

A Chronotopic Analysis of Transgenerational Trauma in Kamila Shamsie's *Kartography*

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ABSTRACT

*The 1947 Indian partition caused significant trauma for Indian Subcontinent communities primarily because many individuals were forced to leave their families and properties as they made the transit from India to Pakistan. Initially seen as altruistic, these immigrants later developed a negative reputation as outsiders and undesired refugees. Utilising Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope, this study investigates the ways in which the complex inter-racial relationships in the city of Karachi need to be contextualised through spatiotemporal perspectives in Kamila Shamsie's novel *Kartography* (2002). By deploying a Pakistani-specific modification of Bakhtin's chronotopes, this article intersects temporal considerations with transgenerational memory as it is mapped on both the physical and imaginary geography of Karachi. This article interrogates Shamsie's depiction of the racial and ethnic conflicts in a multi-ethnic Pakistan in the wake of the civil unrest of 1971, which led to the creation of Bangladesh, with after-effects that are inherited by the next generation. This article contends that estrangement in the novel exemplifies the ways in which immigrants of the second and third generations in Karachi experience transgenerational trauma owing to the legacy of colonial rule, which resulted in the 1947 Partition, through a research method derived from applying the modified chronotopic lens. The overlapping markers of race, class, ethnicity and the ensuing migration since the second and third generations were viewed as outsiders and "Others" in the host culture can therefore be connected to chronotopes from a spatio-temporal and post-memory perspective. Pursuant to this, this article explores the impact of identity axes such as gender, class, and ethnicity on experiences over time and the trauma of the Partition and civil war of 1971 across generations and the ways in which subjectivity is implicated in the different ways in which time and space are conceived.*

Keywords: Indian partition 1947; 1971 Civil war; maps; trans-generational trauma; Spatio-temporality

INTRODUCTION

Kamila Shamsie's third novel, *Kartography* (2002), is a Pakistani novel which fully evokes the subjectivity of geography (and cartography) as it is connected to memories. The novel, which takes place in the period between the events of the 1971 civil war and the mid-1990s, focuses on the ways in which the younger generation is affected by the civil war of 1971. An analysis of *Kartography* necessitates an understanding of the ways in which these characters interpret the events that happened before they were born. Cartography, as invoked in the novel's title, is an extended metaphor that evokes not just place but time and emotions -- the K is a stylistic choice by Shamsie to evoke the K of Karachi (Shamsie, 2002). The emotional map of Karachi is superimposed upon its physical lineaments in the ongoing dialogues and disagreements between

two of the main characters, Raheen and Karim. Giving due consideration to the conflicting narratives in this novel that implicate the crosshairs of race, gender and class, this article interrogates *Kartography* from a spatio-temporal perspective, focusing on its portrayal of transgenerational memory through the lens of Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope. This article contends that a chronotopic analysis of the different ways in which cartographies are defined within Shamsie's narratives will reveal the different ways transgenerational trauma is mapped across multiple ethnic fault-lines in a multi-racial Karachi, and particularly the ways in which subjectivity becomes relevant. Yao (2025) looks at mapping in *Kartography* from the perspective of the spatial turn as embodied by Denis Cosgrove's *Mappings* (p.3), but in this article, the perspective of mapping is wedded to the spatio-temporal contexts of Bakhtin's Chronotope while looking at the ways in which colonial-defined borders have traumatic impacts on successive generations.

The 1971 India-Pakistan military confrontation is referred to in Pakistan as the "Civil War," despite being hailed as Bangladesh's "Liberation War" in Bangladesh. The events of 1971 complicated the already fraught tensions between races and social groups in Karachi, as evidenced by the tense exchanges and deflections between the characters in *Kartography* who come from different generations. One major reason for the inter-ethnic tensions in the two wings of Pakistan is the 1947 Partition of India, a notable and quick example of both forced and voluntary mass population movement across new borders, which is a symptom of the after-effects of colonial interference. The partitioning of countries through colonial influence is also evident in the 1948 Palestinian Nakba, which Manna (2013) describes as a partition that was opposed by other Arab states and which caused the displacement of several Arab and Palestinian communities (pp.87-88). Similarly, in the 1947 Indian-Pakistan partition, many communities were displaced; various inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent crossed borders erected between India and Pakistan owing to the 1947 Partition. The majority of the Urdu-speaking refugees fled from India's north and inland regions and settled in Karachi, the province and country's capital. In *Kartography*, the chronotope of the 1947 Partition is defined by the temporal disruption of migration and the spatial relocation from India to Pakistan, leading to the marginalisation and alienation of Muhajirs in Karachi because of their immigrant background. The parents' generational story of migration and socio-political hierarchies influenced their descendants' identities (Sadecka, 2014, p.84). The 1971 civil war illustrates the impact of ethnic discrimination against Bengalis and the Muhajir as depicted in the narrative of *Kartography*, but also the complex interrelationships between the different ethnicities in the city: Sindhi, Bengali, Muhajir and Pashtoon, amongst others. Karachi functions as a pivotal chronotope, where the legacies of partition and civil conflict intersect and collide. Some of these groups, like the Muhajir, moved to the Pakistani side of the partition, whilst others were separated and displaced from their communities, as was experienced by the Sindhi (Dhall, 2023, p.147). Karachi represents the convergence of class, ethnicity, and power, compelling characters to navigate their identities within a context shaped by historical trauma. Mapping the city serves as a means for Raheen and Karim to unpack, further understand and reconcile their own identities. Shamsie's novel is significant, particularly because it unpacks how different events surrounding the 1971 civil war were interpreted and the ways in which mapping, as the act of going over the terrain of past trauma, reveals the subjective way in which the characters connect to time and space.

