



The sense of alienation and dislocation in the study of Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Line*

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Abstract— “*Shadow line*” by Amitav Ghosh is one of the prominent novels in Indian English Literature. It is a popular historical novel which has been written under the canopy of postcolonial literature. This is the second novel of Amitav Ghosh which was published in the year 1988 and earned the Sahitya Academy Award in 1989. In the current research paper, themes of alienation and dislocation have been analysed. Amitav Ghosh, one of India's the greatest contemporary novelists, strongly depicts the social, cultural and psychological experienced by individuals and marginalised communities uprooted from their native lands. The study also examines, how the writer presents the poor lives are disrupted by migration, war and the brutal partition of India. The main objective of this study through the close textual analysis is to bring into limelight the brutal impact of the brutal division of India that results into pain and trauma of the oppressed community members of the society.



Keywords— *Alienation, Dislocation, Contemporary, Trauma, Underprivileged.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Amitav Ghosh is one of the most prominent and critically acclaimed contemporary literary figures in Indian English literature, whose works have significantly contributed to global literary discourse. He was born on 11th of July 1956 in Calcutta (now Kolkata), India. His life and literary imagination have been shaped by a distinctive blend of transnational experiences, scholarly dedication, and deep engagement with history and culture. His upbringing in various countries including India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Iran due to his father's diplomatic career exposed him to diverse linguistic, cultural, and political environments. This early mobility profoundly influenced his understanding of borders, identities, and historical interconnectedness, themes that recur throughout his literary works.

Ghosh's educational background further contributed to his intellectual development. He completed his undergraduate studies in history at St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, and later pursued a master's

degree at the Delhi School of Economics. Subsequently, he obtained a D.Phil. in social anthropology from the University of Oxford. His academic training in anthropology is particularly significant, as it informs his narrative method, characterized by meticulous research, ethnographic detail, and a strong emphasis on cultural contexts.

Ghosh's writing reflects a combination of “anthropological inquiry and narrative imagination,” allowing him to explore complex historical and social realities with remarkable depth. From the outset of his career, Ghosh demonstrated a commitment to exploring the intersections of history, society, and politics. His early experiences as a journalist also contributed to his analytical approach, enabling him to investigate and interpret contemporary issues with clarity and precision. This blend of journalistic sensibility and academic scholarship distinguishes his work from that of many of his contemporaries (Hawley, 2005).

II. REPRESENTATION OF ALIENATION AND DISLOCATION

Alienation can be described as a feeling of separation from any place, people, community or even oneself. The concept of dislocation is defined as a physical and psychological move from one's native land, culture and belongings. The sense of alienation and dislocation has been presented by Amitav Ghosh in his novel 'The Shadow Lines'. According to Ghosh, shadow line does not just mean the rigid national borders or fuzzy and sifting boundaries between different nations and their identities; rather, it refers to the emotional and psychological dislocation of the characters. Ghosh's novels usually challenge the very idea of rigidity of national borders which separate people and places. Several historical events such as the liberation struggle in Bengal, Second World War, the partition of India in 1947 and communal violence in Bangladesh and India have been described in the novel to highlight the idea of partition leading to alienation and dislocation (Sikder and Talukder, 2025).

Geographical borders and demarcations, in Ghosh's opinion, are arbitrary and erect barriers between nations and their citizens. Jethamoshai, Thamma's uncle, informs her after being convinced to move to Calcutta to live with his extended family.

Because he believes that nations are firm, Jethamoshai's comment illustrates the pointlessness of boundaries. Since he is aware that once a person starts to move, there is no stopping him, he questions the ability of these national boundaries to keep people from their country and culture. The narrator recognizes the foolishness of politician's constant line drawing since it promotes violence and killing on both sides of the border rather than dividing anything or anyone. He conveys his personal opinion about the inefficiency of these borders that separate countries on geographical maps when he claims that they are worthless (Pattanayak, 2021).

Through the novel Ghosh has tried to contrast between the artificial borders with the mental borders. He says people often used to create the political boundaries in their minds by separating the physical world in the form of two nations, two culture and two religions. Although these artificial borders can divide the nations, religions and cultures but they cannot completely divide human memories, relationship and human experiences. Further he says that the political boundaries only create chaos, physical atrocities and mental disturbances. When people encounter these thing they feel alienated and dislocated from their homeland.

