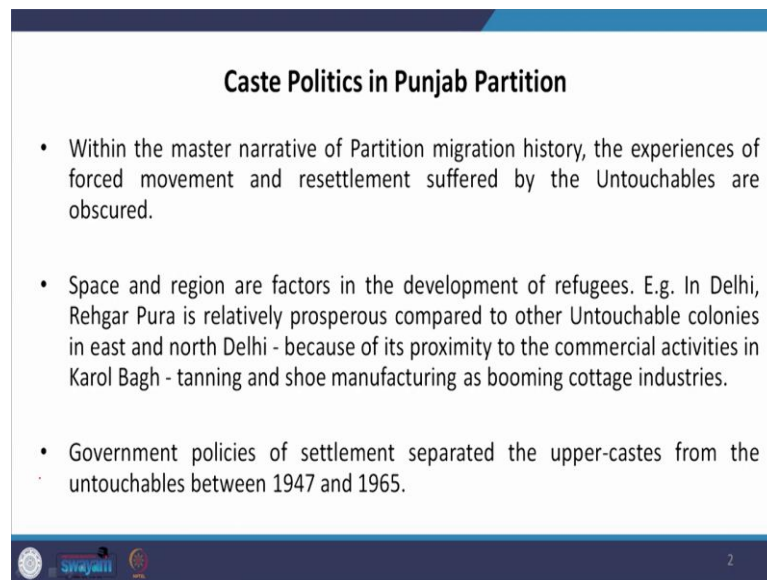


**Partition of India in Print Media and Cinema**  
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**Lecture - 16**  
**Caste Politics in Punjab Partition**  
**Micro-societies and Sub-Cultures**

Good morning and welcome back to the lecture series on Partition of India in Print Media and Cinema. Today, we are going to talk about Caste Politics in Punjab Partition as well as discuss the Micro-societies and their natures and how Sub-cultures actually form - how they evolve and how they interact with mainstream cultural expressions; how the subcultures interact with and develop through interaction with the mainstream cultural expressions and mainstream socio-cultural processes. (Refer Slide Time: 02:11)



**Caste Politics in Punjab Partition**

- Within the master narrative of Partition migration history, the experiences of forced movement and resettlement suffered by the Untouchables are obscured.
- Space and region are factors in the development of refugees. E.g. In Delhi, Rehgar Pura is relatively prosperous compared to other Untouchable colonies in east and north Delhi - because of its proximity to the commercial activities in Karol Bagh - tanning and shoe manufacturing as booming cottage industries.
- Government policies of settlement separated the upper-castes from the untouchables between 1947 and 1965.

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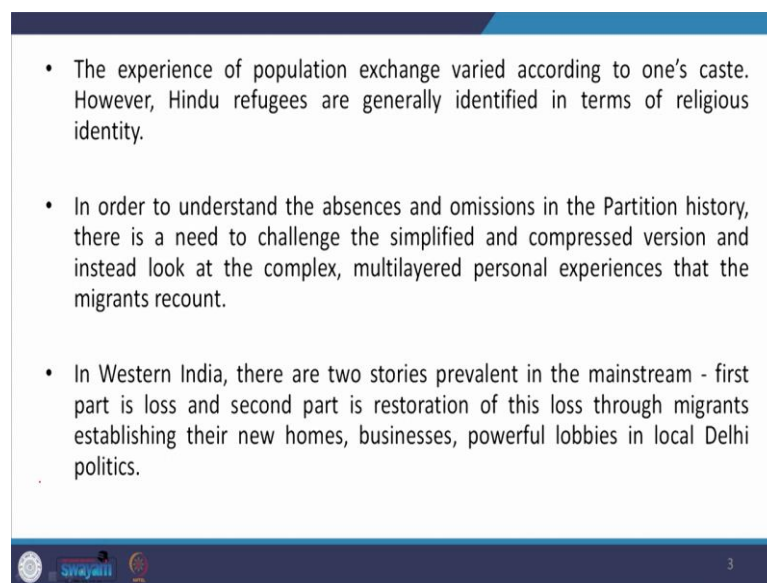
Within the master narrative of Partition migration history, we see that the experiences of the Untouchables have not so much been mentioned. They have remained obscured until a long time. This is also true in the case of Punjab partition.

Space and region are some of the factors that determine the development of refugees and their journey from being refugee to becoming the citizen and so, we have to understand that the process of migration was never homogeneous. Depending on a person's caste, class, social background, different policies were devised by the government to resettle the refugees.

For example, in Delhi, Rehgar Pura is relatively a prosperous area compared to other Untouchable colonies in the eastern and northern parts because of its proximity to the commercial activities in Karol Bagh. We see the tanning and shoe manufacturing have booming cottage industries in these areas. So, having proximity with areas that are known for commercial activities had their own benefit. Rehgar Pura is a case in hand.

Government policies of settlement separated the upper-castes from the Untouchables between 1947 and 1965.

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- The experience of population exchange varied according to one's caste. However, Hindu refugees are generally identified in terms of religious identity.
- In order to understand the absences and omissions in the Partition history, there is a need to challenge the simplified and compressed version and instead look at the complex, multilayered personal experiences that the migrants recount.
- In Western India, there are two stories prevalent in the mainstream - first part is loss and second part is restoration of this loss through migrants establishing their new homes, businesses, powerful lobbies in local Delhi politics.

So, the process of population exchange was greatly determined depending on the refugee's socioeconomic background, like I already stated.

So, when we understand Partition [refugees] only in terms of a homogeneous community, that is a flawed understanding of the situation. When we try to grasp the episode of human migration across the border in terms of the individual's communal identity, there is a kind of misconstruction or false understanding formed.

We have to understand the omissions, the gaps in the Partition history and thereby we need to question the simplified and compressed version and probe into the multi-layered, nuanced personal experiences that are informed by diverse experiences of the migrants.

