troops butchered about thirty thousand Jews with unsurpassed cruelty. Even after the Iron Guard left the government, the slaughter continued unabated in the summer of 1941. Romanian troops were further used to send thousands of Jews on forced marches into designated killing areas, to drown them in the Dniester, or push them into the German zone of the Ukraine. The deportations of nearly1,50,000 Jews to the newly annexed province of Transnistria were especially horrific. The Jews were herded into freight cars and often died of suffocation as the trains travelled through the countryside for days on end. The ghettos and concentration camps in Transnistria were as horrible as anything in the German Reich. Not surprisingly, three quarters of the Jews in Transnistria perished. (Wistrich, 2003)

Hungary was an exceptionally tragic case, for had the Germans not invaded the country in March 1944, far more Jews would have been spared than in Romania. Instead, in a dizzying, accelerated process of destruction that took fewer than four months, more than 60

percent of Hungary's 725,000Jews were packed off to the gas chambers of Auschwitz-Birkenau. By 8 July 1944, almost 440,000 Jews had been deported, and toward the end of the year, except for the Jews of Budapest, the country was virtually *Judenrein*. (Wistrich, 2003)

In the spring of 1944, the Germans broke an earlier promise and began transporting Jews from Italy to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Altogether, some eight thousand Jews died as the Holocaust descended upon northern Italy with unexpected force, bringing death and destruction to about 15 percent of Italian Jewry. The casualties would certainly have been far higher without the humanity shown by many ordinary Italians, whether clerics or laypersons, resisters or non-resisters, soldiers or civilians, nominal fascists, liberals, or communists. Jews found hiding places in the cities and the countryside, in the hills and on farms, in convents and monasteries, and a few were even concealed in the Vatican. They were received and spontaneously assisted, despite the risks involved, because they were seen as human beings with an equal right to live. The history of collaboration in the Holocaust was all too often a story of indescribable cruelty, callousness, indifference, and insensitivity. But there were also islands of charity and simple human decency that stand out all the more sharply as testaments of hope in the prevailing darkness. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Allied response to the Holocaust has been overladen with charges of "complicity," "abandonment," and culpable indifference to the unfolding Jewish tragedy. Some historians have implied that the American and British governments could have saved hundreds of thousands of Jews with a more energetic rescue policy.

The Nazi genocide has been called "the most spectacular and terrifying instance of industrial killing in this century." It has also been seen in recent years by a growing number of scholars less as a regression to barbarism or as a uniquely horrible event but rather as a characteristic expression of modernity itself. More specifically, the Holocaust has been

interpreted as a product of the destructive bureaucratic and technical capacities of modern Western civilization. (Wistrich, 2003)

The Holocaust, while certainly "modern" in some of its organizational and technical features, had equally as many "archaic" attributes, down to and including its primitive methods of killing. Indeed, as many Jews were eliminated by shooting in the horrific pit exterminations on the eastern front as died in the factory-style exterminations at Auschwitz-Birkenau. (Wistrich, 2003)

The racist vision of a great Germanic empire gradually crumbled as the Nazi state became embroiled in a life-and-death struggle from late 1941 onward against a reinvigorated Soviet Russia and the British Empire, newly reinforced by the United States. The military stalemate and the resulting demographic and logistical bottlenecks in early1942 led to a shift in German policy. In order to make good its manpower losses and preserve its military-industrial complex, Nazi Germany decided to maximize the labour potential of its subject populations. As a result, millions of Soviet POWs (most of whom were later starved to death), Poles, Czechs, and other Europeans were brought into the Reich to work, even though this clearly undermined the Nazi vision of a racially pure *Volksgemeinschaft*. At the same time, Jews were being deported out of the central Reich territories to the east, where they would be subjected to conveyor-belt extermination. Thus, the "rational" alternative of economic hyper-exploitation was explicitly reflected for the Jews.

The significant element of "modernity" in the Nazi genocidal project did not therefore lie in its mythical "economic rationality" or in any link to a breakneck developmental program of social transformation (as occurred in Stalinist Russia) but rather in the methods that it pioneered in killing. At places like Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek, Sobibór, Treblinka, and other death camps, the entire apparatus of the modern German state –

the resources of its bureaucracy and military-industrial complex – were put at the disposal of the SS in order to carry out streamlined exterminations. (Wistrich, 2003)

The organization of mass murder involved not only the immediate perpetrators but literally tens of thousands of other Germans: diplomats, lawyers, doctors, accountants, bankers, clerks, and railway workers, without whom the trains to the death camps would not have run. This monstrous machinery of death could not have been unleashed except in a highly organized and bureaucratized society, methodical, perfectionist, and thoroughly modern in its deliberate fragmenting of responsibilities and routinizing of operations. Furthermore, it happened in a state that was able to efficiently coordinate countless bureaucrats in relevant Reich ministries, the army, the judiciary, and the medical establishments, as well as Nazi officialdom in the occupied eastern territories, the SS, and the Order Police. Such relentless systematization and its end product – the gas chambers – is what gave the Holocaust its sinister "modern" aura of depersonalized violence. The gas chambers and crematoriums were an industrial method for liquidating human beings on the basis of a daily quota; they demonstrated "the modern world's capability to organize mass death on a new, more advanced and scientifically planned basis."

This streamlined process was also distinctively modern in its ability to draw on state-of-the-art punch-card technology, which enabled the Third Reich to coordinate the rounding up of Jews throughout Europe, their deportation to the camps, and the statistics that measured their agonies during the "Final Solution." Only after the Jews were successfully identified could they be targeted for asset confiscation, deportation, ghettoization, slave labour, and finally extermination.

Similarly, mass murder on this scale could not have happened without the trial run, beginning in 1939, of the Nazi "euthanasia" program. The physicians of the Reich collaborated grossly in using poison gas and lethal injections to murder eighty thousand

mentally and physically handicapped Germans. This so-called Operation T4 (named for the central office at 4 Tiergarten Strasse, Berlin) had been personally ordered by Hitler. As Henry Friedlander has pointed out, "The success of the euthanasia policy convinced the Nazi leadership that mass murder was technically feasible, that ordinary men and women were willing to kill large numbers of innocent human beings, and that the bureaucracy would cooperate in such an unprecedented enterprise." The same sinister methods that were used in Operation T4 to mask the killing of the handicapped would be applied in the Nazi death camps. SS guards would be dressed in the white uniforms of medical technicians, and the victims were always led to believe that they were being taken to a shower room rather than to a gas chamber. (Wistrich, 2003)

The "hot-blooded" slaughters and “Jew hunts" carried out by Order Police battalions in occupied Poland (described by Christopher Browning and Daniel Goldhagen) present us with a distinctly unmodern side of the Holocaust, one that aligns it more closely with other twentieth-century genocides. No high technology was required for the 40 percent of Holocaust victims who died through malnutrition, famine, and disease in the ghettos, through being worked to death in labour camps, through deportations late in the war that turned into horrific death marches, or through the gruesome executions in pits, trenches, and ravines, using machine guns, rifles, and revolvers.

From eyewitness testimonies, it is evident that sadism and torture knew no bounds at Treblinka, Sobibor, or Belzec, where the cruelty of security guards-Germans, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians-was notorious. As in other camps, they carried out their duties without question but showed considerable initiative when it came to torturing their victims. A good example was the deputy commandant of Sobibor (where 250,000 Jews died), the Viennese-born Gustav Wagner. Like many of the SS personnel in the camps, he was a veteran of the Schloss Hartheim Euthanasia Institute near Linz, a centre for killing off the

mentally sick and handicapped. Master Sergeant Wagner was in-charge of "selections" and better known to his victims as the "Human Beast." One survivor recalled: "Wagner didn't eat his lunch if he didn't kill daily. With an axe, shovel or even his hands. He had to have blood." Another victim remembered him as an angel of Death, for whom "torturing and killing was a pleasure"- he would snatch babies from their mothers' arms and tear them to pieces in his hands. (Wistrich, 2003)

At Auschwitz-Birkenau, there were also other technical perfectionists, like the gifted thirty-two-year-old chief doctor, Josef Mengele, who knew exactly why they were there and how killing Jews could advance their careers. Mengele used Auschwitz-Birkenau inmates as guinea pigs for what he believed was pioneering scientific research into presumed racial differences and physical abnormalities. People afflicted with any sort of deformity were killed on his orders, upon their arrival in the camp, to provide new material for his studies. He also conducted medical experiments on living Jews, especially twins, hoping to find a method of creating a race of blue-eyed Aryans to realize the megalomaniac dreams of Nazi racial science. Mengele's contribution to the millennial struggle for "domination," like that of other SS doctors, was considerable. Yet even Mengele, a music lover and a scientific mind, also had his "compassionate" moments when he gave individual patients the best of care, between "selections." (Wistrich, 2003)

Recapitulating, I would like to present a detailed timeline of how the Nazi bureaucratic machine carried out such a systematic, organized but a ruthless pogrom of the total annihilation of the Jews from the land of Germany in the following table:

Timeline of the Holocaust	
Holocaust–Years	**Holocaust – Events**
1933	The Nazi party takes power in Germany. Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor, or prime minister of Germany. Nazis ‘temporarily’

	suspend civil liberties. The Nazis set up the first concentration camp at Dachau. The first inmates are 200 Communists. Books with ideas considered dangerous to Nazi beliefs were burnt.
1934	Hitler combines the positions of chancellor and president to become 'Fuhrer' or the 'leader of Germany.' Jewish newspapers were no longer to be sold in the streets.
1935	Jews were deprived of their citizenship and other basic rights. The Nazis intensify the persecution of political people that do not agree with its philosophy.
1936	Nazis boycott Jewish-owned business. The Olympic Games were held in Germany; signs barring Jews were removed until the event was over. Jews lost the right to vote.
1938	German troops annexed Austria. On *Kristallnacht*, the 'Night of Broken Glass,' Nazis terrorized Jews throughout Germany and Austria – 30,000 Jews were arrested. Jews were forced to carry id cards and Jewish passports were marked with a "J."Jews no longer head businesses, attend plays, concerts, etc. All Jewish children were moved to Jewish schools. Jewish businesses were shut down. They were forced to sell businesses and hand over securities and jewels. Jews were forced to hand over drivers' licenses and car registrations. Jews had to be in certain places at certain times.
1939	Germany took over Czechoslovakia and invaded Poland. World War II began as Britain and France declared war on Germany. Hitler

	ordered that Jews must follow curfews; Jews must turn in radios to the police; Jews must wear yellow stars of David.
1940	Nazis began deporting German Jews to Poland. Jews were forced to live in ghettos. Nazis began the first mass murder of Jews in Poland. Jews were put into concentration camps.
1941	Germany attacked the Soviet Union. Jews throughout Western Europe were forced to live in ghettos. Jews were not supposed to leave their houses without permission from the police. Jews could no longer use public telephones.
1942	Nazi officials discussed the 'Final Solution' – their plan to kill all European Jews – to the government officials. Jews were forbidden to subscribe to newspapers; keep dogs, cats, birds, etc; keep electrical equipment including typewriters; own bicycles; buy meat, eggs, or milk; use public transportation; attend school.
1943	February: About 80 to 85 percent of the Jews who would die in the Holocaust had already been murdered.
1944	Hitler took over Hungary and began deporting 12,000 Hungarian Jews each day to Auschwitz where they were murdered.
1945	Hitler was defeated and World War II ended in Europe. The Holocaust was over and the death camps were liberated. Many survivors were placed in rehabilitation centres.
1946	An International Military Tribunal (Judicial assembly) was created by Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union. At

	Nuremburg, Nazi leaders were tried for war crimes by the above Judicial assembly.
1947	The United Nations established a Jewish homeland in British-controlled Palestine, which became the State of Israel in 1948.

(History of the Holocaust – Time Line, 1995)

Academics have played an important and conscious part in supporting, elaborating and propagating the ideology of the Third Reich. A school of historians and polemicists has sprung up, which for political reasons is bent on denying the truth of the story of the Holocaust. Present day revisionists continue this tradition. They are the academic equivalent of the neo-Nazi thugs.

One of the most important early revisionists was Paul Rassinier (1906-1967), a French school teacher and reformist socialist, who was himself an inmate of Buchenwald and worked in a labour camp. He cast doubt on accounts of the extermination camps, exploiting the kinds of contradictions which are common when witnesses depend on memory. The apparent reasonableness of his argument concealed his deeply reactionary and bitterly anti-humanist views.

His conclusions were:

- There never was a Nazi policy of Jewish genocide
- There was no officially sanctioned extermination by gas
- There was not 6 million Jewish victims

He admits that Hitler's policy against the Jews was "an unquestionable attack on human rights", and that deaths were "an unfortunate coincidence", usually occurring during transit. But never at any moment, he asserted, did the responsible authorities of the Third Reich intend to order the extinction of the Jews. Atrocities were the work of one or two insane persons in the SS. If gassing took place, it had a parallel in the gassing of criminals in

the United States, where it was a perfectly legal form of execution. But there was, in his view, nothing to prove conclusively that any of the unfit or those so designated were sent to the death chambers.

- In spite of the fact that the bulk of the Jews of occupied Europe were shipped by train to the East and never returned –
- In spite of the film shot by the Nazi authorities of transports arriving at the camps –
- In spite of the photographs of men, women and children lined up awaiting death by shooting or in the death chambers –
- In spite of such Nazi documentation as the technical drawings for the crematoria –
- In spite of the installations still remaining at sites like Auschwitz –
- In spite of the evidence of survivors –

the revisionists still brazenly proclaim that Nazism has been falsely accused.

Unfortunately, the fabrications of the "revisionists" have fallen on fertile ground in a Europe where the old lies of anti-Semitic propaganda and old forgeries are once again being circulated, and indeed were never wholly eradicated. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

If there is a general lesson, then, it is that we must learn that evil can and must be resisted in its early stages; that we always have choices; and that there can be no place for racism and anti-Semitism in a civilized society. Thinking about the Holocaust is like staring into an abyss and hoping it will not stare back. It is the ultimate extreme case, a black hole of history that not only challenges our facile assumptions about modernity and progress but questions our very sense of what it means to be human. (Wistrich, 2003)

3.2 Historical Overview of Partition

The Partition of British India in 1947 was one of the most cataclysmic events in world history, and the debate on it is endless. It was one of several partitions that were carried out in Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East since the eighteenth century. Like most of them it

was attended by, and exasperated violence between, different religious communities. It resulted in more casualties than any other Partition. The numbers killed, displaced and dispossessed in the Partition of India is unknown. Anything between 200,000 and three million people may have lost their lives. Between 1946 and 1951, some nine million Hindus and Sikhs crossed over into India from Pakistan and about six million Muslims went to Pakistan from India.

Advocates of Partition say that separation can bring irreconcilable warring parties to the negotiating table, end conflict and save lives. Giving antagonistic communities the freedom not to live together may prevent violence. Impartial peace-brokers may offer justice to both sides. The division of a country along its ethno-territorial lines makes the new political entities ethnically homogenous. Partition is therefore a way of containing conflict.

Partitions have never produced ethnically pure nation-states, in the literal sense of an alignment of territory and ethnicity or religion. All partitions have left mixed communities on both sides of post-Partition international borders. Partitions have resulted in long-lasting inter-state conflicts. Partitions have only produced running sores.

International officials have tended to dislike Partitions because most have involved the changes of borders by force and created humanitarian problems of magnitude. Partitions have dismayed those who believe people are enriched by ethnic diversity and that territorial division and ethnic wars result from a combination of bigotry and authoritarian government. Authoritarian rulers do not believe in, or practise, consensus. Ethnic hatred and violence was a legacy of all three.

Partitions have been partly inspired by a particular ideology of nation-state. Practitioners of Partition have sought to align territory with ethnicity, culture, language or religion. Because Partitions have always been demanded, and taken place, in territories in which different communities are interspersed, they have been a recipe for armed conflict.

More than ninety percent of the world's states are multi-ethnic. The reconciliation and accommodation of different communities requires an inclusive, pluralist concept of the nation and state in which the identities and interests of all communities are safeguarded by the state. It involves respect for, and the protection of, individual human rights, which are most likely to be achieved by a democratic state which does not identify with any one community. The ethnic, religious, or cultural majority is distinct from the political majority which may respect citizens of all communities. Reasons of state and religious, ethnic or cultural divisions have been inextricably intertwined in creating the situations that have led to Partition in different parts of the world. (Singh, 2007)

Divide and rule has always been the motto of imperial rulers, who never govern by consensus. British policy, especially after the emergence of the INC in 1855, was aimed not so much at 'dividing' Hindus and Muslims, as at encouraging anti-Congress Muslim opinion and giving it prominence as "Muslim" opposition to a "Hindu" nationalism represented by the Congress.

The British saw and discussed Indian society and politics in terms of Hindus and Muslims as separate political and cultural entities. Having replaced the "Muslims" as rulers of India, the British expected all Muslims to be hostile to their rule. They felt that Muslims had instigated the Mutiny of 1857 to overthrow the British and might do so again.

British administrators believed, though, that politically and socially conservative Muslims *and* Hindus, that is landlords, princes, had little in common with the ordinary Indian peasants. What the upper-class Muslim wanted was a revival of his prestige.

With the emergence of the Indian National Congress in 1885 the British needed conservative Muslims as a counterpoise to what the Raj saw as the "seditious" Congress. What disturbed the British were the demands of the Congress – among them, the expansion of the Legislative Councils, the admission of Indians in the Civil Service through competitive

examinations and its economic critique of British colonization. What this amounted to, according to some British officials, was that the aim of the Congress was eventually to oust all Englishmen from India.

There was also conservative Hindu opposition to the Congress, the British did not recognize it as "Hindu" opposition but placed it, in non-denominational terms, in the category of opposition to "Bengalis", "newspaper editors", "barristers", "revolutionary elements" by landlords, princes, "the Rajput aristocracy" and "antiquated Mohammed and Hindus [who] lived on excellent terms".

The Hindu Mahasabha also opposed the Congress, but the British disregarded it. More generally, the British helped to confuse issues by labelling the Congress as "Hindu", and loyalist Muslim opposition to it as "Muslim" opposition to a "Hindu" Congress. The British ignored loyalist Hindu opposition to the Congress, presumably because it would have been politically inexpedient for them.

In 1935, the Hindu Mahasabha felt that the task of constitution-making for British India 'should be the concern of the Emperor of India'. V.D. Savarkar thought that Indian interests should be sacrificed to those of the British Empire 'which is a larger political synthesis'. He accused those speaking in the name of the Indian nation-that is, the Congress - of being parochial. Earlier, at the Indian Round Table Conference of 1932, Muhammad Ali Jinnah thought that the British should grant dominion status in order to check the Congress party, which stood for complete independence.

The British did not encourage the Muslim League to consider the Mahasabha as its archenemy. Probably it would not have served much purpose. The Hindu Mahasabha was the vanguard of aggressive Hindu communalism but it did not seek to displace the British. In fact, it looked to them to advance its political interests. It is significant that the British chose

to recognize not the Mahasabha but the League as the organization which should be used to counteract the nationalist agitation led by the Congress.

The decision to partition Bengal in 1905 was motivated partly to weaken the nationalist agitation in the province. The Congress alleged that partition would result in the loss of national unity. To British officials this was one of the great merits of the scheme. Partition would also please Muslims and lessen the chances of their being won over by the Congress.

Far from weakening nationalist agitation, the partition of Bengal transformed it into a popular revolutionary movement. The intensity of the agitation against partition led the British to consider the formation of a conservative counterpoise to the Congress through the creation of new political institutions.

In 1909, the decision to create separate electorates was justified on the grounds that Muslims and Hindus had distinct religious, social, political and economic interests. In a system of joint mixed electorates pro-Congress Muslims might be elected. Separate electorates would give conservative Muslims a chance to be elected to the Councils, where they would be a counterpoise to the educated middle class represented by the Congress.

Separate electorates institutionalized communal rivalries, especially where Hindu and Muslim had different economic interests. For example, in Punjab large number of Hindus belonged to the landowning, trading and money lending professions. Hindus were therefore alienated by the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 which sought to prevent the transfer of land from agriculturists to non-agriculturists. (Singh, 2007)

Partition stemmed from deep-rooted political differences between the Congress and League on two main issues: their attitudes to the British Raj and their vision of how India should be ruled and by whom. Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who led the main all-India parties in the provincial elections of 1936 and who played leading roles in the

negotiations for a transfer of power in 1946-7, had very different approaches to the communal problem. For Nehru the communal problem was a side issue; the real issue was the achievement of Indian independence. For Jinnah the main political question was about securing political safeguards for the identity and culture of the Muslim minority which made it a separate entity in the state.

In August 1947 the achievement of Indian independence settled the real issue for the Congress. But it was accompanied by the partition of India on a religious basis which was the antithesis of the secular Indian nationalism on which the Congress had always prided itself. Partition revealed that the 'side issue' of 1936 had become inextricably woven with Jinnah's main issue in 1947. But it was not before March 1940 that Jinnah's Muslim League demanded a separate state.

Elections to the provincial legislature were held under the Government of India Act of 1935. The Act of 1935 was the first constitutional measure introduced by the British in India which envisaged that the parties winning a majority of seats would form ministries which would function on the basis of joint and collective responsibility.

Both the Congress and League were dissatisfied with the Act because it did not go far enough to meet the political aspirations of Indians. To the Congress it was a charter of bondage because it was not framed by a Constituent Assembly based on adult franchise and made no mention of a British commitment to ending the Raj. The League regarded the Act as "most reactionary". However, both parties decided to contest the provincial elections under the Act because the election campaign would provide a platform for them to spread their respective messages to voters. It was expected that the Congress would sweep the polls in the Hindu majority provinces, and that the League, or regional parties led by provincial Muslim leaders, would win in the Muslim-majority provinces.

An electorate of some 36 million, as compared to an electorate of 7million in 1920, and representing 30 percent of the adult population, would elect 1585 representatives to the provincial legislatures.

In 1936 Nehru's optimism on the communal problem was well founded. The Hindu Mahasabha, the principal Hindu communal organization, had little influence among the Hindu majority, and was dismissed by the Congress as politically irrelevant. The Muslim League had been more or less defunct since 1920, and its popular appeal was negligible. Its social conservatism made it indifferent to the economic reforms that could better the lot of the majority of Indians of all communities. Also, in Muslim-majority provinces like Punjab and Bengal, powerful inter-communal regional parties, led by Muslim politicians, were indifferent to Jinnah's calls for Muslim unity.

The gap between the Congress and the League lay in their attitude to the British. The League thought that all safeguards for minorities should and would be guaranteed by the British, implying a long drawn out British presence in India. For the Congress the goal was independence. The Congress election manifesto of 1936 also reflected the growing mass support for the organization and the crucial role to be played by the masses in the freedom struggle. For Nehru there were two forces in India: the Congress representing the will to freedom of Indians; and the British who tried to suppress it.

For Jinnah there was a third party- and that was the Muslim League. Jinnah's sole aim was to establish the Muslim League as the sole representative of Muslim affairs in Indian politics. This was an uphill climb. The League had been more or less defunct since 1920. Between 1931 and 1933its annual expenditure did not exceed Rs. 3,000. Since the central office of the League was situated in Delhi, members from provinces far away from Delhi hardly ever attended party meetings. Before the 1937 elections, Jinnah failed to win over Muslim leaders in Punjab and Bengal, who sought the support of Hindus.

The provincial elections revealed the strength of the Congress as an all-India force. It contested 1161 seats in the general constituencies and won 716. It won a clear majority in six out of the eleven provinces in British India, and emerged as the single largest party in three other provinces. The Congress routed the Hindu Mahasabha in UP and Punjab and disabled it politically.

Its achievement in the Muslim-majority provinces was less remarkable. It contested only 56 out of 482 Muslim seats and won 28. It did not secure a single Muslim seat in UP, Punjab and Bengal. But it fared well in Muslim majority North-West Frontier Province.

The Congress weakness in the Muslim-majority provinces did not necessarily reflect communal trends. The League was also unable to contest all the Muslim seats. In a voting system based on separate electorates it won only 4.8 per cent of the total Muslim vote in India and was unable to form a government in any Muslim majority province. It lost to the inter-communal regional Unionist Party in Punjab, and the Krishak Praja Party in Bengal. In Punjab it contested 7 and won 2 out of 84 Muslim seats. In Sind it won only 3 out of 33 Muslim seats. Of the 117 Muslim seats in Bengal it obtained 38. The League clearly lacked a popular base in the Muslim-majority provinces.

The poor performance of both the Congress and League in the Muslim seats showed that communal questions did not play a major role in the elections of 1937. Neither could claim to represent Muslims. But the success of the Congress in the general constituencies highlighted its popularity at the all-India level. For the League the future did not appear very promising as it had failed to capture a majority of the Muslim votes and could not form a government in any Muslim-majority province. In contrast, the Congress would form governments in the seven provinces where it had won. (Singh, 2007)

By the beginning of 1939, it was clear that the Congress had yet to win the support of the Muslim masses. But it was also clear that Jinnah had still to find a political vantage point.

His only weapon against the Congress was negative and unconstructive. The alliances with Huq and Sikander prevailed uneasily as both flirted with other parties and did not give him unquestioning obedience. In the NWFP the League earned the nickname 'Motor League', because its members reportedly spent most of their time driving to tea parties! Only in Bengal had the League opened some district level branches to counter the Congress Muslim Mass Contact Programme. In UP, the League's failure to end Shia-Sunni controversy underlined its lack of influence over Muslims.

It is obvious, then, that the alienation of Muslims from the Congress had not united them or made them into supporters of the League by 1939. The politicization electorates since 1937 had not necessarily resulted in success for communal parties like the League and Hindu Mahasabha. Both the League and the Congress had the chance to win Muslim mass support. Jinnah's opposition to the negotiations for a coalition between the League and Congress in UP showed that the failure of those negotiations could not have been the reason for his demand for a sovereign Pakistan in1940. (Singh, 2007)

On 3 September 1939 a new chapter in Indian politics opened. Lord Linlithgow, then Viceroy, announced India's entry into the war without consulting political parties, legislatures or provincial ministries. Linlithgow's overriding objective was to turn India into a war base, and to provide men and money, and he urgently wanted the support of the Indian parties for the war effort.

The other, more pressing, reason for seeking the cooperation of political parties was to expand the numbers and to preserve the loyalty of the army, the ultimate bulwark of the British Empire. The Viceroy began talks with Indian politicians to probe their terms for supporting the British. He was moved by Gandhi's sympathy for Britain, but he knew that Indian parties would want political concessions in return for their support of the war effort. Jinnah hoped to extract from the Viceroy a promise that the British would jettison the idea of

federation because it implied a united India. The working of provincial autonomy had shown how the Congress would behave if they were in a majority, and therefore Congress ministries should be sacked at once.

Linlithgow saw no reason to give up the idea of federation and majority rule. He informed his superiors in Whitehall that Jinnah was insecure. Also, Fazlul Huq and Sikander Hyat Khan had already promised the British unconditional support for the war effort against his wishes and his disposition to bargain. Jinnah's leadership was under fire from radicals in his party who thought he was pandering to reactionaries and *jee huzoors* like Sikander.

As a public man who had to think of his followers, Jinnah had to preserve unity as well as his own authority within the League. He now placed his cards on the table. If Britain wanted to prosecute the war successfully it must take Muslim League into account.

Jinnah's attitude was more conciliatory than that of the Congress and Linlithgow regarded it as 'not on the whole unsatisfactory'. The Viceroy would try to get all sections of the Muslim community into line behind the British.

The Congress Working Committee decided on 14 September 1939 that the issue of war and peace must be decided by the Indian people, who could not permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends. The Congress invited the British government to declare unequivocally its war aims in regard to democracy and imperialism and in particular how these aims would apply to India.

The Muslim League resolution of 18 September gave the Viceroy what he badly needed to resist Congress demands. The League offered to support the war effort if the Viceroy would take its leaders into confidence and accept the League as the only organization that could speak on behalf of Muslim India. In Contrast to the Congress the League was not interested in an independent, united and democratic India; it resolved

that such a system was totally unsuited to British India which was composed a national state. (Singh, 2007)

Most Congress leaders were put off by the League resolution, but they hoped to draw the League into a united nationalist front. So they offered an impartial inquiry into the Muslim League's grievances against their ministries. Jinnah rejected this olive branch. Nevertheless Congress leaders still sought the League's support for the anti-imperialist front and were willing to discuss Congress-League differences with him. At the Nehru-Jinnah talks between 16 and 18 October 1939 it was obvious, yet again, that the real differences between the two men lay in their attitude to the British. Jinnah did not want the Congress to take any action that might lead to a conflict with the British; and unless this matter was cleared up he said that other important questions did not arise.

This pleased the British, who would not make any commitment to independence. Linlithgow countered the Congress demand by saying he would give full weight to the interests of minorities – meaning the Muslim League. This was exactly what Jinnah wanted. He was pleased that the Viceroy had repudiated the Congress claim that that they represented all Indians. The Muslim League now assured Britain of Muslim support and cooperation during the war.

Linlithgow was pleased at the League's stance, but he knew that Jinnah was out to enhance the League's position at the expense of the Congress. He was aware that the safeguards demanded by the League were incompatible with any relaxation of British control over India. Congress leaders rightly accused the British of using Congress-League differences as an excuse to avoid political advance. This was because Linlithgow was now all the more dependent on the League as a counterpoise to the Congress. On 2 November 1939 he placed a veto on political advance in Jinnah's hand by stating that there could be no agreement about the provinces. On 8 November 1939, Linlithgow himself told Lord Zetland, the then

Secretary of State for India, that the League's attitude was 'the sole, or most important' obstacle to the achievement of Indian independence, and that Jinnah could be perceived as a supporter on imperialism.

With no assurance of independence coming from the British, the Congress decided to resign from office in the provinces on 30 October 1939. This did not suit Jinnah. The Congress withdrawal deprived the League of their main weapon of attack against it – the Muslim grievances against Congress ministries.

Jinnah formulated a new strategy to keep anti-Congress feeling high. He called on Muslims to observe 22 December 1939 as a 'day of deliverance' from Congress governments. 'Deliverance Day' fell flat in most provinces but it infuriated Congress leaders, who did not see how and what they could discuss with the League. (Singh, 2007)

At the same time there was no sign of a united Muslim front. It was against this background, on 23 March 1940, that the Muslim League made its demand for a separate Muslim state. "Pakistan" was not mentioned in the Lahore resolution which called for:

> Geographically contiguous units...demarcated into 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.

Although this was the first time that any Muslim party had adopted "Pakistan" for a policy, the idea was not new. The notion of a Muslim homeland in north-western and north-eastern India was made possible, not because most Indian Muslims lived in the Muslim-majority provinces. In fact more than 60 percent of Muslims lived in the Muslim-minority

provinces. But due to an accident of geography Muslims were a majority in four provinces. Without these Muslim majority areas communalism would have existed in India but it seems inconceivable that any section of Muslims would have been able to demand any kind of "homeland".'

The term "Pakistan" was coined by Chaudhury Rahmat Ali, a student at Cambridge, in 1933. In the summer of 1939 Sikander Hyat Khan published a scheme for a loose federation, with regional or zonal legislatures to deal with common subjects. In September 1939 Jinnah had discussed the possibility of partition as a political alternative to federalism. On 4 March, Jinnah told British officials that Muslims would not be safe without partition, and that if they could not resolve the political deadlock, the only option for the League would be to fall back on some form of partition. (Singh, 2007)

Linlithgow still wanted the support of the Congress for the war effort, and made a new offer on 4 August 1940. The August Offer made no provision for a National Government, or a commitment to independence. Disappointed with the Offer the Congress turned it down.

The August Offer also stated that the British would not transfer their responsibilities to any government that was not accepted by 'large and powerful elements in India's national life' – implying the Muslim League. But even Linlithgow found absurd Jinnah's demand that they take the League into ‘full and equal partnership’ in the running of the country. If the League assumed power in the Muslim-majority provinces it would only create more trouble for the British. Jinnah would be out to bargain with the British for more political concessions, and would throw a spanner in the working of the cooperation between the Unionists and the British in Punjab.

The League rejected the August Offer because it was not offered "equal partnership" at the centre and in the provinces in return for cooperating with the war effort. The logic of

the League's claim to parity and recognition by the British as the sole representative of Muslims demonstrated the seriousness of Jinnah's call for a sovereign Muslim state. Concession of parity by the British would mean their acceptance of the Muslim claim to nationhood, recognition of the League as the equal of the Congress, with an equal claim to the spoils of a transfer of power. Conversely, if the British accepted the contention that Muslims were a nation, they must accord them parity. This logic rationalized Jinnah's persuasion of his Working Committee to reject the August Offer. The Muslim League Working Committee wanted to accept the Offer, but deferred to Jinnah's warning that full cooperation would mean that the entire burden of responsibility for protecting the Indian empire, crushing the Congress, supplying men and money and running the administration would fall on the British and the League. If the Congress decided to cooperate, the British would reject Pakistan scheme. So he advised patience with a view to extracting as many concessions as possible. That Jinnah's word prevailed underlined his ability to get his own way, responsible in no small measure for his hold over the All-India Muslim League.

Jinnah made clear in his presidential address to the League in April 1941 that Pakistan would have 'the status of an independent nation and an independent State in this Subcontinent.' Provincial Leaguers were not at one with him; they interpreted Pakistan as consistent with a federation of India for common purposes like defence, provided the Hindu-Muslim elements stood on equal terms.

