

**Partition and the Traumatic Plight of Common People: A Study of Amitav
Ghosh's Novel the *Shadow Lines***

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Abstract:

Amitav Ghosh in the novel *The Shadow Lines* focuses on the partition of India and the subsequent trauma of the East Bengali psyche. In the novel, the partition becomes the locus for the exploration of larger political concepts like 'freedom', 'nationalism' and for an interrogation of the concept of borders.

The partition was meant to solve the problems of social unrest whether on religious grounds or political motivation but the partition has been turning into communal violence between the two major groups Hindu and Muslim.

My objective in writing of this paper is to portray the impact of the partition that divide the people into small nations with reference to Khuswant Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan*.

The partition affects in the each and every part of human life; it affects on the humanity; it affects in the psychology of the people; it affects on the economy; it affects on the society.

Keyword: Partition, Nationalism, Freedom, Border, Trauma.

1. Introduction:

Amitav Ghosh is a Bengali Indian author, a pioneer of English literature in India; best known for his works in English language. As a novelist, Amitav Ghosh was successful enough in his ambition to win the Sahitya Akademy Award for *The Shadow Lines*.

The novel *The Shadow Lines* reflects on the impact of partition that divides people into small nations. The people of the neighboring countries generally have the same cultural backgrounds, have similarities in features, food, dress and thought, but the partition make them strangers and enemies. They now don't want to know one another unless they come to the battlefield. In *The Shadow Lines* the partition becomes the locus for the exploration of larger political concepts like 'freedom', 'nationalism', and for an interrogation of the concepts of border. Ghosh is an essentially idealistic vision of world without borders- the emblems of which in *The Shadow Lines* happens to be the atlas and the story of Tristan, which are what Tridib bequeaths to his nephew, "Tridib had given me worlds to travel in and eyes to see them with", (Ghosh, 2014) avers the narrator very early in the novel. Tridib's legacy was a particular vision of the world where the shadow lines that connected

people were infinitely more significant than the lines that divided them. *The Shadow Lines* is a novel that questions whether states can be geo-politically defined; whether the socio-political shadow line that we draw between people has any validity by itself, or whether it is an absurd illusion. In other words the novel explores the relationship between the modern nation state and its denizens and it exposes the limits of that relationship.

The impact of partition on the people and the collective psyche of the two newly created nations are too deep to be treated lightly. Amitav Ghosh focuses in *The Shadow Lines* the partition of India and the consequent trauma of the East Bengali psyche. The narrative begins in 1939- there was an outbreak of Second World War and the narrative ends in 1964- there was a cycle of riots in India and Pakistan. This is from history and from the narrative we find – in 1939 Tridib was taken to England and at that time he was eight years old and in 1964 Tridib was murdered in a riot in Dhaka.

Khuswant Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan* which I have taken as a reference to my context is based on the trauma and tragedy of the historic partition of India in 1947. The novel portrays the trauma of partition that gave birth to two political boundaries- India and Pakistan. On the eve of the partition, thousands fled from both sides leaving their home seeking refuge and security. The feeling of Hindu and Muslim has just started from the day of partition which also leads to communal violence, "From Calcutta, spread north and east and west: to Noakhali in East Bengal, where Muslims massacred Hindus; to Bihar, where Hindus massacred Muslim" (Singh, 1989). This has happened because of the partition, where Muslims think that the Hindu had planned and started killing and for the Hindu, the Muslim were to blame. "The fact is, both killed... Both shot... Both tortured. Both raped" (Singh, 1989).

2. Objectives:

- i) To analyze the impact of partition on the people psychologically and socially.
- ii) To analyze the impact of partition on the economic life of people.
- iii) To analyze the concepts like borders, nation and nationality.

3. Methodology:

To analyze the chosen theme of the novel, I have taken up the analytical method. The secondary data has been used from different sources like books, journals and websites relevant to the study. The text of this novel is the main source of this paper.