The novels the shadow lines highlight the existential challenges, migration, and a chaotic state of

affairs. These issues have resulted in the loss of many human lives, particularly those of middle-class families, most of whom are Indians and Asians living in various countries. Ghosh's novels address human problems and the current issues relevant to everyone. Through his novels and the characters Ghosh has presented the theme of alienation and displacements under the shade of history and reality. As an aspiring author, Ghosh himself settled in the United States and became part of the displaced and Diaspora migrant community. It allowed him to write authentically about mixed heritage and the migrant experience, and he has emerged as a great writer. His novels depict the struggles, anxieties, and details of the Diaspora. Dislocation is the condition of post modernity, to which we have all responded with excitement and fear, which is perfectly justifiable in the contemporary context of our lives. This moment is predicated upon not only the significance of the loss of one's roots but also upon one's consciousness of the process of losing that precious 'lived sense of place,' which Ghosh identifies as the catalyst for the possible birth of the novel. In Ghosh's work, displacement has led to alienation and a search for self. He moves from homesickness to follow changing identities and establish new relationships in new place. Most of his characters belong to multicultural society and are deeply aware of the social reality. The multicultural ethos they are confronted with leads to the struggle for a new life but not a complete break from the past. Ghosh focuses on sensitive protagonists who lack a stable sense of place and cultural identity and are victimized by other forms of social oppression (Diksha, 2024).

The author of *The Shadow Lines* does a good job at capturing the magnificent cities of Dhaka and Calcutta. The author goes into great detail on Bengal's partition and the suffering that followed. In Pakistan and India, this division has resulted in significant disruption and relocation. One of the main issues is the displacement of migrants. Even though they are separated into lines, these lines are simply shadow lines that have been erased by nostalgia, longing, and past memories. In addition to two forms of displacement, forced migration and voluntary migration, this book frequently features themes of memory and yearning for home. Bengal's split was the first, and the highly qualified Indian labor force was the second (Pattanayak, 2021).

Naturally, *The Shadow Lines* clearly follows the bildungsroman pattern, which starts with the narrator-protagonist's boyhood and ends with him reaching age and maturity. The bildungsroman's requirement for a change of locale clearly distinguishes each stage of his maturation (Barat, 2021).

The story of the novel, *The Shadow Lines* revolves around the theme of memory, identity, nationalism and the artificial demarcation lines that divide family as well as nations. In *The Shadow Lines* the story takes place in India, England and Bangladesh revealing that there are connections between each and every people despite of the geographic boundaries. The novel opens with the unnamed narrator who tells a number of stories and memories to his cousin Ila and his uncle Robi. These memories and stories include the stories of the narrator, his uncle Tridib and his grandmother Tha'mma, Mayadebi's elder sister and his parents. The two parents of the unnamed narrator have three sons named Jatin, Tridib, Robi. The wife of Jatin is Queen Victoria. He has a daughter called Ila. She moves to different places with her parents. Tridib is the only one from the Maya debi's family who lives in his ancestral house. Though his grandmother thinks that he is useless, but Tridib is very intelligent and he has keen interest in history, geography and ancient civilization. When Tridib sees May Price, she was baby and he had gone to London with his parents in 1939 and stayed at Price family's home. Then Tridib again met May Price in Calcutta and he developed love with her. This is the important element in *The Shadow Lines*. Robi accompanies Tridib, May, Tha'mma and Mayadebi to bring Jethamoshai (grandmother's old uncle) from Dhaka to Calcutta. Then they all saw that Tridib was killed by a communal riot. It has not been mentioned directly but later on narrator hears this as part of the haunting memories of both Robi and May Price. The first generation includes Tha'mma, Mayadebi, Jethamoshi. The second generation is made up of Jatin, Tridib, Robin. The third generation includes Ila and Nick. Tha'mma is the strict grandmother of the narrator. She is the pivot of the family and whatever she says becomes law in the family. She is the elder sister of Tridib's mother Mayadebi. She lives in GolePark, Calcutta, where she reigns supreme over her family her son and daughter-in-law and their son, the narrator, who is very attached to her and listens to her nostalgic stories of her days in Dhaka before partition. Tha'mma retired from her school in 1962 when the narrator turns ten (Geethanjali and Prema, 2021).

