

# Representing Identity of Nation and Post Modern Concern in the Shadow Lines

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**Abstract – Indian writing in English has stepped its enormity by stirring up tradition and modernity in the production of workmanship. The enthusiasm for writing lit the consuming thirst of the essayists which turned their energy and technique to innovate new structures and styles of composing. Amitav Ghosh is one among the postmodernists. He is massively influenced by the political and social milieu of post free India. Being a social anthropologist and having the chance of visiting outsider grounds, he remarks on the present situation. The present paper is expected to look at Amitav Ghosh's treatment of the hazardous of identity in "The Shadow Lines" (1988), which as a memory novel, outlines couple of authentic occasions like the freedom development in Bengal, the Second World War and the Partition of India in 1947 and the communal uproars in Bangladesh and India. In this novel, Ghosh problematizes patriotism as he continued looking for identity.**

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## INTRODUCTION

An authentic survey of the Indian English books demonstrates that every now and then the configuration of the novel has changed, reflecting the adjustments in the age, setting and view of the author. Amitav Ghosh is one of the chief authors who made a particular imprint on the world artistic scene with their rich cultural heritage and skilled language control and in particular their topical concerns. In writing, specialty might be vital yet sincerity is incomparable. Solidity and legitimacy come just when things get set apart with the essayist's trademark perspective. Detached talk might be great logic however it can't be great writing. Ghosh works out of conviction. Every one of his books is driven by his responsibility to certain closely-held convictions and his very own particular world view. In the present investigation, an exertion has been made to connect with the substance of the books composed by Amitav Ghosh.

Ghosh is an innovative experimentalist and he tries broadly with the type of his books. Fundamentally, in any case, it is his themes that computerize his works. Themes are the main impetus of his books. Every epic of Ghosh is horn out of a specific hypothesis. He might compose a travelog a novel or a book of papers yet certain dug in thoughts for hits particular themes goad him on. He has been consistent with his themes, consistent with his thoughts and consistent with himself, lie does not limit himself from remarking on legislative issues, wars, economy and

other common undertakings. Ghosh has indicated noteworthy sincerity. He has not been exceptionally diplomatic in his announcements but rather he has shown momentous sincerity in his adherence to his convictions.

Freedom from political colonialism came as an invigorating breeze to the Indian authors who were presently enthused to compose with new standpoint and express their indigenous ethos and convictions. Post-colonial Indian English authors like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh and so on, composing with incredible dynamism, particular voice, life and a dimension of independence, have freed Indian English writing from the colonial burden. Recorded patriot issues, for example, diaspora, relocation, exiles, colonial hegemony; financial and cultural issues like east-west experience, standing and class and so forth turn into the worries of these scholars. The present paper is proposed to examine Amitav Ghosh's treatment of the tricky of identity in "The Shadow Lines" (1988), which as a memory novel, portrays couple of chronicled occasions like the freedom development in Bengal, the Second World War and the Partition of India in 1947 and the communal uproars in Bangladesh and India.

Amitav Ghosh made the enchantment web of imagination to catch reality in his books. His innovative energy and comic irreverence supplanted the before pattern of sincerity and authenticity. The essential objective of his fiction is

the entrance into the profundities of the theme and decreases the characters and occasions to the dimension of structural systems, procedures that looks like the virtuoso of a painter very different from the aptitudes of a picture taker.

## THEMATIC CONCERN

For Ghosh, colonization and the related procedure is a permanent referent and he can't extricate himself from this paradigmatic cast. This point of view is dependably in his brain as a core value. The theme of novel is a tightrope stroll for him. He discusses the twofold guidelines of the west and still the unhygienic conditions in India, debasement as way of life and different wrongs don't go unnoticed by him. At no expense does he ever pawn his freedom to think. Whatever the enticements, he keeps himself unattached and reasonable research and believing is the thing that he enjoys. Themes are the main thrust of his books. Every tale of Ghosh is horn out of a specific hypothesis. He might compose a travelogue a novel or a book of articles however certain settled in thoughts for hits separate themes goad him on. He has been consistent with his themes, consistent with his thoughts and consistent with himself, lie does not restrain himself from commenting on legislative issues, wars, economy and other common undertakings. Ghosh has indicated momentous sincerity.

