
CONCEPT OF NATIONALISM WITH WOUND OF PARTITION IN THE NOVELS OF AMITAV GHOSH

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Amitav Ghosh is considered as one of the most talented and versatile contemporary writer of Indian English Literature. He has established his distinguished presence in the field of fiction by writing several short-stories, novels considering a variety of themes from diaspora and migration through politics to environment. He has been hailed as the most significant novelist of the present century, yet sufficient critical notice has not been paid to his works, particularly from the point of view of thematic concern regarding Indianness, and Indian Nationalism. However, a lot of critical studies on his novels are obtainable which give attention to only on the themes in his novels and some other characteristics.

Keywords: Nationalism, Indianness, Culture and Migration.

As we are going to outline the elements of Nationalism in the novels of Amitav Ghosh, we consider it correct to have a concise history and description of Nationalism. Nationalism is an ideology that emphasizes loyalty, devotion, or allegiance to a nation or nation-state and holds that such obligations outweigh other individual or group interests.

According to Rabindra Nath, a prominent Bengali poet, teacher, writer, composer, philosopher, painter “Nationalism is a great menace. It is the particular thing that for years has been at the bottom of India’s troubles. And inasmuch as we have been ruled and dominated by a nation that is strictly political in its attitude, we have tried to develop within ourselves, despite our inheritance from the past, a belief in our eventual political destiny.”

As per my views nationalism is closely related to Patriotism, national belongingness, spiritual and intellectual identity, and liberalism. Nationalism has also marked a deep impact on Indo Anglican Literature which can be observed at the level of language, themes, and techniques, selected by Indian English authors and specifically post-colonial writers. The novels of Amitav Ghosh are also enriched with the theme of nationalism.

Ghosh published his first novel in 1986 when he was taking lectures in Delhi University. The Circle of Reason is the debut novel of Amitav Ghosh. This novel is written into three parts: Part one- Satwa, Part two- Rajas, and Part three- Tamas. According to Bhagwad Gita, there are the three primary qualities of nature that are Tamas(darkness), Rajas(passion), and Sattva (goodness). To attain the last goal of this vicious circle of life to accomplish happiness which can only be felt in the state of Sattva the goodness. In this state one lives in concord with the environment. One becomes industrious and resides at a piece, and be contented when he goes with the flow and witnesses the goings of the world. We cannot refuse

the fact that the art of Yoga performs the same task of fetching humans from state of Tamas through Rajas to Passion. We all are spending our lives in the chase of finding happiness in materialistic acts and accumulating prosperity to achieve happiness and prosperity from it but the truth is something else rather we must move our focal point to the actuality which is beyond this material world. We can only find gratification and prosperity within the inner self, identifying the needs of soul, sharing happiness and wealth with others and most significantly we require an operating system to do all the corporeal activities that is our body. So, in a nut shell it can be stated that a healthy body is the key to illumination; it is the key to live life fully by distinguishing and achieving the true satisfaction and prosperity.

This novel tells a duty from Satwa to Rajas to Tamas which is a turnaround of the human journey. Usually one travels from Tamas (darkness) to Satwa (purity). But in this novel, the central character travels in the reverse direction. Amitav Ghosh freely blends past, present, and future which is his strong point of writing. His speedy moves in time and space have been remarkable in his other novels as well. He writes in a sequence of thoughts. The novel can be divided into three stories. The first part pacts with the story of Balaram, a rationalist as well as a huge admirer of Louis Pasteur, the French microbiologist. The second part of the novel depicts the tale of a seller trying to bring together the community of Indians in the Middle East. Jyothidas an Assistant Superintendent of Police takes charge of Lalpukur Police station. He thinks that Alu is a terrorist

The third part deals with the life of Mrs. Verma, who rejects rational thinking. She tries to make an Indian model of community life in the desert. But she is deserted by others. At the end of the novel, it is found that they are in search of new horizons, expectations which are not fully formed and imaginations yet to be fulfilled.