The British smugly concluded that the League's stance precluded the possibility of any concession to the Congress. Bringing the Congress into the defence machine would paralyze action, conveniently forgetting that the Congress was not hostile to the war machine as such but to its exclusion from any responsibility for it. (Singh, 2007)

The fall of Rangoon on 21 February, and that of Singapore on 8 March 1942, spurred the War Cabinet to make a show of working for political change in India. So Churchill sent

out Sir Stafford Cripps, then Lord Privy Seal in the War Cabinet, with a draft declaration offering dominion status to India, leaving the dominion free to remain in or secede from the Empire when the war ended. The Cripps offer envisaged that elections to provincial legislatures would be held after the war. The Lower Houses would act as a single electoral college and choose the constitution-making body by proportional representation. Provinces would have the right to secede from the Union and frame their own constitution.

The Cripps formula thus provided for partition before the transfer of power took place. In one stroke the British overthrew the Act of 1935 as a basis for a post-war constitutional settlement. The Cripps plan also made clear for the first time that the British envisaged that the main parties involved in the transfer of power would be the Congress and Muslim League. The principle of partition was incorporated into the Cripps proposals in recognition of the League's demand for Pakistan.

The British were therefore surprised at the interest of the Congress in trying to implement the Cripps offer. Jinnah himself was taken aback by the extent to which the Cripps proposals met the demand for Pakistan and seemed ready to take part in any government formed under it. An agreement seemed at hand. But the negotiations failed, not because of the attitude of the Indian parties, but because Churchill refused to contemplate any political liberalization, which he equated with the dissolution of the Empire. So the Cripps proposals fell through because the British cabinet prevented an agreement when its achievement seemed possible.

The Cripps offer also taught Jinnah the advantages of not settling with the Congress. By giving provinces the right to opt out of an Indian federation the Cripps proposals encouraged the League to anticipate that, if power was transferred after the war, Pakistan might be in sight.

Much to Gandhi's dismay, a plan outlined by the right-wing Congress leader, C. Rajagopalachari, in April 1942 conceded the prospect of Pakistan. Rajagopalachari's plan was defeated by the All-India Congress Committee, but the acceptance of the principle of Pakistan by a leading Congressman kept it in the air and intensified communal feeling.

Rajagopalachari's plan also dismayed Sikh leaders, who thought the Congress had sold out to the Muslim League. So, in June 1942, the Akali party, led by Baldev Singh, made their-own terms with Sikander Hyat Khan and his Unionist party, who were opposed to any division of Punjab or India. The Sikhs were uncomfortable as they had not received any assurances about their future political status from the British, Congress or League. Punjab was their homeland, but they were a minority in every district. They would resist incorporation into any separate Muslim state and one of their leaders, Tara Singh, warned that the realization of "Pakistan" would spark civil war in Punjab. (Singh, 2007)

The arrest of Congress leaders precipitated the outbreak of a spontaneous and large-scale civil rebellion. On 31 August Linlithgow informed Churchill that he was facing 'by far the most serious rebellion since that of 1857, the gravity and extent of which we have so far concealed from the world for reasons of military security.'

The events of 1942 showed the depth of the national will. In August and September the British used 57 battalions to crush the revolt, 24 of which had to be withdrawn from field formations under training. The administration broke down completely in most of North-Central Bihar and Eastern UP, and the fortnightly reports from the Governor of Bihar for August could not be sent to Delhi because of a breakdown of communications. Railways were blocked or dismantled, telegraph wires were cut; certain railway stations in Orissa could not be declared protected areas because forces were not available to protect them. The Whipping Act was revived in Bombay, and a concerned War Cabinet was told that the

introduction of whipping, 'which might be better termed corporal punishment, is a minor detail in a serious situation.'

The long-term problem was the British intention to leave India. Jinnah declared the movement as most dangerous, intended to force Congress demands at the point of the bayonet. If Congress demands were conceded it would mean the sacrifice of Muslim interests in India. He appealed to Muslims to keep completely aloof from the movement. Provincial Leaguers followed his lead and used their influence to keep Muslims away from the Quit India movement.

One of the most remarkable features of the Quit India movement was the absence of any communal incident or disorder. Even if Muslims generally stayed away from the movement, British officials found, to their dismay that very few Muslims came forward to give evidence against saboteurs, most of whom, presumably, were Hindus. (Singh, 2007)

By March 1943 nearly 30,000 members were enrolled in the Thar Pakkar district alone. In the NWFP the arrest of 8 out of 21 Congress legislators in August 1942 reduced its majority in the provincial Assembly, and opened the way for a League ministry. However, divisions in the provincial League had discouraged the Governor, Cunningham, from installing a League ministry. After prolonged negotiations with the Akalis and the Hindu Mahasabha, Aurangzeb Khan, leader of the NWFP League, formed a coalition with the Akalis, but this ministry only enjoyed the support of 19 of the 43 members in the provincial assembly.(Singh, 2007)

A League Ministry, headed by Khwaja Nazimuddin, was installed by the Governor in Apri1 1943. It enjoyed the support of the Europeans in the Bengal Assembly and contained no Muslim who was not a member of the League. Nazimuddin promised to do everything to advance the war effort.

In December 1943 Jinnah formed a Committee of Action, comprising 5 to 7 members, to prepare and organize Muslims throughout India to meet all contingencies, resist any constitution for a united India and prepare for the struggle for the achievement of Pakistan. It is difficult to say how much control the Committee of Action exercised over provincial Leagues. It had practically no contact with provincial League in the NWFP. Jinnah himself was not very interested in provincial politics; he concentrated on strengthening his position and prestige at the all-India level. Coalitions with non-Muslim parties or non-League Muslims in the provinces only detracted from the League's claim to represent all Muslims. That was why he put his foot down whenever Leaguers tried to line up with non-League Muslims. It was in Punjab that Jinnah launched a unique and unprecedented campaign in November 1942 to establish a League ministry in the province. (Singh, 2007)

The Sikander-Jinnah pact shook the foundations of his alliance with Baldev Singh and widened the communal cleavage in Punjab. The Sikhs accused Sikander of not honouring his pact with Baldev Singh and of Muslim bias. On the popular level the League did not attract large audiences at its meetings in Punjab. But the death of Sikander in December 1942 was a blow to the Unionists and to the British, who acknowledged that they owed the success of the war effort in Punjab to him. Punjab was the only Muslim majority province which had escaped internecine conflicts and frequent changes of ministries since the outbreak of the war. Khizar Hyat Khan Tiwana, the new leader, managed to hold his own against Jinnah at the all-India Muslim League session in Delhi in March 1943.He proclaimed his adherence to the Sikander-Jinnah pact of 1942 but failed to prevent the setting up of a separate League party in Punjab. In February 1944 the reference made by Lord Wavell, the new Viceroy, to the unity of India and his praise for the success of the inter-communal coalition in Punjab put Jinnah up in arms against Khizar. (Singh, 2007)

The enhancement of the League's prestige between 1942 and 1945 owed much to the British and the Congress. For tactical reasons the British recognized the League's claim to speak for Muslims at the all-India level. The Cripps offer went far to concede the right of cession to the Muslim-majority provinces, and so gave some substance to the possibility of Pakistan. In Sind and Bengal the League came into power as a result of official reactions to the ministries which were governing those provinces until October 1942 and March 1943 respectively. However, as their support for the Unionists against Jinnah showed, the British did not necessarily want the League to govern all the Muslim-majority provinces: what mattered most to them was the success of the war effort. In a confidential letter to Wavell on6 April 1944, Sir Bertrand Glancy, Governor of Punjab, sharply observed that Jinnah was preaching Pakistan as the panacea for all ills, but avoided any reasoned explanation of where it began or ended and what benefits it would confer.

Like the British, Congress leaders gave recognition to the principle of Pakistan in 1942 and 1944, regardless of Jinnah's weak position in the Muslim-majority provinces. In his talks with Jinnah in the summer of 1944 Gandhi conceded the principle of Pakistan, probably in the hope of assuaging Jinnah's fears about Congress domination in a united independent India. But this gesture of goodwill was of no avail. Jinnah reiterated that the only solution was to accept the division of India into Pakistan and Hindustan. In this way, both the British and Congress leaders gave substance to the demand for Pakistan, and indirectly built up the stature of the League at the all-India level. (Singh, 2007)

The Second World War ended on 6 May 1945. The next ten months saw the consolidation of the League's position as a force in all-India politics. This happened in two ways. First, in June 1945, the British tacitly acknowledged Jinnah's right to nominate all Muslims to a new Executive Council by not openly criticizing his attitude as unreasonable, especially as most provincial Leaguers were opposed to his stance.

Secondly, Jinnah himself knew that his strength in all India negotiations would be enhanced if the Muslim League won a majority of Muslim votes in the elections to the provincial and central legislatures in the winter of 1945-6. He therefore made a determined effort to expand the League's organization in Muslim-majority provinces, to mobilize Muslims through religious propaganda and to spread the message of Pakistan. He succeeded in his effort in some measure because of the weaknesses of his opponents. (Singh, 2007)

On 15 June 1945 Wavell announced that he would invite Indian leaders to discuss the formation of a new Executive Council, which would be more representative of political opinion. Gandhi protested against the proposed parity between "Caste Hindus" and Muslims in the new Council. He made clear that the Congress would not accept the right of the League to nominate all Muslim members of the new government.

Wavell had no objection to any name on the list submitted by the Congress. But from the outset Congress-League differences on the League's desire to nominate all Muslim members of the proposed Executive Council created problems at the Simla Conference, which started on 25June1945. Provincial Muslim Leaguers were not with Jinnah. Saadullah and Nazimuddin were dependent on Congress support in Assam and Bengal respectively. In the NWFP 50 percent of all educated Muslims did not think he should have a monopoly of Muslim nominations. The Unionists expected some reward from the British for their cooperation in the war effort; and they wanted to have at least one seat in the new Executive Council. Confronting opposition from provincial Leaguers, Jinnah refused to submit any list of Muslim representatives.

To break the deadlock Wavell drew up his own list and showed it to Jinnah. Wavell excluded Congress Muslims in order to please Jinnah but included the name of a Unionist Muslim. Jinnah refused even to discuss the names on the Viceroy's list unless he could be given the absolute right to select all Muslims. He also wanted some guarantee that any

decision which the Muslims opposed in the Council would be passed by a two-thirds majority – in fact a kind of communal veto. Wavell told him that these conditions were entirely unacceptable. At the last meeting of the Conference on 14 July, Jinnah claimed parity in the Council with all the other parties combined.

Wavell could have gone ahead without the League or pressed Jinnah to include non-League Muslims. But Churchill's government instructed the Viceroy not to embarrass Jinnah. So Wavell just wound up the Conference. By refusing to condemn Jinnah's intransigence in fact, by giving in to it, the British presented him with the right to veto political progress. At no stage did the Conference have a say in the matter. The Congress Working Committee found themselves helpless in the face of the Viceroy's attitude. But Congress leaders never learned that he was acting on the orders of the British government.

The British elections of July 1945 brought the Labour government, led by Clement Attlee, into power. On the advice of the new government Wavell announced new elections to the central and provincial legislatures on 21 August. What gave the Indian elections significance was Attlee's statement in the British parliament on 11 September that the Cripps offer of 1942 stood in all its fullness and purpose.

If the Cripps offer stood as the basis of British policy it meant that provinces would have the right to opt out of the Union. That, at least, was Jinnah's interpretation. He worked hard to get a majority in the Muslim-majority provinces so that he could achieve a sovereign Pakistan. (Singh, 2007)

Now that the League was expanding its organization into the countryside, it exploited the religious appeal of Pakistan. Muslim League leaders preached that a vote for the League was a vote for the Prophet. In the Jhelum district the League candidate asked voters to choose between *Din* and *Dunya*. Din was presented as righteousness, the cause of Pakistan, saving

Muslims from the slavery of Hindus. *Dunya* was projected as the reign of infidels and nepotism.

In Bengal, H.S. Suhrawardy had built up support in the urban areas between 1943-45. Fazlul Huq on the other hand, had been involved in ministerial politicking and gradually lost support among the rural peasantry, who had swept him into power in 1937. In 1946 Suhrawardy selected all the League candidates from Bengal, and presented "Pakistan" to the Bengali Muslim as an autonomous Bengal and Assam, showering prosperity on Muslims. The League also promised abolition of the zamindari without compensation – a promise which won it the support of the rural Bengal peasantry. Other Leaguers said that if the British imposed an Interim Government of India, which had adequate safeguards for Muslims, it would be accepted. There is hardly any evidence that Bengal Leaguers were thinking of their provinces as part of a sovereign state of Pakistan. (Singh, 2007)

The gains of the League's victory in other Muslim-majority provinces highlighted the turning away of many Muslims from provincial politicians to rally behind the League as the only all-India Muslim party which would take care of their interests at the centre in the negotiations for the transfer of power. The League's success also represented a solidification and politicization of the Muslim religious community, a rallying to "Pakistan", but whether that meant the victory of Jinnah's conception of a sovereign state can perhaps be questioned. (Singh, 2007)

If the emergence of Pakistan as a sovereign state through the 1947 partition was the inevitable result of the politicization of two intrinsic 'nations', the question of how and when that politicization occurred to make that inevitable arises. In the case of the Muslim community in the Muslim-majority provinces the first essential for such a development was their unification behind the All-India Muslim League, capable of focusing their political

weight at the central negotiating table….On the other hand, Wavell also advised the Cabinet early in 1946 that the British should withdraw from India by June 1948.

Labour Government's commitment to British power was understandably greater than its so-called commitment to Indian independence. British interests were paramount: the political decision to transfer power rested on the strategical premise that Indian security required that India remain in the Commonwealth.

From August 1945 onwards the British were also concerned over the problem of law and order. Popular support for the Congress was evident from the large crowds which greeted political prisoners on their release from jail. The loyalty of Indians in the armed forces and Civil Service also concerned the British keenly.

The crumbling of the imperial military base was signalled further by the mutinies of the Royal Indian Air force and Royal Indian Navy in January and February 1946. The mutinies came without any warning to the British. Although the Air Force mutiny was quickly suppressed, in the naval mutiny twenty British ships were captured in Bombay, and in Karachi; and the rebels retaliated with the ships' guns after British troops opened fire. Congress and League flags flew side by side in Bombay, where industrial labour also joined the strike. Congress and League leaders used their influence to bring the strikes to an end.

This was the background to the Cabinet Mission, which arrived in India on 14 March 1946. Its aim, as described by Prime Minister Clement Attlee, was to get machinery set up for framing the constitutional structure in which Indians would have full control of their own destiny and the formation of a new Interim Government.

The British favoured a transfer of power to a united India, which would keep the army undivided and be of the greatest advantage to them strategically. For defence purposes it was essential that India remain a single unit. Neither the League nor the Congress was told about these intentions. Partition would destroy the homogeneity of the Indian army, and would be

resorted to if the only alternative was complete failure and consequent chaos. If it had to be adopted every effort should be made to obtain agreement for some form of central defence to be set up which would include not only Pakistan, Hindustan and the Princely States, but also Burma and Ceylon, (now Sri Lanka).

Pakistan, if formed, would be militarily unviable. But the British could not come out openly against it, for this could arouse Muslim feeling in Palestine, which would pose a grave threat to the defence system of the Commonwealth. For the British the only alternative was that negotiations for a transfer of power to an undivided India must succeed. It was the only basis on which the British could hope to secure their long-term aim of maintaining India within the imperial security system; therefore they made every effort to achieve it.

Wavell regarded Gandhi as a very tough politician and not a saint. From the start of the negotiations Wavell thought Cripps and Pethick-Lawrence paid too much deference to Congress leaders and their wishes. The Viceroy was appalled at Pethick-Lawrence's apology for 'Britain's misdeeds in the past'. When Gandhi expressed a wish for a glass of water, the Secretary was sent to fetch it himself, instead of sending for a *chaprasi*, and when it did not come at once Cripps fetched it.

Wavell also disliked the Muslim Leaguers. None could say what they meant by Pakistan; they had no real arguments, except vague phrases like 'balance of power', 'prestige', and 'psychological effect'; they also displayed much hatred towards Hindus. Nevertheless, Wavell and Lord Alexander were determined that the Muslim League should not be let down. Since neither the British nor the Congress wanted partition, why couldn't they join forces against the League?

For Congress leaders, partition would be the antithesis of the united secular India they were striving to achieve. The British opposed partition because it would break up the military foundations of their world-wide empire. They wanted to transfer power to an undivided India

which could be retained as a military base. Imperial India was the military arm of the British Empire, supplying it, at no expense to the British taxpayer, with a million troops. The British Indian Army was a well-trained mobile striking force, which could be deployed at short notice anywhere in the world.

The British never informed the Indian parties that a defence agreement assuring the maintenance of their concrete military power would be a condition for Independence.

So, at the Cabinet Mission negotiations all three parties were working at cross-purposes: the League for partition, the Congress for independence for a united India; the British to retain power at the centre in an undivided India, exploiting the Congress-League rift while extracting a military agreement that would uphold their imperial power.

The Mission Plan of 16 May 1946 envisaged a Union government and a legislature to deal with defence and foreign policy, finance and fundamental rights. To placate the League, the Plan stated that all remaining powers would be vested in the provinces. Groups of provinces would determine the provincial subjects they wished to take in common. Groups could set up their own legislatures and executives. Any province could by a majority vote of its legislative assembly review the terms of the constitution every ten years. Provincial assemblies would elect the Constituent Assembly, in which each province would be allotted a number of seats proportional to its population.

The Constituent Assembly would be divided into three sections, representing the Hindu and Muslim-majority provinces and the princely states. The Hindu and Muslim groups would meet separately to decide the provincial constitutions for their group and the group constitution. After these had been settled, a province could opt out of its group. Thereafter the three sections would meet together to settle the union constitution.

The Congress feared that grouping would facilitate Partition. The League complained that the Plan favoured a union. The League never accepted any feature of the union and insisted that it would never enter a Constituent Assembly for a United India.

In private discussions the British told the Muslim League on 16 May 1946 that sections would frame their own constitutions and that the British would only transfer power after a constitution had been crafted in accordance with the Mission Plan. In principle this meant that any section could opt out of a united India. Pakistan could therefore become a reality under the British, before they withdrew.

So Jinnah envisaged a long drawn out process of constitution making and a British presence until it was complete. Cripps and Pethick-Lawrence assured Leaguers on 16 May that the British intended that sections of the Assembly would determine their own constitutions. Sovereignty would not be transferred until the new constitution had been framed.

Congress leaders expressed themselves against grouping and stressed the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly. The British had agreed to this subject to two conditions: equitable treatment of minorities and a defence treaty between India, and Britain. The British told them just the opposite of what they had told the League: that the Constituent Assembly would be a sovereign body. That meant that they would not be responsible for the implementation of the Mission Plan, which is what they had told the League. Neither the League nor the Congress was aware that the British had given contradictory assurances to the other.

The League's resolution made clear that it was accepting the Plan because the compulsory grouping of the six Muslim-majority provinces would favour the creation of a sovereign Pakistan.

Jinnah's suspicions were therefore aroused when the British accepted, a little later, a Congress resolution accepting the Plan with the intention of working against grouping in the Constituent Assembly and asserting that no one would dictate to the Assembly what it should or should not do.

Nehru stressed the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly on19 and 29 July 1946. 'Nehru thought that once Indian parties entered the Assembly they would concentrate on political, social and economic issues. Grouping then is relegated to the background. This implied that grouping was not the leitmotif of his statement. More importantly, Nehru stated firmly that the British could not dictate to the Assembly on any issue. His remarks were clearly aimed at the British and emphasized the independence of the Constituent Assembly. Despite a demand by Jinnah, the British did not respond to his statements.

Nehru's critics have alleged that his opposition to the grouping clauses was the reason for the breakdown of the Mission Plan. Since one of Nehru's critics was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a colleague in the Congress Working Committee, Nehru has been blamed continually for the political breakdown in the seemingly endless debates on the unwanted partition. And, in post-1947 India, the popular pastime of "Nehru bashing" has been easy when the man has been dead for some 42 years. In fact, the basic difference between the League and the Congress lay in their attitude to the British Raj and their vision of an independent India. That schism was highlighted and deepened during political negotiations in 1946.

It was the realization that the British would not implement the Mission Plan in the way they had assured the League, that the League might get nothing from the British, that proved, on 29 July 1946, to be the catalyst for its call for Direct Action. (Singh, 2007)

On 29 July the League Working Committee withdrew its earlier approval of the Missions long term plan and gave a call for “Direct Action”. For Qaid-e-Azam, who believed

throughout his life in constitutional politics, the day finally arrived to "bid good bye to constitutional methods" and prepare his Muslim nation for agitational politics.

This popular agitation for Pakistan was to commence from 16 August 1946, which was chosen as the "Direct Action Day", and it was on this very day that all hell was let loose on Calcutta. The public rally was followed next by what is known in history as the "Great Calcutta Killing". The Muslim crowd on their way back began to attack Hindus and their properties; the Hindus fought back; and this craziness went on unfettered for four days, killing four thousand people and injuring ten thousand more. If the Muslim League mobilized the masses around the ideological symbol of Pakistan, the Hindu Mahasabha had also raised the slogan of Hindu *Rashtra* (state) and launched a mass mobilization campaign. As a "chain reaction" to the Calcutta carnage, riots broke out in the districts of Chittagong, Dacca, Mymensingh, Barisal and Pabna. But the worst came in October in the two south eastern districts of Noakhali and Tippera. If in Calcutta the two communities shared the casualties almost equally, here the Hindus were mostly on the receiving end, as Muslim peasants, in very systematically orchestrated attacks, destroyed Hindu property, raped their women and killed several thousands of them.

It was not just Bengal that witnessed such communal polarization at a mass level. Christophe Jaffrelot (1996) has shown that almost the entire north Indian Hindi belt was experiencing the same communal build up in the 1940s. If the Muslim minorities organized themselves around the rallying symbol of Pakistan and were razing disciplined paramilitary volunteer organizations as the Muslim National Guard, the Hindus did not fall behind in organizing and simultaneously stigmatizing their "threatening others" this can be gauged from the growing popularity of the overtly Hindu Nationalist organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which focussed primarily on the social and psychological construction of the Hindu nation. The number of its volunteers rose from forty thousand in

1938 to seventy-six thousand in 1943 to six hundred thousand by the beginning of 1948. The volunteers were attracted to paramilitary training, were distrustful of Gandhian methods, and nurtured deep anti-Muslim feelings. And the organization was generously patronized by the Hindu Mahasabha leaders, the Arya Samajis and the maharajas of certain princely states where Muslim minorities had of late become articulate and militant. It was no wonder, therefore, that the communal fire that was kindled in Calcutta soon engulfed the whole of the subcontinent. (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

Viceroy Wavell had in the meanwhile managed to constitute an Indian interim government without the Muslim League. A Congress dominated government was sworn in on 2September 1946 with Jawaharlal Nehru as the prime minister. But it came to a complete impasse when in late October the League was also persuaded to join. Nehru sat helplessly while his country was torn by civil war. On 9 December the Constituent Assembly started meeting, but the League decided to boycott it, as Congress refused to accommodate its demand for sectional meetings drafting group constitutions. Only one man still tried to change the course of history! Gandhi almost single-handedly tried to bring back public conscience. He moved alone fearlessly into the riot-torn places – from Noakhali to Calcutta to Bihar to Delhi. His presence had a miraculous effect, but this personal effort failed to provide a permanent solution. At the age of seventy seven, Gandhi was now a lonely figure in Indian politics; as S. Gopal succinctly describes it, “His role in the Congress was similar to that of a head of an Oxbridge college who is greatly revered but has little influence on the governing body.” By March/April 1947, against his explicit wishes, many of the Congress leaders had more or less reconciled themselves to the idea of conceding Pakistan and accepting freedom with partition as a preferable option to the continuing communal violence. However, this was tinged with optimism that this partition would be temporary and, as Nehru

wrote on 29 April, "ultimately there will be a united and strong India." (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

So on 20 February Viceroy Wavell declared that power would be transferred by June 1948 to such authority or in such a way as would seem most reasonable and be in the best interests of the Indian people. Mountbatten arrived in New Delhi on 22 March with plenipotentiary powers and a clear mandate to expedite the process of withdrawal. He realized on his very arrival that it was virtually impossible to hand over power to a united India. On the contrary, there is a also a view that it was his "forced march" to the demission of power that further heightened communal tension and made partition inevitable. In the middle of April he produced what is known as 'Plan Balkan'. It proposed the partition of Punjab and Bengal and handing over power to the provinces and sub-provinces, which would be free to join one or more of group Constituent Assemblies on the basis of self-determination, while the Interim Government would remain until June 1948. Demission of power to the provinces and the absence of a strong centre would certainly lead to Balkanisation of India. It is therefore not surprising that Nehru rejected these proposals on the ground that "[i]nstead of producing any sense of certainty, security and stability, they would encourage disruptive tendencies everywhere and chaos and weakness." Jinnah cast them aside too, as he was not yet prepared to accept the partition of Punjab and Bengal which would give him only a "truncated or mutilated, moth-eaten Pakistan."

On 3 June Mountbatten announced his new plan and proposed to advance the date of transfer of power from June 1948 to 15 August 1947. The plan provided for the partition of Bengal and Punjab; the Hindu majority provinces which had already accepted the existing Constituent Assembly would be given no choice; while the Muslim majority provinces i.e., Bengal, Punjab, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan would decide whether to join the existing or a new and separate Constituent Assembly for Pakistan; this was to be

decided by the provincial assemblies; there would be a referendum in the North-West Frontier Provinces, and in case of Baluchistan, the Quetta municipality and the tribal representatives would be consulted. Nehru, Jinnah and Sardar Baldev Singh on behalf of the Sikhs endorsed the plan the following day and thus began the fast march to transfer of power. (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

The Shiromani Akali Dal opposed such separatist claims, but its anxiety to preserve the territorial integrity of the Sikh community increased once the Pakistan proposal was given serious consideration by the Cripps Mission and in the Rajgopalachari formula of the Congress. As a pre-emptive strike to prevent the possibility of their perpetual subjugation to the Muslim majority rule, they now began to talk of a distinct Sikh land in eastern and central parts of Punjab, taking Chinab river as the dividing line. This territorial vision of Sikh identity took various expressions, such as "Azad Punjab" in 1942 or a "Sikh state" in 1944; but none of these claims were separatist *per se*.

Once the talk of Pakistan became more serious, particularly in the election of 1946, the Akalis decided to move into strategic alliance with the Unionists and later formed a coalition government with them. Before the Cabinet Mission in 1946, Tara Singh on their behalf once again asserted that they were opposed to Pakistan, but if that eventually occurred Punjab would like to remain a separate state, with options to federate with either India or Pakistan. The relationship between the Muslims and the Sikhs deteriorated further following the resignation of the Khizr ministry and outbreak of violence since March 1947. The Akali Dal, patronized by the Maharaja of Patiala, now started mobilizing jathas for the defence of Sikh life, property and the holy shrines, and more significantly, called for partition of Punjab – a demand, which was ultimately accepted by the Congress in its 8 March resolution. But when partition was agreed upon in the 3 June proposal on the basis of population, the Sikhs found that they were about to lose significant properties and important shrines in the Muslim

majority divisions of west Punjab. So a group, prompted by a few British advisers, now began to advocate a third line, that of opting for Pakistan and having an autonomous Sikh region there, and thus retaining the unity of the Sikh community, at least as a powerful minority. But given the hostile attitude of Jinnah and the existing communal relationship, such an alternative to partition seemed impossible to most of the Sikhs. (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

In Bengal, on the other hand, a group within the Bengal Muslim League, led by H. S. Suhrawardhy and Abul Hashim, began to advocate since May 1947 a proposal for a 'United Sovereign Bengal', and received the support of the local Congress stalwart Sarat Bose. But in a communal charged environment, most of the Bengali Hindus believed that the move was nothing but a ploy to have a greater Pakistan that would incorporate the economically rich western Bengal, particularly the city of Calcutta. The proposal was virtually dead when the "well-orchestrated campaign" that the Hindu Mahasabha and the local Congress had launched since April 1947 picked up momentum, advocating the partition of Bengal and constructing a Hindu homeland by retaining the Hindu majority areas in a separate province of West Bengal within the Indian Union.

By late June partition of India was a *fait accompli*. The Bengal Assembly on 20 June and the Punjab Assembly on 23 June decided in favour of Partition: West Punjab and East Bengal would go to Pakistan and the rest would remain in India. Shortly following this, Sind, Baluchistan and then the North-West Frontier Province – against the wishes of the popular Gandhian leader Abdul Gaffar Khan – opted to join Pakistan. Mountbatten's next task was to appoint two Boundary Commissions – one for Bengal and one for Punjab – both under Sir Cyril Radcliffe, to delineate the international frontiers within a strict time frame of not more than six weeks. And the boundaries that the Radcliffe Award prescribed, even the Viceroy admitted, were sure to "cause anguish to many millions of people" on both sides. The India

Independence Act was ratified by the Crown on18 July and was implemented on 14/15 August 1947. Pakistan became independent on 14 August, when in a brief ceremony at Karachi, the newly designated capital, Mountbatten handed over power by reading a King's message, and Jinnah took over as the first Governor General of the Dominion of Pakistan. That night, the Indian Constituent Assembly met in a special session, where at the stroke of midnight Nehru delivered his now famous "Tryst with Destiny" speech. When the rest of the world was fast asleep, as he put it his exemplary flamboyant style, India awoke to life and freedom. The next day he was sworn in as free India's first Prime Minister and the country plunged into celebrations. (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

But there were many who were not in a mood to celebrate. To register his opposition to partition, Gandhi decided not to participate in any celebration and spent the day in fasting and prayer. For many Indians freedom thus came with a sense of loss caused by the partition, while to many Muslims in Pakistan, particularly to their state ideologues, partition itself meant freedom. It is not wonder, therefore, that 'Partition' happens to be the most contested discursive territory of South Asian historiography; just the sheer volume of the literature that has been produced in this field is staggering. When Pakistan was ultimately created, it contained 60 million Muslims, leaving behind another 35 million in non-Muslim India. (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

Historians are now evidently less concerned about causes, and more introspective about the "afterlife" or "aftermath" of partition in South Asia. In other words, they look at how partition impacted on post-colonial history and politics, how partition memory defines community identities and affect inter-community relations, thus emphasising a historical continuity. They self-consciously deny the year 1947 and the foundation of the two nation-states the privilege of being treated as "the end of all history". (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

Demission of power in India did not, however, immediately mean the end of Britain's imperial ambitions, as the old notion of empire now evolved into the more dynamic concept of the Commonwealth of Nations, where old colonies would be "in no way subordinate in any aspect of domestic or external affairs", but would be "freely associated and united by common allegiance to the Crown". Mountbatten took it as a personal mission to persuade India to accept dominion status and remain within the Commonwealth. India in 1947 found its hands forced to some extent when Pakistan accepted the Commonwealth membership; but the new constitution, promulgated on 26 January 1950, proclaimed India a Republic. However, British "pragmatism", as D. George Boyce has argued, managed to overcome this challenge to the "Crown, so central to the whole Empire and Commonwealth identity". India agreed and was allowed to remain in the Commonwealth, despite its republican status – the whole idea of Commonwealth thus being reconstituted. However, the most fundamental shift that occurred in 1947 was in the location of power, i.e., in the "emergence of India as a sovereign state", which historian Ravinder Kumar has claimed in his celebratory mood to be "one of the crucial events of the 20th century." (Bandyopadhyay, 2004)

In a Nutshell, I would like to present a timeline of the main events that made Partition inevitable, potentially dangerous and remarkably tragic in the form of the following table:

Timeline of the Partition	
Partition–Years	**Partition – Events**
1905	Partition of Bengal
1906	Simla deputation petitions the Viceroy for separate Muslim electorates and weightage in representation.
1906	Foundation of All India Muslim League at Dhaka

1909	Indian Councils Act. Morley-Minto Reforms to the Legislative Councils introduced elections at the centre and separate electorates for Muslims in all Councils
1915	Hindu Mahasabha started at Kumbh Mela, Haridwar. Congress and the Muslim League conclude the Lucknow Pact, a joint constitutional scheme for India, on the basis of dominion status.
1919	Indian Councils Act. Montague-Chelmsford reforms extend the Morley-Minto logic of separate electorates for Muslims to the enlarged provincial and central legislatures. Growth of communal antagonism at the level of High Politics, as well as mass politics (1920s witnessed a series of riots in the United Provinces).
1921	Khilafat Non-Cooperation Mass Movement under the leadership of Gandhi. Withdrawal and frustration, after Chauri Chaura incident. Mopla Rebellion, conversions and counter-conversions through *Shuddhi* and *Sanaathan*, and later through *tabligh* and *tanzim*.
1925	Foundation of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, at Nagpur.
1928	Nehru Report proposes a Constitution in which India would attain dominion status with a fully responsible government at the Centre and in the provinces, and which in character is more unitary than federal. It recommends the abolition of separate electorates for Muslims, but an increase in the number of Muslim majority provinces from two to four.

