

PARTITION: A PATH TO FREEDOM OR A GATEWAY TO TRAUMA? A STUDY OF AMITAV GHOSH'S THE SHADOW LINES

Sabiha Sabrin

Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Science and Technology Chittagong, Foy's Lake, Chittagong-4202, Bangladesh

Abstract

The partition of 1947 marks one of the greatest events of history. It gave hope of peace and had promises of freedom, equality of opportunity, ending of ignorance etc. But the promises of partition are not kept. Migration, violence, murder, rape, communal riots, traumatic experiences are the real consequences of partition. Millions of people were affected by partition and are still haunted by its diabolical shadows. Instead of freedom, people are gifted with endless animosity between two nations. Amitav Ghosh is one of the most significant Indian writers of his generation who tries to show the illusory aspects of freedom and border in his novel The Shadow Lines. He skillfully describes the traumatic aftermaths of partition including the communal riots. The present study intends to investigate how the long cherished hope of freedom in the form of partition only gives way to everlasting trauma and how the trauma affects individual's life..

Keyword: Partition, Aftermath, Concept of Freedom, Trauma.

1. INTRODUCTION

The British ruled on the Indian subcontinent between 1858 and 1947. India was considered the jewel in the crown of British Empire. But unfortunately Indian nationals neither had any say in central government nor in local level. The feeling of injustice had created a dream to struggle for freedom among the people of the subcontinent. Finally, the British left Indian subcontinent, but their departure led to the division of

the nation into two independent states, India and Pakistan based on the "two nations theory". The process of partition was accompanied by migration, barbaric violence, brutality, slaughter of innocent people, looting and burning. Intersect between two countries contributed to increase the strife instead of giving desired peace and freedom. Many years after the partition, the people of the two nations are still trying to heal the scars and trauma left behind by this diabolical event of history.

Most of the partition related works deal with the immediate violence and oppression during the partition. Violence lies at the heart of these works. Incidents of murder, rape, looting, migration, train massacre etc. are common in partition works. But the inefficacy of partition and its ceaseless traumatic aftermaths are not presented equally. In *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh depicts the aftermath and incessant trauma of partition. Ghosh here also questions the validity of freedom that is gained by drawing lines between nations. He recalls the 1964 riots to justify his point that drawing of borders during 1947 did not resolve the tensions between Hindu and Muslim communities. The novel also delineates how this never ending enmity can bring tragedy in the life of individual's and give traumatic experience that will haunt them in future.

2. PARTITION AND TRAUMA

Trauma can be defined as a type of psychological and emotional damage that occurs as a result of a severely distressing event, leading to serious and long-term psychological effects. The word "trauma" comes from a Greek word which means "wound", a separation of bodily tissues.

Kai Erikson says,

By individual trauma I mean a blow to the psyche that breaks through one's defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively... By collective trauma, on the other hand, I mean a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of communality. The collective trauma works its way slowly and even insidiously into the awareness of those who suffer from it, so it does not have the quality of suddenness normally associated with 'trauma'. But it is a form of shock all the same, a gradual realization that the community no longer exists as an effective source of support and that an important part of the self has disappeared... 'We' no longer exist as a connected pair or as linked cells in a large communal body (153-4).

Trauma is a term that can appropriately describe the implication of the partition of Indian subcontinent. In case of partition, the whole Indian subcontinent seems like a body; a diseased body which needs to be treated, which requires dismemberment of it, by creating a severe wound. Again, the country is made up of people who inhabit in it, so the wound would also affect their bodies, minds, hearts and lives. Therefore, the wound is not only a physical wound but also a psychological one. It serves as a traumatic experience to them that will haunt them in future. The memory of that incident would leave a scar upon the minds of millions of people. In reality, Partition was "...a sickening slaughter that would turn friend on friend, neighbour on neighbour, stranger on stranger...." (Collins and Lapierre 182). Not "a surgeon's scalpel" but "a butcher's axe" (Collins and Lapierre 289) was required to perform the vivisection of India.