The narrative follows Karim and Raheen, who face unresolved family tensions due to civil war, as their parents were directly affected by the event. Their parents switched fiancés during the 1971 ethnic crisis. Karim's mother, Maheen, was engaged to Zafar, Raheen's father, while Raheen's mother, Yasmin, was engaged to Ali, Karim's father. The switch between intended marital partners is at the root of the events that impacted both generations depicted in the novel. Raheen learns that her father, Zafar, in a moment of weakness, had succumbed to racial prejudice by uttering unkind words about the Bengali that his then-fiancée, Maheen, a Bengali, had overheard. In highlighting the impact a single uttered sentence makes upon the two generations, Shamsie exposes the ethno-political and cultural challenges faced by the inhabitants of Karachi and the fault-lines between belonging and prejudice in a complex multi-racial situation that existed after the 1947 Partition. People who crossed over from India to Pakistan were initially welcomed, but as their numbers increased, locals started to call them "Muhajirs" and viewed them as a threat to their survival. A history of oppression and a significant loss of status over the years led to the emergence of the Muhajir racial identity (Kumar, 2016, p.17). Similarly, due to their cultural and linguistic identity, East Pakistanis (Bengali) struggled to hold a fair social standing in West Pakistan. Due to racial and ethnic marginalisation, identity crises, and cultural persecution, East Pakistanis raised doubts about their allegiance to Pakistan during the national upheaval of 1971. Bengali nationalism was envisaged as a counterbalance to Pakistani nationalism since it was believed to be focused more on "language and culture than on religion" (De, 2018, p.211). Primarily, the aim of this article is to investigate the chronotopic resonances of *Kartography* against the divergences of individual experiences and narrations of the events that occurred in Karachi between the 1971 Civil War and the reality of the younger protagonists in the 1990s.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indian Partition in 1947 led to millions of refugees, causing marginalisation, estrangement, and discrimination. *Kartography*, based on the civil war of 1971 and ethnic politics, focuses on the Muhajirs and Bengali immigrants who arrived in Pakistan across the border. The Muhajir community depicted in *Kartography* with a focus on "the struggles this community experienced during the partition of 1971 and the years that followed" (Kiran, 2017, p.223). Shamsie's *Kartography* examines the idea that affiliation is assessed by the point of birth, and those individuals who, despite residing in their birthplaces, struggle with identity formation because of manufactured disparities in cultural values and social and linguistic distinctions are still viewed as not connected (Akhtar et al., 2021, p.7). Shamsie's protagonists' journeys in the narrative support her notion that historical events like the 1947 partition and the 1971 crisis influence how people relate in the present. No matter how solid one's social standing may be, the novel shows that there may be historical circumstances in which one's ethnic identity becomes more important (Sen, 2022, p.5). Shamsie combines the concerns about class and ethnicity by setting the story in Karachi's upper classes.

The refugees in Pakistan were known as Muhajirs (migrants) and were viewed as outcasts. Similar to this, West Pakistanis could not grant East Pakistanis an identical social position based just on language (Hussain & Rashid, 2016, p.136). These immigrants consequently experienced challenges such as cultural repression, identity crises, and marginalisation. The majority of Karachi's Muhajir population in Pakistan is often depicted as aggressive, manipulative, and tyrannical in nation-space and city-space, causing them to feel excluded from mainstream culture

(Sarkar, 2017, p.188). Aside from that, there are landed gentry who oppose progressive ideas and any type of land restructuring since it could reduce their power and authority (Akhtar et al., 2021, p.11). An association between a person's identity and a strong and dominating racial, ethnic, or rank inherently excludes and marginalises persons who are connected to a separate race, caste, or cultural background. Arshad et al. (2021) highlight that some Pakistanis, primarily due to their ethnic background, enjoy equal rights and protections, while others, like migrants, face stigma and disdain (p.88). This situation bears the hallmarks of discrimination and marginalisation.

In a post-partition Pakistan, societal integration became a major concern, a problem that was ongoing, as may be read in *Kartography*. Neogi (2019) discusses the problem of Muhajirs' societal integration in Pakistan by illuminating the ethnic political conundrums that Karachi's second and third generation Muhajirs had to deal with. The Muhajirs, renowned for their ambition, were severely impacted by political marginalisation, racial violence, and the threat of weaponry and bomb deployment (Neogi, 2019, p.11). After both partitions, societal tensions, communal animosity, and the categorisation of immigrants as "Others" persisted for decades (Sadecka, 2014, p.86). Biswas and Tripathi (2020) write of the predicament faced by partition immigrants in Karachi during the 1971 racial clashes between East Pakistani immigrants and West Pakistanis, as well as the multi-ethnic violence that followed in the 1980s (Biswas & Tripathi, 2020, p.6). Biswas and Tripathi highlight the challenges faced by Karachi's ethnic groups, particularly East Pakistanis, due to rebellion, loyalty requirements, and evictions. Native Pakistanis view immigrants as outsiders, and literate immigrants face prejudice in education and employment under the proportional system (p.6). *Kartography* reveals the lasting impact of the 1947 Indian partition, affecting multiple generations, including those affected by the 1971 partition separating Bangladesh from Pakistan.