1930	Muhammad Iqbal, in his address to the Muslim League, suggests the formation of a Muslim State within the Indian Federation.
1930-32	Communal Award grants separate electorates to Muslims, Sikhs and Untouchables. Gandhi fasts in protest; Poona pact replaces separate electorate for Untouchables with some reserved seats. Round Table Conference boycotted by Congress, but attended by the Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and some Liberals.
1933	Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, a law student at Cambridge, in a pamphlet, *Now or Never*, puts forward a scheme for a fully independent territorial Muslim State consisting of the Punjab, the Frontier province, Kashmir and Baluchistan.
1935	Government of India Act gives almost complete autonomy to the provinces. It establishes "The Federation of India" comprising both provinces and princely states, with a federal Central government and Legislature for the management of Central subjects. The principle of diarchy is abolished in the provinces and transferred to the Centre.
1937	First general elections under 1935 Act. Congress wins 711 out of 1585 provinces, adding an eighth in 1938. Congress launches its mass contact campaign among Muslims without much success. It is abandoned by 1939.
1939	Congress governments resign because Government of India declares war without consulting Indians. Celebrated as "day of deliverance" by Jinnah and Ambedkar.

1940	Muslim League adopts Pakistan as its goal at Lahore.
1942	The Cripps Mission comes to India, but fails to reach a settlement with Congress. Quit India mass movement.
1945	Simla Conference of all political groups fails to agree over the composition of the Executive Council.
1945-46	Second general elections under 1935 Act. The Muslim League wins over 90 percent of reserved Muslim seats.
1946	Cabinet Mission fails to win agreement from Congress and Muslim League over India's constitutional feature. Indian National Army Trials, Royal Indian Navy Mutiny. Direct Action Day and the beginning of Partition violence in Calcutta, followed by Bombay, Noakhali, Bihar and Garmukteshwar (Uttar Pradesh). "Gandhi's Finest Hour" – his fast brings the violence in Noakhali to a temporary halt. Gandhi continues his campaign against violence, away from Transfer of Power parleys and negotiations.
1947	14th August: Pakistan attains independence. 15th August: India becomes independent.
1948	Gandhi assassinated by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu extremist, at a Prayer meeting on 30th January, at Birla House, New Delhi. Violence gradually abates.

(Ravikant and Tarun K. Saint, 2002)

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CHAPTER 4
Representation of History in Five Holocaust Films

4.1 Holocaust Cinema: An Overview

As the twenty-first century gathers momentum, ostensibly moving the traumatic legacy of World War II into an ever more distant past, the production of Holocaust films proliferates. While the number of witnesses to the atrocities perpetrated by Nazi Germany is dwindling, there seems to be an uninterrupted, even growing interest in this particular set of historical events and their cultural and ethical implications. The preservation of Holocaust memory is without doubt one of the dominant ethical imperatives of our time; archival sources become more accessible, and a plethora of new studies deals with Nazi Germany's attempt to exterminate the Jews of Europe, as well as with the cultural aftermath of the Holocaust. However, the dissemination of Holocaust memory is mainly taking place outside the realm of academia. Since the 'communicative memory' of the Holocaust is dying with the last eyewitnesses, widely available media, in particular film, are assuming an increasingly significant part in the transmission of what Joshua Hirsch has aptly termed 'a form of post traumatic historical memory'. The question of how mediated representations can deal responsibly and effectively with the memories of the past has therefore to be asked anew. And it has to be asked in a transnational context that is inclusive of different traditions. Holocaust remembrance exists at the intersection of national cultures, aesthetic conventions and, at least in the context of the film, the inner logic of popular forms of entertainment. The detailed study of Holocaust cinema closes the gap between archive and cultural practice, and the resulting broadening of perspectives allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the different strategies used to remember past atrocities. (Kobrynskyy and Bayer, 2015)

Holocaust films are doubly entwined in the dynamic of memories. As cultural artefacts that come into being within a specific production context, these films shed light on how communities deal with or fail to come to terms with the legacy of the Holocaust. In

doing so, they reflect past and present strategies of representation, as well as their limits. (Kobrynskyy and Bayer, 2015)

Recent Holocaust cinema indeed has to be seen as engaging not just with the historical reality of the Holocaust and its repercussions but also with the quit substantial body of Holocaust cinema to date. The various releases from Claude Lanzmann's original *Shoah* material over the past ten years demonstrate, for instance, how Holocaust cinema exists as an inter-textual network of visualized memories that frequently adds to and cites from earlier documents. This cinematic engagement with the visual legacy of the archive is not limited to moving images. As the contributions to Axel Bangert, Robert Gordon and Libby Saxton's *Holocaust intersections* (2013) demonstrate, the field of visual culture has contributed significantly to how the Holocaust and other forms of genocide are represented in an aesthetic context. In recent Holocaust films, photographs are saliently used, which draws our attention to intermedial relations between cinema and photography. There are significant areas of overlap between these two largely separate semiotic traditions, for instance when portraits of perpetrators, bystanders and victims appear in films as intermedial reproductions of archival images. The proliferation of these images in recent Holocaust films can at least be explained by photography's mimetic qualities that assign to black and white photographs, appearing on cinema screens, a sense of referential authenticity. The practice of German occupiers to take, often against orders, remembrance photos has left us with a number of images first-handedly documenting crimes against civilians. While there are very few surviving photographs the extermination procedure in the camps, mug shots of prisoners and photographs of victims of medical experiments are occasionally used in recent films. (Kobrynskyy and Bayer, 2015)

In the light of how early twenty-first s century Holocaust cinema has aimed to extend the way in which viewers reflect about and remember the Holocaust, one can expect future

films to move further away from what Insdorf describes as 'images – of smoke, of barbed-wire, of sealed train cars, of skeletal bodies – that now function as synecdoches' and be more inclusive of lesser-known aspects of the Nazi crimes. (Kobrynskyy and Bayer, 2015)

Because the Holocaust was such a unique and painful event in the history of human interactions, many filmmakers have dealt with the subject in their films. As the topic is so large, filmmakers all over the world, from the 1940s to our day, have chosen to depict diverse aspects of the Holocaust in both fiction and non-fiction films.

During the first years after World War II, fiction films about the Holocaust were made in those eastern European countries that suffered very badly under the Nazis. In some of the films from that time, the Nazi persecution of Jews plays a minor role, while the war and the ensuing hardship take the films' major focus. An example of this phenomenon is the trilogy of films made by Polish director Andrzej Wajda, which described Polish life in occupied Warsaw. Since that time, a number of films have been produced that focus on Jewish characters and the specifically Jewish experience during the Holocaust. A different type of fictionalized Holocaust film is that which uses the Holocaust as a backdrop for the film's main storyline, rather than a major focus. (Shoah Resource Center, *Films on the Holocaust*)

4.2 Life is Beautiful (1997)

A tragicomedy and a classic in the annals of Holocaust films, *Life Is Beautiful* is a 1997 Italian film directed and starred by Roberto Benigni, who also co-wrote the film with Vincenzo Cerami. Benigni plays the clownish character of Guido, a Jewish Italian bookshop owner, who employs his extraordinarily fertile imagination to save his son from the horrors of internment in a Nazi concentration camp, and later on a definite death. The film partially represents the family history of Roberto Benigni, whose father had survived three years of internment at the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Critically well acclaimed, *Life is*

Beautiful won for its ingenious actor-director Benigni the "Academy Award for Best Actor" at the 71st Academy Awards as well as the "Academy Award for the Best Original Dramatic Score" and the "Academy Award for the Best Foreign Language Film".

4.2.1 Historical Facts – The Nuremberg Laws & Italian Jewry

The Nuremberg Race Laws of September 1935 were a kind of compromise between these countervailing pressures. The laws "for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour" formally stripped the Jews of their remaining rights as citizens. They also forbade marriage marriages and extramarital sexual intercourse between Jews and subjects of the state "of German or related blood"; they prohibited Jews from employing German servants under forty-five years of age (presumably out of fear that Jewish men might seduce younger German women); they forbade Jews from flying the national flag (the swastika) or Reich colors. The Reich Citizenship Law also provided a new definition of who was, and who was not, a Jew. It differentiated among three categories: (1) full-blooded Jews, who were designated as persons descended from at least three fully Jewish grandparents, as were those who belonged to or had later joined the Jewish religious community, had two Jewish grandparents, or had married a Jew; (2) the *Mischlinge* (part-Jews or persons of mixed descent) "first degree", who had two Jewish grandparents but had not married a Jew or been a member of the local synagogue; (3) the *Mischlinge* "second degree", who had only one Jewish grandparent. According to the somewhat inflated Nazi statistics, in 1935 there were no fewer than 75,000 Germans who fell into the category of first- or second-degree *Mischlinge*; in addition to the estimate of 475,000 "full Jews" who practiced their religion and another 300,000 who did not. Thus, there were more than 1.5 million Germans of "Jewish blood" in 1935, according to the peculiar Nazi categorizations. Time would show that differences among these labels could become life-and-death issues.

The declared objective of the Nuremberg Race Laws, according to Hitler's own Reichstag speech, was "to find a separate secular solution for building a basis upon which the German nation can adopt a better attitude towards the Jews. (Wistrich, 2003)

Immediately on coming to power in 1933, Hitler sanctioned a one-day boycott of Jewish shops and businesses to appease the radicals in the Nazi party. It wasn't a success, because most ordinary Germans weren't actively anti-Semitic. In spite of the difficulties placed in their way, many Jewish firms remained in business. But in 1937, a series of decrees "aryanized" Jewish concerns. Jews were required to sell or liquidate their businesses at ridiculous prices. "Aryan" capitalists cashed in. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

The Italian sabotage of the Holocaust was at first sight all the more astonishing given that Italy was the leading ally of Nazi Germany in Europe. Until the mid-1930s, Mussolini treated the Germanic version of "Nordic" racism as pretentious, pseudo-scientific nonsense offensive to a sophisticated Mediterranean people. Similarly, he regarded the persecution of the Jews as an embarrassing mark of Nazi "immaturity", although in his own party he still tolerated Jew-baiters like Giovanni Preziosi and Roberto Farinacci. In periodic outbursts of anti-German resentment, he could be particularly scathing about Hitler and his quirks. In November 1934, he told the Zionists leader Nahum Goldmann: "I know Herr Hitler. He is an idiot, a rascal, a fanatical rascal, and insufferable talker. It is a torture to listen to him. You are much stronger than Herr Hitler. When there is no trace left of Hitler, the Jews will still be a great people."

There was no "Jewish question" in Italy, and no political anti-Semitism comparable in severity to that in France, Germany, Austria or eastern Europe. The Italian Jewish community did not suffer any serious harassment or persecution for sixteen years after the Fascist seizure of power in 1922. Hence, the new race laws of 1938 stunned public opinion and were immediately unpopular, both with the established elites and with ordinary Italians, as well as

in the Catholic Church. The legislation was widely seen by many Italians as a somewhat ridiculous kowtowing to the Nazi Germany, a pathetic attempt by Mussolini to ideologically and politically align himself with Hitler, though this lack of popular enthusiasm was small consolation for Italian Jewry. The "Aryanization" policies in Italy were also far more liberal than those in Germany and Austria. Even more important, the Italians after 1939 defended foreign Jews as well as their own nationals, not only in Italy but also in southern France, Tunisia, Greece, Albania, Montenegro, and Croatia. It is a striking fact that wherever the Italian army was in occupation during the war years, the Jews did not come to any serious harm.

Mussolini after 1940 was critically guilty of cooperating fully with Hitler in the prosecution of war. Even before then, he had implemented his own version of anti-Semitism through the Italian educational system, in the press, on the radio, and throughout cultural life. Most Italian Jews were shattered by the shock of their sudden social exclusion, having been robbed of their citizenship and deprived of their livelihoods in a nation that they had served loyally and well. But inexcusably though these actions were, their impact was partially mitigated by the scale of the exemption, the resourcefulness of the Italian Jews, and the help they received from their neighbours. Even Italian government officials, and some veteran Fascists seemed to be infected by this popular mood and a general unwillingness to toe the Nazi line. The Germans were very well aware of the "lack of zeal" shown by Italian officials in the implementation of the anti-Jewish measures. On 13 December 1942, Goebbels noted in his diary: "The Italians are extremely lax in the treatment of Jews. They protect the Italian Jews both in Tunis and in occupied France and will not permit their being drafted for work or compelled to wear the star of David. This shows once again that Fascism does not really dare to get down to fundamentals but is very superficial regarding problems of vital importance." On 23 June 1943, after a conversation with Hitler, Goebbels recorded that the Führer

apparently expressed dissatisfaction with the Italians for failing to deal radically with the Jewish question. Mussolini, he reportedly said, was no revolutionary like himself or Stalin. Despite these private criticisms, Hitler's loyalty to his ally still remained intact.

On 25 July 1943, the Duce was summoned by King Victor Emmanuel III to his villa and arrested. Not long afterward, the Italian army surrendered to the Allies, Mussolini was the nonetheless rescued by the Nazis and set up the Italian Social Republic of Salò in northern Italy. The Duce quickly issued manifesto declaring Jews to be "enemy aliens" and had an anti-Jewish law passed that dissolved the Jewish communities and charitable institutions and also confiscated their property. German troops invaded Italy, and the SS began to subject Italian Jews to deportation, including the seizure of more than one thousand Jews from Rome in mid-October 1943. This was to be the blackest period in the history of Italian Jewry, when the most fanatical elements in Italian society surfaced to terrorize the Jews, kill partisans, and execute German orders. Some had their hiding places betrayed by Italian citizens, usually motivated by greed. Thousands of Jews were arrested and interned, many ending up in concentration camps near the Austrian border. The most notorious of these camps was established in October 1943 at La Risiera di San Sabba, near Trieste, and had a gas chamber and crematorium. About five thousand Jews, as well as Italian antifascists and Slovenian partisans, were killed there. However, several thousand foreign Jews (and some native Italian Jews as well) who were interned at the Ferramonti-Tarsia concentration camp in southern Italy, occupied y the Allies in 1943, were able to survive the war. (Wistrich, 2003)

4.2.2 Representation of History in the Film

As a film, *Life is* Beautiful met with mixed response. On one hand, it bagged Academy Awards, and on the other, it was alleged that the film sentimentalized the history of Holocaust, which also included the pervasive use of humour. However, the latter can be

understood by the fact that the film sidestepped politics in favour of simple human ingenuity. The film projects Guido's ingenuous use of humour to protect his son from the usual fate that the Jews met in the wake of Holocaust. If Guido had a gun, he would shoot at the Fascists; if he had an army, he would destroy them, but he is a clown, and comedy is his weapon. Historically speaking, a character like Guido could not have existed in the real life death camps. But as a piece of art, *Life Is Beautiful* is neither about Nazis and Fascists, nor about their ruthless dictatorial regime, but it is more about the human spirit that keeps one alive even in the midst of horrible historical realities like Holocaust.

The film is based on the premise of paradox, that is to say, to represent Holocaust and comedy on the same screen. No other Holocaust film has achieved this rare feat before *Life is Beautiful*. Roberto Benigni, as Guido the father, protects his son from the harsh realities of the Nazi concentration camp by using lively humour and powerful imagination. These are his weapons of survival, of counteracting the grim reality of the camp. Even the whole of Nazi machinery cannot seize these weapons away from Guido.

Roberto Benigni has deliberately avoided the portrayal of harsh atrocities of concentration camp in favour of the film having a fable-like structure. Absence is an essential element used in the film. It leads us to the argument that non-representation is a significant strategy employed in the film. It is used to suggest that historical events like Holocaust are beyond the scope of comprehension and representation. However, as a film, *Life is Beautiful* attempts to negotiate between the representation and unpresentability of the Holocaust.

Life is Beautiful can be divided into two distinct halves: the first half is set in 1939 in the Italian village of Arezzo where Guido (Benigni) meets and courts his fairy-tale princess Dora; the second is set in late 1944, where Guido, Dora, and their son Giosue are deported to a German concentration camp, and Guido struggles to maintain the façade for Giosue that the

camp is actually an elaborate 'game' where managing hardships will eventually lead to the prize of a tank.

The anti-Semitic tension in the village is quite evident in the beginning of the film, when Guido and his friend arrive to stay with Guido's Jewish uncle, who has just been attacked. The first images of the village show posters of Mussolini covering the walls, and the local offices also have large images of the dictator on the walls. Likewise, Guido also has funny encounters with the local Fascist official, who may appear to be comically incompetent, but has named his two sons as Adolph and Benito respectively.

The Italian complicity in the Holocaust is also brought about by Benigni through two crucial scenes of the film. In the first scene, Guido poses himself to be an Italian Inspector scheduled to visit Francesco Petraca School, where Dora works. Here, Guido is also called upon to explain in detail the new 'Race Manifesto' to the budding minds. Guido comically justifies his selection for the task by saying, "chosen, I was, by racist Italian scientists, in order to demonstrate how superior our race is. … Why did they choose me, children? Must I tell you? Where can you find someone more handsome than me?" Guido then goes on to point out the perfection seen in his anatomy by talking about his ears, muscles, hips, belly button etc. He says, "What a knot! But you can't untie it, not even with your teeth. Those racist scientists tried it, not a chance!" This scene highlights both the fundamental irrationality of racial discrimination through Guido's arbitrary explanation, and that there were 'racist Italian scientists' and racist manifestos in Italy as in Germany.

Similarly, on the eve of Dora's unwilling engagement with an Italian official, the headmistress of Petraca School explains a problem given to the students in German schools: "A lunatic costs the State four marks a day. A cripple four and a half marks. An epileptic three and a half. Considering that the average is four marks a day and there are 300,000 patients, how much money would the State save if these individuals were eliminated?" Dora

exclaims that she cannot believe that children are asked to deal with such things and the headmistress replies callously, “That was my exact reaction! I can’t believe a seven-year-old child has to solve this kind of equation.”

What was extremely shocking for Dora was the inhumanity, immorality and insensitivity in the content of the question, but for the headmistress and others at the party (including the Fascist official) the problem was shocking because of the level of difficulty that it posed to a seven-year-old child. Historically speaking, this dialogue clearly points at the fact that the Italians were quite aware of the policies of Germany and their Fascist leader, but either they simply chose to ignore the issue or did not mind the policies soon attaining the level of law in Italy as well. Far from painting a picture where Italians were only victims of the Holocaust, the first half of the film clearly demonstrates the complicity of the Italian population in either not opposing or, in some cases, supporting the policies which led to the Final Solution.

The above-described two scenes of the film explicate Benigni’s position on the on-going argument about Holocaust being represented in a rational framework or not. A further example is when Giosue and Guido are walking through the street of the village and Giosue sees a sign saying “No Jews or Dogs Allowed.” He asks why, and Guido replies that some people simply do not like certain others. He continues that one shop does not allow Spanish people or horses; another has banned kangaroos and Chinese people. Guido and Giosue then resolve to put up a sign banning spiders and Visigoths, as the pair dislikes both. This funny exchange between father and son again highlights the absurdity and illogicality of anti-Semitism and Holocaust.

However, as soon as the film shifts from the streets of an Italian village to the concentration camp, the mode of representation also change from comic to the tragic. Guido’s only mission in the concentration camp is to keep his son and wife alive and that he

does by playing the wonderful trick of a 'game'. In one of the camp scenes, Giosue counters his father by explaining what he has overheard that "they burn us all in the oven … [and a] man was crying and he said they make buttons and soap out of us." Guido responds by saying that the claims are irrational and ridiculous: "Just imagine … tomorrow morning I wash my hands with Bartolomeo … Then I'll button up with Francesco. … I've heard of a wood oven, but I've never seen a man oven before!" Guido just laughs away the gruesome reality of the concentration camp in order to provide a sense of hope for survival and certainty to his young, curious son. Thus, the context of the 'game' allows Benigni to illuminate exactly how irrational the Holocaust was; Guido's success in convincing Giosue relies on the fact that the camps were spaces of completely irrational horrors which cannot be explained. Thus, in both the context of the film and the on-going debate about the status of the Holocaust, Benigni's film explicitly agrees that the Holocaust was fundamentally irrational and beyond explanation.

The absurdity of the Final Solution can also be understood through the character of Doctor Lessing. In the first half of the movie, Dr. Lessing is seen staying at Guido's uncle's hotel where he himself works. Dr. Lessing's obsession with riddles can only be satisfied by the intelligence of Guido. Dr. Lessing addresses Guido as 'Genius' because of his sheer intelligence in solving the riddles. However, in the concentration camp, Lessing re-appears, but now as a medical doctor who inspects the Jewish prisoners. With the re-appearance of Dr. Lessing on the scene, the hope for the survival of Guido's family increases. When Guido is made to wait tables for the Nazis in the camp, Lessing signals his urgent need to talk to Guido. At this juncture, we are reminded of the 'good Nazi Oskar Schindler who rescued Jews from their certain death. As the cine-goers, with the same expectation in our minds, we look forward to the dialogue between Guido and Dr. Lessing. However, when Dr. Lessing finally does talk to Guido, rather than offering t o help Guido escape, Lessing explains a

complex word game that he cannot solve alone. He appeals for assistance: "Help me, Guido. For heaven's sake, help me. I can't even sleep." Guido walks away, dumbfounded. This scene further reinforces the irrationality of the camps. Despite of the fact that Dr. Lessing, as a Nazi doctor, is appointed to perform a very important task of signalling life and death in his medical inspection of the Jews, he prefers to remain obsessed with his riddles rather than lending a helping hand to his erstwhile Jewish friend Guido and his family. He thus loses his rational awareness in the middle of the irrational, brutal machinery. In fact, he too has become a victim of the 'grey zone' of the concentration camps.

Coming back to the question of representation of Holocaust, Benigni's choice of comic mode becomes extremely important. The film begins with a voice-over: "This is a simple story, but not an easy one to tell. Like a fable there is sorrow, and like a fable it is full of wonder and happiness." Such an opening statement distances the expectations of the audience from the mode of realism, and creates the effect of a fable. Therefore, within the context of comic mode and fable-like structure, one can say that any attempt at the realistic or historical representation of the Holocaust would undoubtedly fail. Thus, Guido (Benigni) has chosen a different mode to represent the Holocaust – one which is comic and non-representational at the same time.

When Guido meets his uncle in the first scene in the village, the uncle has just been attacked, but he did not cry for help. When Guido asks why, his uncle explains that "Silence is the most powerful cry." Guido's uncle's statement works as a metaphor for all the remaining atrocities the film addresses: *Life is Beautiful* takes place in a camp where the gas chambers, torture, mass death and related horrors are never visually represented on screen, but rather their absence creates an anxiety in the audience as they know that these horrors did take place. This representational absence of the horrors of the Holocaust makes the film extremely dramatic, effective and suggestive. Benigni's choice of not representing the

extreme atrocities of the Holocaust in the film is in accordance with the philosophical position as well which too believes that the extremes of the Holocaust are, indeed, beyond representation.

Three more scenes reinforce the reading of the Holocaust in *Life is Beautiful* as fundamentally beyond representation. The first occurs when Dora is in the women's barracks and one of her fellow prisoners explains that the older people and children are rounded up for 'showers', but are actually gassed to death. At this point Dora stares out of the window, looking, the audience is led to believe, at the smoke stacks of the gas chambers. However, the shot never shifts from Dora staring out the window. The smokestacks are present only in the imagination of the viewers; the scene, however, is just as powerful as the expectation of the gas chambers and smokestacks outside is as disturbing, if not more so, than actual attempts to visually represent these icons of mass death.

Similarly, when Guido's uncle is separated from the other men and is taken with the elderly to 'shower', although the audience sees a room in which the prisoners are forced to undress, the movie does not attempt to follow the prisoners into the actual chamber itself. However, the inescapable cultural knowledge of what awaits Guido's uncle means that the lack of representation is, in many ways, more powerful, leaving the audience to imagine the horrible fate that would shortly befall these prisoners.

The final example is that of a late night, when Guido and Giosue are returning to the barracks holding hand-in-hand. Guido says, "Maybe it is only a dream! We're dreaming Giosue…", but at that point, through the fog (or possibly the smoke caused by the burning of bodies) Guido sees through the haze and we very briefly, see an enormous mound of human corpses. The scene only lingers for a moment, before a shocked Guido retreats into the fog. Here, Benigni shows that the atrocities of the death camps were never far away in the film, but that the film never sought to directly represent them. In *Life is Beautiful*, the cultural

knowledge of the Holocaust undermines the horrible representation of the Holocaust. The brief, but shocking, image of the mass of bodies serves to highlight that the true terror of Auschwitz was never far a reality from the comic, fable-like structure of the film. It is just that Benigni chose not to represent them directly. As Benigni has commented in an interview:

> According to what I read, saw and felt in the victims' accounts, I realized that nothing in a film could even come close to the reality of what happened. You can't show unimaginable horror—you can only ever show less than what it was. So I did not want audiences to look for realism in my movie.
>
> (Kerman & Browning, 2015)

Thus, Benigni in *Life is Beautiful* has created a Holocaust story that represents Holocaust as a historical reality which is fundamentally beyond representation and without an intelligible and rational explanation.

Life is Beautiful, despite of the accusations of sentimentalism and reductionism, actually contains a consistent argument regarding the nature of the Holocaust. Benigni has chosen Cinema, probably the most effective mode of historical representation, to locate Holocaust as a historical event outside the bounds of representation. In doing so, Benigni points to the irrationality, unrepresentability and complete lack of comprehension which surround the Holocaust.

Life is Beautiful is a fine statement of Roberto Benigni on the notion of hope amidst all the horrors of Holocaust. At the end, Guido knows very well that he is going to die, especially when he is captured by the retreating Nazi soldiers. But the love for his son does not allow him to look hopeless and fearful. In any case, he maintains the façade and convinces his son that it's all a game. Guido does a goofy march to make his son laugh. It is one of the most powerful sights that can be contrasted with the unbearable trauma inflicted by

the Nazis on the Jews. Even in the last tragic moments, Guido succeeds in upholding love for life, which reinforces the statement that life is beautiful.

4.3 The Pianist (2002)

The Pianist is a 2002 historical drama which chronicles the life of a Polish-Jewish musician and his indescribable struggles to survive the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto of World War II. The film is co-produced and directed by Roman Polanski, scripted by Ronald Harwood, which stars the Oscar award-winning actor Adrien Brody. It is based on *The Pianist*, a World War II memoir by the Polish-Jewish pianist and composer Wladyslaw Szpilman. The film was a co-production between France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Poland. *The Pianist* bagged several important awards and received much critical praise. It was awarded the "Palme d'Or" at the 2002 Cannes Film Festival. At the 75th Academy Awards, *The Pianist* won Oscars for Best Director (Polanski), Best Adapted Screenplay (Ronald Harwood), and Best Actor (Brody), and was also nominated for four other awards, including the Academy Award for Best Picture. It also won the BAFTA Award for Best Film and BAFTA Award for Best Direction in 2003 and seven French Césars including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Actor for Brody. Roman Polanski, the director of the film *The Pianist* himself escaped the Krakow Ghetto, at the age of 7, through a hole in a barbed-wire fence. *The Pianist* marks the first time that he has made a movie in Poland in 40 years.

The film revolves around the ups and downs experienced by a Jewish family at the onset of WWII in September 1939 when Germany declared war on Poland and captured Warsaw. The family comprises of five members (his mother, father, brother Henryk, and two sisters Regina and Halina), each one is troubled with the ongoing crisis at their own level, and among them is Wladek Szpilman who is a pianist at the Polish Radio Station. When the deportations begin Szpilman is separated from his family, who are transported to an extermination camp in a cattle train. After that the second half of the film depicts how

Szpilman's love for music keeps him going through the horrific times in Warsaw. At the end, when the whole of Warsaw is destroyed and deserted, the only man alive is Szpilman. It's then he meets a Nazi officer who helps him by lending food and a warm coat to survive the bitter winter by the end of WW II till he is rescued by the Russian army.

The film *The Pianist*, which is the based on the memoir of Wladyslaw Szpilman does not refer to his life before he joined the Polish Radio Station. Władysław Szpilman began his study of the piano at the Chopin School of Music in Warsaw, Poland then later went to the Academy of Arts in Berlin, Germany in 1931. After Adolf Hitler seized power in Germany in 1933, he returned to Warsaw, where he quickly became a celebrated pianist and composer of both classical and popular music. On April 1, 1935 Władysław Szpilman joined Polish Radio, where he worked as a pianist performing classical and jazz music, until the German invasion of Poland reached Warsaw on September 1, 1939, and Polish Radio was forced off the air. It is at this dramatic juncture in the history of Poland in general and Szpilman's life in particular that the film begins with. It begins with a documentary footage of 1939 Warsaw and it moves on to featuring Wladek Szpilman, the Pianist playing at the Polish Radio Station when the city is bombarded by the Nazi Germans. As the matter of fact, Szpilman did not identify the German officer until 1950. His name was Captain Wilm Hosenfeld. Despite the efforts of Szpilman and the Poles to rescue Hosenfeld, he died in a Soviet Prisoner of War camp in 1952. The end of the war marked a new beginning for Wladek Szpilman. He survived to play his piano till his death on 6th July 2000.

4.3.1 Historical Facts – Poland and Ghetto Life (Warsaw Ghetto)

Poland initially in the end of fifteenth century was very welcoming to the Jews as an urban, commercial element, who could help rebuild its shattered economy after the Mongol invasions. Jews enjoyed an unprecedented degree of autonomy under the charters of liberty guaranteed by successive rulers. They were frequently employed by the Polish nobility as

estate managers and tax collectors, often served as middlemen between landlords and peasants, and played similar intermediary roles as traders and craftsmen. Poland became a leading center of Ashkenazi Jewish scholarship and spirituality. It was the Ukrainian Peasants' Revolt in 1648-1649, which was the frightening reminder of the vulnerability of the Jews' position in the Polish lands. Between one quarter to one third of the Jewish population in Ukraine and Southern Poland were slaughtered as "Christ Killers" and as middlemen serving the interests of the hated Polish landlords. (Wistrich, 2003)

In Poland, at the end of the war in 1918, the proclamation of national independence was accompanied by jarring pogroms against Jews, especially in places of mixed population, where their loyalties were arbitrarily deemed by Poles to be suspect. Although the German Army on the eastern front treated Jews reasonably well, a special census of Jewish soldiers engaged in active duty at the front was undertaken in 1916. This was supposedly intended to verify rumours of shrinking and black-marketing. The results were never published, though twelve thousand German Jews laid down their lives for the fatherland, and relatively high number won awards for bravery on the battlefield. Such sacrifices did not prevent the pernicious legend from circulating that the Jews (and Marxists) had "stabbed Germany in the back" during the war – a myth that became a powerful propaganda weapon for Hitler and the entire German nationalist right after 1918. (Wistrich, 2003)

Among the nations in inter-war Europe, most eager to encourage a massive removal of Jews from their midst was Poland. Biological and racist anti-Semitism of the pseudo-scientific kind was admittedly less prevalent in Catholic Poland than in neighbouring Nazi Germany. Equally, violence against the Jews was frowned upon. But once Hitler had come to power in 1933, the mood against Jews in Poland became more bellicose, especially on the nationalist right and in the ranks of its Fascist hooligan offshoots. By the late 1930s there were mini-pogroms in the countryside, and "ghetto benches" were reserved for Jewish

students in Polish Universities. Worst still, there was a growing competition among Polish politicians to see who could propose a more far-reaching solution to the "Jewish question" whether through economic boycott, social exclusion, legal discrimination, or mass expulsion. In October 1938, the Polish ambassador to Great Britain proposed that Polish Jews be allowed to go to Northern Rhodesia and similar colonies at a rate of one hundred thousand a year; otherwise, he declared, the Polish government would feel itself "inevitably forced to adopt the same kind of policy as the German government."

Polish anti-Semitism, despite some similarities, did in fact differ from the Nazi variety in a number of significant ways. In the first phase, the "Jewish question" existed in Poland as a genuine minority's problem in an insecure, multi-ethnic state where in 1931 Poles made up to less than 65% of the population. Jews, who accounted for between one quarter and one-third of the population in the large cities of Warsaw, Lódz, Lwow, Cracow and Lublin were particularly suspected of disloyalty or indifference to Polish national interests. To the nascent Polish middle class the Jews were dangerous business competitors; in the eyes of the dominant conservative and clerical elites, they were invariably seen as crypto-Bolsheviks; to the peasantry and small traders, they were alien exploiters.

Not only in Poland but also in Romania, Hungary, Slovakia and even in Italy in the late 1930s, steps were being taken to restrict Jews in the professions and reduce them to second class citizenship. This was an ominous sign of things to come. The Jews found themselves increasingly powerless against this pan-European trend to strip them of their hard-won civic and political rights. Massive pressure was building to impose a sweeping *numerus clausus* (closed number) that would block their educational and economic opportunities, effectively forcing them to immigrate in large numbers. (Wistrich, 2003)

With the German occupation of Poland in September 1939, the old pattern of pogrom and anti-Semitic abuse was encouraged by the Nazis. New decrees were published almost

daily, limiting the freedom and activities of the Jewish population. Jews could not use a tram without a delousing certificate, renewable weekly. All Jews had to salute all Nazi personnel. They had to wear the yellow star at all times. A series of "games" were invented by the Nazi, who took special delight in humiliating the spiritual leadership. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

Ghettoization under the Nazis was a gradual process. The first main ghetto was set up in Lódz in April 1940. The Warsaw ghetto was not created until October of that year. Those in Krakow and Lublin were established in 1941. At first the ghettos gave a false sense of security. But the ghettos also marked the Jews as people who were different, living in squalid conditions, wracked by disease. The result was to dehumanize them in the eyes of society outside the ghetto. The business of setting up the ghettos and appointing the Councils (Judenrat) was entrusted to special security units – the Einsatzgruppen. The ghettos have been described as "captive city-states totally subject to the German authorities". Each ghetto had its own administrative body – the Judenrat (Jewish Council). (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

The Warsaw ghetto was the largest of all. Almost half a million people, over a third of the population of Warsaw, were cramped into a mere 1.3 square miles. The rest of the population inhabited 53.3 square miles. The average room held over 7 people. Only one percent of the apartment had running water. Only a tenth of the population was allowed to cross into the "Aryan" side to work. All aspects of life in the ghetto were controlled by the Nazis through the Judenrat, which grew enormously from a liaison bureau to a body governing 500,000 people living in the most inhuman conditions.