4. Results and discussions:

4.1 Partition in the Contemporary Indian novels in English:

The novel *Train to Pakistan* deals with the partition and its impact on humanity, economy, society, relationship, psychology and so on. Singh has focused the partition from the social point of view not political and portrayed the traumatic and agonizing impact of the partition that those who have not been the direct victims of the partition, yet been affected deep at the psychological and social level. The novel portrays the trauma of partition that give birth to two political boundaries- India and Pakistan. The feeling of Hindu and Muslim has just started from the day of partition which leads to never ending communal violence between the Sikh, Hindu and Muslim. On the eve of partition thousands fled from both sides – leaving their home seeking refuge and security. The partition leads to further brutality thousands and thousands of Sikh, Hindu and Muslim people are murdered, children are slashed, and women are ravished and then killed.

As Dr. Sheelu Singh Bhatia rightly points out, "The partition of India led to the evacuation of the Hindus from Pakistan and the Muslims from India and border crossing of refugees. This also precipitated the communal riots in retaliation of killing Hindus and Muslims in Pakistan and in some parts of India" (Bhatia, 2014). By the summer of 1947, when the creation of the new state of Pakistan was formally announced, ten million people-Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs- were in flight. By the time the monsoon broke almost a million of them were dead, and all of northern India was in arms, in terror, or in hiding. The only remaining oases of peace were a scatter of villages lost in the remote reaches of the frontier which are also influence by partition gradually. One of these villages was Mano Majra. The people of Mano Majra, where the people of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh has been living together as 'brothers' are even don't know about that the British have left an India get partitioned to India and Pakistan.

But one night everything changed in the village when the ghost train arrived in the rail-station of Mano Majra. As Sakshi Thakur rightly points out, "The writer recreates a tiny village in the Punjab countryside and its people during that Bengal summer, when the flood of refugees and the inter-communal bloodletting from Bengal to the Northwest frontier touches them; many ordinary men and women are bewildered, victimized and torn apart. The village, Mano Majra, is on the railway-line near where it crosses the swelling Sutlej, its inhabitants, mostly Sikh farmers and their Muslim tenants have remained untouched by the violence of the previous months. The village money lender, a Hindu is murdered. Jugga, a roughneck Sikh and a clear shaven visitor Iqbal Singh are rounded up, and the thing change for the worse an east-bound train, full of corpses, makes an unscheduled stop at Mano Majra" (Thakur, 2014).

The train was loaded with thousands of dead bodies of men and women, children, adults and olds ones who were killed like animals in Pakistan. Here the Pakistani shows the animal like behavior. Hukum Chand the district magistrate, who has been experiencing death from his childhood to adult but "a trainload of dead was too much for even Hukum Chand's fatalism" (Singh, 1989). He frightened by the violence of death and its magnitude. This the most tragic impact of partition on humanity. The villagers are not told and they are not allowed to come to the near of station. The army with the help of police comes to the village Mano Majra to bring wood and the kerosene to burn the dead bodies. The villagers are confused why they need the wood and the kerosene. They were looking at the station from the roof of their house to know what was happening. After some time,

"The northern horizon, which had turned a bluish gray, shoved arrange again. The orange turned into copper and then into a luminous russet. Red tongues of flame leaped into the black sky. A soft breeze began to blow towards the village. It brought the smell of searing flesh" (Singh, 1989).

After that the villagers are confirmed about the answer the answer was implicit in the fact that the train had come from Pakistan. As Sakshi Thakur observed, "Partition indeed was a great human tragedy caused by politics of the day bringing in its wake untold miseries, sufferings and indignity to the affected men, women and children because they were uprooted savagely from their blood ancestral hearth and home, while warring communities on both sides were after their blood. The scar of partition had created a deep wedge between the two communities that rendered them helpless" (Thakur, 2014).

Everything changed in the village, now everybody looks at each other with eyes of doubt after that incident. The Sikh, Hindu and Muslim who had for generations lived peacefully together as 'brothers' can no longer trust each other. Muslim in India is now threatened with retaliation. There

are discussions in the village that the Muslims are to go to Pakistan for their safety leaving their home behind. All the Muslims in the Mano Majra are ready to go to the refugee camp Chundnugger and then to Pakistan. But they are not allowed to take their property like buffalo, cow, cattle, bullock, carts, charpoys, pitchers and so on. They are only allowed to take whatever they can take at their hands. "I'll give you just five minutes to get into the trucks with just as much as you can carry in your hands" (Singh, 1989). The dacoit Mali and his gang then unyoked the bullocks, looted the carts and drove cows and buffaloes away from the Muslims.