Kartography is a narrative about belonging, relationships, and interpersonal impact, particularly during transgenerational periods like partition and the 1971 war, as it is challenging to fully relieve oneself from past generations' effects (Waterman, 2015, p.2). The 1971 Pakistan civil conflict became a catastrophic event that set an emotional standard for everyone, including those not yet born (p.1). These characters' traumas across generations are reflected in a singular catastrophe that affects them all. Shamsie explores the tale of two generations dealing with the legacy of tragic and violent past events like the 1947 partition and 1971 civil war, as well as their repercussions in their present. Priya Kumar (2011, p.166) examines the ways in which political alienation worsened, as the Pakistani authorities also seemed to turn hostile against immigrants, notably under the Pakistan People's Party's first government (1971–1977). These displaced people were largely driven to the political and economic periphery because of such practices, which divided backwards and developed areas. Oskar Verkaaik (2016, p.854) investigates the ways in which the government's marginalisation of the power elite in places like Sindh throughout the 1950s and 1960s influenced the rise of communalism in the 1970s in relation to the Muhajir ethnic group. The MQM's (Muhajir Qaumi Movement) portrayal of Karachi as a Muhajirs' powerhouse during sectarian strife in the 1980s and 1990s fuelled their strong adherence to the new location. The late 1980s saw a significant shift in Muhajir identification, with the group primarily demonstrating their association with the MQM due to the bloodshed of the time (Verkaaik, 2016, p.853). Singh (2020) delves into Shamsie's story, emphasising the characters' battle to overcome the lingering trauma of partition as well as the interwoven historical, societal, and personal aspects. The Muhajir face challenges and the prejudice they encounter in the Pakistani setting that has become overrun with refugees since the country's partition (Singh, 2020, p.38).

Karachi's racial conflict impacts second and third-generation Muhajirs Zafar and Raheen. Therefore, historical events such as the 1947 partition and 1971 civil war that led to the formation of Bangladesh are spatio-temporal nodes inflected with communal and transgenerational trauma. Maria Lenherr (2019, p.15) explicates that collective trauma is a key component of a group's identity and results from a traumatic process or event that is experienced by a large number of people and can be passed down through generations and communities. For example, in the Palestinian Nakba, the after-effects of that trauma have had long-lasting implications because of the ongoing settler colonialism, which Greenstein (2019) explains as "the displacement of indigenous people by recently arrived settler immigrants" (p. 78). Greenstein explains the violent process of resettlement and the ethnic cleansing as an attempt to gain as much land as possible from "departing British forces" (p.78). This is therefore a pattern of the chaos that erupts in the wake of colonialism because maps drawn are redrawn, fully based on the policies of these colonial forces. Norbasudi and Rosman (2025) note in relation to the Zionist colonisation of Palestine that thanks to the major "injection of capital from Western countries" and the mandate given by British colonial powers in 1948, the partitioning and exclusion of communities during the Nakba grew to the current state of conflict and devastation in Palestine (p.118). This state of devastation can be seen as the most extreme example of what happened when colonial forces either enacted or supported the partitioning of colonised states to create boundaries that should not exist. These create alienation and displacement in multiple communities.

While not entirely similar, one may observe the dynamics of displacement which lead to collective trauma also within the Pakistan context. These dynamics are explored in a personal and spatiotemporal narrative in Shamsie's novel. Kumar (2016, p.14) explores the ways in which Raheen, a thirteen-year-old girl, witnesses racial segregation against immigrants in Pakistani society, where her parents are referred to as strangers and aliens due to their ethnicity and background. Kumar observes Raheen and Zafar's sympathy towards Muhajirs, like Raheen and Karim, in Mehmoodabad, which highlights the growing sense of isolation and discrimination among working-class Muhajirs (p.14). Immigrants experience a schism in their identity as well as an inferiority complex owing to the post-partition segregation. Zaidi et al. (2021) aver that the Muhajir community's mental health is severely impacted by their continued marginalisation on all fronts and their position as outsiders in Karachi's social environment (p.347). Karim, born and raised in Karachi, faces ethnic discrimination due to his heritage, while Raheen, born to Karachi parents, is stigmatised as an immigrant, leading to feelings of isolation and alienation (p.347). This research aims to fill the gap by examining Shamsie's categories of oppression and the impact of generational memories of the partition through the application of a chronotopic lens.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study is analytical and qualitative, with a focus on a textual analysis of *Kartography*. The postmemory framework of Marianne Hirsch and the Chronotopic lens provided by Bakhtin serve as the theoretical foundation for this analysis. The novel will be analysed using analytical methods. To accomplish the intended goals of the study, this article will interrogate memory and transgenerational trauma through the spatio-temporal markers of the chronotopic lens. Pursuant to this, this study will interrogate the impact of social, historical, racial, ethnic, and class on individuals' identity and self-perception. The implications of this method, conducted through the aforementioned chronotopic lens, are a better understanding of ways in which these

markers of identity intersect with different understandings of the spatio-temporal lineaments of Karachi and a deeper understanding of the ways in which the colonial-influenced borders in postcolonial nations lead to traumas related to spatio-temporal schisms.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