A profoundly innovative, intricate and commended novel of Amitav Ghosh, "The Shadow Lines" Presents the injury of partition/partition riots. "Ghosh has edged up his novel to confront the memory of traumatic occasions." What implies the partition isn't straight as Ghosh's epic which is written in the non-direct mode – a perspective which implies its title likewise – the shadowiness of the fringe. However, this fringe – as a theoretical development – contributes just to problematise the circumstances and relations of an extensive number of individuals crosswise over it. Remembering this angle, this paper is set up as a study of Ghosh's treatment of the hazardous of national identity. The epic portrays a wide, cosmopolitan situation the greater part of the real occasions occur either in London or Dhaka and the hero, at present, lives with his family in Calcutta. The epic sublimely demonstrates the landing of modernism in India.

To conceptualize these angles, it appears to be important that we clarify the possibility of identity and in – between space in Ghosh. Remaining as a unique imaginative essayist in English after Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh manages impacts of colonialism. His works while opposing conventional divisions problematise the overwhelming talk of history. One of the determined thought in Ghosh's composing is the in – between Space. It is clear that Ghosh challenges the constructedness of different fringes isolating one country/race/culture from the others. As he continued looking for identity, Ghosh (I) reconsiders his way to

deal with history; (ii) destabilizes the fringes and (iii) Scrutinizes the stifled voices.

## PROBLEMS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

In this novel "a world beyond country" has been posited as a perfect form of existence. This is most desirable in perspective on the development of international private enterprise and worldwide market which request freedom from the check of national limits. "The Shadow Lines" interrogates the process through which a sense of national identity is built. The construction of national identity is said to be the aftereffect of a double dynamics one homogenizing and the other separating. Construction of the possibility of a country or network as homogenous, for example brought together and single, additionally proposes its distinction from different countries or networks. In this way being Indian methods being individuals from a solitary brought together family sharing shared objectives and aspirations. This very idea of Indian will separate him/her from a Pakistani, an American or a British. Ghosh, striking at this very center of the dynamics of nationhood, demonstrates that the possibility of a country is a deceptive construction. One fundamental inquiry the novel rises "Is the country a homogeneous entity?" which is univocally replied with a firm and vehement "No". The episodes that enlivened Ghosh to compose the novel - cruel massacre of the Sikhs following death of Indira Gandhi by the non-Sikh compatriots which profoundly tormented Ghosh – is a proof that the claim of a homogenized country is outlandish. In spite of the fact that the mobs erupting in the outcome of Indira's death are not mentioned in the novel, there are various Incidents to demonstrate that the country of India as a homogenous network was shattered for Ghosh. Communal mobs subsequent to debasement of Hazratbal Shrine in 1964 is a fitting model. The storyteller of „The Shadow Lines" as a school kid recollects how sick sentiments and doubts harmed the agreeable existence of the Hindus and the Muslims. Gossipy tidbits were that one network had harmed the water supply to kill the other network. The entire environment was loaded up with doubts, dread and disdain. Presently the storyteller's closest companion (Montu-Mansur) transformed into a dreaded foe. Such inward partitions interrogates the homogenous body commonwealth of the country, Ghosh centers another imperative guide significant toward this – that is – the historical backdrop of the country shallows up the account of the person: In the uproars of 1964, the storyteller's uncle Tridib had lost his life as a defenseless victim to the maddening furor of communal scorn. This was a key minute in the account of the storyteller's life. In any case, when following fifteen years after the fact in 1979, the storyteller endeavors to recoup the hints of this occasion in the chronicles of the Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi, he doesn't discover any notice of Tridib's demise in the news papers. It appeared as though private story was not in the slightest degree essential for the country's memory.