The novel deals with the theme of alienation, dislocation, migrant or diasporic consciousness where the characters linked with the geographical and emotional boundaries of their nation are trying to find themselves in all the new locations. The migration away from the homeland involves moving away from harmony. The foreign nation might seem like the land of dreams from their native homeland but it is just a mere illusion. Discourse of home is a vital marker of the diasporic themes. Sensitivity to the homeland is one of the

significant parts of diasporic experience. The Shadow line is the story of the victims of history who are exiled by events that take place beyond their control. The novel holds a unique position within the contemporary postcolonial literature. The novel presents the miserable situation of the poor who were uprooted from their native land. Amitav Ghosh focuses on the various socio-economic issues being faced by the Indian diaspora abroad because of illegal migration in the novel. The novel describes the themes like migration, diasporic experience, alienation, dislocation, memory and rootlessness. Characters in the novel do not belong to any particular place but forced to travel and form a new habitat due to loneliness and sense of void that arise out of displacement. The concept of home itself becomes a matter of doubt; there is no home in this novel that is ordinary. Uncertainty about the place of origin or destination is the significant characteristic of this novel (Nithyasekar, 2024).

The novel the shadow line refers to the journey of alienation, dislocation, migration and diasporic approach. Ghosh has given the most beautiful depiction of journey of alienation and dislocation in this novel through his character Tha'mma, Ila and Tridib. Characters who suffer from dislocation and alienation find their homes in a new unknown place throughout the novel. The novelist has tried to convey the sadness and sorrow involved in losing their home and possessions of the characters through this novel. Many people who belong to Dhaka, Kolkata and Pakistan are suffering from the same sorrow and sadness because of partition. Partition has led to great disruption and displacement of people in Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. These kinds of shocking incidents are presented in the novel with reality by Amitav Ghosh. The novel has also depicted some riots, violence that leads to disruption of trust and relationship among people. Death of Tridib can be taken as the best example of how violence leads to physical as well as emotional dislocation of characters. The novel depicts how the characters try to find themselves in this journey of life. They are always affected by the culture, history and memory.

In the novel *The Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh has used a nonlinear narrative technique in which he has portrayed events out of the chronological order instead of straight timeline he uses flashback, flash forward and dream sequences to explore his character's depth. The narrator looks back on the events from a distance of about twenty years, and also digs deep into his memory to recall important incidents from the past that shape the plot. By doing this, Ghosh is able to explore his characters in a really unique way. As in the novel the unnamed narrator recalls that.

"In 1939, thirteen years before I was born, my father's aunt, Mayadebi, went to England with her husband and her son, Tridib.... Mayadebi was twenty-nine when they left and Tridib was eight. I remember trying very hard to imagine him back to my age, to reduce his height to mine, and to think away the spectacles that were so much a part of him that I really believed he had been born with them.... My grandmother didn't approve of Tridib. He is a loafer and a wastrel.... For her time was like a toothbrush: it went mouldy if it wasn't used.... Tridib's father was a diplomat, an officer in the Foreign Service. He and Mayadebi were always away.... Of Tridib's two brothers, Jatin-Kaku, the elder... was an economist with the U.N. He was always away too, somewhere in Africa or South-East Asia, with his wife and his daughter Ila, who was my age.... Tridib had been to London, with his parents, many years ago... [and] there was a family called Price... very, very old friends of Tridib's family, because Mrs. Price's father, Lionel Tresawsen had been in India when the British were here, and... she had a daughter called May, but she was a little baby when Tridib was in London, and as far as I knew he hadn't seen her since... I met May Price for the first time... when she came to Calcutta on a visit. The next time I met her was seventeen years later, when I went to London myself.... Later, when we were eating our dinner, I discovered that in 1959, when [Tridib] was twenty-seven and she nineteen, they had begun a long correspondence.... Smiling at the memory, she told me how [Tridib's] card had reached her just when she was trying to get over an adolescent crush on a schoolboy trombonist... and after that they had written to each other regularly— short, chatty letters, usually. Soon, pen-friend like they had exchanged photographs" (Ghosh, 1988).