Since the Jews were completely cut off, the Warsaw Council – like other Councils – had to take over the task of providing social services: healthcare; education; rationing; food distribution; soup kitchens; the organization of the Jewish ghetto police and the administration of justice; hospitals and sanitations; burials; culture (Jews were forbidden to

play music by "Aryan" composers). It also organized the industry in the ghetto in which half the population toiled. The leader of the Warsaw Judenrat was Adam Czerniakow (1888-1942) who represented the liberal-progressive wing of the ghetto leadership. Like all Judenrat leaders, Czerniakow built up industrial production as an insurance policy against extermination. Ghetto industries created a new elite who owned and ran the workshops and plants. Because of starvation and disease, the death rate in the ghetto was terrifying. Typhoid and dysentery killed large numbers every week. Those who survived were so weak that they were unable to work, and thus became an economic burden. By July 1942, over l00,000 Jews had already perished because of conditions inside the ghetto, leaving 380,000 survivors. When the Jews demanded that the Judenrat should supply 10,000 non-productive Jews a day for "re-settlement", Czerniakow inquired how long that the deportations would continue. The Nazi reply was: "Seven days a week, until the end". When Czerniakow saw that they intended to exterminate everyone in the ghetto, he committed suicide. By September, there were only 70,000 Jews left in the ghetto. They would be destroyed in 1943 during and after the Warsaw ghetto rising. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

Armed revolts also broke out elsewhere in at least twenty ghettos in Eastern Europe, the best known of them being the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto, which lasted from 19 April until 15 May 1943. It was the first armed rebellion by civilians anywhere in Nazi-occupied Europe, taking the Germans completely by surprise. The ghetto fighters consisted initially of the six-hundred-member Jewish Fighting Organization, led by twenty-four-year-old Mordechai Anielewicz, and the National Military Organization, which had four hundred men and women in its force. Armed with only a few machine guns and rifles and a large number of grenades and Molotov cocktails, the ghetto fighters had little training and minimal help from the local Polish resistance. They had witnessed the disappearance of the bulk of the ghetto inhabitants, whether through deportations to the death camps or by death from

starvation and disease. The remaining sixty thousand Jews in the ghetto, many of them teenagers, were the most able-bodied survivors, who had been left for last. When the SS entered the ghetto to round up more Jews for deportation, to their great astonishment they were met by bombs, shooting, and mine explosions. It eventually took three thousand troops under the command of SS General Jürgen Stroop, equipped with heavy machine guns, howitzers, artillery, and armoured vehicles – subsequently reinforced by bombers and tanks – to overcome the hopelessly outgunned Jewish resistance. The Jews held on in the sewers until the ghetto had been totally razed by German forces, some of the fighters jumping from the burning buildings rather than surrendering to their oppressors. They knew from the outset that they were engaged in a hopeless battle, but they were determined to die with honour and dignity. In his last letter from the ghetto on 23 April 1943, Mordechai Anielewicz observed that "what happened exceeded our boldest dreams" and that "what we dared do is of great importance." He had no illusions about his own fate or that of his comrades. What mattered most was that self-defense in the ghetto and Jewish armed resistance had finally become a reality. More than fifteen thousand Jews died in battle, and more than fifty thousand were captured and sent to death camps. (Wistrich, 2003)

4.3.2 Representation of History in the Film

As a film that makes Holocaust its subject matter, *The Pianist* is particularly impressive in representing Holocaust with an underplayed and non-judgmental tone. It resists the easy approach of representing the Holocaust as merely a time in history of ruthless violence, arbitrary persecutions, genocide and barbarism. Instead, it opts for a brutal, honest and laconic representation of war and Nazi anti-Semitism. The film is neither about blaming the monstrous Nazi machinery for mass killings nor about good versus evil. It is about a stark portrayal of the human condition and an extraordinary journey of survival amidst a horrifying event.

Roman Polanski avoids the element of "too obvious" in the representation of Holocaust in *The Pianist*. Whenever a director intends to make a film on such a historical event, the temptation is to show Jews (a collective minority) simply as the hapless victims and Holocaust as an indescribable, untranslatable, incomprehensible tragedy. This view, however, misses out on the representation of individual lives, their pain, struggle, loss and trauma as well as the strategies of survival adopted by individual persons.

Take for example a brilliant scene where we witness the early impact of the war on Jewish people. Szpilman's family have just learned that they will soon be deported; rather than just simply feel sorry for themselves, however, their response is wide-ranging; one family member wants to leave for the country, the other wants to fight, another is just baffled. These are natural human responses which bring the victims to life and highlight the absurdity of the situation. The family members of Szpilman are portrayed as real life characters who happen to be victims rather than victims who just happen to be characters.

Another admirable quality of *The Pianist* is its representation of stark though bleak representation of human condition. The war and the Holocaust just divided people either into victimizer or victimized, humans or sub-humans or even beast, sensitive or brutal irrespective of caste, creed, nationality and religion. For an instance, an old, starving man knocks a tin of soup from out of a woman's hands and begins to lick the liquid from the pavement in the ghetto whilst she hits him viciously with her handbag. It is a miserable, pathetic sight and brilliantly depicts that one cycle of victimization gives birth to another cycle of victimization, that is to say, Nazi German's victimization of the Jews in turn also leads to a Jew's victimization of another Jew. It is the base, animalistic and primitive instinct of survival which provides the focal point to the scene.

The effect of remaining hidden with Szpilman has two-fold effect on the viewers. On one hand, it creates a disorientating atmosphere and so we are able to empathize with the

obvious paranoia surrounding the lead character never knowing when he might be caught or be forced to leave.

The other key effect of this representation is that as viewers we see only glimpses of the chaos through Szpilman's window frames and so the film rather than trying to present the totality of the action, which is instead giving us what can be called an 'object of representation.' In other words, out of the life story of million Holocaust survivors, Roman Polanski has just chosen Szpilman's account. It is just by showing to us the small glimpses of the genocide however Polanski makes it clear that a historical event of the magnitude of Holocaust should be represented in a polyphonic way or through multi-dimensional approach.

The piano is an essential object in this film as it provides a key to Szpilman's survival. It functions as a concrete symbol. After being forced to dessert his family and then having to live in isolation with his fate, his ruminations about music are perhaps the only thing that keep him going. This idea is emphasized when Szpilman locates a piano in one of his hiding spaces. He is unable to play because his presence will be noticed and that may lend him in to trouble. Therefore, we just see his fingers moving in thin air whilst the sound plays in his head and is audible to the viewers. It is this trans-like effect of music that helps Szpilman to sustain his willingness to survive. After being a witness to spilling blood and violent deaths, his fragmented world can attain peace, oneness and harmony only in the world of music. Music functions like a balm, an elixir that soothes his aching mind and heart. Music, as one of the strongest metaphors of art, is life-enhancing and life-preserving.

The more barbaric sequences in this film are handled with a direct, unrelenting quality that leaves the viewer cold. In one sequence, a Jewish family is ordered to stand when their house is interrogated by some SS officers. An old man in a wheelchair can obviously not oblige this wish and so he is simply dumped from his chair and over the balcony onto the street cracking his head on the pavement far down below. During this sequence there is no

score capturing this powerful moment of drama nor are there any close-ups on the faces of the shocked family. Our emotions are not being guided by the director but rather he is leaving us emotionless, numb to such unspeakable violence. The scene leaves the viewers shocked and disturbed, in other words, with a sense of illimitable void. The scene bears an immediate similarity to *Schindler's List* where Amon Goeth's pistol malfunctions making him unable to go through with the act of killing a factory worker. Such scenes point at the brutality and barbarism with which the Nazi SS officers dealt with their hapless Jewish victims. Roman Polanski neither sentimentalizes, nor glamorizes, nor valorises Holocaust as a historical event. It is the stark, menacing realism that shocks our sense of complacency as viewers.

The Pianist resists the urge to be dramatically satisfying, instead underplaying the big moments in order to tie in with the film's unsentimental approach. Every turning point is sudden and unexpected much like life itself. In a split second Szpilman is taken away from his family and we later discover that he never saw them again. Then Szpilman spends a series of agonizing moments whilst in hiding, with a sense of uncertainty and insecurity constantly lurking on his head. When Szpilman is discovered by a German officer, there is just a sad realization that the journey for survival has come to an abrupt end. But then comes the unexpected twist to the fate of Szpilman when the German officer decides to keep Szpilman's hiding space a secret from the outside hostile world.

It is in these moments, as viewers, we are offered any form of cinematic release as Szpilman plays the piano for the SS officer and nearly brings tears to his eyes in the process. At this point, we feel somewhat enlightened and encouraged by Szpilman's survival and for the first time we are offered a cinematic clue that he will probably survive. But this moment of sentimentality is quickly overturned when Szpilman is nearly killed by the Russian soldiers-cum-saviours as he wore a borrowed SS coat.

It is important that the drama is underplayed and that the structure of the film moves against the notions of conventional cinema because it is essential that the film gets across the point that there isn't going to be a happy ending. Even though Szpilman lives and we celebrate the triumph of survival, the overriding feeling is one of neither restrained jubilance nor sorrow but rather a numb sensation which encapsulates all the incomprehensible horror and violence that has gone before it.

Dialogues in the film are effective and suggestive. When Szpilman's family is about to be deported, the tone is very reflective as he tells his sister that he wished he knew her better. This is a rather tender moment that is authentic and sincere rather than an attempt to simply incorporate some heart-tugging sentimentality. There are arguments, debates, pleas, and fears which make us feel that we are as if seeing real-life characters tried and perplexed in real-life historical events. At the level of narrative, there are no satisfying embellishments played up for the sake of drama. This is a very different approach to more mainstream films about the Holocaust which use a range of cinematic techniques in order to clearly establish an exaggerated bleak atmosphere.

The Pianist is so striking for not conforming to typical cinematic conventions and for essentially not turning the Holocaust into a typical cinematic experience. It is a cold, harsh approach to a cold and harsh subject matter and it treats its history with the utmost respect, detailing the experiences of one man and his journey whilst implying that the whole of European Jewry faced the same fate. It does not force emotions upon the viewers and neither does it try and suggest blame. It merely highlights the incomprehensible nature of war and examines the psychology of the human condition when people are forced to make horrifying decisions and act in terrible ways just in order to survive within their surroundings.

The film is entirely sequential, without any flashbacks and generally represents just what the protagonist Wladyslaw Szpilman (played by Adrien Brody) saw through his own

eyes. At two occasions in the film, historical dates are mentioned. For example, one about the beginning (April 19, 1943) and the other about the ending (May 16, 1943) of the Jewish Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto, witnessed by Szpilman from the window in the flat where he was hiding at the time just outside the Ghetto wall.

At times, references to real life historical events such as the declaration of war by Great Britain on Nazi Germany (September 3, 1939) and the landings of the Allies in Western France on D-Day (June 6, 1944) substitute dates in order to lend historical authenticity to the film narrative.

Polanski's eye for details not only with regards to props and scenery but also in the depiction of human nature is what lends authenticity to the film as a historical document. It is neither that all Jews are good, nor that all the Nazis are bad. A character like Itzhak, who is a Judenrat, is a combination of good and evil. For example, on one hand he beats fellow Jews with his truncheon at the time of deportations, whereas on the other, he pulls Szpilman out of the line meant for the deportation to the death camps. Judenrat worked for the Nazis in the hope of improving their chances of survival.

As a statement of human nature and condition, the film also shows positive human traits such as loyalty, friendship, courage, and compassion. A multitude of people help Wladyslaw throughout the film, and he does what he can to help them in return. Wladyslaw would not have survived to the end if a German officer who heard him play had not supplied him with food and a coat.

The casual and arbitrary brutality of the Nazis to the Jews is well documented throughout the film. For example, when a girl asks a Nazi "Where are you taking us?" his reply is a pistol shot to her head. Jews are beaten by a drunken Nazi to celebrate New Year's Eve. Eight Jews are randomly picked out of a line and ordered to lie down on the street. A Nazi shoots seven of them in the head and then runs out of ammunition. The last one, a

Socialist friend of Wladyslaw's, must wait for the Nazi to reload his pistol before he too is shot in the head. Such acts of cruelty are seen throughout the film.

The film begins with a documentary footage of Warsaw in the year 1939. The black and white documentary piece is juxtaposed against the first glimpse of Wladyslaw Szpilman playing piano at the Polish Radio Station, Warsaw, 1939 which lends historical authenticity to the film. The beginning of the film represents Warsaw as a bustling metropolis with crowds in the streets. But by the end, one sees block after block of streets strewn with rubble and desolate of people, with only one man desperately trying to stay alive amidst the destruction. This is a personal narrative of the Holocaust, telling the story of one who did not go to the death camps. The way this film shows how seemingly ordinary people can be so cruel to others is valuable for the shocking questions it raises about human behaviour, and the dangers of this happening again in future.

As a historical document, this film is valuable in its attention to detail, human characters, historical accuracy, and the personal narrative of one man's experiences during this time. The director focuses on what the lead character sees with his own eyes, giving us a glimpse of what those experiences were like. In many cases, he survives by pure chance, representing the randomness often associated with human lives.

Historically speaking, the representation of Warsaw ghetto by Roman Polanski is the strongest aspect of the film. Ghetto life is best represented by the Warsaw Ghetto. It represents the idea of the beginning of the end for European Jewry. It epitomizes anti-Semitism of the Nazis and the Polish people for the Jews. The Warsaw Ghetto also symbolizes isolation, which is also one of the major themes in this film. It was a living hell in the middle of civilization. Outside the ghetto walls was the normal neighbourhood. Non-Jews were able to live a normal life all around the ghetto while the people inside were living in misery. Polanski accurately depicted the struggles of the Jews in the ghetto. One of the most

poignant scenes in the film is when Szpilman is walking through the ghetto after everyone has been deported. The streets are lined with the possessions of the Jews that the Nazis have just thrown out of the apartment windows. The scene is very similar to the chaos depicted in *Schindler's List* with the liquidation of the ghetto. Both scenes mirror reality very closely giving *The Pianist* the historical credibility it needs in order to be called a Holocaust film.

A film like *The Pianist* makes Holocaust understandable, believable and establishes it firmly as a horrific event of the past. This film is a significant attempt to capture the terrible history of Holocaust not only in terms of facts and figures but also in terms of emotions, loss, pain, suffering, violence and its resultant trauma. Roman Polanski's version of the Holocaust based on the memoir of Wladyslaw Szpilman does not undermine the historical facts related to the Jews of Warsaw and Holocaust provided by the historians or history books. It rather complements the available history of Holocaust by focusing its lens on individuals and their struggle for survival. Through the audio-visual medium, the film makes us re-live those harrowing moments of violent deaths and destruction. Individuals representing the common mass have no voice in the grand narrative of history, as its focus is on the extraordinary individuals and events that changed the course of history. *The Pianist* is an extraordinary tale of struggle and survival amidst the troubled times of history (Second World War and Holocaust). *The* Pianist, like *Schindler's List* can be in the category of those Holocaust films which in the hands of matured craftsman like Roman Polanski rescues history from being forgotten.

4.4 The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (2008)

"Childhood is measured out by sounds, smells and sights, before the darkness of reason grows." – John Betjeman

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (2008) is a superbly adapted film by Mark Herman based on the 2006 Holocaust novel of the same title written by the Irish novelist John Boyne. The film depicts the world as seen through the perspective of an eight year old boy who is largely protected from the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust. The film shows an unbelievable friendship between Bruno, the son of a Nazi commandant, and Shmuel, a Jewish boy held captive in a concentration camp, and the barbed-wire fence which separates their worlds. It is then across the fence that their friendship develops and their lives ultimately become inseparable leading to a common fate. The film has won two awards: Vera Farmiga as the best actress in British Independent Film Awards (2008) and shared the Audience Choice Award with *Slumdog Millionaire* in the Chicago International Film Awards (2008). It has also been nominated for British Independent Film Awards, Goya Awards, Irish Television and Film Awards and Young Artist Awards.

4.4.1 Historical Facts – The Final Solution and Children of the Holocaust

Hitler's concept of concentration camps as well as the practicality of genocide owed much, so he claimed, to his studies of English and United States history. He admired the camps for Boer prisoners in South Africa and for the Indians in the Wild West; and often praised to his inner circle the efficiency of America's extermination—by starvation and uneven combat—of the red savages who could not be tamed by captivity.

He was very interested in the way the Indian population had rapidly declined due to epidemics and starvation when the United States government forced them to live on the reservations. He thought the American government's forced migration of the Indians over great distances to barren reservation land was a deliberate policy of extermination. Just how much Hitler took from the American example of the destruction of the Indian nations is hard to say; however, frightening parallels can be drawn. For some time Hitler considered deporting the Jews to a large 'reservation' in the Lubin area where their numbers would be

reduced through starvation and disease. Some of the parallels include the death marches when the Nazis forced hundreds of thousands of prisoners from Nazi concentration camps and prisoner of war camps near the eastern front to camps inside Germany away from front lines and allied forces. A similar parallel can be found in The Long Walk of the Navajo which was also 300-miles, and many of the Native Americans died of starvation. The Nazis even burned Jewish books and buried dead bodies in mass graves. Similarly, how Indian cultures were also erased, libraries of oral tradition functionally burned, and many were buried in mass graves under bibles. (Toland, 2014)

The decision to move towards the "Final Solution to the Jewish question" was taken after the invasion of the Soviet Union in1941. This was an ideological war directed not only against the "subhuman" Slavs, but also the "sub human" Jews. In July 1941 – a month after the invasion of the Soviet Union – Hermann Goering (1893-1946) – Hitler's second in command and presumably acting in line with the intentions of the Führer signed an order, drafted by Heydrich.

The massacres carried out by the *Einsatzgruppen* might be called the "primitive phase" of the Final Solution. These units were not made up of criminals, sadists and maniacs, but were drawn from the elite of the German professional middle class. It became clear that the methods of the *Einsatzgruppen* were inappropriate for dealing with the huge numbers involved. The method also placed a strain on those doing the killing. Himmler later referred to the "psychological problem" in a secret speech to Police Generals in Poland.

Himmler – as he told an SS Police General – saw a solution to the psychological problem in new techniques which would make the killings more impersonal. Himmler was referring t Mobile Gas Vans in use at the Chelmno extermination camp. Carbon monoxide from the vans' exhaust-pipes were pumped into the sealed load space, killing up to 40 persons in the operation.

The mobile gas vans were designed for a typical trip of about ten miles from the loading point to the burial tranches. This meant that the drivers had to drive at a speed not exceeding 20 mph to allow time for the entrapped Jews to be gassed. But the drivers, despite the large amounts of alcoholic drinks dispensed to them, found the job upsetting and drove faster in order to "get it over with".

As a result, the Jews were not quite dead when the vans arrived at the tranches. The scenes facing the drivers and guards were too much even for men hardened by habitual brutality. Yet between December 2941 and spring 1943, over 200,000 Polish Jews and tens of thousands of Soviet prisoners and gypsies were murdered in this way.

Another important innovation was made at Treblinka. Here, instead of being taken to their deaths in gas vans, the Jews were brought en masse to a purpose-built sealed chamber. The commandant then pumped carbon monoxide from an engine into the chamber, killing the 200 Jews huddled inside within 20-0 minutes. For the first time, Jews were being killed in great numbers without anyone in particular doing the killing.

The messy job of pulling the bodies out of the vans and the Treblinka gas chamber was carried out by *Sonderkommandos* – special squads – of Jewish inmates, temporarily reprieved for the purpose. The method of corpse disposal remained the same. The bodies were buried in layers in large trenches dug out by mechanical excavators.

Gassing was indeed more efficient than shooting each victim individually, but a neater, cheaper solution had to be found based on the principles of mass-production. A conveyor-belt system had to be developed.

In august 1941, SS Chief Himmler gave orders for the preparation of the Auschwitz death camp. In September 1941, Christian Wirth, SS Head of the T-4 organization and an expert on "mercy killings", was appointed to Chelmno where he proceeded to gas inmates. In

December 1941, Hans Frank (1900-46) Nazi Governor-General of Occupied Poland, announced a big conference for January 1942 in Berlin.

The conference Governor Frank had talked about took place on 20 January 1942. It was held in a villa at Wannsee on the outskirts of Berlin – with breakfast. The aim of the Conference was to co-ordinate the work of the various agencies that would be involved in the operation of the "Final Solution". Fifteen people took part – a mixture of SS officers and security police, party officials and high civil servants. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

Millions of Jews were deported to death camps and were gassed to death. Many more were shot, starved to death, or died of diseases such as typhus. The Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp complex, where *The Boy with the Striped Pyjamas* is set, was one of the many built by the Nazis.

Auschwitz concentration camp was a network of concentration and extermination camps built and operated by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland during World War II. It was the largest of the German concentration camps, consisting of three main camps and 45 satellite camps.

Auschwitz was designated by Heinrich Himmler, Germany's Minister of the Interior, as the place of the "final solution of the Jewish question in Europe". From early 1942 until late 1944, transport trains delivered Jews and other "undesirables" to the camp's gas chambers from all over Nazi-occupied Europe. The camp's first commandant, Rudolf Höss, testified at his trial after the war that more than three million people were murdered there (2.5 million gassed, and 500,000 from disease and starvation). Since then this figure has been revised to 1.3 million, around 90 percent of them Jews. Others deported to Auschwitz included 150,000 Poles, 23,000 Roma and Sinti, 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war, some 400 Jehovah's Witnesses and tens of thousands of people of diverse nationalities.

On January 27, 1945, Auschwitz was liberated by Soviet troops. This day is commemorated around the world as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. A museum was founded on this site in 1947, which sees 1,300,000 visitors pass through the gates each year.

Children were especially vulnerable in the era of the Holocaust. The Nazis advocated killing children of "unwanted" or "dangerous" groups either as part of the "racial struggle" or as a measure of preventative security. The Germans and their collaborators killed children for these ideological reasons and in retaliation for real or alleged partisan attacks.

The Germans and their collaborators killed as many as 1.5 million children. This number included over a million Jewish children and tens of thousands of Romani (Gypsy) children, German children with physical and mental disabilities living in institutions, Polish children, and children residing in the occupied Soviet Union. Some Jewish and some non-Jewish adolescents (13-18 years old) had a greater chance of survival, as they could be used for forced labour.

The fates of Jewish and non-Jewish children can be categorized in the following ways:

1. children killed when they arrived in killing centres
2. children killed immediately after birth or in institutions
3. children born in ghettos and camps who survived because prisoners hid them
4. children, usually over age 12, who were used as labourers and as subjects of medical experiments
5. children killed during reprisal operations or so-called anti-partisan operations

The Camp authorities sent the majority of children directly to the gas chambers upon arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau and other killing centres. SS and police forces in German-occupied Poland and the occupied Soviet Union shot thousands of children at the edge of mass graves.

The German authorities also incarcerated a number of children in concentration camps and transit camps. SS physicians and medical researchers used a number of children, including twins, in concentration camps for medical experiments that often resulted in the deaths of the children. Concentration camp authorities deployed adolescents, particularly Jewish adolescents, at forced labour in the concentration camps, where many died because of conditions.

Over one million children under the age of sixteen died in the Holocaust - plucked from their homes and stripped of their childhoods, they lived and died during the dark years of the Holocaust and were victims of the Nazi regime. Nazi persecution, arrests, and deportations were directed against all members of Jewish families, as well as many Gypsy families, without concern for age. Homeless, often orphaned, many children had frequently witnessed the murder of parents, siblings, and relatives. They faced starvation, illness, brutal labour, and other indignities until they were consigned to the gas chambers. (*Holocaust Encyclopaedia*, 2016)

The prisoner numbers have become a synonym of dehumanization that struck the deportees of the concentration camp. These numbers were to serve efficient "management" of camps, performed by the SS teams. Within the whole system of "state concentration camps" of III Reich, there was no a single rule of ascribing the numbers to the prisoners. Usually, there were subsequent numbers issued for the newly arrived prisoners (as it was in KL Auschwitz). In some camps (e.g. in KL Gusen or KL Buchenwald) the numbers of the deceased were ascribed again. In such cases, one number could belong to one or even three persons. Prisoners transported from one camp to another obtained a new number every time. Numbers ascribed by camp authorities to those deported to KL Auschwitz became their second name during their incarceration. Being awaken in the middle of the night, they needed to be able to provide their number in German. Those who survived were unable to forget

them. The prisoner numbers were issued chronologically to the newly arrived in KL Auschwitz, similarly as in the majority of German Nazi concentration camps. Therefore, the prisoner number allows us to determine a specific date of deportation. However, when the camp functioned, there were several number series applied - separate for women and for men, and also for various prison categories-groups. These series were prepared by camp administration, regarding the needs, as new transports continued to arrive. Jointly, about 400,000 of prisoner numbers were issued in all series which are categorized as follows:

THE SCOPE OF NUMBERS	THE NUMBER SERIES
1 – 202499	main series – men
1 – 12000	"R" Soviet POWs
1 – 9 000	"EH" – men
1 – 2 000	"EH" – women
1 – 90 000	main series – women
1 – 10 094	"Z" – Sinti and Roma men
1 – 10 888	"Z" - Sinti and Roma women
1 – 20 000	"A" – Jewish men
1 – 15 000	"B" - Jewish men
1 – 30 000	"A" - Jewish women
1 – 3 000	"PH" – police prisoners
404 481	**TOTAL**

(Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum)

4.4.3 Representation of History in the Film

The choice of the film director Mark Herman to shoot the film *The Boy in the Striped* Pyjamas in Budapest, Hungary is crucial not only to the making of the film but also to the recreation of history in the film. Historically speaking, Budapest, Hungary houses two important Holocaust sites – "The Holocaust Memorial Centre" (a renovated synagogue that

dates back to the 1920s and serves as a memorial and museum for and about Hungarian Jews who were killed in the Holocaust) and "The Budapest Ghetto" (where Jews were forced to live during the Second World War). The familiar locale gives historical authenticity to the film.

The opening scene of the film establishes a contrast between the joyous bird-like flight of Bruno and his friends returning from the school, the routine followed by Germans and the tragic deportation of the Jews. To the inquisitive eyes and mind of Bruno, this is the first sight of history-in-making (Holocaust). Bruno is completely ignorant of anti-Semitism in general and his father Ralf's appointment as the Nazi commandant of an extermination camp in particular. The name of the concentration camp is not directly referred to throughout the film. However, we know it for sure that it is Auschwitz because it was the only Nazi death camp with 4 crematoria. The innocence and imagination of Bruno fails to capture the brutal reality of the Holocaust.

The character of Ralf, Bruno's father, as the Nazi commandant of the concentration camp is closely modelled on Rudolf Franz Ferdinand Höss who was an SS-*Obersturmbannführer* (a paramilitary Nazi party rank) and the longest-serving commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp in World War II.

The response of Bruno's grandparents to the promotion of Ralf, their son is also divided. Bruno's grandpa is absolutely proud for his son and the brutal work that he is assigned to do, whereas for the poor grandma it is too much for her to bear. Historically speaking, one of the arguments that is usually put forward is also that Hitler and his party succeeded in the persecution of European Jewry because there was no resistance – neither from the ordinary German civilians nor from the Jews themselves. On the contrary, the sophisticated and civilized Germans sometimes openly or tacitly supported the Nazi party and their genocide of Jews. Later, in the film, Bruno's mother Elsa and his elder sister Gretel also

find themselves divided. Gretel has taken fancy to the extreme nationalism of Nazi party and has become its die-hard supporter. Whereas, Elsa gets on the verge of a breakdown when she realizes that it is next to an extermination camp that they live and that her husband is the commandant-in-charge of that place.

Further in the film, when the family reaches their new home, which is just next to a concentration camp, Bruno observes an alternate reality. From the window of the upper storey, he observes that behind the backyard of their house, across the fence, seems to be a farm, wherein all the farmers have worn a similar uniform, namely, the striped shirt and pyjamas. He is totally unaware of the degree of murder and violence which takes place near his house. The enormity and genuine horror of what happens on the 'farm' is only occasionally and discreetly hinted at throughout the film until the final sequence.

Bruno, out of his curiosity of an adventurer and an explorer, discovers a way from the backyard that leads him directly to the barbed-wire fence of the camp. There Bruno, the German meets his counterpart, Shmuel, the Jew. However, their innocence doesn't recognize any barrier and the two of them become friends immediately. Bruno also remarks about the number imprinted on the shirt of Shmuel. He thinks that the inmates of the farm are playing some game, probably football and that's why they have such numbers printed. Historically speaking, tattooing of numbers was done to dehumanize the Jewish inmates of the camp. It just reduces their identity to being a number.

The scene in the film where Pavel, the Jewish servant at the camp-home treats Bruno's injured leg, Bruno is surprised to know that Pavel formerly lived and practiced as a doctor in Berlin and now he is peeling potatoes. To the little Bruno and his limited world of knowledge, it all seems funny. He even tells Pavel that he must have been a very bad doctor, and that's why he is peeling potatoes in his house. Silence too, in this film, functions as a language of communication. The tragic fate of Pavel's life is immensely reflected in his silent

yet expressive eyes. Historically speaking, the whole of European Jewry were denied their original professions and were forced to do menial jobs, worse in ghetto and worst in concentration camps. They were treated as sub-humans.

Further, Gretel, Bruno's elder sister is greatly influenced by the idea of German nationalism taught to her and to Bruno by the new history teacher Herr Liszt who visits their camp-home. He is out and out a Nazi. Therefore, he projects Germans as the true Aryans, the ideal race, the pure blood and the Jews as eternal evil. Gretel takes fancy to such ideas. She leaves all her teenage girl activities and takes more interest in the activities of Hitler Youth, Nazism and Hitler, whereas Bruno, is an ultimate explorer. He is not interested in either reading or understanding the distorted history taught to him.

Bruno's grandmother dies in the bombings or air raids of England on Berlin. Though she was never a Nazi sympathizer, she is given a burial ceremony which is attended by all SS officers of superior rank. One can very well see that in this scene, tears well up in the eyes of Elsa and she tries to stop the way she is given burial in Nazi style, however she couldn't stop her husband from doing so. The close-up shot on Elsa's face captures the agonizing pain, hatred and anger of Elsa towards Nazism as well as her husband.

Another most remarkable scene is where Shmuel is brought to Bruno's house for cleaning the inner part of the champagne glass. As the mouth of the glasses is narrow, it requires a young child to do the cleaning task. The warm friendship depicted in this scene takes an ugly turn with the arrival of Lt. Kotler, whose aggression and violent nature frightens Bruno so much that he disowns his friendship with Shmuel. Consequently, he is beaten harshly. Bruno bears a terrible sense of guilt at having betrayed his friend Shmuel.

The book, and consequently the film, is not without its critics. The very premise of the book and thereby of the film that there would be a child of Shmuel's age, is considered as an unacceptable fabrication that doesn't reflect the reality of life in the camps. Rabbi Benjamin

Blech has condemned it, saying: "This book is not just a lie and not just a fairytale, but a profanation. There were no 8 year old Jewish boys in Auschwitz. The Nazis immediately gassed those not old enough to work. Nor would it have been possible to crawl in through a hole." Such critics fear that such alleged falsification of history might affect the way the victims of the Holocaust might be remembered and commemorated. However, it has to be kept in mind that John Boyne, the author doesn't claim the book to be a historical novel. Also, statistics from the Labour Assignment Office show that on August 30th 1944, Auschwitz had 619 living male children aged from one month to fourteen years old.

The concentration camp theme occupies the background of the story, and that the genuine horrors of the Holocaust are only occasionally and discreetly hinted at. Suddenly however, at the film's climax, this alters and the film shows that Bruno and his friend Shmuel are gassed to death in a chamber. It is a shocking twist and the film ends on this downbeat and emotionally moving sequence, offering no positive resolution or happy ending.

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas explores the beauty of a child's innocence in a time of war, the common desire we all have for friendship, and the fences—both literal and figurative—that we must all navigate and choose whether or not to break down. The film explores the evil of the Holocaust through the eyes of a child. The film shows a very enhanced and an emotionally-charged, individual experience of the Holocaust through the characters like Bruno, Shmuel and Elsa. It presents a very subjective experience of Holocaust as a historical event. The film gives voice to the victims, especially the millions of children of Holocaust, who perished at the hands of the Nazis.

What makes the film so effective is that rather than depicting the larger picture of the Holocaust and its atrocities, the film, like the novel, instead focuses on individual relationships and gives us an intimate portrait of two innocent boys seeking the same thing: friendship.

The film, like the novel, represents the troubled times of history. The viewers are forced to confront the grim reality that hatred, discrimination, and intolerance remain potent forces in the world. *The Boy in the Striped* Pyjamas is undoubtedly a fictional representation of the history related to the Holocaust, but nevertheless it has an important moral to impart – with love, friendship and loyalty one can overcome hatred, aggression, violence. It also recreates history of the Holocaust for the teenagers of modern times, who are decades away from it. The film just provides a different dimension to look at the Holocaust – the perspective of children.