So, in Western India we see that two two stock narratives or two kindS of stereotypical narratives, two metanarratives in a way get circulated a lot. They are prevalent at the

heart of the mainstream: one is the rhetoric of loss - how much people lost and then the process of restoration of this loss through the dint of one's hard work, merit and through social networking, through political connections and so on.

In this process of narrating one's loss, like Ravinder Kaur says and something that I am going to discuss more in detail when I talk about the refugees, the situation of the refugees in subsequent lectures...the narration of loss by the wealthier sections actually emphasize [this loss] and they underline their affluent status - what they used to possess, their aristocratic background.

So, when there are stories regarding someone that had to leave their valuables, their jewelry and family heirlooms back in their homestead, in their ancestral home on the other side of the border there is also an assertion that these people used to be from the richest part or the most affluent section of the society. And, from there on the story of rebuilding of, refurbishing what had been razed by partition also subscribes to their human quality such as merit, capability to work hard and honestly.

These become family stories that run down generations.. they run from one generation to the other regarding how the refugee had resettled and reestablished himself in the new host land, and how [he] had made [himself] visible and prominent through service in the postcolonial new nation-state that was formed.

There are stories of people establishing their homes, their businesses flourishing and then they are locating themselves among powerful lobbies in local Delhi politics. So, these are stories that are frequently circulated among the Punjabi refugees and, the case of Bengal is not very different from this. (Refer Slide Time: 07:57)

- Gyanendra Pandey - widespread meta-discourse of communal violence was historically rooted in British colonial interpretation of violence, community and identity making in colonial India.
- Knowledge of Partition mainly comes from the narratives told by the upper/middle class high-caste protagonists in the forms of memoirs, auto/biographies, newspaper reports and public speech.
- Quintessential refugee subject is spoken of in/as masculine pronoun and as socially respectable castes who construct the master-narrative of Partition. For e.g. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* is rife with moneylenders, businessmen, landed peasants, soldiers, clerks, preachers and school teachers among Jat Sikhs, who make up the influential upper strata.

Gyanendra Pandey would say that a widespread meta-discourse of communal violence is actually rooted to the British colonial interpretation of the two communities. So, it was the British that had set the lens for Hindus to see the Muslims and vice versa.

The Hindu males would largely be seen as effeminate and not very strong and on a positive side they would be seen as more tolerant, whereas the Muslims were stereotyped as aggressive and tyrants and betrayers and so forth. So, this was at the root of differential identity making in colonial India.

And, the knowledge of partition like the prevalent knowledge, the common knowledge that we all have about partition actually flows from the upper echelons; upper middle-class and middle-class, upper-caste protagonists and their experiences are actually etched in the major works, the seminal works on Partition.

In the form of memoirs, autobiographies and biographies, newspaper reports and public speech what we can access, what is most easily accessible to the public is the elitist discourse on partition.

We need to understand this and something that we are going to repeat again in our subsequent lecture is the quintessential figure of the refugee subject. This refugee subject certainly has a class, caste and gender belonging. So, the refugee that can speak, that speaks for himself as well as for others. The protagonists in most of the artworks and fictions as well as non-fictions are these privileged section of migrants [who] go on to construct the master-narratives about partition.

For example, we see in Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan there are frequent references to money-lenders, to landed peasants, businessmen, soldiers, clerks and all of them belong to the influential upper strata of the society.

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- Partition as a mass-produced event - narration authenticated when staged against the anonymous backdrop of masses, where narrator is mostly an upper-caste protagonist telling their own and other's experiences.
- In Punjab too the migrations of the Untouchables happened at the tail end of the population exchange.
- Major Partition narratives have it that many Dalits had to espouse Islam out of expediency, implying that they awaited rescue by Hindu/Sikh upper-castes and loathed Islamic occupation of what became "Pakistan."
- In the same way, Pakistani narratives do not include voice of the leaders that wanted the non-Muslims to stay back.
- In reality, there were roles of liaisons - Muslim officers evacuating the Hindus and Hindu officers evacuating the Muslims that do not get mentioned in the popular accounts/discourse.

So, we understand that partition as a mass-produced event is authenticated and validated when it is narrated through the mouthpiece of the elite; the narrator is mostly belonging to a privileged section who talks about himself.

In each of these stories, we see the protagonist, the lead character, as someone who has some social and economic capital and the people that are being rampantly killed and their property being destroyed are generally an anonymous crowd in the background. So, they make up the backdrop of the central narrative.

There are certainly some exceptions that narrate the account of the landless peasant and there have been many artworks written by upper-caste middle-class refined class authors both in Punjab and in Bengal that try to frame the narrative from the vantage point of the Dalit, but such cases are not rife.

So, Tamas is an example where we see that though the Dalit Sikh tanner is actually relegated to the background, the entire narrative almost spins around him; the narrative is centered on him and his perspective, his perspective and his wife's perspective.

We see that in Tamas the riots have been instigated and provoked by upper-caste, upper-class people that are by the way very good friends. So, the business men - upper-class Muslims and Hindus actually cohabit peacefully. Their relationship mutually benefit each other, their relationship is symbiotic, but this is not the same for the Dalits, for the landless and the subaltern, right.

What is interesting in Tamas is that the ones that started the riot do not so much feel guilty, but the Dalit man that has been used as the pawn actually carries the weight of guilt throughout the narrative. And, when we talk of subalterns we cannot not talk about the women; women from all the sections. The [White man's] wife, the Dalit man's wife, the Hindu businessman's wife and the Sikh man's wife.

We have all these women that are not functioning from the pith or core of politics - their political consciousness is supposed to be not very strong and yet they actually display a kind of sensibility, which is astounding, which perplexes the patriarchal [hotheads] that support war, violence and bloodshed.