The water of the river Sutlej has risen by the rain. There was a terrifying sight in the river; the dead bodies of many people are floating on the river. By the evening, Mano Majra had forgotten about its Muslims and Mali's misdeed. The river had become the main topic of conversation. There are some young Sikh people who are gathering people to kill the Muslims that are going to Pakistan. The people came in military uniforms with pistols and guns. The refugees have joined them and Mali Budmash and his gang and some villagers are going to kill all the Muslims. By the time Iqbal and Jugga who are arrested by police are released from the jail. Iqbal saw a number of refugees in Gurudwara and asked Meet Singh, "What has been happening in the village." Then Meet Singh replied:

"What has been happening? Ask me what has not been happening. Trainloads of dead people came to Mano Majra. We burned one lot and buried another. The river was flooded with corpses. Muslims were evacuated, and in their place, refugees have come from Pakistan. What more do you want to know?" (Singh, 1989)

When Jugga comes to know about the evacuation of Muslims from Mano Majra, Jugga's immediate concern is the welfare of Nooran, his beloved who is going to the train to Pakistan. Danger to the train means danger to her. Jugga comes to Meet Singh and asks him a verse and then he goes out.

The leader of Sikh young boys who were planning to kill the Muslims began to fire, "The leader raised his rifle to his shoulder and fired. He hit his mark and one of the man's legs came off the rope and dangled in the air. The other was still twined round the rope. He slashed away in frantic haste. The engine was only a few yards off, throwing embers high up in the sky with each blast of the whistle. Somebody fired another shot. The man's body slid off the rope, but he clung to it with his hands and chin. He pulled himself up, caught the rope under his left armpit, and again started hacking with his right hand. The rope had been cut in shreds. Only a thin tough strand remained. He went at it with the knife, and then with his teeth. The engine was almost on him. There was a volley of shots. The man shivered and collapsed. The rope snapped in the centre as he fell. The train went over him, and went on to Pakistan" (Singh, 1989).

The man was none but Jugga who sacrificed his life for his lover Noora who was on the train to Pakistan. Thus, in the novel, Khuswant Singh is not only portrayed the violence of partition but also, through the character of Jugga portrayed that the love is above all and redeems a sense of faith in essential humanity.

4.2 The concept of nation and nationality:

Whenever we talk about partition the concepts of nation, nationality and borders immediately comes up. Nation means "a country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture and history, who live in a particular area under one government: an independent nation" (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). While nationality or national identity mean connected with a particular nation.

Nationalism means devotion to one's own nation. But of course, it must be admitted that such a broader, all-encompassing political concept like nationalism has no uniformed definition. It can be interpreted from varying perspective. In the novel, in course of time Nationalism changes its meaning in the Indian context. The nationalism which earlier united the people of India and brought an awakening for their rights and feeling of nationhood to expel British turned sharp and divided India into two communities- Hindu and Muslim. In this way nationalism changes its meaning in Indian context.

In the novel, *The Shadow Lines* Ghosh has been raising questions on nation and nationality. As Anjali Gera observes, "Though she (Thamma) willingly agreed to the drawing of the lines during the making of the nation, Thamma does not learn to read maps. Her concentration at being told that no trenches or strips of land mark the border articulates the central dilemma of Indian nationalism and independence" (Gera, 2008).

Thamma, the grandmother of the unnamed narrator was born in Dhaka, stayed her maiden life in Dhaka. Only after her marriage she comes to Calcutta. After that India and Bangladesh was partitioned. Now Thamma was born and brought up in Dhaka but she is made Indian national, she became foreigner to her own land. Is she an Indian or a Bangladeshi? As Anjali Gera observe, "Despite her (Thamm's) naturalization as an Indian citizen, her strong loyalties and affiliations to the city of her birth that surface during this return permit Ghosh to investigate the conflicting claims of roots and belongings, nations and boundaries in the Indian mind. Thamma's attempt to identify herself as a native Dhakanian from the older parts of the city, who is contemptuous of the alien inhabitants of new Indian identity when confronted with more compelling claims of an older solidarity. The irony of her alienation in her own homeland comes home to her only through Tridib's teasing reminder, "But you are a foreigner now, you're as foreigner here as May... (195). Her visit to her parental home, ironically figured as a married daughter's 'going home as a widow' (205) where she emotionally declares to her estranged uncle, 'We've come home at last' (212) is used to explore this contradiction of local and national identities..." (Gera, 2008).