4.5 Fateless (2005)

Fateless is a Hungarian film directed by Lajos Koltai, and was released in 2005. It is based on the semi-autobiographical novel *Fateless* by the Nobel Prize-winning author Imre Kertész, who also wrote the screenplay. Imre Kertész was born in Budapest in a Jewish family. In 1944 he was sent to Auschwitz at the age of fourteen. He survived the German concentration camps and returned to his native Budapest where he has been living since. *Fateless* tells the story of a teenage boy who is sent to concentration camps at Auschwitz, Buchenwald and Zeitz.

4.5.1 Historical Facts – The Jews of Hungary and the Nazi Camps

Before the war, there were over 700,000 Jews in Hungary. During the war, refugees from other countries swelled that number to 800,000. The Jews of Hungary presented the Nazis with a problem. They were a fully integrated community. Although Hungary was a wartime ally of Nazi Germany, and had a fully-fledged fascist government, there were no ghettos and the Jews were not segregated in any way. It is true that in 1938 Hungary had begun the “legal definition” of Jews that would oust them from the financial life of the country.

The Jews' special position can be explained by the fact that they were predominantly middle class and could not easily be dislodged without damaging the fabric of Hungarian society. As late as mid-1944, the Manfred-Weiss concern, owned by the Jewish millionaire Baron Weiss, was the largest munitions factory serving the Third Reich.

The Hungarian nationalists were reluctant to surrender their Jews to the Nazis to carry out mass deportations. Though by March 1944 the Nazi war effort was collapsing, Hitler was so obsessed by the need to exterminate this large, intact Jewish community that he summoned Admiral Miklos Horthy de Nagybanya (1868-1957) the Hungarian head of state and instructed, "you must choose between German occupation of Hungary or the immediate appointment of a government approved by me. The "solution" to the Jewish question in Hungary was long overdue and must start immediately.

Horthy obediently appointed a fascist prime minister. A German plenipotentiary – in effect, a German governor of Hungary – was installed in Budapest, bringing with him Eichmann and his staff and the bureaucracy of destruction. Meanwhile, the Hungarian administration started legislating at enormous speed. Jewish stores and businesses were forced through the same machinery of dispossession and confiscation as had been developed in Germany. Within a few days, all Jewish stores were closed – over a third of all businesses in Hungary. All Jewish bank accounts were frozen. The Jewish population was left with no means of survival.

Eichmann's first step was to meet the Jewish Council of Budapest and demand a full report on the community's property. Then he ordered the immediate setting up of a Judenrat which would be the only body recognized by the SS and responsible for carrying out their orders. This was the same machine for collaboration as had worked in the Polish ghettos. Eichmann promised that no harm would come to those who co-operated fully. Eichmann thus achieved an enormous feat – the Judenräte was committed to collaborating with him in

carrying out the measures, believing this to be the safer option. But while the Polish Judenräte, especially in early days, could be forgiven for such naivety, the case was very different in Hungary.

Very soon the Jews of the outlying regions of Hungary were being concentrated near mainline stations. This operation was the swiftest Europe had yet seen. From these concentration camps, the Jews were deported to Poland at a death rate of some 12,000 a day. At all times, the Judenrat knew what was happening to the deported Jews. Eichmann spelt it out to them. The leaders decided to keep this knowledge to themselves. They went so far as to fabricate postcards from a nonexistent work camp with optimistic reports about food and conditions, in order to entice those left behind to join them.

This co-operation of Hungarian police, the Judenrat, the civil service and the population generally helped to make the Hungarian deportations almost peaceful. The Jews trusted their leadership, preferring in many instances to volunteer for earlier deportation so as to be together with friends or family. At times Auschwitz-Birkenau could not cope with the transports. Because of the limited capacity of the furnaces, corpses had to be burned in open trenches. Speed was essential because the Red Army was moving towards the camp. In little over two months, the bulk of the Jews of Hungary had been killed. (Bresheeth, Hood, Jansz, 2013)

The new industrial killing techniques were developed in the concentration camps run by the Economic Central Office of the SS. There were three types of camp:

1. Concentration Camps (KZ) such as Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen and others. They were not equipped to kill large numbers of people.
2. Work Camps – they ranged from very small camps supplying slave labour for local industries to the huge IG Farben camp at Auschwitz III which employed over 15,000 Jews on average at any time.

3. Extermination Camps like Sobibor, Chelmno, Birkenau and Treblinka. These were specialist units – industrial killing centres, processing death on a massive scale. Over 3 million people died in them.

Together with its many satellite camps, Buchenwald was one of the largest concentration camps established by the Nazis. SS authorities opened Buchenwald in July 1937, about five miles northwest of Weimar in east-central Germany. Prisoners were confined in the northern part of the camp ("the main camp"), while guard barracks and the camp administration were located in the southern part. An electrified barbed-wire fence, watchtowers, and a chain of sentries with machine guns surrounded the main camp. The SS often shot prisoners in the stables and hanged other prisoners in the crematorium area. Most of the early inmates were political prisoners. In November 1938, in the aftermath of Kristallnacht, German SS and police sent almost 10,000 Jewish men to Buchenwald where the authorities subjected them to extraordinarily cruel treatment. The SS also interned criminals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), and German military deserters at Buchenwald. In the camp's later stages, the SS incarcerated prisoners-of-war of various nations (including the United States), resistance fighters, and former government officials of German-occupied countries.

Beginning in 1941, a number of physicians and scientists conducted medical experiments on Buchenwald prisoners. These experiments, primarily focused on contagious diseases, resulted in hundreds of deaths. The Buchenwald camp system became an important source of forced labour for the German war effort. In 1942, the Gustloff Company established a sub-camp of Buchenwald to support its armaments works. SS authorities and business executives (both state-owned and private) deployed prisoners to at least 88 satellite camps, mostly in armaments factories, in stone quarries, and on construction projects. The prisoner population expanded rapidly, reaching 112,000 by February 1945. Periodically, the SS staff

conducted “selections” throughout the Buchenwald camp system and sent those too weak to work to so-called euthanasia facilities where they were murdered by poison gas. At Buchenwald, SS physicians also killed prisoners unable to work by phenol injection.

As Soviet forces swept through Poland, the Germans evacuated thousands of concentration camp prisoners. After long, brutal marches, more than 10,000 prisoners from Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen, most of them Jews, arrived in Buchenwald in January 1945. In early April 1945, as U.S. forces approached, the Germans evacuated around 30,000 prisoners from Buchenwald and its sub-camps. About a third of these prisoners died from exhaustion or were shot by the SS. An underground prisoner resistance organization in Buchenwald saved many lives by obstructing Nazi orders and delaying the evacuation. On April 11, 1945, in expectation of liberation, starving prisoners stormed the watchtowers, seizing control of the camp. Later that day, American forces entered Buchenwald. Soldiers from the 6th Armored Division found more than 21,000 people. Between July 1937 and April 1945, the SS imprisoned some 250,000 persons from across Europe in Buchenwald. Exact mortality figures can only be estimated, as camp authorities did not keep complete records. The SS murdered at least 56,000 male prisoners in the Buchenwald camp system, some 11,000 of them Jews. (*Holocaust Encyclopaedia*, 2016)

4.5.2 Representation of History in the Film

Fateless is unsentimental and disturbing on the whole. The film maintains an honest tone throughout. For example, in the beginning, the teenage György is more interested in catching a glimpse of a pretty girl than grasp the implications of his father's departure to a forced labour camp. Even on the day of his own arrest, György doesn’t take it to be an ominous event but an everyday one. Keeping aside all the crucial events of Holocaust history, the film instead focuses on György's mundane experiences. It convincingly portrays the

boredom as well as the terror, the moments of camaraderie as well as the brutality of the camps.

There are great many moving scenes in the film – the cannot but be moved when they see György embracing his father for the last time; piles of left luggage outside the transports in Auschwitz; swaying line-ups of striped prisoners forced to stand for hours on the parade ground; pale, thin almost lifeless György bewilderingly looking at himself in a mirror etc.

Usually, a Holocaust film is expected to have vivid sounds and sights of horror. But the projection of narrative in the film is disjointed and is largely devoid of excessive emotions. It is a series of bleak images, as seen through the eyes of young Gyuri – of emaciation, loss of dignity, and proximity to disease and death. The pre-dominant presence of Nazi is not to be seen and the officers in the concentration camps themselves are rarely seen on the screen. However, the presence of the Nazis and their murderous philosophy is the palpable backdrop. The film focuses on the pathetic and disoriented inhabitants of the death camps - the exhausting drudgery, senseless punishments and Gyuri's rapidly deteriorating physical condition. The film chronicles mundane events like a piece of meat surfacing unexpectedly in a bowl of soup, which suddenly acquires an existential significance; where Gyuri lies motionlessly next to a dead body in a straw mattress day after day in order to receive the extra ration doled out to the dead man by mistake; where in the middle of violence, hopelessness and isolation prison inmates find moments of respite to joke and sing. The individual instances of loss, pain and indignities suffered add up to an atrocity of monumental proportions.

Fateless neither has the emotional literalism of Spielberg nor fable-like fantasy of Benigni. The film consistently captures the existential notion of fate – or as Gyuri thinks of it, “fateless”. The film includes many of the Holocaust scenes we have come to expect – the

trains, the camps, the hunger for food, but it does not directly portray the horrors of Holocaust in its historical sense.

As a classic film on Holocaust, *Fateless* builds its emotional power not from the marching of armies and the resulting horror and violence, but from the experiences of individuals. When Gyuri finds a fellow Hungarian mentor in the camp who teaches him how to eat, how to look after himself, how to survive and differentiates them from the more Orthodox Latvians, we learn more about existential strategies adopted by common individuals in times of historical crisis for survival. Gyuri does indeed survive, and despite the remonstrations of a kindly American soldier, he returns to Budapest. His family is gone, and the bafflement with which he is greeted by former neighbours is so heartbreaking but so real.

Gyuri experiences firsthand the horrors of the camps: starvation rations, the knowledge that he "could be killed at any moment", back-breaking labour. He is singled out and derided as "not a real Jew" by some of the more orthodox prisoners, he hides the death of a bunkmate so that he can take his rations, and finally he falls victim to a horrific-looking knee infection. Each scene ends with a fade to black, each scene is centered round a single moment of emotional resonance — the film mimics Gyuri's memory. He is the only protagonist, so we have no one else with whom to identify. Moments like these are effective because it places itself, and thus its audience, in the position of a victim of the holocaust.

Keeping aside historical accuracy, the film has three finest, successive and nearly dialogue-less scenes, whose visual poetry is superb. It is a sort of unconventional style which is used for the subject of Holocaust. The first is a scene where the prisoners are ordered to stand, indefinitely, and for no known reason. The scene ends with a long shot that climaxes with the sudden sound of a man in the distance splashing heavily to the muddy ground. The abrupt cut to this shot, coupled with the starkness of the sound, makes it a highly powerful

and dramatic moment. The next scene sees a starved and weakened Gyuri, terrified, cold, and wet, leaving his bed to wander off into the rainy night in search of the latrine. The terrain is, as always, a sheet of mud; and the terribly fragile boy is barely able to walk. Later, it is seen that his knee has swelled to three times its size. In the next scene it is day and the boy's closest friend, a young Hungarian man Bandi Citrom, admonishes him for not washing and taking care of himself physically. Earlier we learn that this young man has lived through the Ukraine camps and knows what it takes to survive. He wants to share his knowledge and has taken the young boy under his protective wing. Gyuri responds by hugging him and telling him the simple words, "I am cold." Bandi stops yelling realizing how fragile Gyuri is, and slips his own jacket over the boy. Gyuri has lost his will to live, exhausted, and hurting from an infection which has set into his improperly operated knee. In the next scene, the most abstract in the film, Gyuri sits on a heap of rubbish inside a factory setting, and stares at a German officer seated nearby voraciously eating. At a point the officer senses the boy's uncomfortable gaze and turns to face away from him. The scene renders Gyuri's state of weakness and hunger-induced delirium. In the next scene Gyuri is tossed onto the back of a cart carrying 'corpses.' This is a strange, surreal scene, as some of the corpses are still alive, others half-dead or dead. As he is being carried along on the cart the scene cuts to a striking, upside-down subjective point of view shot. As Gyuri lies in near death he looks up to the sky, and the scene cut to two or three shots of the beautiful dark clouds slowly parting to reveal light, a glimmer of hope, and we hear the boy utter the words, "carrot soup." Gyuri has somehow regained the will to live, and is taken to a decent hospital to recuperate, where he is treated kindly for the first time by a camp authority figure, a young German soldier.

Gyuri's "normal" emotions resurface when he returns to Budapest after the liberation of the camps. He feels anger, frustration and confusion when upon his return he finds that those who had evaded a fate similar to his own, even members of his family and friends, do

not want to hear what went on in the concentration camps. They welcome him back but tell him "It is all in the past. The Nazis have been defeated," when he wants to talk and ask questions. The most heartbreaking scene of the film occurs at the end - not inside the hellish confines of the camp but in freedom, at a street corner in Budapest in approaching dusk. Gyuri leaves the apartment of some old friends who are delighted to see him and offer him his favourite dishes to relish but don't want to hear about Auschwitz, Buchenwald or Mauthausen. Rebuffed, Gyuri leaves to go and look for his estranged mother. (His father, another victim of the camps, did not return) He stops on the street outside the apartment and thinks back on his life in the camp which now seems less confusing to him than the freedom outside. He recalls wistfully that the year spent in the camps was not one of just horror and suffering; there were "magic hours" there too. He thinks back on his favourite hour, just after dinner, a respite from the day's backbreaking labour and indignities, ["which I waited for and loved most in the camp"] when he would joke and sing with his fellow prisoners. It is at this wrenching moment that we realize that for Gyuri, the camps are not the past. They are his searing and present reality and they will remain so for the rest of his life.

It is the last part of the film that is most disturbing, that is to say, when Gyuri half-alive, half-dead returns to Budapest. He is neither treated as a hero who has survived concentration camps, nor as a helpless victim with whom anyone wishes to sympathize. Probably, in this section of the film Gyuri fully realizes what it means to be a Jew. Some of the people even come up to him and ask what the camps were like. He numbly replies them that hell does not exist, but the camps do. *Fateless* as a film asks a perennial question of what survival means. Gyuri is a witness and a victim of history-in-making and it is an aesthetic response to the pseudo-historians who uphold Holocaust-denial. The film leaves a very dark and sombre effect on the cine-goers. The film has made a superb use of voice-over technique revealing what goes on in the mind and heart of Gyuri.

Fateless as a film raises questions about heaven and hell, about happiness, about human nature, about mankind's capacity to endure, about identity. It attempts to re-conceptualize the Holocaust. It produces an effect familiar and shocking, beautiful and horrifying at the same time. *Fateless*, like several other Holocaust films, moves full circle, by beginning with the principal character's lead-up to his imprisonment, the camp experiences, and then finishing with the liberated character returning home to pick up his life pieces.

4.6 Schindler's List (1993)

Directed by the master craftsman Steven Spielberg, *Schindler's list* is a 1993 American film set against the backdrop of Second World War and the Holocaust. The film is based on the novel *Schindler's List* written by the Australian novelist Thomas Keneally. The film is about the war profiteer, black marketer, industrialist and a Nazi member named Oskar Schindler and his unbelievable effort of saving more than 1100 Jews from their certain deaths by putting them to work in his Enamelware factory. The film was nominated for 12 Academy Awards and won seven out of them, including one for "Best Picture". Steven Spielberg won another for "Best Director". In 1998, the American Film Institute selected it as the ninth most popular film of all times in their "100 Years...100 Movies list".

Part of Spielberg's reluctance to make the movie was that he didn't feel that he was prepared or mature enough to tackle a film about the Holocaust. So he tried to recruit other directors to make the film. He first approached director Roman Polanski, a Holocaust survivor whose own mother was killed in Auschwitz. Polanski declined, but would go on to make his own film about the Holocaust, *The Pianist*. Spielberg then offered the movie to director Sydney Pollack, who also passed. It nearly took 11 years and a lot of efforts on the part of Leopold Page (Poldek Pfefferberg, a Holocaust survivor) to convince Steven Spielberg to make this film.

In order to gain a more personal perspective on the film, the director travelled to Poland, interviewed Holocaust survivors and visit the real-life locations that he planned to portray in the movie. In Poland, he visited the former Gestapo headquarters on Pomorska Street, Schindler's actual apartment, and Amon Goeth's villa. Eventually the film shot on location for 92 days in Poland by recreating the Płaszów camp in a nearby abandoned rock quarry. The production was also allowed to shoot scenes outside the gates of Auschwitz.

4.6.1 Historical Facts – Kraków-Plaszów Concentration Camp and Life and Times of Oskar Schindler

Kraków is a city located in southern Poland. On the eve of World War II, 60,000 Jews lived in Kraków out of a total population of 250,000. During the first days of the war thousands of Jews fled from Kraków.

On September 6, 1939, German troops occupied Kraków and immediately began persecuting the city's Jewish population. In late October, the Nazis made Kraków the capital of the *Generalgouvernement*; this made persecution even worse for Kraków 's Jews. A Jewish committee was set up and declared to be a Judenrat on November 28. In early December the Nazis carried out a terror action, in which several synagogues were burnt down and much Jewish property was seized.

In May 1940, the Nazis commenced expelling Jews of Kraków to nearby towns, in an effort to make the capital of the *Generalgouvernement* "free of Jews." By March 1941, approximately 40,000 Jews had been kicked out of their homes, and only 11,000 remained. During the expulsions, the Nazis stripped the Jews of all their property. That same month, the German authorities established a ghetto in the southern part of Kraków. On March 20 the ghetto was sealed with a wall and a barbed-wire fence. The remaining Kraków Jews were forced inside, as were several thousand Jews from nearby communities. By late 1941, some 18,000 Jews were imprisoned in the ghetto. They were subjected to overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. In

addition, the Germans installed several factories within the ghetto in order to take advantage of the cheap Jewish manpower.

On March 19, 1942 the Germans initiated a terror operation, against the ghetto's intellectual class. During this *Intelligenz Aktion*, some 50 well-known Jews were deported to their deaths at Auschwitz. At the end of May, the Germans commenced deporting the remaining of the ghetto population to extermination camps. The *action* began on May 28, and was carried out by the Gestapo, the regular police, and army units. During the operation, which lasted until June, some 8, 300 Jews were killed on the spot and 6,000 were deported to Belzec. Among them was the chairman of the Judenrat, Artur Rosenzweig, who had refused to collaborate with the Germans and was thus punished.

After the *action*, the Judenrat was abolished and a "Kommissariat" was established instead. The area comprising the ghetto, decreased by half, while there were still 12,000 Jews still lived there. In late October, following the *Kommissariat's* refusal to collaborate with the Germans, the authorities embarked upon a second *aktion*, during which they deported 7,000 Jews to Belzec and Auschwitz and shot 700 instantly. Following this *aktion* the Nazis further reduced the ghetto's area and divided the remaining part in two – one part for the working Jews, and the other for the rest of the prisoners.

In March 1943, the Germans transferred the 2,000 working Jews to the Plaszów camp, and proceeded to liquidate the rest of the ghetto – murdering 700 Jews on the spot and deporting 2,300 to Auschwitz. Only a few hundred of the Jews who had been transferred to Plaszów survived the war.

Oskar Schindler was born on April 28, 1908 at Zwittau/Moravia (today in the Czech Republic). His middle-class Catholic family belonged to the German-speaking community in the Sudetenland. The young Schindler, who attended German grammar school and studied engineering, was expected to follow in the footsteps of his father and take charge of the family

farm-machinery plant. Some of Schindler's schoolmates and childhood neighbours were Jews, but with none of them did he develop an intimate or lasting friendship. Like most of the German-speaking youths of the Sudetenland, he subscribed to Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party, which strongly supported the Nazi Germany and actively strove for the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia and their annexation to Germany. When the Sudetenland was incorporated into Nazi Germany in 1938, Schindler became a formal member of the Nazi party.

Shortly after the outbreak of war in September 1939, thirty-one-year-old Schindler showed up in occupied Kraków. The ancient city, home to some 60,000 Jews and seat of the German occupation administration, the *Generalgouvernement*, proved highly attractive to German entrepreneurs, hoping to capitalize on the misfortunes of the subjugated country and make a fortune. Naturally cunning and none too scrupulous, Schindler appeared at first to thrive in these surroundings. In October 1939, he took over a run-down enamelware factory that had previously belonged to a Jew. He cleverly manoeuvred his steps- acting upon the shrewd commercial advice of a Polish-Jewish accountant, Itzhak Stern - and began to build himself a fortune. The small concern in Zablocie outside Kraków, which started producing kitchenware for the German army, began to grow by leaps and bounds. After only three months it already had a task-force of some 250 Polish workers, among them seven Jews. By the end of 1942, it had expanded into a mammoth enamel and ammunitions production plant, occupying some 45,000 square meters and employing almost 800 men and women. Of these, 370 were Jews from the Kraków ghetto, which the Germans had established after they entered the city.

A hedonist and gambler by nature, Schindler soon adopted a profligate lifestyle, carousing into the small hours of the night, hobnobbing with high ranking SS-officers, and philandering with beautiful Polish women. Schindler seemed to be no different from other Germans who had come to Poland as part of the occupation administration and their associates.

The only thing that set him apart from other war-profiteers was his humane treatment of his workers, especially the Jews.

Schindler never developed any ideologically motivated resistance against the Nazi regime. However, his growing revulsion and horror at the senseless brutality of the Nazi persecution of the helpless Jewish population wrought a curious transformation in the unprincipled opportunist. Gradually, the egoistic goal of lining his pockets with money took second place to the all-consuming desire of rescuing as many of his Jews as he could from the clutches of the Nazi executioners. In the long run, in his efforts to bring his Jewish workers safely through the war, he was not only prepared to squander all his money but also to put his own life on line.

Schindler's most effective tool in this privately conceived rescue campaign was the privileged status his plant enjoyed as a "business essential to the war effort" as accorded him by the Military Armaments Inspectorate in occupied Poland. This not only qualified him to obtain lucrative military contracts, but also enabled him to draw on Jewish workers who were under the jurisdiction of the SS. When his Jewish employees were threatened with deportation to Auschwitz by the SS, he could claim exemptions for them, arguing that their removal would seriously hamper his efforts to keep up production essential to the war effort. He did not balk at falsifying the records, listing children, housewives, and lawyers as expert mechanics and metalworkers, and, in general, covering up as much as he could for unqualified or temporarily incapacitated workers.

The Gestapo arrested him several times and interrogated him on charges of irregularities and of favouring Jews. However, Schindler would not desist. In 1943, at the invitation of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, he undertook a highly risky journey to Budapest, where he met with two representatives of Hungarian Jewry. He reported to them about the desperate plight of the Jews in Poland and discussed possible ways of relief.

In March 1943, the Krakow ghetto was being liquidated, and all the remaining Jews were being moved to the forced-labour camp of Plaszów, outside Kraków. Schindler prevailed upon *SS-Haupsturmführer* Amon Goeth, the brutal camp commandant and a personal drinking companion, to allow him to set up a special sub-camp for his own Jewish workers at the factory site in Zablocie. There he was better able to keep the Jews under relatively tolerable conditions, augmenting their below-subsistence diet with food bought on the black market with his own money. The factory compound was declared out of bounds for the SS guards who kept watch over the sub-camp.

In late 1944, Plaszów and all its sub-camps had to be evacuated in face of the Russian advance. Most of the camp inmates—more than 20,000 men, women, and children—were sent to extermination camps. On receiving the order to evacuate, Schindler, who had approached the appropriate section in the Supreme Command of the Army (OKW), managed to obtain official authorization to continue production in a factory that he and his wife had set up in Brünnlitz, in their native Sudetenland. The entire work force from Zablocie—to which were furtively added many new names from the Plaszów camp—was supposed to move to the new factory site. However, instead of being brought to Brünnlitz, the 800 men—among them 700 Jews—and the 300 women on Schindler's list were diverted to Gross-Rosen and to Auschwitz, respectively.

When he learned what had happened, Schindler at first managed to secure the release of the men from the Gross-Rosen camp. He then proceeded to send his personal German secretary to Auschwitz to negotiate the release of the women. The latter managed to obtain the release of the Jewish women by promising to pay 7 RM daily per worker. This is the only recorded case in the history of the extermination camp that such a large group of people were allowed to leave alive while the gas chambers were still in operation.

One of the most remarkable humanitarian acts performed by Oskar and Emilie Schindler involved the case of 120 Jewish male prisoners from Goleszow, a sub-camp of Auschwitz. The

men had been working there in a quarry plant that belonged to the SS-operated company "German Earth and Stone Works." With the approach of the Russian front in January 1945, they were evacuated from Goleszow and transported westward in sealed cattle-wagons, without food or water. At the end of a seven-day gruelling journey in the dead of winter, the SS guards finally stationed the two sealed cattle-cars with their human cargo at the gates of Brünnlitz. Emilie Schindler was just in time to stop the SS camp commandant from sending the train back. Schindler, who had rushed back to the camp from some food-procuring errand outside, barely managed to convince the commandant that he desperately needed the people who were locked in the train for work.

When the wagons were forced open, a terrible sight was revealed. The Schindlers took charge of the 107 survivors, with terrible frostbite and frightfully emaciated, arranged for medical treatment and gradually nourished them back to life. Schindler also stood up to the Nazi Commandant who wanted to incinerate the corpses that were found frozen in the boxcars, and arranged for their burial with full Jewish religious rites in a plot of land near the Catholic cemetery, which he had especially bought for that purpose.

In the final days of the war, just before the entry of the Russian army into Moravia, Schindler managed to smuggle himself back into Germany, into Allied-controlled territory. The wartime industrial tycoon was by now penniless. Jewish relief organizations and groups of survivors supported him modestly over the years, helping finance his (in the long run, unsuccessful) emigration to South America. When Schindler visited Israel in 1961, the first of seventeen visits, he was treated to an overwhelming welcome from 220 enthusiastic survivors. He continued to live partly in Israel and partly in Germany. After his death in Hildesheim, Germany, in October 1974, the mournful survivors brought the remains of their rescuer to Israel to be laid to eternal rest in the Catholic Cemetery of Jerusalem. The inscription on his grave says: 'The unforgettable rescuer of 1,200 persecuted Jews".

In 1962 a tree was planted in Schindler's honour in the Avenue of the Righteous at Yad Vashem. Oskar and Emilie Schindler were recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” in 1993. (www.yadvashem.org)

4.6.2 Representation of History in the Film

There are hardly any films in the mainstream Hollywood cinema that would create debate, both academic and public, regarding the truthful account of a historical event like Holocaust as is done by Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List* (1993). The attempt of Spielberg is laudable as the popular Hollywood cinema has largely overlooked the Jewish Holocaust of World War II. The greatest contribution of *Schindler's List* is that it has created awareness about the Holocaust at a time when the event was beginning to fade from popular consciousness. Spielberg’s version of Schindler is an attempt to preserve the Holocaust in the world’s memory. The film uses an understandable, linear narrative to depict the life and times of Oskar Schindler.

In this Oscar-winning film, Steven Spielberg has created scenes of great dramatic intensity in order to heighten the effect of Schindler’s transformation from a Nazi war profiteer to an enlightened saviour or a rescuer. In doing so, he has compromised with both the sources – Thomas Keneally’s novel as well as the historical accuracy. However, one can easily understand that such a heightened dramatic effect as is seen in the liquidation of the Kraków ghetto scene in the film is the critical point of transformation in Schindler’s life. Spielberg depicted Schindler, on horseback, viewing the brutality from a hill overlooking the ghetto. This is the scene in which Spielberg has viewers’ focus on the girl in the red coat, which serves as a metaphor for Schindler’s individualization of Jewish victims. Several of the film’s other dramatic scenes - Schindler’s visit to the Auschwitz in order to secure the release of 300 women diverted to the camp, for instance – never occurred yet have become integral to popular perceptions of Schindler.

A historian like David M. Crowe has analyzed the documentary evidence related to the story of the film in order to separate fact from fiction. In the opinion of Crowe, there comes no single critical point of transformation that made him into a saviour. However, there are a few logical explanations – economic self-interest, strong personal ties with Jews, as well as a streak of non-conformity – for his altruism. According to Crowe, it was precisely the flaws in the behaviour of Schindler that prompted this almost impossible humanitarian act of saving more than 1200 Jews. It was Schindler's misdeeds, as a German intelligence agent, as profiteer, and as a Nazi comfortable in the sinister world of the SS, that placed him in a position to facilitate his act of rescue.

Schindler's accountant, Itzhak Stern's strong comments about the impact of the closing of the ghetto on Oskar was probably another source of transformation. According to Stern, the murder of the children in the ghetto's *kinderheim* (children's home) during the brutal closing of the Kraków ghetto on March 13-14th, 1943, prompted Oskar's firm commitment to do everything he could to save as many Jews as possible. Stern said that this was the crucial incident that unsettled Schindler's mind. Schindler had changed overnight and was never the same again. Though Oskar would undoubtedly be shocked by the murder of the *kinderheim* children, other evidence suggests that he had already chosen his path sometime before the tragedy. The *kinderheim* horror simply made him more determined to save as many Jews as he could. But undoubtedly, of all the crucial points in Oskar's life, it is the liquidation of ghetto that shook him from within and to have a single-minded pursuit to save as many Jews as he can.

The beginning of the film itself establishes the happy-go-lucky, ambitious, industrious, charismatic personality of Oskar Schindler. It shows how he bribes over the topmost Nazi officials in order to secure an industrial career for himself. At this juncture, Second World War and the Jewish condition were merely the realities of Nazi regime, and

like a true opportunist he would like to make the most of it. It is only after his association with Itzhak Stern, the Jewish accountant of his enamelware factory that he realizes the gravity of the Holocaust. His Herculean efforts to rescue as many Jews as he can begin from the point when he bears witness to the liquidation of the ghetto and its accompanying brutal violence. The panoramic scene from the top of the hill gives him a full view of the Nazi barbarism. Actor Liam Neeson has powerfully dramatized the character and personality of the real Oskar Schindler through his dynamic performance. His dignified and royal presence, penetrating eyes, and acting skills heightens the dramatic effect of the scenes. However, it is in the last scene of the film that Liam Neeson as Oskar Schindler bears the greatest cinematic effect. All eyes turn to him when Oskar Schindler climbs up the pedestal in the factory and delivers his parting speech. The graph of Oskar Schindler's life journeys from lust for power, women and glory to being a humanitarian saviour. The final scene of the film powerfully captures the regret and the repentance of Schindler for not having done enough to save as many Jews as he could.

Another most powerful character in the film is played by Ralph Fiennes as Amon Goeth, the Nazi commandant. His ruthlessness is evident in the very first scene when he is introduced. He gets a female Jewish engineer murdered cold-bloodedly just because she argued with him. One of the most impressive scenes in the film is Goeth's ritualistic shootings/killings in morning from the balcony of his villa. This highlights the fact that life and death in the camp were decided arbitrarily. However, it is Helen Hirsch and Itzhak Stern who bring out the true nature of Amon Goeth as a monster who is fond of killing Jews for the sake of killing. He is shown as an ardent follower of Hitler and Nazi policies.

Ben Kingsley in the role of Itzhak Stern also functions as an agent of transformation for Oskar Schindler. His ingeniousness, loyalty and humane presence probably forces Oskar Schindler to think about the question of Holocaust seriously. His recitation of the Talmudic

verse, “he who saves one life, saves the humanity entire” finalizes the transformation of Oskar Schindler.

Audio-visually, the film takes great pains in its style and method to portray the events in the most realistic manner. The first and most obvious visual aspect is the film’s use of black and white photography. With the exception of the title credit sequence, the small documentary end piece, and the girl shown in the red coat during the liquidation of the Kraków ghetto, the entire film is shot in stark black and white. There can be several reasons for the use of black and white colour scheme in the film. It was only Spielberg and the director of cinematography Kaminski who chose to shoot the film in a grimy, unstylish fashion. Also, according to Spielberg, “It’s entirely appropriate because I’ve only experienced the Holocaust through other people’s testimonies and through archival footage which is, of course, all in black and white.” So, the use of black and white in the film does not confer nostalgia towards the horrors of the subject, rather it adds weight to the film’s claims of historical 'truth'. Another argument put forward by Spielberg for the use of black and white colour in the film is that ‘colour’ represents life, whereas the film is about the dark period of history – Holocaust. The documentary-style footage adds deep focus to the realistic presentation of history and ultimately it accentuates the emotional impact of the film. This documentary/newsreel quality representation adds weight to the film’s claims to historical authenticity. The film too doesn't shy away from the graphic nature of the subject and the film is never less than harrowing, particularly in the clearing of the Jewish Ghetto scene in which the camera follows Nazi soldiers running down the street, in a rapid series of hand-held shots. In my opinion, the film does not suffer from the lack of colour as well as the grand cinematography of the other films of Spielberg.

A symbol of innocence in the movie, the little girl in the red coat who appears during the liquidation of the ghetto in the movie was based on a real person. In the film, the little girl

is played by actress Oliwia Dabrowska, who—at the age of three—promised Spielberg that she would not watch the film until she was 18 years old. She allegedly watched the movie when she was 11, breaking her promise, and spent years rejecting the experience. Later, she told the Daily Mail, "I realized I had been part of something I could be proud of. Spielberg was right: I had to grow up to watch the film." The actual girl in the red coat was named Roma Ligocka; a survivor of the Kraków ghetto, even though in the film she is shown dead in one of the camp scenes, which symbolizes death of innocence and life itself. She was known amongst the Jews living there by her red winter coat. Ligocka, now a painter who lives in Germany, later wrote a biography about surviving the Holocaust called *The Girl in the Red Coat*.