We see women asking some very fundamental questions that unnerve and disquiet the roots of ah patriarchy - something that the patriarchal assumptions naturalize, normalize and in fact, support and defend, such as the war scheming, right. So, we see that Dalits, subalterns, females - they are relegated to the backdrop as an anonymous mass.

There is this common perception that in the Northwestern frontier during the partition the Dalits had to espouse Islam out of expediency; many Dalits were forced to embrace Islam and this kind of stock narrative suggests that the Dalit converts awaited the Hindu and the Sikh upper-castes to come rescue them and bring them back into the fold of their original religion. And, rescue them from the loathsome Islamic occupation and the idea of Pakistan.

In the same way, we see that in Pakistan's meta-narratives there are hardly mentions of the other types of leaders; leaders that helped the non-Muslims evacuate safely and also protagonists that wanted the non-Muslims to actually stay back and vouched for their safety.

In reality, we would see that the picture is much more mottled, much more diverse and layered and nuanced. So, there were roles of liaisons. There were Muslim officers that evacuated the non-Muslims and Hindus that ensured that the Muslims actually crossed the border safely, but these narratives do not get mentioned so much in the popular accounts. We understand that just like in the case of Bengal in Punjab also the Dalits did not leave their violence-prone areas until the end, before the actual partition precipitated and the cataclysm materialized. So, they were still clinging on to their hopes that the partition might not take place. The Untouchable's migration happened at the tail end of the population exchange. (Refer Slide Time: 18:09)



- Unlike the upper-caste populace, the Dalits did not move away from the violence-prone areas before the actual Partition.
- Dalits in Punjab greatly benefited from the government's mediation in facilitating resettlement (whereas many upper-castes boast self-rehabilitation). Congress played a pivotal role in designing resettlement policies to socially and economically develop the Dalits. Moreover, because the Dalits had not lost much property (didn't have in the first place), they were not so much entitled to compensation as they were to doles.
- Their rehabilitated spaces/lands were not the best areas, and their mode of earning was only through traditional occupations.

However, we see that unlike in Bengal where refugees have trickled across several decades against the historical backdrop of different events of communal riots being provoked at different junctures of history; in the case of Punjab on the western side, Dalit refugee's migration was a neater process.

And, unlike in the eastern side where the government did not play a very important or significant role as a beneficiary - in fact, there are many accounts by the Dalits coming up recently that the different political parties in West Bengal actually exploited the Dalits for their votes.

So, they were treated as vote banks; unlike such a situation, in Punjab we see that the government actually mediated and facilitated resettlement in a great way. While the upper-castes boast of self-rehabilitation on both sides of the border, on the western side Congress actually went on to play a vital role in designing resettlement policies for the socially and economically disadvantaged sections. There were many plans and policies designed to uplift and develop the Dalit's conditions.

This is a general case that because the Dalits could not claim that they had lost much, they did not have a lot of material property in the first place. Most of them would earn through working in lands. They were not so much entitled to compensation as they were to free doles or the charity acts of the different governments. The charities and doles and welfarist schemes of the government helped the Dalits a lot.

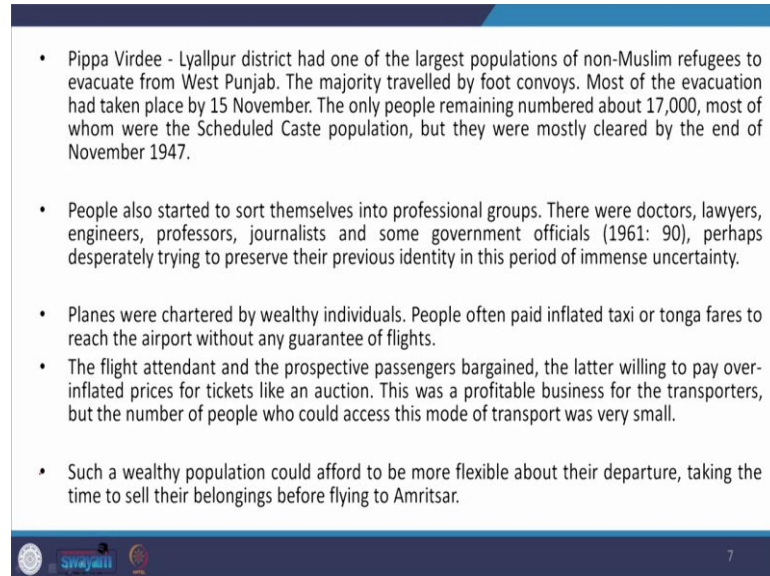
So, consequently we see that the Dalits are not choosers of the lands and spaces where they would settle. They were given lands and spaces and those were not the best of the lands. They were not resettled in the posh areas or the urban areas. So, in many cases there were planned townships or even resettlements done in the suburban areas.

These people were for some time helpless because they only had the traditional knowledge; they had historically earned through traditional occupations. So, they had very limited skills and after the partition they greatly depended on the government's schemes and services.

In the case of Bengal, we see that the peasants who worked on lands [did] not fit well into factory jobs and there is a lot of dissatisfaction. So, a person with knowledge of

peasantry, of tilling lands or fishery or the boatmen would not be grafted very well or repositioned very well in factory jobs.

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- Pippa Virdee - Lyallpur district had one of the largest populations of non-Muslim refugees to evacuate from West Punjab. The majority travelled by foot convoys. Most of the evacuation had taken place by 15 November. The only people remaining numbered about 17,000, most of whom were the Scheduled Caste population, but they were mostly cleared by the end of November 1947.
- People also started to sort themselves into professional groups. There were doctors, lawyers, engineers, professors, journalists and some government officials (1961: 90), perhaps desperately trying to preserve their previous identity in this period of immense uncertainty.
- Planes were chartered by wealthy individuals. People often paid inflated taxi or tonga fares to reach the airport without any guarantee of flights.
- The flight attendant and the prospective passengers bargained, the latter willing to pay over-inflated prices for tickets like an auction. This was a profitable business for the transporters, but the number of people who could access this mode of transport was very small.
- Such a wealthy population could afford to be more flexible about their departure, taking the time to sell their belongings before flying to Amritsar.