CHRONOTOPES AND TRAUMA-INFLECTED BORDERS

Between the twentieth and the twenty-first century, there have been more than one segmented society along artificially constructed borders owing to the long legacy of colonialism. Three of the most salient are: the Apartheid in South Africa, the Nakba of Palestine and the India-Pakistan Partition. All three historical re-mappings of spaces, which led to the displacement of entire populations, have resulted in collective and intergenerational trauma that is reflected in the redrawing of maps as is effectively deployed in *Kartography*. By no means is this unique in human history, but the conditions of suffering and ongoing trauma are definitely related to the spatio-temporal contexts created by the segmenting of entire populations, a bifurcation in identity and belonging. The chronotope may be defined as the intertwining of time ("chrono") and space ("topos"). Time within a literary chronotopic context is experienced within a specific space, shaping relationships and events in a narrative. Bakhtin highlights chronotopes as "organising centres" of narratives through which time thickens, and space becomes meaningful, allowing us to explore how historical events shape characters' experiences (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 80). Chronotopes are dynamic elements that influence character development, story meaning, and connect historical events, physical environments, and emotional journeys in narratives. Bakhtin's chronotope helps to understand how cultural norms often shape social interactions and human conduct (Davis, 2022, p.2). The concept of the Chronotope offers insight into the lasting effects of historical events on people and societies, integrating the emotional, social, and cultural weight of the past into the present.

Bakhtin's essay "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel" presents a typology of key chronotopes derived from the diverse configurations of time and space in different fiction genres, some major generic and other minor motivic ones, one which Al Jahdali (2014) explores within a Palestinian context (p. 218). For instance, the chronotope of the road represents the progression of characters over time, where most life events and crises occur (Tran, 2019, p. 52). The chronotope of the encounter or meeting signifies that different elements come into contact with one another in the same place and time. According to Bakhtin, the encounter chronotope is "marked by a higher degree of intensity in emotions and values" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 243). The encounter chronotope encompasses interactions between individual characters, cultures, and their respective fates. The chronotope of the threshold, on the other hand, signifies the character's arrival at life-altering situations, which can either lead to progress or disaster. According to Bakhtin, there are instances in literature where chronotopes can coexist and have a "complex interaction among them" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.252). Chronotopes can therefore be identified through various spatial and temporal indicators and contexts that interact differently, resulting in distinct effects in the texts.

Bakhtin opines that novels serve as a tool to understand the time and space relationship within the world depicted in the texts. Chronotopes depict discoveries on the correlation between actions and characters with respect to time and space (Cal, 2012, p.365). The theory of the chronotope is a means by which one can situate a specific spatiotemporal perspective for

understanding trigger points in history and their impact upon individuals in fictional narratives of those trigger points. In this article, we contend that these trigger points are directly related to those spatio-temporal schisms created by imposed borders that separate and displace entire communities. These schisms may be examined through an interrogation of chronotopes. Bakhtin posits that novels serve as intricate settings where complex chronotopes are unveiled, facilitating an exploration of events and the characters' inner lives, as he states, "chronotope is the place where the knots of narrative are tied and untied." (Bakhtin, 1981, p.250). Consequently, chronotopes function as a lens through which the reader can explore the text more profoundly. Tran (2019) writes that chronotopes are as common in literature as concepts and motifs (p.50). According to Bakhtin (1981), there are instances in literature where various chronotopes can coexist and have a "complex interaction among them" (p.252). Sue Vice (1997) asserts that, "every text has its own chronotope or set of them because of the ways in which time and place intersect to generate various outcomes (p.202). Three important chronotopes emerge in Shamsie's *Kartography*: the chronotope of Partition 1947, the chronotope of the 1971 civil war, and the chronotope of Karachi. They function at the individual and overlapping levels simultaneously.

POSTMEMORY, TRANSGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND HAUNTING

Kartography examines the ways in which current generations realise and react to the transmission of trauma and memory across generations. In this way, the narrator protagonist represents the ways in which the younger generation is connected to the traumatic past of their parents. Judith Greenberg (2007, p.352) explores transgenerational trauma, examining how young generations interact with and support stories of past trauma, how these narratives influence them, and how their own recent traumas interact with or rediscover these memories.

The partitions of 1947 and 1971 have haunted and traumatised the people of the subcontinent and future generations since they occurred. Hindus and Muslims faced a loss due to their belief that their customs, rituals, and peculiarities would remain unchanged in post-partitioning spaces (Gogoi, 2017, p.29). However, these younger generations quickly realised how odd and alien their new language and culture were, especially after their new home turned into a burning place (p.29). Greenberg (2007, p.362) posits that those born after horrific events increasingly identify as part of the generation that experienced these events, and the horrors continue to haunt them. The year of such a birth marks the beginning of the "generation of post-memory" and the "second generation," the generation that must search for traces of their history only to discover gaps (p.362). Hirsch suggests that the traumatised generation, influenced by historical trauma, undergoes "postmemory," a concept that explains the ways in which trauma is passed down through generations. This is a concept that is made more fraught when explored in the ways in which colonial legacies of displacement disrupt each community's understanding of their own identities through spatio-temporal markers. The idea of postmemory establishes a memory connection between the parents and the younger generation. Hirsch defines postmemory as the transmission of catastrophic information and experiences from early generations to second or third generations after a terrible event (Hirsch, 2012, p.6). *Kartography* may therefore be explored in line with Hirsch (2012), to refer to the traumatic experience of the first generation of immigrants that is passed down to the second generation in such a potent way that the "later perceives these memories as their own" (Hirsch, 2012, p.5). Postmemory examines the lives of future generations who, despite not experiencing the trauma, are raised in the ghost of the transmitted remembrance, as protagonists contributed to their postmemory, as in the case of later