After partition, India and Pakistan are still trying to establish and maintain a secular state with freedom and equality for all, but their attempts are interrupted by the riots. Religious tensions between these two nations have caused disturbance since the partition as Isabella Bruschi says, "... the old ghost of communal hatred, which shook the Indian Subcontinent in 1947, reappears again and again each time causing new outbursts of violence;... the life of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh

communities has been haunted by recurrent strife...." (25-26). In January 1964, there was clash between Hindus and Muslims after the disappearance of a precious relic from a mosque in Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. In India there was a militant separatist movement among the Sikhs in Punjab in the early 1980s that finally resulted in the operation Blue Star that left hundreds of troops and civilians dead and injured. Further, on 31 October 1984, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two members of her Sikh bodyguard. Communal tensions between Hindus and Muslims further reappeared in the 1990s that contributed to the destruction of the Babri Masjid in the city of Ayodha on 6 December 1992. Other than the riots, India and Pakistan were involved in three wars in 1947, 1965, and 1971. Again, Kashmir is a great example of the traumatic aftermath of partition. Mughal Emperor Jehangir once said that Kashmir was "a page that the painter of destiny had drawn with the pencil of creation" (Hay 2). But this "earthly paradise" (Hay 2) becomes the most disputed territory and a point of contention even today. Kashmir had also been partitioned like India, not by legal borders but by invasion and conflict. Thus, Kashmir bears the mark of lifelong enmity between Hindus and Muslims, it becomes a "... insurmountable barrier to their reconciliation" (Collins and Lapierre 550).

3. FUTILITY OF FREEDOM DEPICTED IN THE SHADOW LINES

People desired freedom from British colonialism, but freedom brings sufferings. The British policy of "divide and rule" finally resulted in partition. It has displaced millions of people, has led to the death of many people. Many people have to accept the fate of refugees. In the novel, *Tha'mma* frequently meets people in Calcutta whom she has known in Dhaka, who have come across the border before or after partition. These helpless people are doomed to a life of struggle. Their happy past is a dream now, present full of miseries. One day *Tha'mma* goes to meet her relative. Her cousin belonged to an affluent family and lived in a large house in Dhaka. But now, in Calcutta he has managed to be a ticket clerk and now is dead. His family lives in a room without any facilities like before. In Dhaka also there are migrants like Saifuddin and Khalil. Saifuddin has a garage and somehow manage his lives, but for Khalil, a rickshaw puller, it becomes difficult to run his family. The

life of those People is shaped by the borders separating them. There would have been no separate India or Pakistan, no violence and sufferings, no confusion between one's home and homeland, if there had been no partition. Those people are also nostalgic like Tha'mma, the border could not erase their memory and emotion. Their memory of freedom is related to sufferings. Though freedom is achieved after long struggle, no one can celebrate such freedom.

There were riots that occurred long after the partition of 1947. One of such riots was the January 1964 riot that affected Khulna, Calcutta and Dhaka simultaneously. The riots recall the brutality and unrest of 1947. In this way, drawing of borders does not resolve the tension. It does not bring the blessing of freedom for the nation. Partition exists as a living history in other events that bear the memory of the partition. After partition the two sides of the border come closer than before. The Mu-i-Mubarak incident is a clear example of the continuing trauma of partition. The sacred relic known as Mu-i-Mubarak, a hair of the Prophet Mohammad was installed in Hazratbal mosque in Kashmir. That place became a great center of pilgrimage for people of different religions. On 27 December, 1963, the relic disappeared from the Hazratbal mosque. When the news spread, life came to a standstill in Kashmir. Black flag demonstrations were held; schools, colleges and shops were closed; vehicles were disappeared from the street. On 4 January 1964 the Mu-i-Mubarak was recovered, and the people of Kashmir erupted with joy. In Khulna, a district of East Pakistan, a demonstration in protest against the theft of the relic turned violent, shops were burnt and few people were killed. The riots soon spread from Khulna to other districts like Dhaka. The Hindu refugees soon began to move towards India. The cities of East Pakistan were in the grip of killing, looting and burning. In Calcutta rumours were spread that the trains from Pakistan were full of dead bodies. In response to it, Calcutta also erupted on 10 January. The Hindu mobs killed Muslims, burning their shops and houses. Prophet relic was stolen from Kashmir, where there was no trouble, but madness spread to other places of both sides of the border. Their difference vanishes and the two sides resemble each other, they are united in hatred.