Pippa Virdee looks at [the case of] the Lyallpur district in her research and how one of the largest populations of non-Muslim refugees had evacuated from West Punjab's Lyallpur district. She describes how the majority traveled on food convoys.

The mode of travelling would also determine and define the class and social allocation of the refugee. The poorer sections would obviously travel for miles on foot convoys and when we talk of partition, we have the kind of stock image and impression of the kafilas - poor people walking on foot, carrying the cattles and belongings on bullock carts and so on; and there are trains or chains of such carts travelling together. Most of the evacuation in Western Punjab region had taken place by 15th of November and the Scheduled Caste population that had stayed back were cleared by the end of November, 1947.

Even in refugee camps, we see the the class-caste differentiations being reasserted and maintained. So, the professional groups such as the doctors, professors, lawyers, engineers, journalists, government employees and officials had already lost in many cases their economic footing, their social reputation. They were desperately clinging on to some imagined reputation through maintaining a distance from the Dalit social groups.

This was a period of uncertainty and what Pippa Virdee says holds true in the case of the Bengalis [also] - the middle-class Bengali Bhadrakol who had lost everything and they were clinging on to an imagined prestige and that is where the rhetoric, the story of 'fall' comes from, the fall of the middle-class and yet they do not want to be identified and conflated with the Dalits.

This desperate attempt to preserve one's identity as a social group was there. It was visible and there are rich people - contrary to how the poorer populations traveled, the richer could actually afford to buy plane tickets and plane tickets were being sold on blacks.

So, people were paying for inflated taxi fares, tonga fares and they could reach airport somehow and so, the flight attendants and the flight companies were bargaining their tickets, they were selling the tickets at over-inflated prices like an auction. And, they were benefiting from this situation. So, this became a profitable business for the transporters.

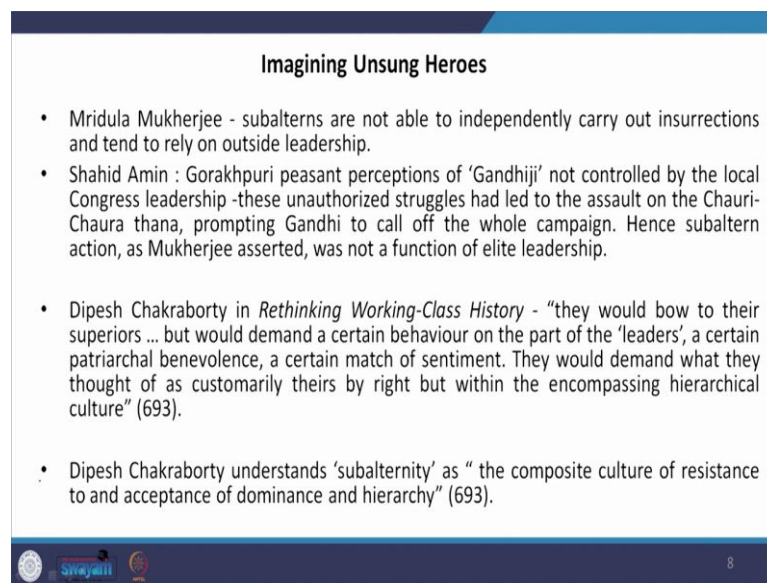
The wealthy people could invest a lot of money and make sure that the process of travelling and resettlement was a safe and successful one.

So, this process was safe successful even if it cost a lot of money. The wealthier sections could afford to be more flexible regarding their departure.

The process of exchanging property, selecting land, buying land for one's home and business - the question of choice informed all these processes for the affluent, the richer sections. So, before they flew to Amritsar they could actually systematically exchange their property.

From here, we are going to talk about the subalterns and the people that we see as parts of subcultures. So, from here we are going to talk about subalterns and the micro-societies, the subcultures.

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**Imagining Unsung Heroes**

- Mridula Mukherjee - subalterns are not able to independently carry out insurrections and tend to rely on outside leadership.
- Shahid Amin : Gorakhpuri peasant perceptions of 'Gandhiji' not controlled by the local Congress leadership -these unauthorized struggles had led to the assault on the Chauri-Chaura thana, prompting Gandhi to call off the whole campaign. Hence subaltern action, as Mukherjee asserted, was not a function of elite leadership.
- Dipesh Chakraborty in *Rethinking Working-Class History* - "they would bow to their superiors ... but would demand a certain behaviour on the part of the 'leaders', a certain patriarchal benevolence, a certain match of sentiment. They would demand what they thought of as customarily theirs by right but within the encompassing hierarchical culture" (693).
- Dipesh Chakraborty understands 'subalternity' as " the composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of dominance and hierarchy" (693).

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Mridula Mukherjee argues that the subalterns are not able to independently carry out the protests and revolts outside of a godhead, outside of a kind of prominent leadership.

Shahid Amin points to the case of the Gorakhpuri peasants, who had a misplaced or a kind of, let us say, upside down perception of Gandhi that was besides Gandhi himself. Their understanding of Gandhian politics was not controlled by any Congress leadership at the locality.

Their unauthorized struggles that went under the banner of Gandhian movement, but not quite [subscribed to the Gandhian principles] had led to the assault on the Chauri Chaura Thana or police station, and this prompted Gandhi to call off the entire campaign. Mridula Mukherjee notes that the subaltern action can go wayward in the absence of or it can go on to take its own different expression in the absence of elite leadership.