Again, Jethamoshai who was born in Dhaka, stayed in Dhaka but the people there do not accept him as one of them (Bangladeshi) because of his religion and race, but he did not come to India. Now, is he an Indian or a Bangladeshi? Thus, Amitav Ghosh has been questioning the concept of nation and nationality. AS Jon Mee rightly points out, "The sense of the provisionality of national identity in reinforced on a personal level by the continuing doubling of individual identities as if each character in the novel is caught up in the identity of another rather than autonomous and fixed" (Mee, 2003).

Whenever we talk about the concept of nationalism, the character of Thamma becomes more prominent. In the character of Thamma we can see, she had a lust for freedom from colonial rule and this feeling ingrained the feeling of nationalism in her. Thamma, as is made very clear that in text, 'sees national identities not in terms of imagined communities, but as a deeply rooted connectedness sacrifices of generations'.

"It was for our freedom: I would have done anything to be free" (Ghosh, 2014). Here "our" is very significant because she is talking about her entire community which share a common interest to be free and Thamma says that she is the part of the larger community sharing a common interest. The common interest refers to freedom and sacrifices. Her concept of nationalism is to be coupled with the idea of fraternity. The idea of nationalism comes to her through the nourishment of past glories and memories. Once in her youth, Thamma had a great desire to join the terrorists group after

knowing that the terrorists are working for the freedom of the country. “Ever since she (Thamma) heard those stories, she had wanted to do something for the terrorists, work for them in a small way, steal a little bit of their glory for herself. She would have been content to run errands for them, to cook their food, wash their cloths, anything” (Ghosh, 2014).

One day, one of her classmate who had been a member of one of the secret terrorist societies since he was fourteen who had been exercising gymnasium, learning to use pistol and make bombs, smuggling message and running errands. The first mission they had given him was to assassinate an English magistrate in Khulna district. All was ready but he was arrested by police at end of that week when he was to leave Khulna from their classroom, but nobody knows it before. She (Thamma) felt very upset as she think to herself- “if only she had known, if only she had been working with him, she would have warned him somehow, she would have save him, she would have gone to Khulna with him too, and stood at his side, with a pistol in her hands, waiting for the English magistrate” (Ghosh, 2014).

As she revealed her feeling to the unnamed narrator she was ready to kill the magistrate, “Yes, I would have killed him” (Ghosh, 2014). Such is her nationalist feeling. The protagonist feeling that Thamma shows in the novel is a kind of violence. As Suvir Kaul rightly points out, “the exemplar of militant nationalism is Thamma, who has lived the nationalist dream” (Kaul, 2014).

The concept of nationalism, we can also see in the character of Jethamoshai, as when he says, “I know everything, I understand everything. Once you start moving you never stop. That’s what I told my sons when they took the trains. I said: I don’t believe in this India-Shindia. It’s all very well, you’re going away now, but suppose when you get there they decide to draw another line somehow? What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I’ll die here” (Ghosh, 2014).

The advancement in information technology, communication and transport, have made this world into a big village and to talk of a nation as a separate entity appears as anachronism. But it is also true that competition in various fields is increasing. The cut-throat competition has made people look to their own national interests. Therefore, national feeling still continues to inspire people. They still, identify themselves with the country they belong to. But national has caused enmity even between those who have strong cultural ties between them. The neighboring countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have the same culture, the same food habits, the same language, yet they are enemies because the political lines on the map have separate them from each other and they are inspired with national feeling.

Thamma while she was once wanted to be free, does not like Ila because Ila use to stay in London as she (Ila) wants to be free. “Free of you!... Free of your bloody culture and free of all of you” (Ghosh, 2014). Thamma is critical towards Ila because she thinks Ila doesn’t belong to London. As for Thamma, Ila has no right to live there... She doesn’t belong there. It took those people a long time to build that country; hundreds of years, years and years of war and bloodshed. Everyone who lives there has been earned his right to be there with blood: with their brother’s blood and their father’s blood and their son’s blood. They know they’re a nation because they’ve drawn their borders with blood” (Ghosh, 2014).