The narrator remembers the two separate encounters he had with May Price: the first encounter in 1963-64 where May was accompanying Tha'mma, Mayadebi and Tridib to fetch the narrator's grandmother's uncle, Jethamoshai, from Dhaka (present Bangladesh) to Calcutta (India), who all witnessed the death of Tridib in the episode of communal violence during this journey; and the second encounter, where May is located by the narrator himself in London during his stay in London for one year's research grant to gather material for Ph.D. thesis in 1979-80. The narrator remembers his meeting with May Price in 1961, when he was nine years old: "I met May Price for the first time two years after that incident, when she came to Calcutta on a visit. The next time I met her was seventeen years later, when I went to London myself". In such a way, the novel narrates the events that occurred in 1939-40 during the Second World War, 1960-63 and 1978-79 in a scattered manner, but the adult narrator, who is

recollecting about these events in 1980s, has organized these scattered pieces of temporal and spatial memories in a unified manner. Though in a chronological order, this piece of writing starts from the period of time before the narrator was even born and it belonged to colonial India, it consists of a lot of postcolonial moments and all episodes occur in simultaneity in order to give sense to the story at the end of it. The year 1939 marks the beginning of the Second World War and a lot of changes taking place in the Indian subcontinent. It was the time when Mayadebi came to London and had met with the Price family and Tridib. This story was narrated to the young narrator in twenty one years after the event; the narrator was only eight years old. Tridib met May when she was still just a baby in London. They started loving each other through their letters, breaking the barriers of national and cultural boundaries. In his story, Amitav Ghosh discusses the enigmatic relationship between Tridib and May and also the strong connection that exists between their families despite the physical and geographical barriers that seem to exist between the two nations they come from (Prasad, 2008).

Amitav Ghosh employs his characters to illustrate diverse perspectives on borders and belonging. Tridib, characterized as an intellectual and dreamer, transcends geographical boundaries through his imagination. In contrast, Ila embodies the cosmopolitan outsider, lacking roots and stability. The narrator remarks, "She had no sense of place," emphasize her disconnection from both India and the West (*The Shadow Lines*). Ila's liberty starkly contrasts with the narrator's deep connection to memory and ancestral history. This dynamic among the characters reveals that national identity is not singular or static but shifts based on perspective, memory, and personal experience. The narrator's quest to comprehend his place in the world is mirrored in his emotional recollections: "I could not see her face; but I could tell that she was smiling, the way she always did, with her eyes" (*The Shadow Lines* 198). These personal moments imply that human experience is defined more by relationships than by borders (Prabakar, 2025).

Thus, it is possible to describe *The Shadow Lines* as a novel which depicts the complications of the themes of alienation, dislocation, and diaspora consciousness. Ghosh tries to emphasize the psychological aspect of displacement and describes it not only as a physical but also mental and spiritual condition. Through *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh shows his main preoccupation with the idea of wider cross-border humanity with deep insight into the problems of ethnic nationalism and communalism. It also demonstrates new heights of his craftsmanship (Prasad, 2008).

The shadow lines represent not only physical divisions on a map, but also the psychological and emotional disruption onto the collective consciousness of the affected people during the partition of Indian subcontinent. By this geographical demarcation they had to encounter displacement, alienation, and fractured identity, leaving individuals feeling adrift, caught between worlds, and uncertain of their place in the grand narrative of history. This sense of alienation and dislocation is further compounded by the imposed ideologies and cultural norms of the colonizer, who forcefully criticized the local practices in every walk and talks of life and often fostered a sense of inferiority among the deprived section of the poor society. Even after the end of the rule of the colonial government, these shadow lines persist in the lives and identity of the people, continuing deep and subtle influence on the consciousness of the individuals to perceive themselves, their companionship to others, and their view of understanding of the world around them. They shape prejudices, fuel conflicts, demonstrating the enduring legacy of colonialism and its lasting impact on the human experience (Goel, 2025).

The book shows how these harsh artificial boundaries lead to on-going problems with politics, society, and the economy, creating a cycle of hurt and unfairness. It also explores how our memories and the stories we tell about the past are complicated, and how the lines that separate us can make it hard to understand what really happened. The main character, a young Indian man named Tridib, represents the struggles of a society dealing with the lasting impact of being ruled by another country, a burden that affects not just politics, but everyday life and how a nation sees itself. This legacy is felt in the way people talk about politics, but also in the small details of daily life and the big stories that shape a nation's identity. The novel tries to make sense of how these things are all connected, and how they affect the people living through it. This all shows the writer's exploration of cultural identity of the different nations, displacement and alienation and the artificial nature of the political borders drawn by the nations.

