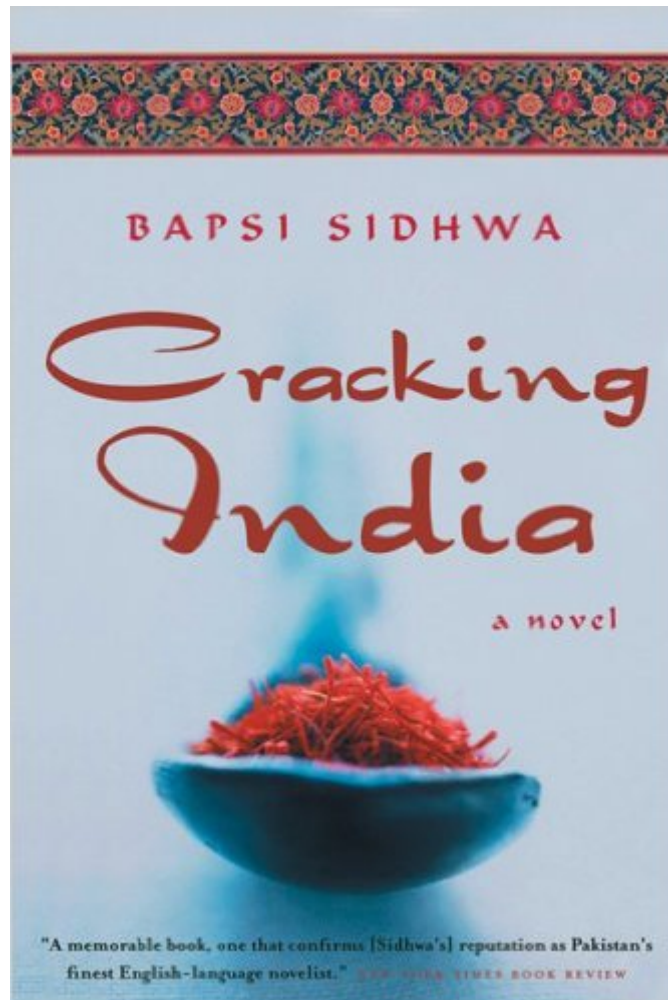


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# Cracking India: A Novel



## Synopsis

The 1947 Partition of India is the backdrop for this powerful novel, narrated by a precocious child who describes the brutal transition with chilling veracity. Young Lenny Sethi is kept out of school because she suffers from polio. She spends her days with Ayah, her beautiful nanny, visiting with the large group of admirers that Ayah draws. It is in the company of these working class characters that Lenny learns about religious differences, religious intolerance, and the blossoming genocidal strife on the eve of Partition. As she matures, Lenny begins to identify the differences between the Hindus, Moslems, and Sikhs engaging in political arguments all around her. Lenny enjoys a happy, privileged life in Lahore, but the kidnapping of her beloved Ayah signals a dramatic change. Soon Lenny's world erupts in religious, ethnic, and racial violence. By turns hilarious and heartbreaking, the domestic drama serves as a microcosm for a profound political upheaval.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 840 (What's this?)

Paperback: 296 pages

Publisher: Milkweed Editions; Reprint edition (January 23, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1571310487

ISBN-13: 978-1571310484

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (47 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #73,451 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > World Literature > Middle Eastern](#) #164 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Specific Demographics > Ethnic Studies](#) #3358 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Contemporary](#)

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Wrenched from the security of the familiar, a young girl gleans intimate knowledge of the nature of betrayal. As a cosseted child, Lenny's short life is defined by the affection of family, friends and her beloved Ayah. As most children who have the blessing of regularity in their lives and know the indulgence of boredom, Lenny is on an intimate terms with mundane household affairs and

neighborhood gossip, her extended family ever available for entertainment and amusing peccadilloes. The family's simple life changes forever with the Partition of India in 1947 and the creation of Pakistan for Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs remaining in the state of India. As citizens of the newly formed Pakistan, this family's everyday reality begins to shift with the changing times, threatening to destroy a child's security and trust forever. In Lahore, a city that has welcomed differences and encouraged variety, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus have mixed without incident. After the Partition, the dangers of alliance permanently stamp the mark of change and entire families begin to disappear overnight. In agonizing stages, Sidwha relates this tragic account through Lenny's eyes. And it is that vision, with glimpses of violence flashing around the periphery, that ultimately alerts Lenny to the shape of the future. The juxtaposition of family life and national chaos outlines an insider's interpretation of daily routine and a whole country spinning out of control. Peopled with eccentric characters and quirky personalities, one of the most romantic and beloved is Lenny's beautiful and desirable Ayah. Ultimately, the abrupt disappearance of that Ayah, who has been kidnapped by nefarious characters, is central to the theme of this carefully wrought tale.

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