Freedom, which creates the feeling of nationalism, for Rubi is nothing but the root of all problems to lie there. Robi who is an Indian Administrative Service Officer belongs to post-partition generation, and having an intimate knowledge of communal disturbances that rent the national fabric of India notes how freedom seemed to lie the very root of all subcontinents problems. “Free, he said

laughing. You know, if you look at the pictures on the front pages of the newspaper at home now, all those pictures of dead people- in Assam, the north-east, Punjabi, Sri-Lanka, Tripura people shot by terrorists and separatists and the army and the police, you'll find someone behind it all, that single word: everyone's doing to be free... I think to myself why don't they draw thousands of little lines through the whole subcontinents and give every little place a new name? What would it change? It's a mirage; the whole thing is a mirage" (Ghosh, 2014).

4.3 Partition in the novel *The Shadow Lines*:

"In 1947, came partition, and Dhaka becomes the capital of East Pakistan" (Ghosh-2014).

In 1947 India was separated and partitioned into two nations- India and Pakistan. After that everything changed in the both sides. The partition affects on the human life politically, economically, psychologically and socially. More it has brought separation in relationship, religion and race as Hindu-Muslim. After that the people living in India and born in Pakistan who came before the partition or the people who were born in India but because of the partition and for their religion compelled to migrate from both sides- there never arise the question to come back or to go back there.

There is a beautiful symbol in the novel that has been used by Amitav Ghosh to portray the impact of partition on the psychology of the people. In Dhaka there was a big joint family, with everyone living together: Thamma's grandparents, her parents, she and Mayadebi, her Jethamoshai, her father's elder brother- and his family, which included three cousin of roughly on her age as well as a couple of spinster aunts. After the death of father-in-law of Thamma's mother, there was a quarreling among the house:

"Soon things came to such a pass that they decided to divide the house with a wooden partition wall: there was no other alternative. But the building of the wall proved to be far from easy because the two brothers, insisting on their rights with a lawyer- like precision, demanded that the division be exact down to the minutest detail. When the wall was eventually built, they found that it had ploughed right through a couple of door-ways so that no one could get through them anymore; it had also gone through a lavatory bisecting an old commode. The brother even partitioned their father's old nameplate. It was divided down the middle by a thin white line, and their names were inscribed on the two halves of necessity in letters so tiny that nobody could read them... Once it (the partition) had actually happened and each family had moved into their own part of it, instead of the peace they had so much looked forward to, they found that a strange, eerie silence had descended on the house. It was never the same again after that; the life went out of it" Ghosh-2014).

It was worse days for grandmother and Mayadebi, after the partition so much bitterness lay between the two families that they could not speak to each other, they behave like strangers, the same things happened after the partition of India and Pakistan. After the partition in the house everything was upside-down like they would drink tea in bucket, they would bath in the kitchen, then they would take their breakfast in the afternoon. "Everything's upside-down over there,... at their meals they start with the sweets and end with the dal, their books go backwards and ends at the beginning, they sleep under their beds and eat on the sheets, they cook with jhatas and sweep with their ladles, they write with umbrellas and go walking with pencils... (Ghosh, 2014). This is how partition impact in the psychology of the people.

As Meenakshi Mukherjee observes, "The house metaphor, for example, is worked out relentlessly by typing it up with the division of Bengal. The grandmother's expectation of the

visibility of the border between India and East Pakistan grew indirectly out of her experience of territorial division she had witnessed in childhood. When the ancestral home was partitioned, the brothers insisted on their rights with a lawyer-like precision so that the dividing line went through doorways and a lavatory 'bisecting an old commode. The brothers even partition their father's old nameplate'. That the borders should be explicit, that the lines should be clearly marked on the land by 'trenches or something' was the least she could expect after so much violence and bloodshed during the partition of India in 1947" (Mukherjee, 2014).