What Gandhi is saying and how that is being taken - there is an incommensurable gap between the elite leaders and how their messages or sermons reach the remote areas. There is a kind of simulacrum, there is a kind of doubled meaning from where the original, the real can hardly be recovered.

Dipesh Chakraborty in "Rethinking Working Class History" is referring to the subalterns [and notes that] they would bow to their superiors, but would demand a certain behavior on the part of the leaders, a patriarchal benevolence, a certain match of sentiment. They would demand what they thought of as customarily theirs by right, but within the encompassing hierarchical culture.

What Chakraborty here is trying to say is very important, meaning that subalternity functions through maintenance, continuance of a master-servant relationship. It demands a kind of patriarchal benevolence, a charitable behavior on the part of the master, although the larger hegemonic structure is not really topsy-turvyed or tempered.

The subalternity, as Chakraborty understands, is the composite culture of resistance to and acceptance of dominance and hierarchy. It is not always looking to upturn the current situation of domination.

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- Sumit Sarkar – “assertion-within-deference”- meaning the way in which the subordinate , by evoking notions of benevolent patriarchy, is able to exploit his own subordination to his benefit by contributing towards the definition of what constitutes the correct understanding of the patron’s role(693).
- A subaltern’s “notion of what is fair, just or customary would refer backwards, to the hierarchically structured order of an ideal society” (694) thus contesting hierarchy but taking place within the hegemony of hierarchy.
- Chakraborty – pre-capitalist working culture in India was hierarchical, violent and inegalitarian (696). “A ‘respect’ of a boss derived from a precapitalist culture with a strong emphasis on religion, community, kinship, language and other similar loyalties” (696).
- While Chakraborty sees a monolithic nature in the class solidarity, it assumes culture as static and unchangeable.
- The contradiction in the “educated” leader’s culture - to educate the labourers on the one hand and a more unconscious sense of distance and superiority.

Sumit Sarkar further notes how subalternity functions through assertion of difference, meaning the way in which the subordinate, through evoking notions of benevolent patriarchy, is able to exploit his own subordination to his own benefit by contributing towards the definition of what constitutes the correct understanding of the patron's role.

There is a kind of status-quo that the subaltern also subscribes to and believes in. He does not necessarily want to become the master and make the master as a slave or a serf overnight, and that is not true like Chakraborty and Sarkar would say.

They would like to function within the structure of domination and yet expect certain conditions to inform their own subordination, and within that subordination their welfare and the right behavior of the master and the patron's role are all protected.

There are certain boundaries that even subalterns want to maintain and not overstep. So, the subaltern's notion of what is fair, just or customary would refer backwards to the hierarchically structured order of an ideal society. Thus, contesting hierarchy [takes place] within the hegemony of hierarchy.

So, a respect of boss in the pre-capitalist culture, like Dipesh Chakraborty notes, is greatly shaped by... it churns out of religious, communal kinship, linguistic and other similar loyalties. There are critics that note that Chakraborty's understanding of this monolithic nature of class solidarity assumes culture as static and immutable.

Critics note that there could be contradictions in the educated leader's cultures. There could be leaders or masters that are willing to educate the laborers at their own expenses through spending their own money.

There could be contradictory pictures of the educated leader, who is investing towards education of the laborers and yet, on the other hand, maintaining an unconscious sense of distance and supremacy. So, resistance as well as domination are mechanically applied and they acquire an ever present quality, which hardly comments or even renders visibility to the master-servant relationship.

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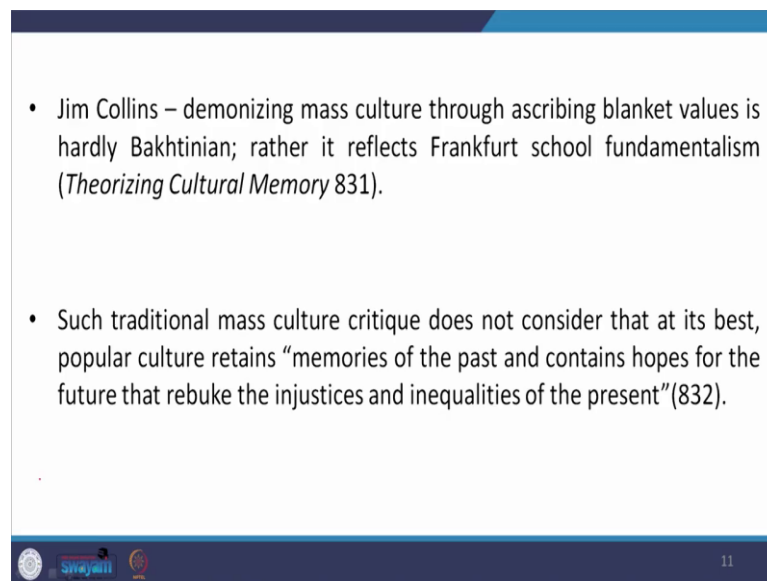


- Resistance is toned down and mechanically applied when it becomes an ever-present quality that hardly comments about the master and servant relationship.
- George Lipsitz - the different forms of cultural expressions of different subcultural groups have a profound impact on mainstream popular culture (*Theorizing Cultural Memory* 829). Instead of bemoaning the disappearance of folk-cultural traditions, Lipsitz shows their ability to express conflicts and contradictions and exert enormous influence as the marginalized to the mainstream, beyond the confines of their specific subculture.
- Similar to how postmodernists reject the distinction between high and popular art/culture (831).

Now, George Lipsitz notes that the different forms of cultural expressions of different sub-cultural groups have a profound impact on mainstream popular culture. Lipsitz is against bemoaning the loss or the death of the folk cultural traditions, and instead wants to see how these folk cultures have [metamorphosed] through their evolution, the way they have evolved and manifested themselves through ramified meanings, how they can actually pose their presence onto the marginal cultures and their functioning.