In terms of historical authenticity, Spielberg originally wanted to shoot the movie completely in Polish and German using subtitles. Finally, he gave up the idea because he felt that it would reduce the significance of dramatic visuals on the screen. According to Spielberg, "I wanted people to watch the images, not read the subtitles. There's too much safety in reading. It would have been an excuse to take their eyes off the screen and watch something else."

Schindler's List is a film that traverses conventional Hollywood techniques and practices in an effort to increase its claims to historical truth and authenticity. It seeks to achieve the status of art cinema through the claims of an increased level of authenticity. The film has attained the status of a significant historical document, one of the ultimate proofs of the undeniable catastrophe suffered by the European Jewry.

The clear objectives of Spielberg in making this film are two-fold – to make this film a definitive version of Holocaust which is available to the general viewing public at large and to capture the dense nature of the Holocaust. It is within this context that the film becomes truly 'representative' of history.

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CHAPTER 5
Representation of History in Five Partition Films

5.1 Partition Cinema: An Overview

In the first few years after Independence, the basic structure of the Hindi film remained essentially rooted in mythology, history and the Bhakti and Sufi traditions. But soon it began to distance itself from its earlier larger emphasis on Indian mythology and fairy tale adventurism and expanded its domain to cover a vast range of genres. Cinema had, by now, established its strong links with the socio-political ground realities and had begun to influence society by taking up relevant and significant contemporary issues.

The most important of such issues was to ensure unity and harmony between Hindus and Sikhs on the one hand, and the Muslims on the other in the wake of Partition, which had uprooted millions of people, and had led to large-scale casualties and destruction of properties. Another crucial issue was to eliminate, or at least minimize, the acute linguistic differences and ethnic discord that had started threatening the unity of the newborn nation. An urgency was felt to reassert 'Indianness' as a composite entity based on mutual respect for, and acceptance of, diverse religions, languages, cultures and ethnic groups. Equally important was the urgent need for mobilizing people all over the country for national reconstruction and to ensure that the nation's energy was not dissipated in internecine conflicts and unwanted strife. Such a challenge was taken up wholeheartedly by a host of film-makers, each focusing on a specific communal milieu. (Raj, 2014)

The Partition inspired many creative minds in India and Pakistan to create films depicting the massacres during the migration, some concentrated on the aftermath of the partition in terms of difficulties faced by the refugees in both sides of the border, while some dealt with issues of women, rape and abduction. (Ali and Sabir, 2013)

Since its inception Indian cinema has dealt with varied subjects – political, social, economic, general etc. The event of Partition of India has been the theme in many Indian

films. Few films are based on novels penned down by renowned Indian and Pakistani writers and few of them are written with the purpose of making a film by a particular person. Indian cinema concentrated on this theme to bring forth the history which led to the event of Partition. The plight of people, their migration, their troubles, and their psychology is well portrayed through the cinema. Many reputed directors have dealt with the issue of Partition. (Ali and Sabir, 2013)

Indian cinema acts as a bridge between the citizens of its country and the factual events taken place in the past by communicating the historical knowledge. Partition of India has been highly memorized in many Indian films. Mainstream cinema is deeply affected by the Partition. Cinema deeply influences the lives of people; it leads to purgation of emotions. (Ali and Sabir, 2013)

By and large Hindi cinema has foregrounded the love story and has brought in history only tangentially or as a backdrop. Overtly and consciously historical films are few and far between. The fear of controversy and personal safety may be a cause to handle "sensitive" issues such as Partition. At the same time, they are also passionate about some issues, which they would like to address in their films. This contradiction is resolved by dealing with controversial themes in a tangential manner, either by making them the backdrop to a love story or by highlighting certain universal and humanist concerns and glossing over the political contradictions and contestations. Moreover, it may be too facile to say that in Hindi cinema the Partition serves only as the background. After all, the love stories that dominate are ones whose trajectories have been charted by the historical event of the Partition. (Ali and Sabir, 2013)

Basically the work on Partition in Indian cinema can be divided into three phases: In the first fifteen years after the Partition, cinema narrates the story of migration, abducted women and their recovery. The second phase is that of the 1970s which gave space for the

surfacing of concealed emotions by dealing with repressed issues in society – among these was Partition and communal conflict. The third and the last phase is that of the 1990s with the demolition of the Babri Masjid followed by the Bombay riots, which negotiated issues of identity, secularism and citizenship. The recall value of Partition is enormous as in the way it is invoked in communal riots discourses as well as by the people during genocides, pogroms etc. (Ali and Sabir, 2013)

5.2 Tamas (1988)

Written and directed by Govind Nihalani, *Tamas* is a 1998 tele-series based on the Hindi novel of the same name written by Bhisham Sahni. The riot-stricken Pakistan at the time of India's Partition in 1947 functions as the backdrop of the novel and the tele-series. The film depicts the miserable plight of emigrant Sikh and Hindu families as they undertake the hazardous migration to India as a consequence of the Partition. It was first shown on Doordarshan as a mini-series and later as a four hours long feature film. The film has won National Film Awards of 1988 in the category of "Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration", "Best Supporting Actress", and "Best Music Direction".

The novel is autobiographical, so is the film. In other words, the novel is based on the memories of Bhisham Sahni, the writer, who is himself a refugee to India from West Punjab, which is now in Pakistan. This film looks at Partition from an Indian Punjabi perspective, who faces the onslaughts of Partition and the dire need to migrate to a safer destination on the Indian side of Punjab. The first part of the film also highlights the provocations faced by the Muslims, and their supremacy in Western Punjab (now in Pakistan) due to their sheer numbers. *Tamas* is an appropriate title used by the novelist as it symbolizes the darkness of those times when religious intolerance and civil war was rampant and it tore apart two refugee families, one Sikh and the other Hindu. Though they have shared very amicable relationship with their Muslim neighbours since centuries, they ultimately became the victims of violence

and hatred in the Partition of 1947. A thousand year of the history of co-existence just became meaningless in the face of communal riots during 1947. Freedom was achieved but at the heavy cost of bloodshed, massacre and division of geographical lands (Hindu India and Muslim Pakistan) which then extended to the division of hearts.

India's Partition altered this long-standing tradition of co-existence. Overnight, the religious diversity in India became dangerous. The political parties fought for power and this fight resulted in people coming out on the streets, looting, killing and making millions of their own neighbours homeless. The division brought a strong sense of fear, insecurity and panic in the people. They considered their very neighbours as enemies and their home or 'basti' as unsafe. So they left their homes for a new Promised Land, a land that never was. This search landed millions of people to migrate, either willing or coerced, from India to Pakistan and vice versa.

5.2.1 Historical Facts – Exodus of Hindus and Muslim "Mohajirs"

Some of the most indelible images of Partition are those of the historic train and foot convoys, the old and the young huddled together, carrying few if any belongings, hoping to reach their destinations in safety. But this sheer fact of terror and mass displacement alone did not create the figure of the refugee. When people left their homes, when their "familiar way-of-being in the world" was disrupted by violence, fear, or uncertainty, it was not necessarily with the prospect of permanent displacement. The making of refugees was not "a onetime set of events bounded in time and space", but was instead profoundly shaped over time by the two post-colonial states as they struggled to classify, enumerate, and manage these displacements.

Sind was a region that was particularly characterized for its "communal harmony", and in the days leading up to Partition, Sind's governor, Francis Mudie, described it as a place which "[c]haracteristically … carries on almost as if nothing had happened or was

going to happen," and that he "[didn't] expect many real Sindhi [Hindus] to leave the Province. In keeping with Mudie's view, Karachi did not experience the scale of violence that had ensued in Punjab and Delhi. Yet soon after Partition, the Hindu population began to leave Karachi, so that in the decade between 1941 and 1951 almost the entire Hindu population had left the city. By the time, "the most notable communal incident" took place on January 6, 1948, Hindus and Sikhs were already leaving the city and the province in large numbers. In fact, the "incident" took place as Sikhs from various parts of Sind arrived in Karachi to leave by ship for India, and were taken in open horse carriages to a *gurdwara* in the city. Reportedly, Muslim refugees surrounded the *gurdwara* and attacked it, and this led to rioting in the city which was brought "under control" when the army was deployed.

The post-independence governor of Sind, Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah, attributed the departure of Sindhi Hindus to the incoming Muslim refugees, and argued that "[t]he Sindhi Hindu, a shrewd businessman, does not want any upheaval and the Sindhi Muslim is also free from communal hatred. It is the refugees who have brought heat and passion into the placid life of this province." Although he recognized that "Muslim refugees" had to be "welcomed", he regarded the "refugee problem" as "the greatest problem" facing the province in "the maintenance of law and order in Sind."

But by early September, Hidayatullah noted that "destitute refugees" were arriving in Karachi at the rate of 400 daily. By mid-September, 27,000 refugees were reported to have come to Sind, and a week later their numbers had doubled. It was these Muslim refugees who were considered to be the "refugee problem" since the increase in incidents of violence in the city was associated with them, and they were received with some hostility by the Sind government. Initially there were no arrangements for organizing them into camp, and they quickly became a visible presence in the city as footpaths filled up. By the time some camps were set up many more refugees had arrived, and housing refugees became a critical issue.

The housing crisis put the Pakistani state in a predicament similar to that of the Indian state with Delhi. On the one hand the Pakistani state was attempting to reassure Sind's Hindus to remain in their homes but on the other there were thousands of shelterless Muslim refugees. However, in response to the housing crisis, the government passed the Sind Economic Rehabilitation Bill for taking over "abandoned" properties and allotting them to Muslim refugees. This task of taking over and allotting "abandoned" houses to *muhajirs* fell to the Rent Controller's Office. A Custodian of Evacuee Property was not set up in Karachi until 1948, for unlike the Punjab and Delhi there had been no instant "mass abandonment" due to violence. This also made the Rent Controller's task, an extremely difficult one, for although Hindus were leaving, it was unclear if a house was "abandoned" or not if the owner left without declaring his intentions. So many had locked their homes and gone but, with the hope of returning once conditions improved. Furthermore, in many cases part of a family remained in Karachi while another left for India. So although Hindus were leaving, their houses were not "empty". At the same time "abandoned homes" were being demanded by angry Muslim refugees who claimed an entitlement to the new nation-state.

Muhajir anger was two-fold – on the one hand it was directed against the Pakistani state and in particular the Sind government, and on the other it was directed against Hindus of the city. Thus, government attempts to convince Sindhi Hindus to stay in the province were criticized by *muhajirs* as "the Hindu-appeasing policy" of the government, and Hindus became the focus of both anger and suspicion. While many *muhajirs*, including those from Delhi, were survivors of considerable violence, the resentment of ill-treatment elsewhere became directed against Hindus in Sind. There was indignation that Hindus were evacuating safely to India while Muslim refugees were being "plundered" in India. In addition, Hindu loyalty to Pakistan was questioned, as described in the cartoon which declared that their hearts were still in India. Sinister intentions were attributed to the city's Hindus.

By questioning their degree of belonging and rendering them suspicious, and equation emerged in *muhajir* opinion whereby Hindus were believed to be leaving (sooner or later) and so their houses were there for the taking.

The riots of January 6, 1948, were in a sense a continuation of the ongoing violence, and massive looting and seizures of houses were an important part of the riots. The scale and visible nature of the violence dispelled the notional "peace" in Karachi, and sharpened contending political discourses. It became an occasion for local Hindu leaders as well as Sindhi Congressmen in India to emphasize that "Hindus no longer feel safe in Sind," but it also allowed the Sind government to announce that there was no more place for *muhajirs*.

The Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation argued, on the basis of figures provided by the MEO, that West Punjab had received a "surplus" of 12 lakh refugees. The notion of "surplus" was based on numbers of Muslim refugees that had arrived "over and above the non-Muslim population that had left the province" of West Punjab. It was stated that this "excess" was composed entirely of "agriculturalists" since the "exchange" of "urban non-agriculturalists" had been almost equal.

Ayub Khuhro, in a letter to Jinnah, argued that Professor Hasan's figures were incorrect on a number of accounts. Khuhro stated that there were 14 lakh Hindus in Sind but most of these were living in urban areas and 2.5 lakh in Karachi alone. However, he argued that 4 lakh Muslims had already "replaced the outgoing urban Hindus since the 15th of August 1947," and in other towns of Sind the population had also doubled. Furthermore, people were still coming in by rail from Rajputana and by ship to Karachi, and there was "no means of stopping or controlling this influx." Thus, Khuhro pointed out that Muslim refugees coming in from outside divided Punjab were not being included in the official resettlement calculus, but were a reality in Sind. (Zamindar, 2007)

5.2.2 Representation of History in the Film

According to Govind Nihalani, the treatment of Partition in Bhisham Sahni's *Tamas* is one of detachment and remarkable objectivity. It is a reflective response to the theme of Partition. (Nihalani, 2008)

When a literary text is rendered into a film, the adaptation is done not only with the purpose of enriching the original but also modifying and interpreting the original in a different mode so as to make it a superior work of art. Adaptation is done with the intention of making the original more comprehensive, appealing and interpretative. Govind Nihalani's film version of *Tamas* attains this rare feat and lends the charm of immortality to the novel.

Like Bhisham Sahni, who based his novel *Tamas* on the basis of his experiences of migration during Partition, Govind Nihalani too has been a migrant. He was born in Karachi, Pakistan and migrated to India during Partition soon after Partition. The plots of his films are based on urban crime and politics. Nihalani's eye for details made him began his career as a cinematographer of Hindi films which include the films of Shyam Benegal as well. He has already received Padma Shri in 2002 for his outstanding contribution to Indian cinema and a National Award for Best Cinematography for Shyam Benegal's *Junoon* (1979). Nihalani has used the literary narratives of writers like Vijay Tendulkar, Shashi Deshpande, Mahasweta Devi and many more for a successful adaptation. However, in one of his interviews given to *The Tribune* on October 25, 1998, he told Belu Maheshwari that he was neither familiar with *Tamas* nor with Bhisham Sahni. It is only when he was looking for stories related to the Partition, that he came across the title *Tamas*. It took six years for Nihalani to transform the narrative from pen to screen. Further, Nihalani said:

> "I had wanted to make a film on the Partition for a long time since I was also an affected person. I was very young but the Partition had left very emotional

> and traumatic memories. My first memory of blood, of fear and panic comes from that time". (1998)

The word "Tamas" means 'darkness' which has multiple implications. One form of darkness in the novel and the film is the time itself, that is to say, the dark clouds of Partition which overshadowed life in the sub-continent. But simultaneously, it also represents filth and unpleasantness, whether it is biological, intellectual, material, moral, spiritual, emotional or psychological. Nihalani has tried to represent the same in the film version of *Tamas*.

For the most part of the film, Nihalani like Bhisham Sahni has used a marginalized and socially downtrodden character like Nathu to give us a glimpse of the riot-stricken Pakistan during and after the Partition. It is a subaltern (subordinate) perspective which observes, understands and interprets the historical reality of Partition. Nathu and his conversation with his pregnant wife Karmo provides us with a victim's perspective towards Partition violence and killings. Nihalani has represented the episodic novel into a film version with great skill and craftsmanship. Nathu leads the viewers/audience from his filthy hut where the tele-series begin with the butchering of a pig to the mosque, the burning grain market, innocent victims being killed by ignorant hands, doubts, fears, communal agitation, war-camp like religious places, and finally the refugee camp where Nathu is found dead and Karmo gives birth to their child. The greater part of the film is presented through the eyes of Nathu and his wife Karmo, whereas the remaining part is seen through the matured and aged perspective of Harnam Singh and his wife Banto, the roles played by Bhisham Sahni and Dina Pathak in the film. The socially marginalized characters are given the greater responsibility of taking the narrative ahead through their actions, fears, anxieties, suffering and finally death. It's a perspective from below which is largely overlooked by mainstream historical discourse. The film too projects other plots like that of Congress (represented by Bakshiji) and their actions of selfless service to the society inspired by Gandhiji; the Muslim

League (represented by Hayat Baksh) and Hindu Mahasabha and their politics based on fundamental religious ideology; the role of passive administrator played by the British (Richard); the Sikhs represented by Teja Singh and the communists represented by Mirdad and his comrades.

There are many dramatic and intensely emotional scenes in the whole film. The opening scene of the film itself establishes tension and violence, where the poorly equipped tries to kill a full grown pig, and which he has to supply at the behest of Thekedar, who in turn says that he is going to provide it to the veterinary surgeon for medical experiments. Nathu, who is a tanner by profession, has killed a pig for the first time without knowing and understanding that his action entails great repercussions. the beginning shot of the film establishes the atmosphere of fear, anxiety, panic, violence, bloodshed and chaos. Throughout the whole film, it is this act of killing that becomes the greatest guilt of Nathu, who is constantly consoled by his wife Karmo. The pig that is killed by Nathu is ultimately found on the steps of the mosque, and which aggravates communal tension in otherwise peaceful atmosphere.

Govind Nihalani has done an important change from an aesthetic or cinematic point of view, that is to say, he does not refer to the character of Murad Ali with name but rather with his social position of Thekedar in the film. Though Thekedar has clearly League sympathies and affiliation, his religious identity and ideology are not directly referred to but is only hinted at. He is shown as a shrewd opportunist, who first of all uses Nathu to spread communalism and then towards the end takes on the new role of a peace emissary shouting slogans of peace. Nihalani subverts the historical reality and gives it a universal effect by hiding the religious identity of people like Thekedar. Probably, he seems to suggest that during and after Partition people ceased to be peace-loving, tolerant Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and became blood-sucking monsters, who enjoyed looting, murdering and raping.

Govind Nihalani as a responsible filmmaker universalizes the tragic situation of Partition wherein humanity suffered.

The novel *Tamas* ends with the loud announcement made through the peace bus. Bhisham Sahni ends the novel by exposing the hypocrisy of the communal and political leaders, the craftiness of people like Murad Ali and exposing the indifference of the British who did not do anything to control the mass killings and communal riots. However, the film ends with a different scene and message. The film ends with the gradual discovery of Karmo of her husband's death Nathu. She sees the dead body of Nathu lying at the backside of refugee camp. At the same time, she delivers an infant whose cries get blended with the shouts of "Allah-O-Akbar!" and "Har-Har-Mahadev!"

The film ends with a silver lining, with the hope of life on one hand, and on the other this hope of life begins amidst the dark clouds of communal frenzy and death. Ironically, the birth of a life pronounces the death of a nation. The new-born infant of Karmo and Nathu is delivered in a divided India. He or she will bear the legacy of this history of India's Partition.

There are two scenes in the whole film which are notably worthy of detailed analysis. The first scene of killing the pig in a dimly lit hut presents a scene of stark violence. The squeaking of the pig while being targeted by Nathu creates a sense of disgust and filth. The gory murder of the pig initiates the whirlpool of communal frenzy and rioting leading to numerous deaths and killings and Nihalani leads it to the willing act of women of Sayeedpur jumping into the village well. Barring a scene or two, Nihalani avoids a direct portrayal of brutal physical violence. Nandini Ramnath points out in "Heart of Darkness: Govind Nihalani's *Tamas* is Timeless" that:

> 'Nihalani eschews a direct depiction of the large scale killings that accompanied the partition. Rather than bodies, we see the killers; instead of blood-letting, we are confronted with the faces of victims'. (Ramnath, 2011)

This includes murder of the old Muslim perfume seller by the young inexperienced Hindu fanatics. The act is captured with a long shot. The penetrating camera lens of Nihalani doesn't focus on the murder or on the person who is killed, instead the focus is on the act of stabbing and the close up of the killer against the background score which enhances the sense of horror. The same fear and horror is visible on the face of Nathu when he and his wife Karmo look at the scenes of bestiality from a distance. Nihalani also shows the terror-stricken and bewildered faces of the Sikhs gathered in the *gurdwara*, especially when the Muslim mob are about to launch an attack. The close up shots enhances the sense of terror, fear, panic and violence.

However, the film apart from exposing the communal colours of all religions and the shrewd opportunism and craftiness of the British, it shows a few scenes which uphold noble values and spread the fragrance of humanity. For an instance, the commendable act of Ehsaan Ali's wife Rajjo to shelter Harnam Singh and his wife Banto for some time, and to return their valuables and gun when the continued their journey to the other village.

Nihalani's portrayal of the British officer Richard and his wife Lisa is equally interesting. Richard, like a loyal British officer, coldly and insensitively observes the wild fire of communal frenzy spread in the town. He deploys government control only after a lot of property is destroyed and a lot of devastation has taken place. On the contrary, his wife Lisa has a humanitarian attitude towards the whole tragedy of Partition. She even coaxes her husband to take some action against this communal madness. Finally, she enlists herself as a volunteer to serve the injured and the suffering. This is the saving grace of her character. Lisa's act of kindness and sympathy restores the faith in humanity.

The character of Jarnail Singh is also symbolic of those common people of India who had great faith in India's nationalism, Mahatma Gandhi, Ganga-jamuni culture of India. He appears to be slightly eccentric but he works for India's unity out of his conviction and

fearlessly. He tries his level best to bring a sense of realization and discretion among the people of the town and asks them to restore sanity amidst communalism. However, his brutal murder in the middle of the market area symbolizes the silencing of secular forces by the fundamentalists.

The film *Tamas* also employs episodic structure. The heavy lingering music composed by Vanraj Bhatia is consistent with the tragic atmosphere of the film. Music of this film, like its episodes, does not provide any sense of relief. The music too has the tragedy at a 'grand scale'. The series begins with a loud shout 'Aayoo Rabbaa…' followed by the echoing silence, titles and then the filthy hut. The loud shout with silence immediately behind it creates a haunting effect. (Nihalani, 2008)

And the tele-series *Tamas*, for the director:

> "*Tamas* is more than just a mini-series or a film, it is an act of faith"
>
> (Nihalani, 2008)

Tamas as a film brings the forgotten history of Partition to life. Its focus is on the elite class of Indian politics as well as the ordinary men and women who struggled for their lives during Partition riots. It provides an alternative version to the discourse of mainstream history which shows how ordinary human beings grappled with their lives amidst the horrors of Partition. *Tamas* creates a sense of anarchy and horror without showing bloodshed and massacre directly. It functions as a counter-history and provides an interpretative version of Partition history which takes into account the lives of individuals and their struggle for survival, which usually goes unnoticed in the annals of history.

5.3 1947 Earth (1998)

1947 Earth is a 1998 Indian period drama film directed by Deepa Mehta. It is based on Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Ice Candy Man*. *1947 Earth* forms a part of Deepa Mehta's

Elements trilogy. It was preceded and followed by offbeat films like *Fire* (1996) and *Water* (2005). It bagged "Best Film Award" in Asian Film Festival, Filmfare Best Male Debut Award (Rahul Khanna) and also it was India's official entry for the Academy Award in the category of Best Foreign Language Film. The movie depicts growing tensions and conflicts in Lahore before and during India's Partition. The perspective or point of view is of a polio-ridden adult Parsee girl named Lenny looking down the memory lane and recollecting the harrowing days of Partition when she was just 8 years old. It is her utter disillusionment at the course of events and a personal sense of betrayal towards her ayah Shanta that forms the part of the story.

The earth is made up of different elements like air, water, fire etc. but the largest domain is the one that supports life in varied forms. Amongst all species, human beings are on the highest pedestal because of their sheer intelligence. Whereas other species fight or kill for food, human beings fight or kill the fellow human beings because of the identity crisis. Our identities are social markers because they are associated with our names, clothes, food, languages and most importantly religions that we follow. It is often the loss of identity that prompts actions leading to radicalism, fanaticism or extremism. *1947 Earth* is one such story of loss arising out of religious strife during the Partition. The story is set in Lahore in the time period directly before and during the Partition of India in 1947.

5.3.1 Historical Facts – Lahore in 1947

Until the beginning of the 1940s, Lahore was celebrated as a paragon of communal harmony. A religiously mixed and varied population had continuously lived in it ever since it fell to the Afghans in the early 11th century. According to the 1941 population census, the total population of the Municipality of Lahore was 671,659 out of which Muslims constituted a majority of 64.50 per cent. Except for a small Christian community and some individuals from other minor groups, the rest were Hindus and Sikhs who together made up 36 percent of

the population. In the Lahore District as a whole the situation was similar. Muslims were 60.62 per cent while Hindus and Sikhs together formed 39.38 per cent of the population. The Hindus and Sikhs, however, owned the overwhelming bulk of the property in the city and in the district. Communal tensions began to rise in the winter of 1945-46 when provincial elections were held. In March 1947 the first communal clashes took place in Lahore. When Partition took place, a few months later in mid-August, Lahore had been emptied of almost all the Hindus and Sikhs. The demographic consequences of such change were indeed profound and everlasting.

On 23 March 1940 the All-India Muslim League demanded in its annual session at Lahore the creation of a separate Muslim state(s) in the Muslim-majority areas of India. It contested the provincial elections in the winter of 1945-46 on such a platform and received a clear mandate from the Muslim voters in its favour. Not surprisingly the majority of Hindus and Sikhs were opposed to such a division. During 1946 communal riots between Hindus and Muslims took place in Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar and some other places. Harrowing scenes of barbarism and bestiality were enacted, but on a limited scale. Punjab, a Muslim-majority province with substantial Hindu and Sikh minorities, escaped unscathed that first round of communal violence but the horrors that lay in store for it a few months later completely dwarfed events elsewhere on the Subcontinent.

From the beginning of 1947 relations in Punjab between, on the one hand, the Hindu-Sikh community (in the context of the 1947 riots Hindus and Sikhs can be considered one community) and, on the other, the Muslim community (at that time comprising all sects and tendencies) became tense as British rule in the Subcontinent neared its end. In early March communal clashes occurred in Lahore and immediately spread to other parts of the province. As the days and weeks passed the attacks became more frequent, more pitiless and more organized. They continued until the end of that year. The most intense period was the couple

of months before and after mid-August. The writ of the state could easily be flouted and anarchy and chaos prevailed. In typical Hobbesian terms Lahore and the Punjab had lapsed into the dreaded 'state of nature'. However, instead of a 'war of all against all', as Hobbes conceived of in the state of nature, a 'war of communities' began to rage. The crucial question everyone wanted an answer to was undoubtedly the following: Will Punjab go as a whole to Pakistan, as the Muslim League was hoping, or, will it be divided between Pakistan and India, as the Sikh leaders and the Indian National Congress demanded? No decision to allocate the whole province to Pakistan or to divide it between the two states would have satisfied all the three groups. For the inhabitants of Lahore the life and death question was, of course: On what side of the international border will Lahore end up?

It was indeed the most important city of north-western India, having been a provincial capital under the Mughals, the capital of the Sikh kingdom and again the provincial capital of Punjab under the British. Located on the eastern banks of River Ravi and situated more or less in the upper middle part of the united Punjab, it had for centuries enjoyed great economic, political and military significance. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – all had valid historical, cultural and emotional claims and ties to it. Therefore the battle for Lahore was fought on all fronts and by all means: political, legal, brute force and terror. In the final round Lahore was awarded to Pakistan. Suddenly it became a border city. It retained its status as a provincial capital, but that of a truncated Punjab, namely the Pakistani West Punjab.

The clash over Lahore epitomizes the human tragedy that Partition imposed on the Punjabis. At the end of 1947 Lahore had transformed from a multi-communal city into an almost exclusively 'Muslim' one. This pattern of demographic change was by no means unique. All traces of an indigenous Muslim presence were wiped out from several cities in eastern Punjab, which went to India, while in western Punjabi cities Hindus and Sikhs became conspicuous by their absence. The fate of those who lived in the rural areas was no

better. The sole exception was the town of Malerkotla in East Punjab whose Muslim population was spared by the Sikh hordes because more than two hundred years earlier the Muslim Nawab of Malerkotla had shown mercy to the minor children of Guru Gobind Singh, in defiance of the orders of the Mughal state.

Such an exception apart, the first real experiment in ethnic cleansing after the Second World War took place in Punjab. The earliest estimates put the figure at 200,000 to 500,000 killed. Later the figure of one million was mentioned in many works. More recent estimates put the figure in the neighbourhood of two million killed. The exact number will never be known. Some 12 to 15 million people were forcibly transferred between the two states. It created the biggest, single refugee situation in history. Hundreds of thousands of women were abducted by men of a different religion, of which at least 75,000 were raped. The distinguishing feature of the South Asian, or more correctly and accurately Punjab holocaust was that all the three religious groups were its victims. Ironically its perpetrators belonged also to all of them. (Ahmed, 2004)

5.3.2 Representation of History in the Film

1947 Earth is a realistic portrayal of Partition and its resulting violence and trauma. It presents the conflicts related to Partition in a realistic mode. We do find two polarities within which the whole film is constructed – on one hand, the film is melodramatically constructed portraying domestic set up and familiar images of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh solidarity in pre-partition India; whereas, on the other, it represents the larger historical forces (communalism, political differences between Congress and Muslim League) that led to Partition.

The film begins with the adult voice-over of Lenny who talks about her life in Lahore of March 1947. She says, “I was eight years old, living in Lahore of March 1947, when the British Empire in India started to collapse. Along with talks of India’s independence from Britain came rumblings about its division into two countries, Pakistan and India. Hindus,

Muslims and Sikhs who had lived together as one entity for centuries suddenly started to clamour for pieces of India for themselves. The arbitrary line of division the British would draw to carve up India in August of 1947 would scar the Sub-continent forever." Lenny's voice-over tries to convey the then situation in Lahore, regarding the assumptions of partition. She breaks a glass plate, which symbolizes the partition as what would be the condition of people and how difficult would it be to leave their homes, businesses and friends behind. Lenny's action leads to doubt in the mind of her mother Bunti, her ayah Shanta and Imam Din regarding the absurd and arbitrary division of India.

The discussion at the dinner table of Lenny's house amongst the adults clearly brings out the differences that existed amongst different factions of the country. The meeting of Shanta, Dil Navaz, Hassan, Lenny, Sher Singh and the butcher in the park symbolizes the peaceful Lahore before the Partition of India. It is a space or a meeting place for the confluence of different faiths. Friendship, loyalty and love are the paramount forces that govern the lives of these people. Dil Navaz and Hassan are in love with Shanta. Love sees no religious barrier as both Muslim men have a crush on a Hindu girl. Dil Navaz, the ice-candy man is a happy-go-lucky guy, frolicsome and frivolous whereas Hassan is sombre towards the important issues of life. Though Shanta doesn't discourage the flirtatious behaviour of Dil Navaz in a serious manner, she is romantically inclined to Hassan, the masseur man. As the Partition of India nears, it's going to be a crucial issue which will decide the fate of these characters. Lahore, both historically and in the film version, is shown as a tolerant place where multiculturalism breeds smoothly.

Being a Parsee family, Rustom, Bunti and Lenny are supposed to be neutral in their stance towards the division of India. However, while going to the market, they come across a procession of Leaguers who damage their car while shouting the slogan "Long Live Pakistan!" This comes as a jolt to the Parsee family. They could now see the changing reality

of Lahore and what was going to be in the days to come. Lahore was going to be hijacked by the Muslim League demand for Pakistan of which Lahore would also be an integral part. In that case, it won't have any place for Hindus and Sikhs, who will then be forced to go to India.

When all the friends again meet in the Park, things have changed in Lahore. They talk about the new reality of Lahore. The park now has homogenized groups of single faith except for their group which has remained heterogeneous. At the same time, Dil Navaz enters as a holy man who can talk to Allah and can foresee the future. When asked by a Sikh as to what will happen to Sikh after the British divides India. To which, Dil Navaz in the guise of holy man replies, "When the time for division comes, there is going to be a huge storm, and you will all fight like animals." The words of Dil Navaz function as a premonition to what became a reality in the Lahore of 1947.

Untouchability and child marriage prevailed in the society before independence as well. For an instance in the film, the cleaner's wife beats her daughter Paroo for pushing the car of Rustom as it didn't start and for playing with Lenny, which is not meant for her. Finally, under the influence of the changing social, political and religious situation in Lahore, the cleaner converts to Christianity and gets her child-daughter married to an old Christian man. He safeguards his own as well as the future of his family.

Lenny's mom Bunti symbolizes the position of women in pre-partition times. Though she knew how to drive a car, had an independent thought of her own, yet she is treated as a subordinate by her husband as she is shown removing his socks while he comfortably lies down on the bed.

As all the friends have their food together in a local hotel, there is a heated debate about the division of India and the growing panic amongst the people. All the friends seem divided and they half-heartedly agree that when the time comes they would support each

other. This scene points to the fact that during the time of Partition, panic, psychosis and rumours played vital role in escalating communal passions resulting in large scale violence.

The scene when Hassan watches people begin leaving the city of Lahore in anticipation of Partition is one of the most dramatic scenes of the film. The haunting music, dramatic use of lighting that casts eerie shadows on the passive, zombie-like individuals, the back and forth shots between the procession and the silent witness who is unable to speak and is shown helpless in his observation of events, the herding of people at night with all of their possessions etc. evoke the realistic portrayal of Partition and its resultant tragedy.