"When I turned back to my first circle I was struck with wonder that there had really been a time, not so long ago, when people, sensible people, of good intention, had thought that all maps ere the same, that there was a special enchantment in lines; I had to remind myself that they were not to be blamed for believing that there was something admirable in moving violence to the borders and dealing with it through science and factories, for that was the pattern of the world. They had drawn their borders, believing in that pattern, in the enchantment of lines, hoping perhaps that once they had etched their borders upon the map, the two bits of land would sail away from each other like the shifting tectonic plates of the prehistoric Gondwanaland. What had they felt, I wonder, when they discovered that they had created not a separation, but a yet-undiscovered irony- the irony that killed Tridib: the simple fact that there had never been a moment in the four-thousand-year-old history of that map, when the place we know as Dhaka and Calcutta were more closely bound to each other than after they had drawn their lines- so closely that I, in Calcutta, had only to look into the mirror to be in Dhaka; a moment when each city was the inverted image of the other, locked into an irreversible symmetry by the line that was to set us free- our looking-glass border" (Ghosh, 2014).

The narrator discovers that the mischief is done by politicians, who deceived the people. The division or partition is decided by a few people in power but that cannot always represent the voice of the people. People at large don't understand the complexity of political overtures. Though, at first some people with good intention have drawn the lines on the borders thinking that all the maps were same that there was a special enchantment in lines. But they have drawn not a line but an irony- the irony which killed Tridib.

The maps are beguiling and misleading. They tell that the people of the adjacent countries are different, while the truth is altogether otherwise. East Pakistan and West Bengal cannot be separated by any lines, because they have the same language, same culture, and the same food habits. People living in two countries have blood relations. The narrator draws circle on the maps to discover that the places, generally believed to be far and distant, a not so distant. A circle of 1200 miles in radius he finds will cover more than half of the world population- "Beginning in Srinagar and traveling anti-clockwise, it cut through the Pakistan half of Panjab, through the tip of Rajasthan, and the edge of Sind... It was a remarkable circle more than half of the mankind must have fallen within it" (Ghosh, 2014)

The agony of the grandmother when she knew that her birth place after the partition belongs to another was very acute. Thamma become the representative of all the people that suffer the same problem because of partition. Dhaka is where Thamma was born but she is an Indian national. From her childhood she had her golden dreams fighting for freedom in East Pakistan. But in 1964, those very people for whom she was ready sacrificing her life are now her enemies. Home is a place where one is born and brought up. There is an emotional bond between the home and the heart. It is a place where one can claim one's right without any hesitation. If there is any confusion about the root of one's origin, an individual's identity would be in question. Thamma becomes a foreigner to her own

land because of the partition of India and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). She needs a visa to East Pakistan. Finally the fact that “the border is not on the frontiers: It is writing inside the airport” (Ghosh, 2014) confuses Thamma all the more.

The division of the novel into two parts- ‘Going Away’ and ‘Coming Home’ is in itself a conscious attempt to dismantle some of the time-tested notion of experience. So, when Thamma says “I could come home whenever I wanted”, (Ghosh, 2014). The narrator who was a child expresses his surprise why his Thamma does not differentiate between coming and going. “Thamma, Thamma! I write. How could you have ‘come’ home to Dhaka? You don’t know the difference between coming and going!” (Ghosh, 2014). The narrator after a passage of time realizes that this is the modern world where mental division cannot find the physical visible borders on the frontiers.

The truth is further highlighted when the narrator’s father explained to Thamma that there aren’t any trenches or anything that divide East Pakistan and India, as they show in a map. Thamma is further confused. She asks “if there is no difference, both sides will be the same, it will be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day without stopping. What was it for all then – partition and all the killing and everything – if there is not something in between?” (Ghosh, 2014) while there is partition, it will affect not only in one side, it affects on both the sides – there will be killing, looting and ravishing in both the sides. The partition was meant to solve the problems of social unrest whether on religious ground or political motivation. But it wasn’t solved rather the partition creates the feeling of Hindu and Muslim and people are compelled to migrate from their home or birthplace merely for the reason based on whims of political solution of the problems faced by the nation. It becomes the reason for the communal violence between Hindu and Muslim only. As A.N. Kaul observes, “The novel, according to the blur, focuses on nationalism, the shadow line we draw between people and nations, which is both an absurd illusion and source of terrifying violence” (Kaul, 2014).