We need to understand the folklore beyond the confined or specific definition of subculture, and this has a postmodernist undertone, where there is rejection of clear distinction between high and popular culture. And, this is also quite deconstructionist in a way where we say in a Derridian sense that the center is constantly moving towards the margin and the margin is constantly moving towards the center.

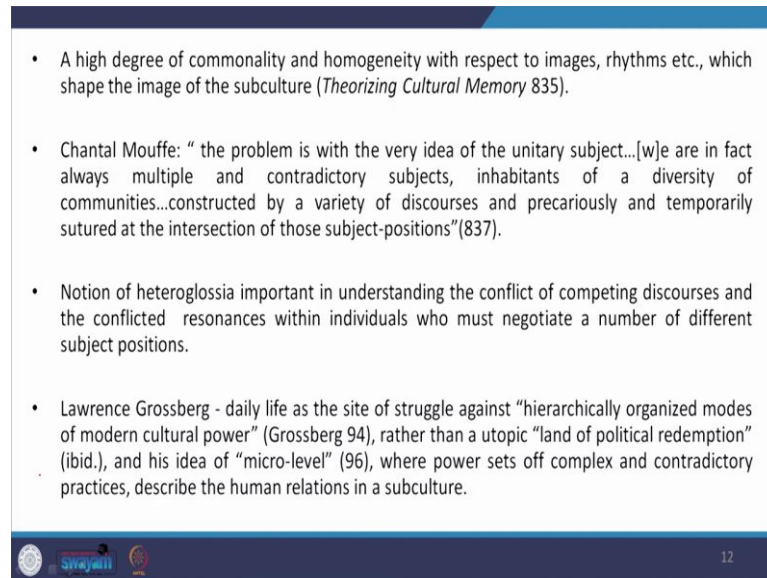
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- Jim Collins – demonizing mass culture through ascribing blanket values is hardly Bakhtinian; rather it reflects Frankfurt school fundamentalism (*Theorizing Cultural Memory* 831).
- Such traditional mass culture critique does not consider that at its best, popular culture retains “memories of the past and contains hopes for the future that rebuke the injustices and inequalities of the present”(832).

Jim Collins notes that demonizing mass culture through ascribing a kind of blanket definition or attaching certain blanket values can hardly be Bakhtinian; it rather reflects Frankfurt school's fundamentalism. So, a traditional mass culture critique does not consider that at its best popular culture retains memories of the past and contains hopes for the future that rebuke the injustices and inequalities of the present.

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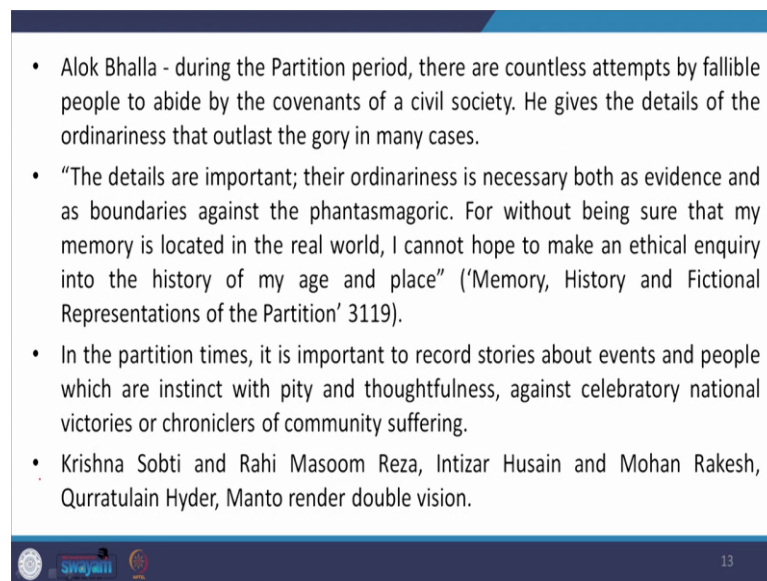
- A high degree of commonality and homogeneity with respect to images, rhythms etc., which shape the image of the subculture (*Theorizing Cultural Memory* 835).
- Chantal Mouffe: “ the problem is with the very idea of the unitary subject...[w]e are in fact always multiple and contradictory subjects, inhabitants of a diversity of communities...constructed by a variety of discourses and precariously and temporarily sutured at the intersection of those subject-positions”(837).
- Notion of heteroglossia important in understanding the conflict of competing discourses and the conflicted resonances within individuals who must negotiate a number of different subject positions.
- Lawrence Grossberg - daily life as the site of struggle against “hierarchically organized modes of modern cultural power” (Grossberg 94), rather than a utopic “land of political redemption” (ibid.), and his idea of “micro-level” (96), where power sets off complex and contradictory practices, describe the human relations in a subculture.

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Chantal Mouffe states that the problem is with the very idea of the unitary subject. So, we are always multiple and contradictory subjects and we inhabit as diverse communities. We are constructed by a variety of discourses and precariously and temporarily, we are these different communities, and the subject formation in fact, is sutured at the intersection of these [different] subject positions.

This also harkens back what Lawrence Grossberg has to say regarding our daily life being a site of struggle against hierarchically organized modes of modern cultural power, rather than a utopic land of political redemption. So, when we talk of a micro-society, micro level meanings, power, sets of complex and contradictory practices - the meanings are constantly reshaping, [they are] protean, meanings in flux that describe human relations in a subculture.