Themes such as nationalistic fervour, violence between communities, and powerlessness of people who are forced to leave their home become evident through the novels of Ghosh. Analysis of his novels under consideration illustrates how Ghosh promotes the case of dispossessed people and how they experience misery and sadness because of violence between communities and barriers that separate them physically. The issue of existential dilemmas, migrations, state of chaos, and loss of life of human beings, particularly middle-class people, are central in the novels under consideration. Ghosh deals

with human issues and problems of the contemporary society. An aspiring writer Ghosh has settled down himself in U.S, and thus qualifies to be part of the 'displaced', 'diaspora' migrant community. This has enabled him to write authentically about the mixed heritage with the migrant people. He emerges as a great writer and his novels depict the struggles, anxieties and details of diasporas' of the contemporary society. Dislocation is the state of postmodernity to which we have all reacted with excitement and fear; reactions entirely reasonable in the present settings of our lives. Ghosh's remarkable collection of fiction and non-fictional essays resides somewhere between the comfort of settlement and the frightening yet exhilarating possibility of the event of unsettlement, often a foot in each, and mostly poised just on the edge of disjunction. But this moment is based not only on the importance of Lostness but on the awareness of the process of losing the precious 'lived sense of place' a 'distancing' that Ghosh sees as a catalyst for the possible birth of the novel. And it is in the apprehension of both these experiences simultaneously that of the loss of location and that of a consciousness of being caught in these processes of losing one's locatedness lies Ghosh's significance as one of the most important writers of our times. In Ghosh, displacement has resulted in alienation and in search for self. He takes a journey from the past to the present, through new faces and new connections. His heroes belong to a multi-cultural society and possess great insight into a social truth. Their encounter with a multi-cultural spirit is what gives rise to their fight for a new existence without completely severing ties with the past. (Mohana, 2016).

The novel "The Shadow Lines" by Amitav Ghosh brings into focus the feeling of homelessness of the rootless persona. It highlights the nostalgia for home and embrace of love towards homeland in the protagonist. One of the most important issues of the character is the transition from source culture to target culture, from homeland to diaspora until both of them overlap and merge. The characters in the novel follow the concept of unique homeland and the feeling of insecurity. The displaced persons are caught in two opposing poles that either they could acclimatize themselves or stuck in the hostile world of shadow lines. Their homeland always stays in their inner mind even when they get displaced in the new land. The nostalgia for home in changing cultural environment evokes feelings of rootlessness, alienation, and dislocation. The characters with dislocated destiny are filled with the problems of home through rootlessness, nostalgia, memory, and diaspora. The flashback technique has been used in an extremely effective manner in this novel by Amitav Ghosh. However, the aggressive

imperialism, colonialism and capitalistic fervour threatened the idea of fixed, distinct home for individuals. Some immigrants showed the sense of unavoidable dislocation who withdraw into themselves in isolation and derive a sense of release recollecting the past walking down the memory lane. Prof. Makarand Paranjape in his seminal work *In Diaspora: Theories, Histories, Texts*, succinctly depicts consequence of physical and psychological alienation saying: Homeland gets so distant from the diaspora that the motherland becomes a kind of sacred idol of memory and imagination. As the homeland plays such a central role in one's life, great writers including Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul, Amitav Ghosh, Bharati Mukherjee, Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai have handled this theme of belongingness and search for home in their works. Amitav Ghosh portrays the picture of the victims of diaspora who find themselves isolated and yet attached to the nostalgia of the past. They get insecure and being surrounded by a new culture, try to recreate their past home. Calcutta and Dhaka get depicted in their memories with all its beauty. Home memories are depicted as a recurrent backdrop in the whole novel. Here Tha'mma and Ila find themselves geographically and culturally disoriented because of partition and globalization and they regain their lost home through memory, fantasy, narrative and myths. Along with the intense attachment to and nostalgia about the past, one can also notice how intensely one's past past intrudes into the present. The novel reveals that memory of everyone is measured on the scale of how much one's past experiences share with others. *The Shadow Lines* shows nostalgia that is an essential part of history (Sahare, 2016).

III. METHODOLOGY

The objective of the current research paper is to investigate the issues of trauma, alienation, and displacement of *The Shadow Lines* through qualitative, analytical, interpretative, and descriptive methods as well as through narrative techniques. The research seeks to analyse the complex interplay between the old and new memories of the displaced people, the harsh history of the partition that led the common people to alienation and traumatic experiences. The study also explored the different types of dislocation like geographical, emotional, cultural, and intellectual alienation caused by the political borders and partition. By means of a critical text analysis, this research will try to bring into focus how the novel by Ghosh does not only represent the personal problems of his characters but also represents the bigger historical-political framework which provides us with an understanding of the universal aspects of human nature of

longing, sadness, and search for identity. While the objective of this study was the analysis of the narrative styles used by Ghosh in his novel, at the same time this research will try to look into the ways in which migration, partition, and displacement influenced the fragmented identities of his characters.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