generations (Aamir & Khan, 2021, p.101). The only way the younger generation can recall this trauma is" through the stories, images, and behaviours of the older generations," and despite the fact that these events took place in the past, their impact is still felt today (Hirsch, 2012, p.5). *Kartography*'s protagonists similarly recall the trauma of the past generation through the testimonies of older generations, and the maps of Karachi drawn or represented by both Raheen and Karim in their correspondences to each other become the spatiotemporal link between generations.

DISCUSSION

TRANSGENERATIONAL TRAUMA THROUGH BAKHTIN'S CHRONOTOPIC LENS

Bakhtin's chronotope theory facilitates the analysis of the ways in which the partition, the 1971 war, and the dynamics of Karachi influence characters' experiences of trauma, marginalisation, and alienation. The impact of these events led to marginalisation, isolation, and the alienation of the Muhajirs based on their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The initial alienation of the Muhajirs becomes a legacy for subsequent generations, and this is connected to the operation of post-memory. Postmemory from Hirsch's (2012) perspective refers to the ways in which second generation and subsequent generations have inherited the collective loss and trauma of the survivors, creating a sort of "guardianship". The events of 1947 and 1971 in Pakistan may therefore be read in that light. The term *Kartography* in the novel is reflective of these spatiotemporal dimensions but more overtly refers to the mental and physical divides within Karachi, a city where perspectives are shaped by factors such as class, origin, and language (King, 2011, p.154). The discord between native Sindhis and Muhajirs exemplifies the ways in which systemic inequities, such as the quota system, exacerbate marginalisation.

In *Kartography*, the older generation is afflicted with a migration story that subsequently influences the lives of their descendants (Sadecka, 2014, p. 84). The overlap between socioeconomic class, ethnicity, and historical memory converges within the urban settings of Karachi, confounding individual identity. The encounter with the automotive thief, who is precluded from employment due to his Muhajir lineage and class status, is a crucial moment for the younger generation, including Karim, Zia, and Raheen (Shamsie, 2002, p.175). Individuals who left their homes during partition to rediscover themselves in an inclusive country should have realised that their journey was not over. The characters' unresolved journey illustrates the essence of the partition when migration transforms into an ongoing process, hindering individuals from completely assimilating into their new identities. Local residents and those who had not experienced partition made fun of them based on their race, ethnicity, and being Muhajirs (p.85). This social phenomenon demonstrates the ways in which Karachi's urban environment becomes a locus of contested belonging, wherein social hierarchies predicated on ethnicity and migratory status govern inclusion and exclusion. In official papers, they were viewed as expatriates. The partition of immigrants evokes horrific memories in their collective psyche, and official institutions are unable to help this trauma recover (Jan et al., 2021, p 17). The intentional neglect to address past trauma on an official level leads to individuals bearing the burden of unresolved trauma across generations, perpetuating cycles of alienation.

Post-partition, Pakistan's political and cultural landscape experienced a sudden shift, causing discontent and mental disturbance among native and immigrant communities. These transitions underscore the convergence of several chronotopes, wherein past conflicts are reenacted in current contexts, perpetually influencing community dynamics. As Aunt Laila avers, “my family lived here for generations. Who the hell are these Muhajirs to pretend it’s their city” (Shamsie, 2002, p.41). Muhajirs and Bengalis in West Pakistan face social status disparities, leading to marginalisation, cultural discrimination, and identity conflicts (Hussain & Rashid, 2016, p.136). Signifiers such as Sindhi/Muhajir, native/immigrant, Bengali/Pakistani, privileged/non-privileged and indigenous/non-indigenous have created psychological strain in the immigrants' minds and their young generation after partition. Sadecka (2014, p.86) explores the ways in which traumatic events such as the 1947 and 1971 partitions have resulted in marginalisation, prejudice, identity crisis, and alienation amongst second and third-generation immigrants. *Kartography* vividly portrays the protagonists' struggle to escape the historical trauma of partition and its ongoing effects in the form of otherness on their lives in the city space of Karachi. The legacies of past conflicts, intertwined with spatial experiences in Karachi, illustrate how identities are continuously evolving, influenced by both historical and present-day factors.

PARTITION POSTMEMORY AND THE TEMPORAL DISRUPTION IN *KARTOGRAPHY*

Shamsie explores the experiences of families during the 1947 Partition, who face exclusion and marginalisation due to their migration and displacement. Zafar's family moves to Pakistan, but is classified as outsiders, perpetuating a sense of alienation. Raheen and Karim, born later, inherit the emotional ramifications of their parents' stories and behaviour. *Kartography* (2002) delves into the societal integration of Muhajirs in Pakistan, highlighting the ethno-political challenges they face in their new Karachi home, influenced by the ongoing effects of the Indian partition. The occurrences of 1947 and 1971 linger as temporal and spatial disruptions embedded in individuals' daily lives, shaping their identities through generations. The second and third-generation protagonists, during the 1947 and 1971 partitions, engage in a geographical exercise to adapt to the changing subcontinent's geography (Singh, 2020, p.38). Such spatial adaptability signifies the negotiation of identities across several temporal contexts, wherein each generation must address both individual memories and collective history. Shamsie's main characters are from two generations: the second generation, comprising Maheen and Ali, and Zafar and Yasmin, born after 1950, and the third generation, including their offspring, born around 1973. Even individuals who were “born much later could not escape the dynamics of the past events, as is seen in the case of Raheen and Karim, two members of their children's second generation (Sadecka, 2014, p.86). Zafar, a second-generation immigrant from Pakistan, has not forgotten the hardships his family faced owing to dislocation during India's partition.