Through the storyteller's development from adolescence to adulthood, Ghosh has demonstrated that the possibility of a national outskirts is only a delusion. The deceptive idea of the national outskirts that are built to extend a picture of contrast crosswise over political division is uncovered in the novel. The storyteller's grandma immovably has confidence in the capacity of national fringes to separate her very own locale from different networks. Her nationalistic convictions appear to be undermined as the novel unfurls. In 1964 when she intends to visit Dhaka, she ponders whether she would probably observe the fringes among India and East Pakistan from the air. At the point when her grandson (the storyteller) ridicules her asking - if the fringe was a long dark line, she says, "obviously not. Be that as it may, unquestionably there's something – channels maybe, or officers or weapons pointing at one another, or even simply barren piece of land. Don't they consider it no-man's land?"(167) with her experience of the traumatic occasions of the partition, grandma's expectation of a fringe is normal to her however silly to other people/us. With the unfurling of the novel, the grandma is compelled to realize the way that the opposite sides of the fringe were only the perfect representation of one another. This acknowledgment in a sense torments her and powers her to cross examine the very motivation behind the nationalist development and the reasons of war between the countries. She endeavors to state the need of a genuine boundary.

In his books Amitav Ghosh investigates the thoughts of nationhood and Diasporas, thoughts that include connections between people having a place with the equivalent or to various networks that occasionally transgress and rise above the shadow lines of political fringes. The Shadow Lines presumably speaks to Ghosh's most head-to-head confrontation with nationalism and national identity and it is all the while about each character's individual identity. Both in Political Science and Geography there is a particular meaning of a nation or a state. Anyway the word „Country" bears a particular significance to a man. A man's whole entity of present, past just as future is related with his own nation or local land or country. All in all, the piece of land where one is conceived winds up one's country, local land or homeland. Inside the parliamentary framework it is a standard that a nation will keep up the privileges of individuals of that nation yet when the state can't hold up under the duty of a man, his entire entity is in question. On the foundation of that crisis Amitav Ghosh composes an invaluable novel The Shadow Lines.

## **NARRATIVE OF EVENTS**

Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* is a narrative of occasions which are related to one another. A large portion of the narrative in the physical world is set in

Calcutta, Delhi and London and at as a rule, utilizes as foundations, different chronicled occasions that characterized the Indian Subcontinent like the Swadeshi Movement, the Partition of India and the communal mobs of 1963-64 in Calcutta and Dhaka and furthermore to some degree the Second World War. The tale at its very beginning has a multicultural and multi-spatial intrigue. This intrigue, accompanied with the portrayal of connected and non-connected occasions in different spots and non-places gives the novel a paradigm move to a point, where different alleged "postmodern" and "post structural" elements can be contended. Additionally, leaving the plot and the putting of the novel aside, it is the narrative, by its perplexing, continually bungling snare of recollections, which gives the novel intrinsic cultural and sub-cultural elements that thusly gives the novel an inert "non-absolute" space. What's more, it is this "non-absolute" space that should be developed so as to comprehend the part of "postmodernism" in the novel.

## **POSTMODERNISM**

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## **SHADOWINESS OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION**

The Shadowiness of the fringe, and that way, the ramifications of the title of the novel, in this manner unmistakably stands expressed. Political division is arbitrary as it is subjectively taken and all things considered identity of the general population over the so called national outskirts are imbalanced constantly. Quite this fleetingness of individual identity additionally proposes the transience of the