‘The Shadow Lines’ is the most celebrated novel of 1988 by Amitav Ghosh. This novel established him as the international author by winning Sahitya Akademi award. This story can largely be referred as a tale of partition and borders. Partition of country gives birth to the question of home and nation for huge chunk of people, who became victim because they lost their nationality, their home, their culture and became alien in their own country or home. This novel originates the emotions fettered with the thought of nation of post-colonial age. Decolonisation in India not only produced new states and boundaries but also produced destitute people, wayfarers, shortage, poverty and scarcity in the country. This is the tale of one such family who suffered the quest of finding home, after the partition of India and Bangladesh. Thakuma, the aunt of the protagonist is another important character after Tridib the protagonist. She became a citizen of India after partition as she was married in Kolkata and before marriage she lived in Dhaka which now has become a part of Bangladesh. The lines drawn on the border with the help of fences seem to be the lines of shadows which appear in the light of day and vanish in the dark of night. She has spent all her life in the melancholy of becoming a foreigner in her own country. This new or old country is full of the old customs and culture but her maternal house and relatives are no more hers now.

She is a self-governing woman who retires as a principal from a school of girls. Her character is important as she emanates the feelings of nationalism. Before the partition, people of India had ignited the spark of insurrection against the British law in every heart. Thamma was a young, enthusiastic and vigorous lady who was completing her bachelor’s in college at that time. All the young people were very influenced by the heroism of freedom fighters that were then called as terrorists by the British Government. Before independence when the blood of every citizen of India was boiling for independence, being a woman, she had this blazing fire of nationalism in her spirit and to a great extent wanted to serve the freedom fighters. She was a strong woman. She always desired to serve her nation although she did not get an chance to struggle for freedom against Britishers yet as teacher she always tried to inculcate patriotic values in her students. She always performed her duty whole heartedly and responsibly. We can notice these qualities of hers when she admits her desire to serve for nationalists and killing the soldiers of Britishers.

“The Hungry Tide” is written into two parts: Part one- The Ebb: Bhata and Part two- The Flood: Jowar. The most attractive thing is that drew my notice was that it is written in multiple small chapters in both parts. There are two main characters in the novel one is Kanai, the main protagonist and Piya a Cetologist from America. Every alternate chapter enlightens the story either of Kanai or Piya. It is like the two ends of the same river that are together but apart, that is bound to move concurrently for their survival still cannot gather but will merge into the sea when it comes to the end of river and beginning of the sea. And then it will be impossible to identify any difference and find the existence of any two objects. In the sea, there can be only one water that doesn't recognize anything else except its own challenger deep which accommodates numerous species and lives.

The novel unfolds through the perspective of Kanai, Piya, Nirmal, Nilima, Kusum, Fokir, Moyna, and Horen. An anonymous fictional narrator is present like a commentator and bridges the missing gaps in the novel. The major geographical area is confined to the Sunderbans, though references have been made to places like America and Kolkata as well. There is a mix-up of past, present, and future in the narration. Piya is an Indian origin foreigner. She was born to Indian parents but grew up in America. But the love for her country pulls her to Sundarbans for research only but then a series of events compel her to stay in India and work for the betterment of her people. What an amazing thing it is that she never goes back to her parents and spends all her life to raise Fokir's son and serve the trust. It is nothing but feeling of Indianans and Nationalism.

'Gun Island' Is a Surreal Novel About Climate Change and Migration. This is the latest novel by Amitav Ghosh which got published in June 2019. Writing novels is not just entertaining but it reflects the personal experiences, concerns, feelings, and thought process of the author himself. After reading so many works and interviews of Ghosh I can state this. The backdrop of this story is again set in the Sunderbans which is badly affected by climate change and Ghosh is so concerned about it that it is reflecting on his work not only once but twice. In *The Hungry Tide* as well he pointed out this issue of disturbing nature and warned about the hazardous results. In the same manner, Ghosh has always chosen Hindi names like "Tridib", the protagonist in shadow lines, his beloved "May", "Thamma" his grandmother. Thamma is the abbreviated version of "thaku ma" which means grandmother in Bengali. And various events and geographical detailed description locations in Calcutta and Dhaka for example the gol market, victoria memorial, ports of Al- Gzhira in Circle of Reason, etc.

How much influence of his nation, being a person who is born and brought up in India, but doesn't reside in India, is there on the writer that it can be noticed in the various events, atmosphere, description of its character's appearances. Since this quality is often seen in the works of diaspora writers but it is remarkable to write the actual circumstances and issues of India while living in some foreign country especially in the era of such less internet penetration and lack of communication facilities, etc. Amitav Ghosh, The critic, chronicler, essayist and thinker, has certainly been breaking many glass ceilings. His work has the intensity of live veracity, which possibly stem from his experiences as a journalist, academician, anthropologist and lecturer in different parts of the globe.

It is absolutely right to say that the whole thing illustrates the thought of Indianans in the works of Ghosh.

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