The space of Karachi functions as a locus where memories and postmemories are challenged and redefined, as individuals from different generations navigate their respective positions within this intricate metropolitan setting. Asif, a Sindhi feudal lord, asserts that immigrants had deprived Sindhis of employment opportunities, while Zafar highlights the hardships faced by Muhajirs who moved to Pakistan abandoning everything about their lives and livelihood, including “our homes, families, and ways of life”(Shamsie, 2002, p.223). Shamsie showcases Zafar's transformation of his parents' memory into a postmemory by claiming ownership of their relocation journey, despite not personally experiencing it. The new generation relies on older generations' stories, pictures, and behaviour patterns as the only sources to recollect

such trauma (Hirsch, 2012, p.5). Zafar remarks that he must have witnessed his parents declare that they migrated here to be Pakistani, instead of being Sindhi, “a thousand times” when Asif asserts that Muhajirs did not wish to be assimilated into Pakistani society (Shamsie, 2002, p.224). The conflict between integration and expulsion in urban spaces like Karachi highlights the contested site of identity, forcing individuals to navigate belonging parameters. The characters’ narratives illustrate how individuals confront identity crises by interacting with the temporal aspects of historical events, striving to connect the past with the present.

Civil conflict of the past links historical events with current marginalisation and characters’ intersecting identities by highlighting the persistent influence of past occurrences on generational memory and contemporary relationships. Shamsie’s *Kartography* explores the generational impact of the 1971 tragedy on the second generation, highlighting the racial and ethnic discrimination that influenced their parents’ lives. Hirsch argues that “postmemory” characterises the feelings of those who are nurtured in stories that precede their lives (Hirsch, 2001, p.12). Karim, a young protagonist, claims to be a “half-Bengali,” but his school friend Zia challenges him by advising him not to talk about his Bengali ancestry (Shamsie, 2002, p.42). Zia had learned that “Bengali” was a negative word with a nasty meaning through family discussions. Comparable to this in the narrative, Raheen, the protagonist, flashes back to the 1971 public strife when her mother Yasmin attempted to conceal Karim’s mother’s lineage by claiming that “she was not Bengali and had resided all her life in Karachi” (Shamsie, 2002, p. 183). This act of concealment illustrates the ways in which the civil conflict of 1971 shapes personal and collective memory, affecting identity formation and sustaining cycles of exclusion. When Raheen relates that this event had some bearing on their “current existence”, Shamsie shows that a historical occurrence like the civil disturbance of 1971 is a fading memory that resulted in racial biases persisting in society and haunting subsequent generations (Shamsie, 2002, p. 44). The story explores the struggles of young Bengali individuals, with Karim’s identity shaped by a tragic event, and his mother’s racial and ethnic-based atrocities during unrest, causing hesitation to reconcile with Zafar.

The intersecting chronotopic spaces created by the partition and the 1971 civil war collectively represent an important spatio-temporal dimension towards understanding the persisting trauma of unresolved historical conflicts that resurface in personal relationships. Raheen and Karim, raised in a family with diverse ethnic backgrounds, learn about their parents’ and country’s pasts from their uncles’ discussions when they termed Raheen’s Muhajir parents as “Immigrants” (Shamsie, 2002, p.40). Family spaces facilitate the transmission of trauma across generations by reconfiguring individual narratives through shared memories. The children were exposed to discussions about prejudice and historical events like the 1947 Partition and the 1971 civil war, with Aunt Laila’s claim of Karachi as her birthplace highlighting discrimination. The urban landscape of Karachi enables competing narratives of belonging, highlighting the deep-rooted influence of historical events on contemporary identities. Laila goes on to ask why those terrible Muhajirs had to go and establish a political entity while individuals like “Zafar and Yasmin” prove ownership of Karachi (Shamsie, 2002, p.41). Laila labels Raheen’s parents as foreigners in their new home and links ownership and belonging to race and birth. This label underscores the ways in which the chronotopic ramifications of the two events have marked this particular family for generations.