On the other hand, Jethamoshai did not want to leave Dhaka because he thought that the politician could again divide the country and he might once again become a foreigner in his own land when grandmother went there to bring Jethamoshai to Calcutta. This is the fear that the partition creates in the mind of the people. As Jethamoshai says, “I understand very well, I know everything. Once you start moving you never stop. That’s what I told my sons when they took the trains. I said: I don’t believe in this India – Shindia. It’s all very well, you are going away now, but suppose when you get there they decide to draw another line somewhere. What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will have you anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I’ll die here” (Ghosh, 2014).

The novelist has observed that the partition that divide the people into small pockets of nations so completely that they don’t want to know about one another unless they come to the battlefield. The border that carved at the time of partition has led to further brutality in the form of riots, communal violence, and pogroms – the organized killings of large number of people because of their race and religion and organized historical distortions and culture depletions with which the history of independence India fully filled up. The novel *The Shadow Lines* shows how the partition which creates the feeling of Hindu and Muslim at the day of partition creates violence even after seventeen years. The borders are the perpetrators of the violence and hatred. They are potently equipped with the devices that are capable of initiating the process of annihilation. The riots in Dhaka and Calcutta in the novel are the belated example of the partition of India, which went unprecedented soon after India was divided.

As Meenakshi Mukherjee observes, “During the 1964 Hindu-Muslim riots – subsequently forgotten by history – Mantu who was suddenly transformed into an enemy” (Mukherjee, 2014). In terms of the story told in *The Shadow Lines*, in one of the riots in Dhaka on January 1964, a young man Tridib was murdered in the very place where his aunty (Thamma) was born and brought up and stayed her maiden life, Tridib was murdered there while he had gone to bring back his granduncle (Jethamoshai) to Calcutta and was accompanied by May his beloved, Thamma and Mayadebi. Tridib was killed in the mob as he was a Hindu from India. At that time in Calcutta also the narrator was feeling a communal strife. The narrator remembers one early January morning when the school buses came only with a dozen boys. This was usual as the boys told him that ‘they’ had poisoned the Tala Tank, that the whole of Calcutta’s water supply was poisoned. But nobody knows who ‘they’ were. All over the city rumour played a vital role in spreading fear among the people,”-especially that familiar old rumour, the harbinger of every riot- that the train from Pakistan were arriving packed with corpses” (Ghosh, 2014). Communal disharmony had disfigured the faces of the two cities of Dhaka and Calcutta simultaneously. As Ghosh makes his protagonist put it, “it was a time when ‘each city was the inverted image of the other’” (Ghosh, 2014).

Stunned by the death of her nephew Tridib, Thamma develops hatred for Pakistan. As Suvir Kaul observes, “Perhaps the crowning irony of *The Shadow Lines* is that almost as soon as Thamma realizes that the legacy of her birthplace is not separable from her sense of herself as a citizen of India, her nephew Tridib’s death at the hands of a Dhaka mob confirms in her a pathological hatred of ‘them’” (Kaul, 2014). During her early days, she felt intensely for those were now her enemies. From her early childhood she had her golden dreams fighting for freedom in East Bengal. But in 1964, those very people for whom she ready sacrifices her life are now her enemies. The death of Tridib was not revealed immediately in the novel, the unnamed narrator discover the death of Tridib after the seventeen years of his search. The death of Tridib was as for the Rubi is the irony of partition that killed Tridib. “They had drawn their borders... What had they felt, I wondered, when they discovered that they create not a separation, but a yet-undiscovered irony-the irony that killed Tridib” (Ghosh, 233).

In *The Shadow Lines* Ghosh also focuses on the meaninglessness of the borders through the character of Thamma. Thamma before flying to Bangladesh is very disturbed to realize that her birthplace Dhaka is merely at odds with her nationality (Indian). Further on in her conversation with her son, she is told that the border is not on the frontiers but it is write inside the airport, “This is modern world. The border isn’t on the frontiers: its right inside the airport” (Ghosh, 2014). While before flying to Dhaka she thought if she would be able to see the border from the plain. Thamma thought that the border was a long black line with green on one side and scarlet on the other, like it was in a school atlas. Then she more puzzled and asked her son then the son laughed and said: you won’t be able to see anything except clouds and perhaps, if you’re lucky, some green fields. Then Thamma said, “But if there aren’t any trenches or anything, how are people to know? I mean, where’s the difference then? And if there’s no difference both sides will be the same, it’ll be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day without anybody stopping us. What was it all for then- partition and all the killing and everything – if there isn’t something in between?” (Ghosh, 2014).