Another heart-rending scene in the film is the arrival of ghost train carrying the butchered bodies of Muslims at the station of Lahore. It is the same train which was to bring the sisters of Dil Navaz from Gurdaspur to Lahore. However, when it arrives, it leaves Dil Navaz completely shattered and vengeful. The train, as modern machinery and transporter of death, arrives and the sounds of screaming witnesses to the travesty overwhelm the music. The arrival of the train epitomizes the on-going massacres and the impending horrors of Partition that would not spare even Lahore in the days to come. While the butcher comes to inform other friends about the tragedy that has befallen Dil Navaz, they listen to the first prime ministerial speech of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the eve of India's independence. A sharp contrast is brought out between the pain and suffering of the common man and the sense of joy of independence reflected in the famous speech of Pandit Nehru. There were two Indias within the same India – one that suffered and the other that rejoiced.

Hassan, Shanta and Lenny baby go to meet Dil Navaz to give him condolences and console his aching mind and heart. Suddenly, they see that the protests turn violent and all the communities (Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims) indulge into loot, murder and rape. While goes out to make arrangements for Shanta and Lenny baby to return home, Dil Navaz tells Shanta, "This is not only about Hindus and Muslims. It's about what is inside us. Hindus, Muslims,

Sikhs – we are all bastards, all animals – like the lion in the zoo that Lenny baby is so scared of. He just lies there, waiting for the cage to open. And when it does…" Shanta rejects the proposed marriage with Dil Navaz which infuriates him further.

However, the gradual discovery of Hassan's dead body, who planned to elope with Shanta to Amritsar comes as a jolt to the viewers as well. It's absolutely evident that it is Dil Navaz's doing and now he along with a group of violent protesters enters the gates of Parsee family in search of other non-Muslims. To their greatest surprise the gardener and the cleaner have become Muslim and Christian respectively. Yet Shanta remains to be traced. All the members of the house inform them that she has gone to Amritsar but Dil Navaz successfully tricks Lenny-baby and find out the hiding place of Shanta. She is dragged out of the house, loaded on to a cart, abducted and taken away. This scene brings out the inhuman atrocities meted out to women during Partition.

The film ends with the adult Lenny recalling the fact that the British simply left a truncated country, a divided India even after ruling for 250 years and that before 50 years she betrayed her ayah Shanta whose whereabouts she doesn't know. But with her loss she has lost a very large part of her own identity. The film reinforces the historical fact that over one million were killed during India's invasion. Seven million Muslims and five million Hindus and Sikhs were uprooted in the largest and most terrible exchange of population known to history.

1947 Earth as a film functions as the microcosm (Lahore) of what happened at the macro level (India). It shows individuals and communities caught, tried and perplexed in real-life crisis in the form of Partition. Here, two dramatic and inter-related stories of Partition live on in their violent incomprehensibility, moving across different modes of representation; from personal memory to oral history, literature, and finally, film. The fraught nature of Partition history as lived experience in present day India and Pakistan, the absences and

losses that punctuate communication and interaction between them were reinforced when the Pakistani authority refused to allow Deepa Mehta to film *1947 Earth* in Lahore. While the film talks about a history that had already taken place (Partition of India in 1947), it was made in the year 1998 during the height of nuclear build-up between India and Pakistan and Kargil War in 1999, that is to say, another history-in-making.

5.4 Khamosh Pani (2003)

One of the landmark films in the annals of Partition Cinema, *Khamosh Pani*, directed by Sabiha Sumar, has already bagged not less than 10 prestigious awards which include Bronze Leopard Award for Best Actress, Golden Leopard Award for the Best Film, in Locarno International Film Festival of 2003; Audience Award for Best Director in Nantes Three Continents Festival of 2003; Best Actress in a Leading Role and Best Screenplay Award in Karachi International Film Festival of 2003.

The film *Khamosh Pani* depicts Pakistan during General Zia-ul-Haq's autocratic regime based on radical Islamic laws. It is in the late seventies that an ageing woman named Ayesha Khan encounters her traumatic past amidst the increasingly radical climate of the country. Originally, Ayesha Khan was Veero, a young Sikh girl who escaped the mass honour killings done by her family during the Partition. Ultimately, she was saved by a Muslim man, who then marries her, converts her to Islam and provide her a secured future. It is after thirty years of her traumatic past, that she faces the ghost of her haunting past. It is during Zia's dictatorial regime that her son comes into contact with fundamentalists, and becomes one of them. Her marginalization is complete after everyone deserts her, including her son and friends. The film draws on the cyclical nature of trauma, where Veero's survival of the physical violence of Partition is brought to a closure by Ayesha's suicide three decades later, caused by the psychological violence of a radical state. The films of Sabiha Sumar have

explored the impact of fundamentalist Islam on the rights of women in Pakistan and *Khamosh Pani* was her first feature film.

If we look closely at the world around us, we would clearly notice that society treats man and woman, boy and girl differently. Despite of the fact that both live in the same region or locality, both have same habits, both speak the same language and to the extent that both possess probably similar physical, emotional, psychological and intellectual abilities. The fact is that one gets less and the other gets more. The male is always on the demanding side, whereas the female on the receiving side. There is a clear discrimination made between the two. When a male child is born, it is hailed as a proud moment as he would be the progenitor of the family. However, when a girl child is born, it is an occasion of sadness for many as she wouldn't continue the family lineage.

In pre-independence era, women suffered the most due to social evils like female infanticide, dowry, child marriage, widowhood, sati, purdah, polygamy and many more. On one hand, the girl was considered to be a burden by the family, but on the other, her virginity was treated as the reputation and honour of the family.

During the Partition, people took advantage of the softer sex and targeted women. For the mobs, looting, killing and robbing were ways to let the "other" feel unsafe. But apart from that, humiliating women of other religion was the best way to take revenge upon the "other". Women were abducted, raped, sold, taken as bonded labour, married forcefully, and even forced to convert and adopt the husband's religion. The central theme of the film *Khamosh Pani* is the plight of women during 1947 when India was both liberated and divided. *Khamosh Pani* is a film based on the plight of women especially during Partition.

5.4.1 Historical Facts – Honour Killings in Punjab during Partition and General Zia-ul-Haq's Rule in Pakistan

The most dramatic form of violence in Punjab was massacre, the attack by huge crowds upon villages, trains, refugee camps, and long files of migrants moving from one side of the Punjab to the other, in which large numbers of people were killed including both men and women, children and old people. A few days before independence and partition, it was reported from the Punjab that "the disturbances are producing an average daily killing of about 100 people with occasional large raids in which 70 to 80 people are killed at one fell swoop." However, massacres of much larger numbers were common even in villages with relatively small populations. Nor are the numbers of killed at all exact. Recorded figures estimated from eyewitness accounts are rounded off approximations: 4,000 killed in a village or small town here, 3,500 at a railway station there, and so forth.

Insofar as Punjab is concerned, for Sikhs and Hindus, especially the former, the massacres of Sikhs and Hindus in Rawalpindi district35 and in other parts of the far western Punjab in Rawalpindi Division (administrative unit comprising several districts) in March 1947 was the first link in the chain for which vengeance was required and was taken, especially in August and September, in the days before and the weeks after the partition award. But it has been already argued, and there is further evidence on the matter, that Sikh leaders were not moved only or even primarily by the desire for revenge and retaliation, but by a conscious political motivation to regroup and consolidate the community.

In short, the Sikhs would massacre the Muslims in the East in the same way that Sikhs had been massacred in the West and land and property would then be exchanged as well as population. And so it was. In this case, moreover, it is clear that emotions of the moment did not lead to immediate "revenge and retaliation" since "there was comparative peace for several months" after the killings of Sikhs in Rawalpindi district. But, trouble from the Sikh

side began on a relatively small scale two weeks before the boundary award. The British repeatedly affirmed in one way or another that Sikhs were acting as a community, evidently to a purpose, and presumably with some coordination.

Jenkins remarked on August 4 that the "urban slaughter was without precedent" even in the first phase of violence in the Punjab and that "the rural massacres were new." These massacres appear in lists and documents on the printed page as nothing but events and statistics, with some expressions to suggest the enormity and viciousness of the carnage, such as "unprecedented," "slaughter," "outrages," "gruesome," and the like. Urvashi Butalia has sought to individualize these killings through interviews 40 and 50 years after the facts with persons who witnessed them and who did some killing of their own. One favourable reviewer of her book remarked about it that the individuals whose accounts are presented "pass before us in an endless procession of misery and distress … Each emerges as a complex human being, far removed from the mere statistical data to which he or she had been reduced in the dusty pages of the official reports of the partition."

One may suggest that reducing the killings to lists of statistics and describing them as links in a chain of retaliation and revenge is dehumanizing while individualizing them exposes precisely their effects, makes them real, causes revulsion in our hearts and minds that may contribute to the advancement of the cause of human rights. But things are not so simple, for her accounts—confirmed by the few other reports available to us on these matters—reveal a different kind of "chain," one of complicity in violence that blurs the boundaries between killers and their victims. It appears that untold numbers of women and children were "saved" by their own fathers and brothers by being slaughtered to prevent their capture, abduction, rape, and conversion during these raids. One Mangal Singh, for example, during an attack upon his village cut off the heads of 17 women and children in his own family one by one in full view of all members of the family, though he and his son ultimately escaped, reached

safety in India, and fostered new families. In this and other families also, women marched to the village wells one by one and threw themselves in to avoid capture by suicide. In other cases, villagers built huge bonfires put to the same purpose. (Brass, 2003)

The Zia-ul-Haq regime was a combination of the mullah and military alliance where he used Islam to legitimize his dictatorial rule. The internal dimension of the Mullah-Military alliance was linked to the regime's requirement to appease the right wing religio-political groups so as to remain in power. The external dimension was related to Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. Pakistan's military encouraged the Jihadis to fight Pakistan's proxy war against the former Soviet Union purely to deny direct government participation in the standoff. So, Islamisation was able to develop strong roots within the country due to the Zia policies in Pakistan.

While the military regime used Islam internally to gain religio-political legitimacy, the concept of jihad was used externally to arouse religious sentiments and mobilize guerrilla bands of Mujahideen (Jihadi fighters) against the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan. Pakistan's Mullah-Military alliance therefore, emerged through the Jamaat-i-Islami, (religious political party) as a result of internal and external dynamics during the 1980s. Zia followed the Islamic political ideology of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and mixed religion with politics with a two point agenda: to legitimize his rule and acquire political allies to prolong his rule. The military encouraged the Jihadis to fight Pakistan's proxy war against the Soviet forces purely to project the war as a struggle between Islam and "Godless" communism rather than a confrontation between capitalism and communism.

The Pakistan military and the JI established a close working relationship with each other. The JI aimed to establish an Islamic state that adopted the Shariah and for this the assistance of the army was imperative. In turn the Pakistan military exploited the Islamic concept of Jihad and its accessory the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI trained JI volunteers for

trans-border operations into Afghan soil against the Soviet forces. Since the elections of 1970, the JI bids to infiltrate in the civil institutions and social structure.

The external element that involves Soviet military presence in Afghanistan generated a resistance from the Islamic fundamentalists groups such as Jamaat-i-Islami and Hizb-i-Islami in Afghanistan who in turn developed linkage with their Pakistani counterparts. These Pakistani fundamentalist groups teamed up with the Pakistan military and the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate. As a result, the nexus between the Pak-military and the ISI Directorate began to take shape and ultimately resulted in the "Islamisation" of Pakistan.

However, Zia-ul-Haq's twist that the armed forces were not only the defenders of the geographical frontiers but the ideological frontiers as well and his emphasis on "Iman, Taqwa and Jihad" (Faith, Piety and Religious War) as opposed to the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's slogan "Unity, Faith and Discipline" in the wake of the Afghan Jihad in the late 1970s was bound to affect the ethos of military whose officers had always been motivated in the name of Islam. Thus Zia utilized the prevailing national and international environment to legitimize and stabilize his regime. (Shah, 2012)

5.4.2 Representation of History in the Film

The film *Khamosh Pani* has a crucial historical function to perform, especially in the context of Pakistani cinema in its 60 years of post-partition existence. The film as a narrative claim historical specificity, as it represents two different historical frameworks – one which represents the miserable plight of women on the frontiers of Punjab during Partition and the second which highlights the history of Pakistan during the autocratic rule of President General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and his missionary policies of Islamisation of Pakistan. This is also achieved in the film through the historical contextualization of the story. Neat dates and detailing text appear at the beginning and often at crucial points in the film. This

increases the historical authenticity and documentary evidence of the film. Television as a source of news plays a crucial part in imparting authenticity.

In this film, there is a scene wherein the television is set at the local village teashop telecasts a debate on the incomplete Islamisation of Pakistan, accompanied by the intermittent India bashing in a Pakistani television programme. Sabiha Sumar, the director of the film, like a historian performs the practical function of a chronicler, drawing on lived and transmitted memory. In other words, the traumatic memories of Ayesha while being her former self of Veero, a young Sikh girl is a personalized account of a lived experience. This personal history is a repository of collective history of the whole of Sikh community living during the harrowing days of Partition in Pakistani Punjab. Using television news as a leitmotif of lived reality, the film foregrounds the interpellation of assembled spectators as national audiences. Television images are also markers of historical change, as Saleem transforms from a frivolous, wandering, aimless young boy singing film songs to being the image on the screen – of the bearded politician demanding complete Islamisation of the country. The television and the news bear testimony to the historical transformation that has taken place in Pakistani Punjab after the death of Bhutto and under the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq.

In the film *Khamosh Pani,* personal becomes political and political becomes personal by the end of the film. The political affects the historical and the personal, finally transforming and affecting lives, relationships and changing psyches forever. The acceptance of Islam by Veero can be logically explained as a direct outcome of Partition. However, it represents the symbolic death of Veero's religious identity as she left Sikhism and embraced Islam. While Veero never crosses any borders as the village she stays in 1947 is the same which she inhabits in 1979, borderlines are established where the nations have changed. She then crosses both communal and national boundaries by marrying outside the community as

well as by staying still. The biggest change brought about by the Partition was the heightened identifying and being identified as a Hindu, Muslim or Sikh and Ayesha is symbolic of a nation that was made 'Muslim.' It is the realization of her precarious identity whereby she must reaffirm her faith and nation once again, that makes Ayesha jump into the well, which she had once zealously escaped from. The film deals with the idea of the changing nature of the self, which transforms and acquire a new identity when crisis arises.

Sabiha Sumar as the director of the film does not go for the documentary version of the film. Her impulse is towards a fictionalized form than the documentary as it would have meant scratching the wounds of victims who have been through the trauma of Partition. Set between the limits of the fictionalized and the documentary, the film creates a historical archive of its own which is very crucial to the overall understanding of Partition history.

The film also re-affirms historical authenticity in a different form. There are several parallels established between historical reality and its fictional representation in the film. For example, Saleem starts as a romantic lover chasing his beloved Zubeida in the beginning of the film. However, as soon as he comes under the influence of radicals, he leads from the forefront in the process of Islamisation of his own village. Estranged both from his mother and beloved Zubeida, he zealously volunteers erecting a higher wall at the girl's school, implementing Zia's *Chador aur Chardiwari* (veil and four walls) prescription for women. To win approval from his extremist mentors and collaborators, Saleem makes increasing demands of Ayesha in terms of identity, till she's unable to withstand the ignominy and ends her life.

Quite contradictory to Saleem's reaction to his mother's past, his beloved Zubeida responds differently. When one and all deserts Ayesha to live a life of isolation, it is Zubeida who comes to her as a sole companion, though Zubeida's relationship with her *beau* reaches to the point of irremediable crisis. While this association does not succeed in saving Ayesha

from her ignominious death, Zubeida's association with Ayesha continues symbolized by the locket and her musings.

Female voice as a site of protest plays an important role in this film. Both Ayesha and Zubeida, as moderates and liberals resist the penetration of fundamentalism in their lives. They even criticize Saleem for succumbing to it so easily, yet are not able to save him from being an Islamic radical. This feminist vision is against the historical bias that creates a gulf between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs; regressive religious practices and orthodox Patriarchy.

Religion is also depicted in terms of the beliefs of the older as being more accommodative and humane. This is evident in the heated exchange between the village barber and the radicals. On being heckled to shut down his shop for Friday prayers, the barber lashes out on the oddity of half-baked youngsters instructing the older generation about traditions and religion. This communicates two trends, one that is applicable to the contemporary world in general, which has witnessed a resurgence of conservatism in the last decade or so. The other is more specific to Pakistan, being the unresolved issue of the role religion was to play in the public life of Pakistan. There are ceaseless arguments over the identity of Pakistan and what its founder intended – a secular nation or an Islamic state.

In this film, we can clearly see the difference between the village ethos which gives preference to culture than to religion and city which is governed by political policies than local culture. The peaceful village of Charkhi is disturbed when the men from cities arrive in the countryside, and begin implementing Zia's programme. They enter the village as ghostly shadows at night when the whole community is busy singing and dancing at a local wedding. These are the closing shots of bonhomie and celebration that marks the village life. The Punjabi folk songs evoke nostalgia and impart a distinct local flavour to the gathering, which could very well be a scene from the other side of the border. Here Punjabiyat is more determining than Muslimness.

The mixed-gathering, the loud humour, and the dance performance are all set to change when the winds from the city blow. In their first public appearance at the village mosque, the use of chaste Urdu-Arabic by the city-bred radicals is used to undercut the local language. Sabiha Sumar successfully undermines the strangeness of this particular language in a Punjabi village. One can clearly see the idiomatic and ideological shift evident in the language. The disconnect with the people at the grassroots is also clear. When the village was still idyllic, the city of Zubeida's dream was one of opportunity and independence. However, in the closing shots of the film we are shown the sobering atmosphere of the nation and city, on a mature Zubeida who sets out with Ayesha's locket in her neck bestowed by her carefree past and a *chador* over her head, enforced by her stifling present. It's a moment of synchronization, wherein two different moments come together, unite and become one – one that is historical past of divided India and the other that is contemporary Pakistan.

Khamosh Pani represents history within history. It begins with the contemporary history of Pakistan located in 1979 and then goes on to accommodate the traumatic past of Ayesha as Veero and thereby of the whole Sikh community and their destiny in Punjab during Partition. The film functions as an allo-history (alternative history) to the mainstream historical discourse wherein the individuals and their lives become the vantage point of representation.

5.5 Garam Hawa (1973)

Directed by M.S. Sathyu, *Garam Hawa* is a 1973 Urdu drama film, with Balraj Sahni as the protagonist. The screenplay is written by noted Urdu lyricist Kaifi Azmi and Shama Zaidi. It based on an unpublished short story by noted Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai. The fine lyrical music of the film is composed by the famous classical musician Ustad Bahadur Khan, with lyrics by Kaifi Azmi. The film depicts the story of how families on both sides of the

border suffered emotionally, and how their dreams and values were shattered to pieces after the Partition.

The locale of the film is Agra, Uttar Pradesh and it deals with the tragic tale of a North Indian Muslim businessman and his family soon after the Partition of India in 1947. The protagonist of the film Salim Mirza, a local businessman faces a dilemma of whether he should move to Pakistan as done by his own family members and other Muslim brethren or he should stay back. The situation got really troublesome soon after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. The film details the slow disintegration of his family, and is one of the most poignant films made on India's Partition. It remains one of the few serious films dealing with the post-Partition plight of Muslims as the largest minority living in India.

5.5.1 Historical Facts – Exodus of Muslims and Economic Crisis after Partition

One of the difficulties has involved the ways in which certain kinds of violence enter the official record and thus inform history, making invisible the role of the state as well as the use of violence by the state. This is particularly true of what has come to be called "Partition Violence," or the "Communal Violence at Partition," where the focus has largely been on the violence between Hindus and Sikhs versus the Muslims.

Makan, houses were at the centre of this violence and we need to examine how the Indian state responded to this aspect of the violence, the occupation of houses in a cycle of forced dispossession. Although attempts were made to divert trains from Punjab away from Delhi in order to reduce the number of refugees coming to Delhi, still, according to the 1951 Census of India, 323,320 "non-Muslim refugees" arrived in just the months between August and October 1947.

However, in its initial phase, the evacuee property legislation protected the rights of the "evacuee" and declared occupations as "illegal". In principle it was meant to enable the return of the displaced, in this case "Muslim refugees," to their homes.

In addition, such occupations had taken place on both sides of the divided Punjab and a large number of angry and destitute Hindu and Sikh refugees were still without shelter. Thus the Indian government adopted the policy that no (non-Muslim) refugee would be evicted for illegal occupation without being provided with alternative accommodation. In effect, Muslims who had taken shelter in camps could not return to their homes if they had been occupied, even after the riots and murders had stopped.

Most Muslims of Delhi were forced out or evacuated from their homes. But in discussions that ensued these homes came to be described first as "abandoned" and then as "vacant" and "empty houses," which could then be used for rehabilitation. The violence that accompanied this process of "emptying" was thereby erased. Even after much of the rioting had stopped, these occupations remained a part of the violence in the city.

Policemen, as Maulana Rehman saw it, were not neutral agents of the state, but directly involved in Muslim displacement. Muslim zones, rather than serving as a refuge for Muslims, became part of a contested and fearful geography, in which institutions of the state were complicit in unsettling Muslims. Randhawa noted that an outcome of this contested geography was a "tendency among the Muslims, particularly of the lower middle class shopkeepers and labourers … to sell off their belongings and go to Pakistan.

Thus the experience of becoming a Muslim refugee was not just shaped by murderous violence in the city. The violent seizures of their homes by other refugees as they were forced into Muslim camps, as well as the continuing disputes over housing as they were forced into Muslim zones, produced a sense of a partisan state unable to protect them and unwilling to rehabilitate them.

As studies of contemporary refugees have shown, it is the breakdown of trust which is culturally constituted in a society that forces a person to become a refugee in the first place, and this distrust is only heightened in the hierarchical disciplinary spaces of a refugee camp.

From the perspective of Delhi's Muslims, the state had failed to protect them in their homes, the Muslim policemen of Delhi were also in the camp, the sanitary conditions of the camp were so poor that a number of people had died of cholera, and the camp was rife with rumours of what was going on in the city. Thus it is not surprising that the Muslims of Purana Qila were hostile to the camp managers – representatives of the Indian state on whom they were now dependent for their survival. In addition, the camp had brought together Muslims from many different social backgrounds and political orientations, and, as Salim sahib had recalled, stripped many of them of their "respectability." E. Valentine Daniel and John Knudsen describe this as "a state of hyperinformation" in which it becomes very difficult to give meaning to experiences, and it was in this "state of hyperinformation" that Muslims of the camp were then being asked to decide whether they wanted to stay in Delhi or go to Pakistan.

In this context of "hyperinformation," there were some extremely important efforts to reassure and retain the Muslims of the city. Gandhi's arrival in Delhi in October is widely regarded as the most important intervention in halting the murders and occupations. Sumit Sarkar describes it as the "Mahatma's finest hour," as a frail but determined Gandhi began to visit Muslim *mohallas* in an effort to restoring the morale of the Muslims.

Salim Saheb, on the other hand, recalled Maulana Azad's *khutba* at the Jama Masjid on October 24, 1947. Maulana Azad till the very end tried to stop each and every person. And here is a historic speech by Maulana Azad at Jama Masjid. A very historic speech … for as a result of his speech many people's packed beddings opened, they say, packed beddings opened … at the time in our *mohalla* there was a debate whether to go or not go. Azad, in his historic *khutba,* had argued to the city's Muslims that "this escape that you have given the sacred name of *hijrat*" was a hasty decision, made in fear. He asked them to les these difficult times pass, and said they could always leave later if they wanted to. The impact of the *khutba*

went beyond those who were actually present to hear it, for word of mouth and newspapers spread Azad's "*dardnak cheekh* [cry of anguish]." According to the Chief Commissioner Khurshid, Muslim refugees "in Purana Qila returned in thousands to the city with more confidence … and this was partly the result of the speech by Honourable Maulana Azad."

On January 12, 1948, Gandhi started his fast. Azad noted that the fast had an "electric effect" and that" not only the city but the whole of India was deeply stirred." One of Gandhi's conditions for breaking his fast, according to Azad, was that all Muslims of Delhi be resettled in their own homes. Azad wrote that he did not think that this was a practical solution since "many of the refugees from West Punjab had occupied the houses which were left vacant by Muslims. If it was a matter of [only] a few hundred, perhaps Gandhiji's wishes could have been carried out."

As Aziz sahib noted, Muslim displacement was accompanied by a feeling of dispossession because of the creation of Pakistan. However, as thousands of Delhi's Muslims boarded special trains to Pakistan, the Pakistan government viewed this exodus with alarm. One of the Pakistani Cabinet's concerns was that the Boundary Force consisted of only 20 percent Muslims, and even fewer officers, and that this disproportion had failed to deter a "slaughter of Muslims in large numbers." The loss of confidence in the Boundary Force had taken place on both sides, and thus it was agreed that the problem of controlling the violence and providing safe passage to the "evacuating populations" had to be handled differently. As a result, by August 28 the Boundary Force was replaced by the joint Military Evacuation Organization (MEO). The MEO coordinated now-divided military units so that Pakistan army units escorted Muslim caravans and trains while Indian army units escorted Hindu and Sikh caravans and trains.

When violence engulfed Delhi in early September, it became a subject of intense discussion in the parallel Pakistani government's Emergency Committee of the Cabinet. On

September 15, 1947, Mohammad Ali Jinnah reported on his discussions with Delhi's Muslim leaders. He argued that Delhi's Muslims had now two courses open to them – one, to demand from the Indian government that they "give the minorities a fair deal" or two, "to start a civil war." The possibility of migrating to Pakistan, of seeking refuge or a home there, was not considered as an option. When it was clear that Muslims were leaving their homes and going to refugee camps in large numbers, a suggestion was made in a meeting of the Pakistani Emergency Committee that in order to stop further abandonment of Delhi by Muslims, Liaqat Ali Khan as prime minister should go there to talk to the refugees and "advise them to stay on and make them understand that they were now nationals of India and should look to the Indian government for protection." This then became the Pakistani position on the matter, that "the Muslims who are forced to leave their homes in India are Indian nationals and so long as they are in India it is the duty of the Indian government to feed and protect them as much as their other citizens."

The Pakistani government insisted that only those in Purana Qila who had opted to work for the Pakistan government should be allowed to board the special trains to Pakistan, for it had not agreed to the movement of any refugees from Delhi or from Uttar Pradesh (UP). Liaqat Ali Khan took particular exception to what he described as the "dumping" of Muslims across the Pakistan border, and emphasized that the MEO agreement extended to only "members of the minority community" of East and West Punjab, the Punjab States, and the North West Frontier Province.

Syed Mohammad Jalil argued that it had become impossible for them, Indian Muslims, to remain as Muslims in India, and that this was ultimately "the failure of Pakistan". His view of the Indian Muslim predicament was extremely dire. In his view there were only three "roads" open to Indian Muslims: 1) to migrate to Pakistan, but there was not

enough space for them there; 2) to become Hindu, but this was also not deemed acceptable; or 3) to be slowly killed off.

Mahatma Gandhi's fast on January 12 to restore peace to Delhi, and bring security to its Muslim population was a brave attempt. It had a dramatic effect on Muslim morale and aided attempts to reduce communal tensions in the city. A few weeks later, his shocking murder on January 30 at the hands of Nathu Ram Godse further served to discredit Hindu extremist groups, and it has been suggested that this also increased the confidence of the north Indian Muslim population. There was even a feeling that conditions in Delhi had changed such that Muslims would be welcomed back. Thus it is possible to conjecture that in the following month, as letter and news were exchanged between Muslims in Karachi and Delhi, between friends and family, many who had never intended to stay permanently in Pakistan or were disappointed decided to return to their homes.

In official Indian discourse, however, it was their numbers that became particularly important. By mid-March 1948, the Indian High Commission in Pakistan had stated that every day a thousand Muslim refugees were returning to their homes in India. By mid-May, the United Kingdom High Commission in Delhi first quoted local newspapers as saying that 200,000 to 300,000 Muslims had returned, while in a later report to the Commonwealth Relations Office it suggested that 100,000 to 250,000 Muslims had returned, with 40,000 having retuned to Delhi alone. In yet another report it quoted local news that 2,000 Muslims were returning every day.

While it is uncertain how these numbers were arrived at, in the absence of any precise mechanisms for counting, the numbers became important enough that from April 3, 1948, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Delhi Police began quantifying Muslim arrivals and departures in the city in its weekly reports.

In a letter to Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad expressed alarm at newspaper reports of crowds of Muslims applying for permits to return to India, and calculated that at the rate of 350 permits a day, about 30,000 or 40,000 Muslims could potentially be returning every month. They would demand to "be treated on his return to India as a national of India and in the same way as any other national."

When the permit system was first introduced, the Indian constitution was still in making and citizenship laws had not yet been drafted. But as people, like Ghulam Ali, continued to cross the border with or without permits, an array of permit court cases necessitated the introduction of legal citizenship provisions in advance of the constitution itself. The violations of permit regulations thus became the first site for contesting and giving shape to the unresolved questions of citizenship in a partitioned subcontinent.

However, to understand these legal contestations in the making of citizens, the historical conditions and the technological intervention of permits need to be foregrounded. Permits were introduced by the Indian state as an emergency measure, announced and then brought into effect within five days. The permit system thus cut across both a time of uncertainty and a range of disordered familial formations. Even in the midst of violence in Delhi and a large-scale exodus, some male members of families had stayed behind in an attempt to protect homes or businesses, or retain jobs. In other cases, young men in the family had gone to Pakistan in search of business opportunities or employment, leaving behind their wives, children, elderly parents, brothers and sisters at "home". Many Muslims who had "opted" to work in the new Pakistan government continued to maintain their homes and families in India. In other cases, sections of extended families had gone to Pakistan, while others had remained in India. (Zamindar, 2007)

5.5.2 Representation of History in the Film

Garam Hawa marks the directorial debut of one of the finest directors that India has ever produced named M.S. Sathyu. The subject matter of the film itself invited a lot of controversy as it deals with the human consequences resulting from the 1947 Partition of India. The arbitrary division of undivided India, as ordered by Lord Mountbatten, and the splitting of India into religious coalitions, with India remaining Hindi and the new country of Pakistan serving as a refuge for Muslims, resulted in the world's largest transfer of human beings and a few million deaths, rapes and refugees. On its release too, *Garam Hawa* was received with a ban under the pretext that it "instigated communal dissension". However, the conviction of M.S. Sathyu not only paved way to the reversal of ban but also won him an award for making a film that contributed to "national integration". The most touching aspect of the film is its efforts to create what we may call "Muslim Identity" and to present the endurance of Muslims in North India, who did not wish to move from their homes after the Partition, as a real-life situation. The film delineates the life and times of Salim Mirza, a local shoe-factory owner and a patriarch who does not want to migrate to Pakistan. The sub-plot of the love story is also added to the main plot which has a political narrative at the centre.

Historically, the film presents an authentic account of the transformation of India as a country wherein with the change of power equations, the socio-economic realities also changed forever after the Partition. The focus of the film is on the socio-economic scenario of Northern India after Partition, the relation between the Muslim and Hindu inhabitants of Agra and the changing perspectives of Hindus and Nationalists toward their Muslim counterparts. The attitude of Hindus towards the monstrous birth of Pakistan, the suffering and the homeless minority Muslim population residing in North India, the bureaucratic dominance of Hindus in socio-economic matters – all these led to a mass segregation and disparity between Hindus and Muslims, wherein the loss of one was the gain of another. Moneylenders refused

to provide loan to Muslims and employers stopped employing them. The State government confiscated the houses of those possessing no official ownership as per the Evacuation Act, making the already miserable life of Muslims much harder and ultimately compelling them to migrate to Pakistan as an only solution.

The title of the film *Garam Hawa* (Scorching Winds) is not only appropriate but also suggestive. It suits the tragic and elegiac mood and tone of the story overall. Both historically and as a film, it highlights the fact that the scorching, troubling heat of Partition engulfed even the strongest of people and communities. The ordinary men and women were faced with an almost impossible task of first dislocating themselves from their roots and past, and then relocating themselves on a new soil. A man like Salim Mirza with his deep faith in the cultural ethos of India and noble human values is also hard-struck with the changing times. The first scene of the film shows Salim Mirza retuning from railway station where he went to see of one of his relatives migrating to Pakistan. Since then till the very end of the film, it is a series of loss for Salim Mirza – loss of relatives, family members most importantly his mother and his daughter, acquaintances, business, reputation, house. Once on the verge of loss of faith in his erstwhile ideals, he too decides to leave for Pakistan. But the last scene of the film shows a different Salim Mirza. In spite of cribbing over his displacement and discrimination, Salim Mirza too like his young son Sikander Mirza becomes part of the massive protest and finds a new meaning for his life. He regains hope and faith in life again.

Though Salim Mirza becomes powerless against the shift in attitudes and political climate, he doesn't think of going to Pakistan as a softer and an easier option at the first go. He has done nothing wrong, yet he is punished by the post-partition environment in Agra. As Salim's situation becomes grave, the camera frames him in smaller spaces, implying his imprisonment in his own hometown. He says, "They have taken everything. Only our faith will survive." He is strong, but he is discouraged by the exodus of family members to

Pakistan. In the end, he too makes the journey to the train. On the way, Salim and his son Sikander encounter a massive protest rally which seeks to unite the dispossessed of the nation. First Sikander, and then Salim, join the flag-waving mob. The train is forgotten, and the final scene brings a sense of hope as we see Salim Mirza accepts his situation in a new way and begin to take charge of his life.