A family mystery rekindles memories of 1971, causing long-standing tension between Raheen and Karim. Although the younger generation doesn’t witness the events, the traumatic memories of the first generation continue to impact the second or third generation. Raheen asks, “What does something that happened over 25 years ago have to do with our lives?” (Shamsie,

2002, p.211). The narrative explores the impact of the 1971 terror on the younger generation of immigrants in Karachi, with Raheen and Karim's relationship haunted by the ghost of Zafar and Maheen's failed relationship, potentially causing repeating patterns. The pattern of unsuccessful partnerships demonstrates the persistent influence of unresolved historical conflicts on personal interactions, ensuring that each generation bears the burden of the past. In the story, the protagonist discovers that she and Karim were split up before birth in 1971, inherited from their parents or because of the 1971 partition and ethnic tension, and she asks, "What does 1971 have to do with now?" (Shamsie, 2002, p.241). The young generation faces numerous obstacles in accepting their past and dealing with personal and societal shame and guilt. Shamsie explores the repercussions of 1971 through the fiancée exchange between Raheen and Karim, who are members of succeeding generations. In the 1990s, Karim and Raheen's relationship deteriorated due to Zafar's racial intolerance and lack of compassion towards his mother, a situation that Maheen believes may be influenced by the 1971 civil war. Maheen articulates, "You and Karim would be together if it weren't for Zafar and her story standing in your way" (Shamsie, 2002, p.307). Maheen's confession reveals the ways in which the young generation faces numerous obstacles in accepting their past and dealing with personal and societal shame.

BAKHTIN'S CHRONOTOPE: PARTITION AND POST-PARTITION CONVERGENCES IN *KARTOGRAPHY*

Shamsie's *Kartography* effectively explores the role of race, ethnicity, and class in oppressing immigrants in post-partition Karachi, Pakistan, through meticulously constructed second and third-generation characters. Karachi functions as a space where the legacies of partition and civil conflict intersect. The city represents the convergence of class, ethnicity, and power, compelling characters to navigate their identities within a context shaped by historical trauma. The overlapping chronotopes of the 1947 Partition, the 1971 civil war, and the divided Karachi's metropolitan landscape illustrate the manifestation of historical trauma being instrumental for identity conflicts across generations. For instance, Shamsie explores the social divisions and family breakdowns caused by conflicts between Bengalis and Pakistanis in 1971 and Karachiites and Muhajirs in the 1980s and 1990s. At thirteen, Raheen discovers subtly discriminatory practices in Pakistani society when she witnesses a conversation between her father and friends about land legislation in Sindh. Laila claims that because Muhajirs all fled their homes during the partition, they have no concept of "attachment to a specific place" (Shamsie, 2002, pp. 39-40). Sindhis view migrants as unfaithful to their home and the countries they reside in, viewing themselves as superior.

The influence of local settlers and cultural norms on how minorities and migrants are treated as outsiders and marginalised. Karachi is a hub of generational trauma, ethnic strife, and urban displacement, highlighting the problems of ethnicity and belonging in a contested city. For instance, Raheen, the protagonist, is traumatised by her aunt Laila's description of her parents as refugees from the partition. Laila very clearly maintains that Karachi belongs to the natives and not to the immigrants, in relation to one's identification, relationships, and "devotion to the place" (Shamsie, 2002, p.41). This incident prompts Raheen to wonder if people are still classified according to race and ancestry after decades of residency, marriage, and the birth of children and "I, a child of immigrants, was also an immigrant" (Shamsie, 2002, p.41). It is clear that these dialogues and interchanges in *Kartography* are the ways in which Shamsie delves into the intricate interplay of gender, class, and ethnicity, highlighting the ways in which the partition's legacy shapes characters' identities and relationships, influenced by power and oppressive systems.

Kartography alludes to the civil war circumstances of 1971 and highlights the ways in which governmental operations and socio-political and cultural practices undermined human connections. Shamsie portrays the Bengali community's trauma in Maheen's inner struggle in Pakistani society after partition and the 1971 civil conflict, highlighting unfair practices like political and ethnic marginalisation and exclusion experienced by Bengalis and Muhajirs. The many instances of civil conflict as a result of Partition-related migration illustrate the ways in which characters confront these conflicts. For instance, Zafar had to call off his engagement to Maheen, who was of Bengali ancestry, during the civil war when a wave of anti-Bengali sentiment swept the nation. Zafar's decision was influenced by social conditioning from his family and friends, who believed he was a betrayer of his own people. Zafar's childhood friend Shafiq, for instance, questioned his decision to marry a Bengali woman and allow her to "have children" (Shamsie, 2002, p.231). Zafar made the choice to break off his relationship with Maheen, and he committed to it, even though he had genuine emotions for Maheen. The engagement was broken off when Maheen overheard him making disparaging statements about her, claiming that it was his "civic duty" to marry her in order to "dilute her bloodline" (Shamsie, 2002, p.232). By highlighting a personal trauma and hurt that radiated across two generations, Shamsie has depicted the impact that ethnic and racial decimation has on the interpersonal relationships between various generations.

Karachi's urban landscape reveals systemic inequities fostering social hierarchies, affecting perceptions of belonging and alienation, influenced by race, class, and ethnicity, enduring across generations. Shamsie connects the issues of class and ethnicity by situating the narrative of *Kartography* amongst Karachi's upper classes. When Raheen and her friends were encountered by a carjacker, they were astonished to discover that the elite of Karachi were identified as "Burgers" (Shamsie, 2002, p. 174). Like Raheen's family, the car robber is a young generation Muhajir. However, Raheen's protected life is not affected by the discriminatory quota system, which reserves jobs and education for Sindhis. The vehicle burglar claims that because everyone lived in a tight-knit community on "this side of Clifton Bridge," wherein status was the only thing that mattered, he really cannot apologise for his birth (Shamsie, 2002, p.175). When Zafar brings up the discriminatory framework agreement that impacts Muhajirs, his friend Laila immediately reprimands him because he is of an ethnic background, adding that if you scratch the surface, "only Muhajir blood" will come out (Shamsie, 2002, p.224). Such prejudices against Muhajirs and Bengalis demonstrate the superficiality of some connections and the ways in which these relationships may be undermined by inter-racial conflict and hostility.