Again, how the partition have its impact in the mind of the people we come to know about through the character of the Jethamoshai. Jethamoshai didn’t want to leave Dhaka because he thought that the politician could again divide the country and he might once again become a

foreigner in his own land. As the partition made many people like a foreigner in their own land who are compelled to migrate, "I know everything. I understand everything. Once you start moving you never stop. That's what I told my sons when they took the trains. I said: I don't believe in this India-Shindia. It's all very well, you're going away now, but suppose when you get there they decide to draw another line somewhere? What will you do then? Where will you move to?" (Ghosh, 2014)

5. Policy Implication:

Through the study we find that partition is an evil thing that creates only pain and agony and the feelings of hostility among near and dear ones. The problem that created by the time of partition has been prevailing to till date. War encourages death. There is no meaning of victory with no survivors. So, we must solve the problems through understanding and discussion. Government from both sides should take initiative for a permanent solution to the problem. To change the mindset of the people from an early age, government of both the countries can include good things about both the countries in their scholastic curriculum.

6. Conclusion:

Through the study of Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Shadow Lines* and Khuswant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, we find that both are against the partition. Both are critiquing partition. Amitav Ghosh in his novel *The Shadow Lines* has been questioning the concept of nation and nationality as he is the supporter of a universe without borders and boundaries.

Here my intention in this paper is to portray the impact of the partition how it impacts on each and every part of human life; on the humanity; on the psychology; on the economy; on the society. The partition created the feeling of humiliation and agony among the people who are compelled to immigrate from their home and the birthplace, The Muslims are to go to Pakistan and the Hindu are to come to India leaving their property behind. The partition makes the people foreigner in one's own motherland. As in the novel *The Shadow Lines* Thamma was born in Dhaka and passed her whole maiden life at Dhaka but after the partition she becomes a foreigner to her own birthplace. Here Thamma becomes the representative of those all people who have been suffering the same problem. In this way partition also brings separation in relationship too. Before the partition the people in Calcutta and Dhaka were living together, sharing same language and same cultural backgrounds but after the partition they become strangers and enemies, they do not even want to know about one another unless they came to the battlefield. Thus is the impact of partition in the psychology of the people. Thus, the line of separation was marked not only on earth but also in their minds and hearts.

The novel, *The Shadow Lines* makes an oblique reference to the traumatic partition of India in which thousands of men, women, and children died a cruel death. Most of them were innocent rustics staying in Punjab and Eastern Calcutta who had nothing to do with either of the two dominions. The partition of India is chronicled in history as a big, bloody and unfortunate divorce. At the same time, the partition has a great affect on the economy. During the partition thousands and thousands people fled from Pakistan to India leaving their property behind. Even in the refugees they also can only take whatever they can carry on their hands.

In Khuswant Singh's novel *Train to Pakistan* after the partition the Muslims of the village Manu Majra at first thought that they are going to the refugee camp for a few days and then come back to Manu Majra once the storm was blow over. But later, they realize that they will be taken to

Pakistan from the Chundunnugger refugee camp and that they can't take their belongings with them. They can only carry in their hands. In the novel we see that though the partition brings out brutality, inhumanity and madness of mankind, it also brings out to light the acts of kindness, courage and selflessness. There are many instances in the novel which are out of religious racial prejudices that the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim share in the village. In the novel the trains from Pakistan become a symbol of inhumanity and animality. But the people of Manu Majra become the symbol of love, kindness, which shows fellow feelings towards the Muslims of their village.

At last, though the novel *The Shadow Lines* deals with the impact of partition, the novel has also thrown some light on the Hindu-Muslim relationship in the past. In the riots during the division, there were instances of Muslim families in Pakistan giving shelter to Hindus at the risk of their own life and Hindu in India doing the same. The discrimination and differences between the two communities are predominantly illusory. Khalil was a Muslim and a poor man looked after the old man as if his own father but the bitter truth and irony remains that both the innocents are killed as it always happens. The mob does not distinguish between the poor, co-religionists or pagans.

Thus, the novel shows that though the partition affects on each and every part of human life, it does not differentiate a person from his/her memories.

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