country/national identity. The circumstance is concisely brought out by Sadat Hassan Manto in the short story "Toba Tek Singh", where the so – called lunatic just exhibits mental soundness. To state, political division of nation(s) is only a farcical demonstration. "The partition of the nation is anticipated in the novel as a demonstration of insignificant violence" In the novel there is a developing sense that the rationale of the country state is essentially inconsistent with different forms of sub continental network – that to be Indian is to be unreasonably and maybe ineffectively characterized oneself against one's identical representation from over the outskirts. Ghosh has appeared in the novel that mobs and separations at the social and national dimension don't generally bring forth any arrangement through partition of the greater country – state. He has demonstrated that violence does not get headed to the outskirts. Dhaka and Calcutta - the two unique urban areas in two free states - don't drift separated and turn into the other reality as they erupt at the slightest guise. The example of violence in these urban areas relates them to one another. The storyteller embraces a voyage into this land which exists outside space, a cost without separations and a place where there is mirror occasions. He is essentially stunned to find that the outskirts couldn't separate these spots, rather bolted them into irreversible symmetry. He saw indistinguishable scenes of violence on the two sides, with couple of human incidents of sparing lives - characteristic of inseparable mental soundness that ties individuals to one another autonomous of their administrations. The marginal turns out to be only "a mirror outskirts". (247)

The author draws out the arbitrary idea of the partition rationale – that is, partition of India and Pakistan (Bangladesh) is outlandish and arbitrary. The fringes are none yet the arbitrary result of the politicians' impulses. These arbitrary lines can't generally decide the cultural contrast between the two networks living over the outskirts. One way or the other India/Calcutta will stay associated with East Pakistan/Dhaka. The way that Jethamosai, Tha"mma"s uncle, won't leave Dhaka and relocate to India endorses this kind of reasoning. To cite Jethamosai, "I don't put stock in this India – Shindia. It's everything great, you're leaving currently, yet assume when you set there they choose to draw a different line some place? What will you do at that point? Where will you move to? Nobody will ever have you anyplace." (237) Ghosh recognizes no different national or cultural substances on the grounds that for him every single such demarcation are shadow lines, arbitrary and concocted divisions. The creator intensely tackles political themes both national and international.

## CLASS POLITICS

Politics: The postmodern analysis of *The Shadow Lines*, be that as it may, stays fragmented without

taking a gander at the class-politics of the novel. An unmistakable class-line can be found in the novel is the portrayal of its characters and in the occasions and non-occasions and in the narrative. Going to the characters first, the vast majority of the portrayals that occur all bear a similar class 3D image – either administration or socially upwardly versatile. This anyway has the exception of the storyteller's youth narrative, in the character of his grandma. All things considered, a specific class marvel can be attributed to the grandma as well, as the portrayal makes her only a result of a spectator to class-politics. The portrayal of Tridib too has its own class-politics. Tridib from the earliest starting point has been portrayed as a picture, a picture of yearning for the storyteller, somebody that he generally needs to be yet can't as he needs in faculty. This picture has distinctive class-politics. Tridib's entire character depends on the straightforward point of alienating him and making an "enchantment picture" out of the picture. Such estrangement which has been made a decent attempt to be portrayed as scholarly distance however which entirely attributed a class-estrangement to the picture. Additionally when the narrative strides into the domains of multiculturalism, through Ila first and after that later through May and the Prices, the class-politics reserve a solid a dependable balance in the novel.

## BALANCE OF TIME

Amitav is an urban based author endeavors to recoup the idyll of the world from the encounters of his adolescence. As a traveler he explores the native sensibility with the fragments of his hereditary memory. We can't locate a normal theme in his works. They are for the most part altogether looked into in a unique way with an extreme narrative technique. Meenakshi Mukerjee says: —The obviously straightforward portrayal of *The Shadow Lines* is in certainty an intricate jigsaw confound of varied time and spot sections including some enchantment pieces that reflect others. Steady difference in time and spot demonstrate his insightful co-appointment in portraying the story. He speaks to two noteworthy techniques, the picaresque and social realism, to speak to Middle East fiction. He offered voices to his characters to scrutinize the pioneers, through his communalism, colorization, re-colonization, neo-colonization is recurring musings in Ghosh's work.