The film also highlights the historical fact that after the Partition of India, Muslims had a precarious sort of existence and status in free India. In the first place, as was the case with Delhi, that Muslims living in the refugee camp were forced to leave for Pakistan. Some went for several other reasons – lack of job opportunities, loss of homes, loss of reputation, open social and economic discrimination, better business opportunities in Pakistan etc. As far as the film is concerned, it reiterates the historical fact. The elder brother of Salim Mirza, despite of being in a respectable and responsible position of a representative of Muslims on behalf of the Muslim League in India, he too decides to leave for Pakistan. Gradually, the elder son of Salim Mirza too gets disillusioned when they run the risk of losses in shoe-making business, when their loans are not sanctioned, when the officials ask for bribe. He too decides to leave for Pakistan leaving his whole family behind.

However, the greatest tragedy befalls Amina, the daughter of Salim Mirza. She is a terrible victim of Partition. The historical fact that families disintegrated after the Partition affect the life of Amina Mirza directly. First, she was betrothed to Kazim, the son of Salim Mirza's elder brother. But as they decide to go to Pakistan, he love-life takes a tragic turn. Kazim does return to Agra to get married to Amina but illegally. Therefore, he is sent back to Pakistan just before a few days prior to their wedding. Later, she manages to fall in love with Shamshad, the brother of his *bhabhi*, who too goes away to Pakistan breaking the promise that he would return to marry her. The dearth of eligible bachelors and the disintegration of families after the Partition led to domestic tragedies as that took place in the home of Salim

Mirza. It is also interesting to note that people like Fakruddin, who begins his career as a Muslim League member, finally joins Congress as he is a shrewd opportunist and a corrupt businessman. However, the worst victim of Partition in the film is the old mother of Salim Mirza, who is not only rendered homeless at such an advanced age of life but is also forced to evacuate the home which embodies the memories of her golden past, her wedding ceremony and her dead husband. In the wake of Pakistan, the Evacuation Board forced Muslims like Salim Mirza to vacate their ancestral homes just because they could not establish their ownership through a piece of document. There are a couple of scenes in the film which needs special mention – the vehement refusal of grandmother to leave the ancestral home and her resultant hiding on the upper storey of the house to avoid finding suggests the emotional and familial attachment to the place or home which is usually not recorded in the official historical discourse; the humanitarian gesture of Ajmani Sahab to allow Salim Mirza to bring her dying mother to the ancestral home.

Garam Hawa offers a reading of Partition that is alternative to the Partition narrative of official historiography. It talks about a minority perspective towards India's Partition and its new reality which is absent from the grand narrative of historical discourse on India's Partition. The film challenges the usual patronizing representation of Muslims in official historiography. The film's subaltern historical narrative of a minority's experience of Partition is greater in its value as a historical resource.

The film highlights the notion of citizenship and belongingness, the yearning for "homeland" which is overlooked by official historiography. The film also highlights the economic, social, cultural and emotional incentives that determine the decisions of common people apart from the religious one. Through the presentation of unemployment and distrust of Muslims as Indian nationals post-Partition, Sathyu challenges the representation of the Nehruvian administration as tolerant, economically stable and developmental, and above all

accommodative of minorities in official historiography. Rather than filling a silence on Partition in Indian historiography, *Garam Hawa* fill gaps and silences in official historiography of Partition – minority concerns, unemployment, nationalism, belongingness or citizenship, disintegration of families, housing issues being only a few of many silences.

5.6 Naseem (1995)

Directed by Saeed Akhtar Mirza, the Hindi film *Naseem* (The Morning Breeze), made in 1995 stars the well-known Urdu poet and lyricist Kaifi Azmi, Mayuri Kango, Seema Kelkar, Kulbhushan Kharbanda and Kay Kay Menon etc. The film was produced by NFDC and Doordarshan. It was first shown by Doordarshan followed by a very limited theatrical release. Saeed Akhtar Mirza also bagged the National Award for Best Direction and Screenplay for *Naseem*. The film is less about Partition and more about the social and political conditions encountered by the minority Muslim community in the contemporary India. However, we may derive a seamless relationship between the events leading up to Partition and those that finally led to the demolition of Babri Masjid and the spread of communal violence as its aftermath. The film has its focus on a Muslim family living in Bombay in the months leading up to the destruction of the Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992.

When a child is born, it knows nothing about the world or what happens within it. It is his or her family members, relatives etc. who teach social norms as how to live in a society; the elders of the family groom the children and teach them about religion. As the children grow up they learn a lot from their parents, siblings, grandparents and school. These teachings play a very important role in understanding the difference between love and hatred. It is when the children reach teenage, they start interpreting and making a difference between what is good or bad, whether to hate or to love. The film *Naseem* too is based on a family. It is a family that has people of three generations living under one roof.

5.6.1 Historical Facts – Babri Masjid Demolition and its Aftermath

Our country, which is plagued with poverty, disease, misery, hunger, illiteracy and lack of adequate medical facilities to a large section of its population, has been witnessing a strange phenomenon. Last two decades have been an observer to the conflicts and issues, which have no bearing on those who are hungry, uneducated or unemployed, on those who use the great blue sky as the roof for their 'housing', the pavement dwellers, who constitute no less than 40-60% in big cities. In the meanwhile the clash for the house of Ram or Allah came as a big bang and has been hogging the front-page headlines day in and day out.

The demolition of 'disputed structure', on 6th December, which till few years ago was known as Babri Masjid, started being referred to as the precise place where lord Ram was born. It was claimed that this was built by the Mughal invader Babur to humiliate the Hindu psyche, and it stands as a shame to the honour and prestige of the nation. Babri demolition came as a big jolt to the whole country. While a section of society (those belonging to the Sangh Parivar, SP) referred to this event as the wiping away the blot on the face of the nation, Shourya Divas (Day of Bravery), Hindu Navnirman Divas (Day of Hindu Resurgence) etc. a large section of population felt it is a day of shame for the secular and democratic values for which we stand. It is a day most of the people believing in the values emerging from India's freedom struggle, the values of democracy and secularism hung their heads in shame. It is a day when many of this section felt that it was the major onslaught on the principles enshrined in Indian constitution.

Chronology of Events:

- The controversy was brought to fore in 1984, when in the first 'Dharma Sansad' (Religious Parliament) of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) a resolution was unanimously adopted demanding the 'liberation' of the site of birth of Lord Ram. The issue had been forgotten since 1950. In due course Sri Ramjanmbhumi Mukti Yagna

Samiti (Committee for Sacrifice to Liberate Ram's Birth Place) was founded under the leadership of Mahant Avaidyanath (27th July 1984).

- On 25th September it launched a procession, which set off from Sitamarhi in Bihar with the mission of liberating the temple of Ayodhya. This march reached Ayodhya on 7th October 1984, it carried the idols of Ram and Sita in a large truck and the main slogan of the march was *Bharat Mata Ki Jai* (Hail Mother India). "Its impact derived once again, from the diversity of sects represented in it since 'Vishnuites, Shaivites and Tantrists who have a long history of violent competition were peacefully gathered under the banner of a goddess not worshipped by any of them; *Bharat Mata, Mother India*'.
- Later in 1986 a large Sant Sammelan, held at the bidding of the Yagna Samiti set up a Ram Janmbhumi Trust, which called on the govt. to transfer the property rights of Ayodhya site so that the biggest temple of the world could be built. Meanwhile VHP organized multiple campaigns to rouse the issue. In the same year an application was filed in the court of the munsif to remove the restrictions on the puja. The application was turned down.
- On 1 Feb. District judge of Faijabad ordered opening of the locks of the Masjid. Muslim community was not allowed to offer prayers. The Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) was formed, followed by the countrywide mourning by Muslims. Also Sunni Central Waqf Board filed a writ petition against the district judge's order.
- In March 87 large number of Muslims assembled at Boat club demanding handing over of the Babri Masjid. While in April a congregation of Hindus assembled in Ayodhya demanding the liberation of Ram Janmbhumi. In 1989 a shilanyas was held on 9th Nov. and the foundation of temple was laid the next day, plinth was dug 192

feet away from the masjid. The atmosphere was kept on the boil by the aggressive campaign of the organizations involved.

- From Jan. 1990 onwards VHP especially and the Sangh Parivar as a whole kept threatening to storm in and build the temple. On 3rd January 1990, Sadhu Sammelan at Allahabad decided that the Mosque should be shifted, lock, stock and barrel.
- In the Dharam Sansad, February 14 was decided as the date for the construction of the Mandir. On February 7th, the VHP announced a postponement and said that they were giving V.P. Singh exactly 4 months' grace period (to resolve the issue). So, construction was planned for June 1990. Meanwhile, 50,000 video cassettes of a 70 mm. film on the 'Ayodhya dispute' were distributed by the VHP/BJP abroad and infinite number in India as a whole. (Among other things, it showed how on one night in 1949, the Ram Lalla idol appeared inside the Babri Masjid from nowhere.)
- On May 1st, 1990, Dwarka Shankaracharya, Sampoornand Saraswati was arrested, along with 10 followers, under Sec.151 IPC, (apprehension of breach of peace), by Mulayam Singh Yadav and temples in Gujarat observed a Bandh in protest.
- On May 7th, 1990, another attempt at construction was thwarted and 163 people were arrested in Ayodhya. On May 9th, the Shankaracharya was released.
- End May, BJP called for a National Referendum on Ayodhya, but VHP rejected it. Sometime between then and mid-June, Muslim leaders rejected V.P. Singh's offer to mediate, because they found that the VHP insisted on having the 'Garbha Gruh' under the arch of the Masjid.
- L.K. Advani proposed Somnath to Ayodhya Rath Yatra on 16th June 1990.

The V.H.P. set the date of October 30th for the construction of the Ram Mandir, the very date on which Advani's Rathyatra was supposed to arrive at the gates of the Babri

Masjid. Advani gave warning about a mass movement and there was general talk by Sangh Parivar about Dharmayudha or Holy War.

As per BJP's decision to enter the fray in a big way, L.K. Advani's Rath yatra began from Somnath to Ayodhya. The trail of Yatra left number of incidences of communal violence in its aftermath. Also the anti-minority (Muslim) hatred started going up and up due to the repeated campaigns around the temple issue. Advani could not complete his Yatra as he was arrested on way on 25th October 1990 and the Yatra came to a halt. Still many a Kar Sevaks assembled at the Babri Masjid site and tried to damage the mosque. Mulayam Singh Yadav's government had to open fire in which fifty people died.

Following this the call was given for the Kar Seva at the site on 6th December 1992. For the Kar Seva nearly 3 Lakh volunteers were mobilized from all over the country. The BJP chief Minister of the state gave the written undertaking to the court to protect the mosque. In the demolition, which took place, the police and the other paramilitary forces withdrew from the site leaving it open to the Kar Sevaks. The mosque was demolished in 5 and a 1/2 hours and the debris were thrown in the river Saryu. A makeshift temple came up in a day's time, which was declared as the prelude to the real grand temple, which will be built in future.

In the post demolition period massive riots took place all over the country, especially in Mumbai, Surat and Bhopal. The demolition led to dismissal of the BJP governments in four states and preparation for the parts of the temple began in workshops scattered all over. Since then the on-off game of the temple agenda is on. Also different groups affiliated to RSS (Sangh Parivar) have been talking in different and contradictory voices about the temples at Ayodhya, Kashi and Mathura. (Puniyani, 2010)

5.6.2 Representation of History in the Film

One of the more subtle aspects of coming to terms with a traumatic past is the recognition that it is impossible to overcome or transcend the experience completely: in other words, mourning a loss can "succeed" only through an acknowledgement of its ultimate failure. *Naseem* (1995) as a film engages itself with the legacy of partition in bold and inventive ways, promoting precisely such a politics of mourning. *Naseem* is a fictional feature in Hindi-Urdu by Saeed Mirza, a filmmaker known for his offbeat works dealing with the experiences of minority groups in contemporary India. *Naseem* poignantly explores the uncertain future of a secular nation through Bombay, as its microcosm.

The protagonist of the film, a teenage girl named Naseem, goes about her common life – attending school, hanging out with her friends, sneaking into a film meant for adult audiences, spending time with her ailing grandfather (her beloved *dadajan*) – even as the evil politics of communalism unfolds itself in the nation and on television. The strong bond between Naseem and her grandfather constitutes the emotional core of the film: the old man talks to his granddaughter about the times when he was young and newly-wed, leading a happy life with his wife in Agra before 1947. This nostalgic recollection of the past is full of enchanting memories. At the same time, it is contrast with the disillusionment of present and the uncertainty of future.

Here, memory is transmitted across generations, and the narrative moves back and forth. The plot has an interesting structure that breaks temporal order yet remains obsessive with dates. As the episodic narrative jumps from one month to the next, the sequences are marked by dates, so that we move closer to the fateful day in early December. The very first shot of the film shows Naseem sitting in front of a large mirror with three panels, brushing her hair, her back to the camera, so that we see her face reflected in the central panel. Somewhere behind her and near the camera is a television set, also reflected in this panel.

The two side panels mirror the anxious faces, in profile, of an older woman and a young man who, we soon learn, are her mother and elder brother. While the grownups seem troubled by the television broadcast, Naseem is engrossed in her own reflection. This tripartite image – of Naseem, her mother and her brother Mushtaq has symbolic significance as well. The central panel reflects the lively, beautiful and moving image of Naseem, whereas the other two panels reflect the frozen images of the other two characters. Probably, it is a symbolic representation of the quintessential life getting trapped and perplexed by the mundane realities of the world. However, the image of Naseem symbolizes the eternal, free flowing and unperturbed life. This very first shot establishes the films radical sense of time and politics.

Naseem's elder brother Mushtaq, who has to deal with the violence of the public sphere, reacts angrily to their grandfather's endless narrations. To him, and to his militant friend Zafar, this is nostalgic escapism. The reality that matters to the youth is the reality that unfolds around them, a disturbing reality of marginalization and persecution, which is determined by religious ideology. This way, the film achieves a remarkable double articulation of History in the very first shot. This double vision is further elaborated in the scene of the family's Eid celebrations. Wearing a shervani, the grandfather recites poetry for the guests. When Zafar responds with more couplets, the old man is impressed. But there exchange of poetry gives way to a more pointed debate when Zafar says it is difficult for him to get into these festivities as every day there are reports of more people dying, and the dead all happen to be Muslims. The grandfather suggest that it is the poor who die in riots, to which Zafar retorts that it is the Muslims who have been kept poor in post colonial India. As Zafar recites from Faiz, the old man gently chides him, saying that he is quoting the poet out of context there by changing his intended meaning. Claiming that new times require new attitudes and interpretations, Zafar respectfully excuses himself from the family gathering;

Mushtaq also leaves with him quietly signalling his agreement. Two very different consciousness, shaped and separated by generational experiences and sensibilities are contrasted in this scene. Together, they capture the complexities of a community's sense of History, its anticipations of the future, and its present political crisis.

The grandfather dies in the early hours of December 6, 1992. As the body is being taken for the burial, Zafar brings news of the fall of the mosque. When he remarks that *dadajan* has chosen the perfect time for his departure, his comment is as much an indictment of the old man's escapism as a deep fear about the future. At this point the possibility of peaceful community life in India virtually disappears, and the demolition of the mosque strikes the last nail into the coffin of secularism. The old man's death appears to signal the end of secularist politics. (Sarkar, 2010)

The last scene of the film shows both *dadajan* and Naseem sitting adjacent to each other and in conversation. The grand-daughter asks a scientific question to her beloved grandfather and expects a logical reply. She asks, "Why is the sky blue?" to which grandfather amusingly replies, "Because it is not green or red." The grand-daughter then explains the scientific reason responsible for the blue sky. However, the final reply of the old man is the most intensely meaningful and philosophical. He says, "It is not that very important in life to know why sky is blue or green or red in colour; rather what is more important in life is to laugh and to remain happy." The outlook of grandfather towards life is neither materialistic nor religious nor scientific but commonplace and philosophical. He believes in the nurturing and sustaining power emotions and feelings in life which neither requires dull or drab logic nor scientific explanation.

The climax of the film symbolizes life of a common man, through a panoramic vision trying to narrate hope in the times of disparity. It also gives us a glimpse as to how common

people live through such small moments of happiness, completely unknown to the high end politics of the state.

This film uses the demolition of Babri Mosque as its backdrop without being outspokenly critical. It talks about India as a nation in turmoil. It depicts a time which is to witness a miniature Partition in terms of Post-Babri demolition communal riots. However, it conveys this very communal conflict without being bloody and murderous on screen. The movie uses flashback technique consummately. The canvas of the film is replete with characters belonging to three different generations, three different ideologies and attitudes towards life – first to come is the character of grandfather played by the much revered Urdu poet and lyricist Kaifi Azmi himself. He belongs to the order of world wherein peace, secularism and brotherhood were day-to-day realities. It was also an era marked by nationalistic feelings. It was a point in life which harmoniously blended seemingly antagonistic forces, for example, grandfather's relationship with his two bosom friends namely Haidar and Tripathi. Second to come is Sajjad, the son of grandfather and the father of Naseem and Mushtaq. He and his wife lurch in an existence which is limbo-like, that is to say, on one hand they are cut off from their roots completely as they are living in Mumbai leaving Agra, and on the other hand, what they witness is political conspiracies and communal clashes which do not promise a secured bright future. Third to come is Mushtaq, the son of Sajjad and his friend Zafar. Both of them and their like-minded friends represent the aggressive, disillusion and misguided youth of India who can be systematically brain washed and religiously and politically motivated. They are hopeless and rootless. They belong to "no man's land".

Amidst these conflicting forces run a parallel life promising and life enhancing force named Naseem, the titular heroine of the film. Naseem means the gentle, fragrant, beautiful morning breeze. It is an apt title. It is so because Naseem represents the constant flux of life

which in contradiction to the stagnancy of life as represented by other characters. Naseem functions as the connecting link between past, present and future. Grandfather is harmony personified. Sajjad and his wife are dilemma personified. Mushtaq and his friends personify disillusionment, hopelessness and violence. Whereas Naseem symbolizes serenity in times of turmoil, hope in times of despair and life in times of death.

Naseem presents a deeply affecting portrayal of Muslim-Indian subjectivity destroyed by loss and the impossible demands of a truncated life. Towards the end, though the film presents secularism as dead in India, its utopian dimension remains forever in memory. Thus, Naseem is a remarkable example of cinema of mourning that captures a contemporary moment of crises to reflect on the past and insist on to have a better historical consciousness in order to ensure a progressive future.

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CHAPTER 6
Conclusion

The history of human evolution has proved that the records of visual history are much more ancient than that of oral history. Since the beginning of human evolution, both individual and social memories are largely constructed and influenced by the visual art. The pre-historic cave paintings of the Paleolithic Age found in both Asia and Europe can be regarded as the initial attempts of human civilization at recording history through the expression of their feelings, emotions and their response to recreate life itself. These are the remnants or relics of history created by older civilization and preserved over a period of time in the world of nature. It is beyond doubt that their paintings enrich our understanding of these prehistoric civilizations and the activities they engaged themselves in. Inarguably, from the Neolithic and Chalcolithic ages, etching, sketching, painting, and modelling became effective ways of producing, preserving and passing over tangible historical records for the future generations. Thus, one can say that visual art developed as an important medium of creating public history alongside oral and other traditions.

The journey from pre-literate societies to the part-literate and modern ones saw a remarkable transition in the ways of sustaining individual and public history. The part-literate societies saw for the first time conscious artists who drew sketches, made portraits of landscapes, documentary illustrations etc. After the Dark Ages of Europe and at the climax of Renaissance, painting and sketching gained a lot of currency and significance. The artists then were aided by better technology in terms of canvas, colours and inks, varied tools etc. Thus, the artists of Renaissance could capture the realities of their times, document them for future theorizing and interpretation.

However, the greatest breakthroughs came in the form of the invention of printing press in 16th century and that of camera in 19th century. The camera and its capture had an edge either over portrait paintings or sketching as the captured visuals enhanced the life-

likeness which was lacked by other medium of visual arts. Since the beginning of 19th century, camera stills played an important part in recording public history through various movements, protests, revolutions, rallies, meetings and public gatherings. The powerful combination of text and photographs published in media often changed the course of history and thereby influenced the public opinion.

The invention of motion picture camera by Thomas Edison revolutionized the way reality was observed, documented and preserved. From the beginning of the 20th century, the celluloid was used to document past (history) as it would have happened. It is not surprising the most spectacular and historical of all events like wars began to be documented by professionals. Immediate history was made available to the contemporary public on the basis of cinematographic records. On one hand, such a documentation of history was an added dimension for the mainstream historians to understand history apart from the written records, whereas on the other, it began what we now call the making of historical films or films based on history in the world of cinema. A rich corpus of written archive emerged from cinema – film scripts, magazines, reviews, newspaper supplements and books, advertisements, biographies and autobiographies of the stalwarts of cinema. It thus achieved the shape of an ever-expanding industry with commercial interests in view and a promising future ahead. All these was achieved before the second world war and it is at this juncture the engagement of mainstream historians began with cinema.

The initial engagement of history with cinema was intricate if not full of hostility. The traditional mainstream historians eyed the discipline of cinema with doubt as far as its documentary value for creating history is concerned. Except for the French historians, no one experimented with their traditional methods and tools of recording history. The unwavering faith of historians in the authenticity and validity of raw historical facts did not allow them to engage with cinema as a complementary domain that can bring new insights into the

recreation of history or past. So, for more than 50 years, historians kept themselves aloof and kept on criticizing cinema for its fictitious representation of history lacking factual validity. The insistence of historians on the objective representation of truth as far as history is concerned, led them to question the authenticity and validity of cinematic representation of history. This blind faith in the absolute objectivity of historical facts did not allow many historians to change their historical perceptions. They failed to realize the relativity of these historical facts rather than its absoluteness. So, the larger question remained, "can historians view photographic evidence and cinema at par with the traditional historical records? Is historiophoty possible?" Thus, the modern historians have broken the shackles of 19th century and have accorded due consideration to cinema as a significant source for construing history.

Historians seriously limit the scope of their vocation when they stick to the documentary evidence. For example, can the larger historical truth prevail about the Holocaust if the historians do not take into consideration the visual recordings of the German atrocities made often by the German officers themselves? Can historians, even for a moment, think about writing the history of Vietnam War or the U.S. War on Iraq without duly considering the photographic evidence and video recordings which provides a lot of authenticity to its documentation? It's a lesson to be learnt in enhancing the historical authenticity and validity and at the same time taking into consideration human sensitivity attached to such horrors committed in history.

Contemporary history will be significantly deficient in recreating history if it doesn't consider consulting the available rich corpus of photographs, video recordings and cinema of contemporary historical events. The documentary history of events like 1992 Babri Masjid Demolition, 2002 Godhra and Gujarat Carnage etc. cannot be written without reference to their camera footages. Such footages are essential to preserve social memory and public history. The documentary representation of history without the representation of human

experience is extremely limited in its scope and it often remains the history of elites without any focus on the ground level reality. The grand narratives of history are incomplete without the complementary resources like oral accounts, archives, newspapers, interviews, biographies, autobiographies, literary texts and cinema, the last one especially being the most influential of all. While writing historiography, consciously or sub-consciously, the classical historians talked only about the ruling elite classes without any reference to the suffering and the doomed.

Thus, historical films play a momentous role in the recreation of past. Their strength lies in emotionalizing, personalizing and dramatizing the past. It narrativizes history and brings it to the plane of ordinary human experience. Cinema brings history to life. Music enhances this effect. The presence of flesh and blood actors performing historical and fictional characters with their emotional subtleties produces a powerful historical effect on the audience. A contemporary historian like Hayden White rightly refers to the "narrativization of history" and "historicization of narrative" as inevitable processes of recreating historical past.

It has to be accepted at this juncture that all historical films are both factual and fictional to a lesser or greater extent, the way history is. Classical historians and their versions of history till date have been accepted as true and authentic because people think that these historians know the past better. This may well be true but at the same time, historians should resist the temptation of converting their historical scholarship into an outdated monopoly. Historians need to discard the categories like "absolute historical representation", "objectivity", "historical authenticity" etc. By considering cinema and historical films not as opponents but as sailors sailing in the same ship, contemporary historians and for that matter history proper can go a long way in sustaining social memory and public history for future

generations. History proper and cinema as disciplines have to negotiate a balancing act between what is unhistorical and historical for the recreation of past.

Thus, on the basis of the conducted research, I have reached and formulated the following conclusions:

1. Historically, human civilization had never before seen mass killings and genocide of this scale and the massive transfer or migration of human beings across the border as that took place during the Second World War (1939-1945) and Holocaust (the Nazi persecution of Jews, Gypsies, Sintis, Romanians, Homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Political Opponents etc.) and during the Partition of India (1947) respectively that shook the foundations of civilization in two different continents, namely, Europe and Asia. The Partition of India and its resulting communal riots were primarily a result of the untimely and absurd division of united India into two, namely, India and Pakistan based on the ideology of religious difference. Whereas, Holocaust was first formulated as a bigoted racial policy and then implemented with all force and vigour by the Nazi Germany under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, the Chancellor of Germany from 1933 to his death. What was so shocking and horrifying was the amount of bestiality demonstrated by a whole nation (Germany) to a group of people (Jews) in the case of Holocaust and by individuals and communities towards the "religious other" in the case of Partition.
2. On the basis of historical enquiry, one can say that Holocaust was an officially adopted policy of the killing of Jews and other ethnic groups by the German bureaucracy. Though absurd, it was pre-planned, methodical, state-engineered act of oppression and genocide in which approximately 10 million people lost their lives. The Partition of India, on the other hand, appears to be arbitrary, sporadic and equally absurd as neither the newly going-to-be formed Indian government nor the common

people of India were physically, mentally, emotionally and psychologically prepared for such a transfer or migration. The 'divide and rule' policy of the British, their passive role during the unfortunate division of the country and the communal aggression of the common people led to an unprecedented situation of brutal murders, rape, loot etc. This situation of unrest, fear and insecurity affected approximately 30 million people across the borders. However, both the historical events proved that given a situation man is capable of unimaginable treachery and brutality.

3. Historical evidence proves the fact that as far as the Holocaust is concerned, it didn't have two different sides waging war against one another. In other words, the game was one-sided, in which the Nazi Germans decided the arbitrary rules and the Jews were the doomed players. Before Adolf Hitler came to power in 1933 as the Chancellor of Germany, Jews and Germans have lived in perfectly amicable situation since generations. However, in another 6 years and with the beginning of Second World War, the tables turned for the Jews within German occupied territories. Imposition of unjust Nuremberg Laws, confiscation of property and business, forced to live in ghetto life, deposition to concentration and death camps etc. became the reality. As far as the Partition of India is concerned, ordinary Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs too had a long history of cordial relations, which got poisoned due to the unfortunate division of the united India on religious lines. The fact is that all sides killed, looted, abducted, murdered and raped. In the case of Holocaust, Nazi Germans were the victimizer and the Jews and other ethnic groups were the victimized. Whereas in the case of the Partition of India, all communities played the role of victimizer and victimized turn by turn.
4. A marked difference between Holocaust and Partition can also be seen in the response of the common people towards each other. After Adolf Hitler came to power in

Germany in 1933, the social-politico-economic situation changed dramatically. The ordinary Germans who have been one of the most sophisticated and civilized people in the human history turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to the pain, suffering and victimization of the Jews. Their long-lived neighbours, friends and acquaintances suddenly became "the other" for them. Hatred, jeering and mocking from the German counterparts added to the miserable plight and tragedy of the Jews. One rarely comes across stories of support, care and concern between ordinary Germans and the suffering Jews. However, this fact stands in contrast with the historical reality before and during the Partition of India. India can boast of more than 1000 years of Hindu-Muslim solidarity. But the Partition of India did not merely draw the geographical boundaries but also divided hearts and a culture of co-existence. Despite of meting out the worst atrocities to one another, one comes across many acts of heroism where ordinary people turned saviours and rescued their neighbours from a certain death. It would be fallacious on the part of anybody who rules out the culture of co-existence between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in India before the Partition.

5. The ease with which the Jews in Germany and the Hindus and Muslims in India agreed to migrate can be ascribed to the fact that probably all of them believed that their migration from their respective homes and towns was a temporary arrangement and once the Second World War and the British leave, the Jews, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs would be able to return to their homes. None of them had an idea that the historical decisions of the elites and bigoted policies are going to change their lives and destiny once and for all. The implementation of the 'Final Solution' by the Nazi Germans came with a promise to the Jews that they are going to be re-settled at a better place once they agree to migrate. Later, the voluntary migrations got converted to forced deportations. A great façade was created even in the labour,

concentration and death camps which created an illusion of life for the Jews. They had no idea whatsoever of total annihilation of Jews by the Nazis. On the other hand, The Muslim League and Mohammad Ali Jinnah also projected 'Pakistan' as a 'Promised Land' for the Muslims of India where safety, security and a better life awaits them. However, the ultimate reality is that most of the migrants died on the way to Pakistan and the rest who reached there are still regarded as outsiders or *mohajirs*. Both Holocaust and Partition Cinema bring home this bitter truth of life. Against the discourse of mainstream history, this alternative version of history is deeply rooted in real life historical facts.

6. Both Holocaust and Partition Cinema in consideration capture the harsh reality of those times as well as the scenes of brutal violence and death with utmost objectivity. They do not represent the elite view of historical representation, rather projects the perspective of the victimized. They deal largely with the victims of larger historical events like Holocaust and Partition. Whether it be Guido and his family, Gyuri, Szpilman, Shmuel with the exception of Oskar Schindler in Holocaust Cinema and Nathu and his wife Karmo, Harnam Singh and his wife Banto, Shanta, Ayesha, Salim Mirza and his family – they are all the victims of historical forces beyond their control. They are trapped, tried and perplexed in baffling real-life situations. Their pain, suffering, trauma, fears, concerns and anxieties are objectively represented in both the Holocaust and Partition Cinema. They truly represent what we may term as "people's history". The mainstream historical discourse does not take into account the unbelievable rescue effort of Oskar Schindler who finally succeeded in saving 1200 Jews from their imminent death. It is only in literature and in cinema that a person like Oskar Schindler and his remarkable feat are aesthetically preserved.

7. Holocaust and Partition Cinema can function as an alternative version of history which helps in addressing the contradictions, gaps and silences in the mainstream historical discourse. It neither negates nor undermines the significance of mainstream history. It simply provides an alternative point of view to construct the historical reality. This cinematic reconstruction or revision of past or history makes it more interpretative and substantial. The representation of history in cinema frees history from the tyranny of standardization of what we call representing historical truth.

The time has come to seriously examine the approach of historians to cinema in general and the historical films in particular. Since history itself has proved to be a dynamic discipline, the habit of viewing films with an eye to 'facticity' should give way to a nuanced understanding of the historical potential of cinema. A strong relationship between visual and written history is certainly in the interest of both public memory and a socially relevant history. If historians want to bridge the widening chasm between public and academic histories, they have no choice but to take films based on historical events seriously. On the other hand, film-makers cannot, and should not, ignore the historical context while representing any historical event on the celluloid. Given the will and ample opportunity to collaborate, historians and film-makers, operating in a heterogeneous field of interdisciplinarity can learn a lot from each other and sustain the long tradition of history-making.

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APPENDIX

History and Cinema: Contradictory or Complementary Disciplines?

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Abstract

Cinema has always played a momentous role in giving voice to the existential concerns and dilemmas of common people, tried and perplexed in our tragi-comic postmodern world. Films are cultural artifacts created by specific cultures, which reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Film is considered to be an important art form, a source of popular entertainment and a powerful medium for educating — or indoctrinating — citizens. The visual elements of cinema give motion pictures a universal power of communication. Classic cinema has invariably proved its worth by exercising a formative influence on the psyche of cine-goers. It has effectively tried to mobilize the sensitivity and sensibility of cine-goers. Classic cinema, like classic literature, incorporates a polyphonic narrative, that is to say, it projects reality from a multi-dimensional perspective. It does not merely invite us to enter a realm of enchantment and entertainment but also bring us face-to-face with the gruesome realities of ever-changing life. However, the commitment of cinema becomes doubly strengthened when it comes to projecting some of the most disturbing and controversial historical events. Such potentially dangerous historical events have unleashed a destructive tsunami of communalism, hooliganism, jingoism, violence, war, inhuman atrocities etc. Cinema, thus, plays a pivotal role in representing such unprecedented historical events authentically and objectively.

Keywords – history, cinema, interdisciplinarity, objectivity-subjectivity

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APPENDIX

Holocaust: The Final Solution

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Abstract

The Holocaust was the genocide of approximately six million European Jews during World War II, a programme of systematic state-sponsored murder by Nazi Germany, led by Adolf Hitler, throughout Nazi-occupied territory. Of the nine million Jews who had resided in Europe before the Holocaust, approximately two-thirds perished. In particular, over one million Jewish children were killed in the Holocaust, as were approximately two million Jewish women and three million Jewish men. Some scholars maintain that the definition of the Holocaust should also include the Nazis' genocide of millions of people in other groups, including Romani (more commonly known in English by the exonym "Gypsies"), Sinti, Soviet prisoners of war, Polish and Soviet civilians, homosexuals, people with disabilities, Jehovah's Witnesses and other political and religious opponents, which occurred regardless of whether they were of German or non-German ethnic origin. Using this definition, the total number of Holocaust victims is between 11 million and 17 million people.

Holocaust refers to the period of twelve years from 1933 until 1945, that European Jews were hunted, persecuted, slaughtered, tortured and massacred by the German Nazi Party and by their various collaborators. The Holocaust was, is and will forever be, one of the most shocking examples of human degradation ever to darken the face of the earth.

Keywords – holocaust, genocide, anti-Semitism, Nazism, World War II

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