Disrespect and prejudice against immigrants are prevalent across society because of their identity and origin. Maheen, the Bengali mother of the male protagonist Karim, suffered many instances of this and faced marginalisation as a Bengali community representative, complicating her sense of relocation and interpersonal relationships, particularly because her gender further exacerbates the discrimination she faced. Being a Bengali, Maheen suffered social isolation before and after the civil war in 1971 (Shamsie, 2002, p.41). For instance, Maheen is assaulted by an elderly beggar woman who spat at her when she was walking to Ali's car (Shamsie, 2002, p.188). Such encounters highlight the persistence of ethnic and class-based prejudices in Pakistani society, thereby perpetuating a cycle of discrimination across all social strata. Maheen, a Bengali woman from Karachi, experienced an identity crisis and discrimination due to her Bengali heritage. At a party, Asif mocked the Bengali people, calling them "rabble" and threatening their survival. Maheen suffered when Asif slapped a Bengali waiter for a small, unintended gaffe and said, "Halfwit Bingo! Go back to your jungle" (Shamsie, 2002, p.183). The waiter and Maheen's mutual

glances helped establish a shared identity despite their class and gender differences in the locale of Karachi that embodies both a tangible environment and an emotional terrain.

The state's harsh and discriminatory policies towards Muhajirs prolonged marginalisation and a sense of alienation, compelling individuals to engage in illicit activities. An educated but marginalised Muhajir (immigrant) car thief is only one example of the thousands of immigrants who lack the ability to influence politics, governmental oppressive policies like the quota system for employment and university admissions. The car thief informs Karim that due to biased government policies and "the quota system," he is a carjacker and not a "civil servant" (Shamsie, 2002, p.175). The car thief seeks refuge in fanaticism and crime since fundamental rights to acceptance and respect are violated, as he cannot prove his legal identity. This prejudice, based on his class and ethnic background, leads him to resort to violence, highlighting the pervasive nature of discrimination faced by Muhajirs.

Karim's exile from Karachi reflects the trauma he endures due to historical conflicts, while his estrangement from Raheen reflects the social, familial and temporal divide shaped by the past events. Karim's estrangement in London is attributed to ongoing racial and ethnic violence in the 1980s and deteriorating law and order conditions in his hometown, particularly with his close friends Raheen, Zia, and Sonia, who were raised in a violent environment. He admits to Raheen that leaving a portion of the city he calls home every day is "what dying is like" (Shamsie, 2002, p.75) and is an agonising experience for him. Similar to this, he severed relations with Raheen and her father after learning about the incident that happened before his birth to her mother, that the Zafar was responsible for the breakup of his family, and that Raheen would act similarly to her father in the future, as "she is the same as her father" (Shamsie, 2002, p.244). Being so affected by the generational oppressive mindset of the society, he subsequently commands Raheen not to return to Karachi and says he would marry her if she were to reside somewhere other than Karachi once Raheen graduates in the United States.

The fiancé's swamp and family mystery, rooted in ethnic and racial discrimination, disrupts Raheen's self-imposed model, rekindling memories of 1971. She expresses distress, refusing to speak to her father, and feels estranged from her body and identity, causing her to distance herself from her family. Raheen's engagement with her past fractures her identity, illustrating that the trauma of partition and civil war engenders fissures in familial relationships. Her inquiry, "how is this event from 25 years ago related to our lives?" (Shamsie, 2002, p. 211), demonstrates how past events persist as influential forces, shaping the current lives of characters despite their lack of direct involvement. The fiancé swap and the extreme hurt experienced by Maheen is a tragic example of the spiralling events that occur in Karachi as a spatio-temporal site which enfolds overlapping cultural and class-based fault lines and fractures created from the sites of mass trauma such as the 1947 partition and the 1971 civil war.

CONCLUSION

This article argues that trans-generational memory and the overlapping categories of race, ethnicity, social status, and culture exacerbate the trauma faced by partition immigrants and their descendants, part of the legacy left by colonial policies, which resulted in the re-shaping of more than one nation. Bakhtin's chronotope concept illustrates the ongoing negotiation of identities and traumas across temporal and spatial dimensions. The overlapping chronotopes of the 1947 partition, the 1971 civil war, and Karachi's expanding metropolitan environment illustrate

historical trauma as a struggle for identity and autonomy across generations. Chronotopic and postmemory perspectives underscore the ways in which we understand how spatiotemporal contexts lend an additional dimension to contemporary issues of exclusion, marginalisation, and displacement. The study highlights the socioeconomic, cultural, political, and ethnic limitations faced by immigrants and their descendants, who were labelled as "others" and foreigners in their new environment, due to their origins and migratory history. The implication put forward by this article is that *Kartography*'s idiosyncratic narrative reveals the fractures in time and space caused by the Partition and the Civil War, and is an important chronotopic marker of the transgenerational trauma experienced by the inhabitants of Karachi. The implications of this study are that spatio-temporal perspectives towards understanding the impact of Colonial-imposed partitions upon the identity and will to self-autonomy in nations such as Pakistan, South Africa and Palestine, who suffer these partitions, which are a collective wound upon cultural psyches.

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