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- Alok Bhalla - during the Partition period, there are countless attempts by fallible people to abide by the covenants of a civil society. He gives the details of the ordinariness that outlast the gory in many cases.
- “The details are important; their ordinariness is necessary both as evidence and as boundaries against the phantasmagoric. For without being sure that my memory is located in the real world, I cannot hope to make an ethical enquiry into the history of my age and place” (‘Memory, History and Fictional Representations of the Partition’ 3119).
- In the partition times, it is important to record stories about events and people which are instinct with pity and thoughtfulness, against celebratory national victories or chroniclers of community suffering.
- Krishna Sobti and Rahi Masoom Reza, Intizar Husain and Mohan Rakesh, Qurratulain Hyder, Manto render double vision.

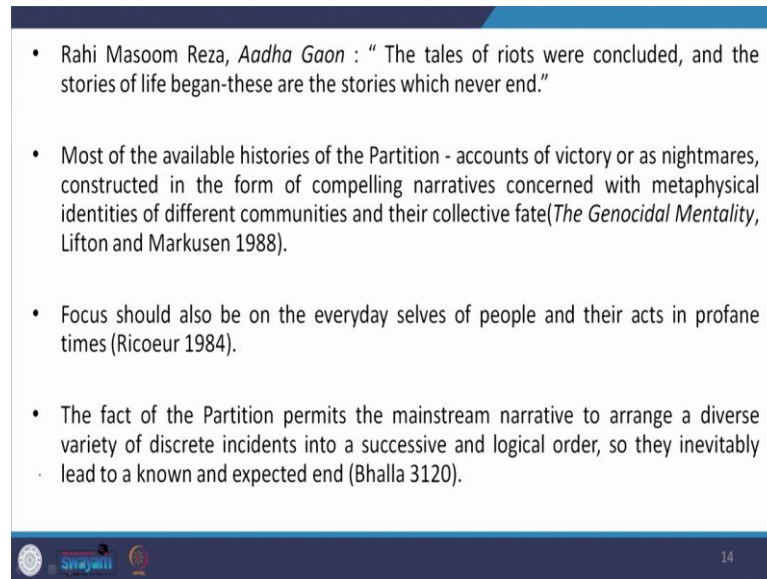
Alok Bhalla notes that during the partition period, there were countless attempts by fallible, in fact, ordinary human beings to remain civil, to maintain the civil code of conduct, and that maintaining such conduct was heroic given the situation. So, he gives the details of ordinariness that outlast the gory in many cases. So, details are important.

Their ordinariness is necessary both as evidence and as boundaries against the phantasmagoric. Without being sure that my memory is located in the real world, I cannot hope to make an ethical inquiry into the history of my age and place. We need to record the different stories about events and people that also celebrate pity,

thoughtfulness against the celebratory national victories or chronicles of community suffering.

We have writings by Krishna Sobti, Rahi Masoom Reza, Intizar Husain, Mohan Rakesh, Qurratulain Hyder and so forth.

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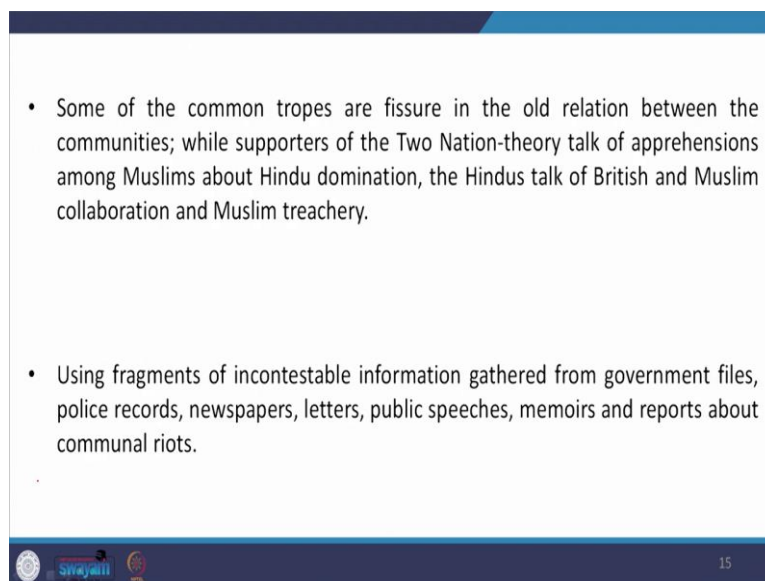


- Rahi Masoom Reza, *Aadha Gaon* : “ The tales of riots were concluded, and the stories of life began-these are the stories which never end.”
- Most of the available histories of the Partition - accounts of victory or as nightmares, constructed in the form of compelling narratives concerned with metaphysical identities of different communities and their collective fate(*The Genocidal Mentality*, Lifton and Markusen 1988).
- Focus should also be on the everyday selves of people and their acts in profane times (Ricoeur 1984).
- The fact of the Partition permits the mainstream narrative to arrange a diverse variety of discrete incidents into a successive and logical order, so they inevitably lead to a known and expected end (Bhalla 3120).



So, in Aadha Gaon, Reza [states]: 'The tales of riots were concluded and the stories of life began - these are the stories that actually never end.' So, between account of victory and nightmares there were so many gray existences that were neither completely black nor white [but] constructed in the form of compelling narratives.

We see that these accounts of victory or nightmares try to form compelling narratives, and there are metaphysical imaginings of or identities of different communities, where individuals become symbols, stock symbols of the stereotypical understanding of a community - nothing more than that.

The characters in these accounts of victories or accounts of fall, nightmare, failure do not have any excesses. No emotional, physical or other excesses because they subscribe to certain metaphysical identity. So, the fact of the partition permits the mainstream narrative to arrange into a successive and logical order. They always tend to lead to an expected end. (Refer Slide Time: 40:36)



- Some of the common tropes are fissure in the old relation between the communities; while supporters of the Two Nation-theory talk of apprehensions among Muslims about Hindu domination, the Hindus talk of British and Muslim collaboration and Muslim treachery.
- Using fragments of incontestable information gathered from government files, police records, newspapers, letters, public speeches, memoirs and reports about communal riots.