By the novel the author demonstrates native land as a physical location, side by side he points out that it can also be exist in the memory and imagination of native dwellers. In the character of Tha'mma, her experience shows the limitations of defining home geographically by sifting one place to another during the partition, while the narrator's experience demonstrates how a person can develop emotional relationships or attachment with places beyond his immediate surroundings. Furthermore, the novel suggests that human attachments are stronger and more complex than political borders. Ghosh does not deny the power of borders established between two nations; rather, he tries to show that their power is incomplete. Borders can regulate movement between two or more nations and determine their citizenship, but they cannot completely control the memory, imagination, affection, or cultural identity of the people of the nation. Amitav Ghosh has tried to show that dislocation is not limited to people who physically migrate, even those who remain in their homeland too can experience dislocation because political borders and historical events can transform their relationship with the known places that they occupy. Ghosh has depicted the character the unnamed narrator who never physically visited many of the places that occupy his imagination. But through the character of Tridib's story he develops an intimate relationship with them. The narrator also experiences psychological dislocation after Tridib's death. He has tried to understand how an ordinary geographical border could separate people who were connected by family, friendship and history. The novel the shadow lines indicates the crisis of national identity, the character Tha'mma initially believes the importance of national borders but the journey of Dhaka challenges this belief. She came to know the political partition has transformed it in to another country. She finds it very difficult to know how a place of her own which was connector to her family earlier suddenly became foreign for her and her family. Another character named Ila in the novel also represents another important form of alienation and dislocation. Though she lives in London freely out of the restriction of Indian traditional culture yet she her life reveals the loneliness that can accompany cultural displacement. Through this character

Ghosh suggest that physical movement across national borders does not automatically produce freedom or belongings. A man can cross the national borders easily but he remains psychologically and emotionally displaced from his or her own native land. May price is also another character of the novel who represents the dimension of alienation and dislocation. She belongs to England but her relationship with Tridib creates a connection between English and Indian world. The death of Tridib leaves her with a lasting sense of emotional disturbance and dislocation. Ghosh focuses the political boundaries or partition, the most important historical cause of alienation and dislocation in the novel the shadow lines. The division of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh create new political boundaries and displaced millions of people. He says people who once belong to the same culture become separated by national identities. Ghosh points out another factor memory, which plays central role in the novel that helps to produce alienation and dislocation. The characters in the novel use memories to reconstruct places that they have lost or never physically experienced. Through the novel the author demonstrates native land as a physical location, side by side he points out that it can also be exist in the memory and imagination of native dwellers. In the character of Tha'mma, her experience shows the limitations of defining home geographically by sifting one place to another during the partition, while the narrator's experience demonstrates how a person can develop emotional relationships or attachment with places beyond his immediate surroundings. Furthermore, the novel suggests that human attachments are stronger and more complex than political borders. Ghosh does not deny the power of borders established between two nations; rather, he tries to show that their power is incomplete. The current study suggests that borders or political demarcations can regulate movement between two or more nations and determine their citizenship, but they cannot completely control the memory, imagination, affection, or cultural identity of the people of the nation.

V. CONCLUSION

The shadow lines reveal that the characters travel here and there throughout the story. The characters like Thamma, Ila, Tridib and May price move here and there in lieu of the artificial geographical borders during the partition of India and Pakistan. The partition of India and Pakistan creates a major source of alienation and dislocation. Alienation and dislocation are central thematic structure of the novel *The Shadow Lines*. Through Partition, communal violence, migration, memory, and national boundaries, Ghosh explores the difficulties of

alienation and dislocation faced by the common people in divided countries. The novel ultimately suggests that identity is not permanent it can change any time according to the situation as in the novel the author has shown in the character of Tha'mma. Thamma's identity develops according to the experiences through moving different places, relationships, culture and circumstances. The characters move between places, histories, and cultures, and their experiences challenge harsh and rigid definitions of nation and home.

After analyzing the text and related articles, papers, journals the study suggests that the Alienation and dislocation not only arises when political and social divisions separate people from their territories, memories, culture, attachments and relationships of their belongings but also may arises from the environmental and ecological crises such as natural disaster including cyclone, floods, climate change, increasing of sea levels and depletion of glaciers, the new forms of alienation and dislocation.

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