1984 was an earth shattering year for India; there was a nonconformist violence in the Punjab, military assault on the Golden sanctuary of Amritsar, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's death, trailed by mobs and incredible catastrophe in Bhopal. Every one of these occasions shaken the lives of Indians from numerous points of view. Amitav took all themes to his anecdotal work. Looking Backll he says I see that the encounters of that period were significantly vital to my improvement as an author. His narrative style in „*The Shadow Lines*“ is increasingly sophisticated and



sensible in portraying the genuine political occasions. When he travels through his corpus of composing, it is clear, Ghosh has at this point turned into somewhat infamous in his striking embrace of new sorts and styles at whatever point he attempts another show-stopper.

In *The Shadow Lines* memory assumes extremely huge job weaving the over a wide span of time, Childhood and adulthood of the storyteller, distinctive incidents in Bangladesh, India and east Pakistan and numerous different interlockings of sub plots produced by memory which decides the form of the novel, its diversions its decisions, its wide extending narrative-technique, exclusions scholars innovative mix of Time and Place together. The narrative voice in *The Shadow Lines* establishes the nearby correspondence between the domain of memory and lived understanding. A large portion of the piece of the story was uncovered from the memory of Thamma, storyteller and grandma.

Memory' is past and in Real' battle exists she can't process the progressions that occurred in her home spot east Bengal (Bangladesh). Ghosh presents this psychological status through her inquiry where is Dhaka?. The personalities are changed by the partition. She was shocked and gives a philosophical articulation at Jethamoshai where he needed to acknowledge consistently thing which was once strongly opposed by him. He just calls her a lady', a strayer' as a result of partition. Singular battle, vulnerability, loneliness and nervousness are delightfully brought out by Ghosh in these incidents, which he calls, battle with quiet'. With the demise of Tridib Ghosh says the division is 'false nationalism' which gives only a sense of misfortune, contention and terrific dread of violence and passing of blameless individuals as we do locate a similar inclination in Tagore's universalism. This is only not a story among various characters but rather an unceasing enduring of each man torn between the over a significant time span.

The diverse voices and characters that establish the memory turns into the narrative voice, which binds together and integrates the divergent strands of the occasions occurred in *The Shadow Lines*. The recollections and encounters of different characters channels through the awareness of the storyteller and he re-describes them, and the peruser is diverted by the various dimensions of the portrayal. This tale has numerous layers of themes and complex narrative structure. It is extremely fascinating to perceive how the anonymous storyteller weaves together the numerous accounts of three ages of two families for example the private and open existences of Mayadebi and Mrs. Cost in the over a wide span of time.

Precisely in *The Shadow Lines*, the relationship between the storyteller and Tridib is unique relation between a developing kid and an adult man. The exact notice of dates and locations draws the consideration of the peruser to numerous incidents; this is best delineated by the grouping of basement scenes' whose fragmented portrayal is spread, forward and backward, over the length of the novel. It is an arrangement that starts with the eight-year-old Ila hauling the legend into an unused dusty corridor of the family house in Raibajar to play houses with him, and closures with the last scene between them numerous years after the fact in the basement of the prices'house in London.

Time' is an unprecedented element in the novel. It is at times illusory'and here and there cement'. Ghosh is skilled author in forcing the specialty of recollection to the storyteller. The story moves quickly independent of time starting with one age then onto the next. Space'has been given a striking description of even littlest spot in the novel. Both Time' and space' rises above the render to the storyteller's mind and aides in encountering and review the occasions in the reality.

The regular strategy and the request of sequential arrangement is subverted by the narrative voice, which has an inferred creator and unmistakable from the genuine creator. While watching the self-portraying drive behind the narrative, *The Shadow Lines* mirrors the existence of anonymous storyteller taking after the individual educational encounters of Amitav Ghosh. The narrative isn't successive; it is exceedingly hindered by the interruption of memory and gives us the alienation impact. The tale of choudaries and costs set in India and England gives the storyteller learning contemporary political occasions, for example, journey for freedom, theme of alienation, jobs of demarcations which separate the states. To extend all these, storyteller brings out some post-colonial and culturally diverse experiences.

## CONCLUSION

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