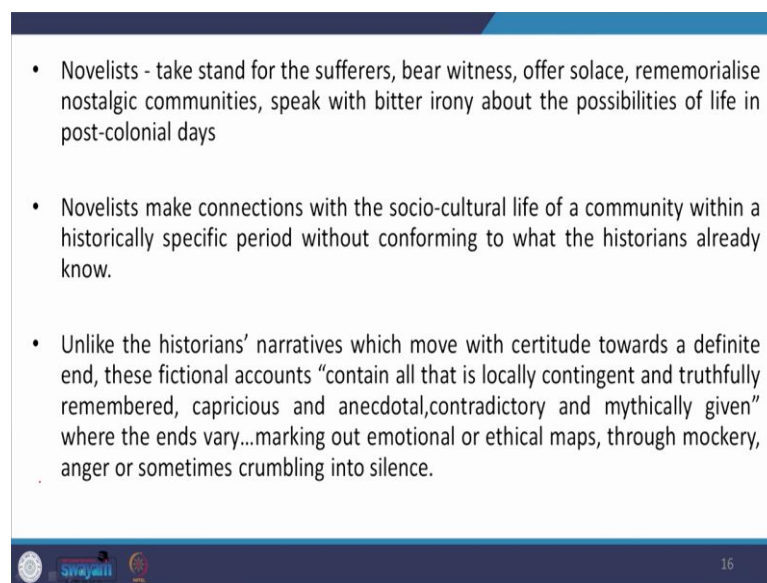
 Swayam 

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Some of the common tropes are fissure in the old relation between the communities. Supporters of Two-Nation theory talk about apprehensions among Muslims, about Hindu domination and conversely Hindus talk about British and Muslim collusion and Muslim treachery.

These are narratives that keep coming back and they are backed by official records, such as police records, government files, newspapers, memoirs, reports, letters, public speeches and so forth.

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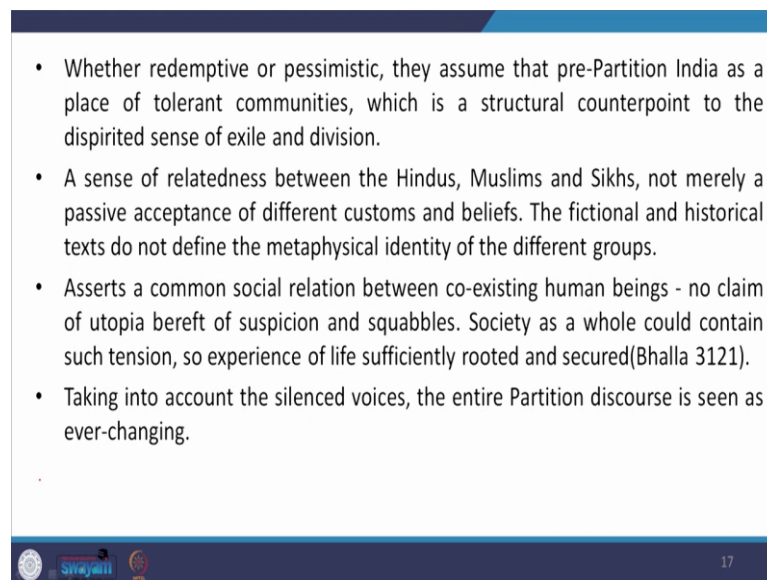
- Novelists - take stand for the sufferers, bear witness, offer solace, rememorialise nostalgic communities, speak with bitter irony about the possibilities of life in post-colonial days
- Novelists make connections with the socio-cultural life of a community within a historically specific period without conforming to what the historians already know.
- Unlike the historians' narratives which move with certitude towards a definite end, these fictional accounts "contain all that is locally contingent and truthfully remembered, capricious and anecdotal, contradictory and mythically given" where the ends vary...marking out emotional or ethical maps, through mockery, anger or sometimes crumbling into silence.

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So, the artist has to take the stand for the sufferer, bear the witness, offer solace, memorialise the nostalgic communities and at many times, speak with bitter ironies about [different] possibilities of life.

Historian's narratives move with a certitude towards a definite end, whereas the fictional accounts contain all that is locally contingent and truthfully remembered, capricious and anecdotal, contradictory and mythically given, where the ends could actually vary. And, these are ways of marking out the emotional and ethical maps, through deploying mockery, anger, dark humor or even crumbling into silence.

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- Whether redemptive or pessimistic, they assume that pre-Partition India as a place of tolerant communities, which is a structural counterpoint to the dispirited sense of exile and division.
- A sense of relatedness between the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, not merely a passive acceptance of different customs and beliefs. The fictional and historical texts do not define the metaphysical identity of the different groups.
- Asserts a common social relation between co-existing human beings - no claim of utopia bereft of suspicion and squabbles. Society as a whole could contain such tension, so experience of life sufficiently rooted and secured (Bhalla 3121).
- Taking into account the silenced voices, the entire Partition discourse is seen as ever-changing.

So, whether redemptive or pessimistic, pre-partition India should be understood as a tolerant community, and a sense of relatedness between Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs (not merely as passive acceptance of different customs and beliefs) is necessary. So, the fictional and historical texts do not define the metaphysical identity of the different groups.

Taking into account the silent voices, the entire partition discourse could have a more mottled and heterogeneous, heteroglossic appearance, where we see that human beings of different types basically coming from different moral, religious ecosystems can actually coexist.

And, there is no claim of utopia that is outside of suspicion and squabble - society as a whole could contain such tension according to partition artworks. These tensions, small squabbles or minor local tensions did not warrant, did not actually bring about partition.



So, (we discussed) the experience of life sufficiently rooted and secured in the partition literary works and artworks that delve into the sufferings and the understandings of the individual.

Thank you. I will meet you again for another round of discussions and lectures.