In this novel, Tridib is the representative of the modern man who does not believe in geographical borders, who tries to cross all lines through his imagination. But his

journey of life is ended after having fallen victim to the so called concept of freedom that partition promised to give. In reality it gives a collective and private memory of violence. Tridib was killed in a riot in Dhaka on January 1964 that was held in response to the riots in Calcutta. Tha'mma, Tridib, May Price and Robi went to Dhaka to bring back the uncle of Tha'mma. When they were returning and the rickshaw of Khalil carrying Jethomoshai was following them, a mob attacked them. May Price get out of the car to save them and Tridib also followed her and was killed by them. His death is an example of the shadowiness of the lines and the melting away of differences. Amitav Ghosh tries to point out the limitations of boundary and distance through the experiences of the narrator. The narrator once believed that distance separates and there exists another reality on the other side of the border. He tries to illustrate national boundaries by drawing circles with a pair of compasses on a map. He is perplexed after realizing cultural and emotional ties that exist between geographically distant areas. The narrator has discovered that the riot he was caught up in on his school bus in Calcutta and the riot that killed Tridib in Dhaka were product of the same incident. Both of them occurred in response to the theft of the sacred relic of the Prophet Mohammed's hair from Hazratbal mosque in Kashmir. Khulna, a city of East Pakistan where some of the terrible riots took place, is less than one hundred miles away from Calcutta on the other side of the border, but 1,200 miles away from Srinagar, Kashmir. In this way an event like the theft of the Prophet's hair in Srinagar induces a response thousands of miles away. There is something about the social relations in the subcontinent that can transgress the "looking glass borders" (Ghosh 233). Instead of separating them it ironically binds them together. Dhaka and Calcutta are now more closely bound to each other than before. It focuses on the sameness of human emotions and reactions. The real ties that bind people are a shared history, not artificial lines that cause violence and trauma. "The narrative thus suggests that the nature of boundaries can be understood through the metaphor of the looking glass: Partition's border between the people of India and West Pakistan resembles the mirror's boundary, in which self and other are identical" (Daiya 193).

A communal riot is an echo of partition that reminds that partition resolved nothing. But riots are not

remembered. The war with China is considered as the most important thing in the history of the country. On the other hand, riot is a local thing, not important in comparison to a war. The people those are killed in riots are very little in numbers than the people who are killed in war. Riots do not receive any media attention and leave no trace in national history or in individual memory. All are compelled to forget the riots as it impede the official histories of the state. When riots start, the government authorities do everything to stop it. And soon "... the riots had faded away from the pages of the newspapers, disappeared from the collective imagination of 'responsible opinion', vanished, without leaving a trace in the histories and bookshelves. They had dropped out of memory into the crater of a volcano of silence" (Ghosh 230). The silence about riot is because riots question the validity of freedom. A war is the drama of state authorities, where riots are insignificant as riots bring a breach in the monolithic authority of the government. But the most important thing is ignored, that there are many Hindus trying to save Muslims or many Muslims trying to save Hindus, often at the cost of their own lives. One should not forget the sacrifice of Khalil, a poor Muslim refugee who gives shelter to a Hindu uncle of Tha'mma. He is killed in a Muslim land for the safety of a Hindu. Such heroes are not remembered, such sagas go unwritten and unrecorded. Because such common man's effort can shake the monopoly of the government, can shatter the illusion of distance, can show the ineffectiveness of drawing borders to divide people and their shared history.

Tha'mma is the grandmother of the narrator, who has her own concepts of nation and nationalism. She grew up in the atmosphere of anti-colonial struggle and glorifies militant activities. Her concept of nationalism is full of unrealistic notions about freedom and nation building. She believes that a true nation can only emerge out of struggle and armed conflicts. Her understanding of the concept of freedom is also very limited. To her, freedom means political freedom of the nation from the colonial rule and this freedom come through sacrifice and bloodshed. She rejects Ila's notion of freedom. Ila wants to be free from Indian culture. For this, she decides to go to London. But Tha'mma thinks Ila has no right to live in London, because she does not belong to that place. Her belief is that a nation is built with blood and sacrifice and Ila has no contribution like that. Tha'mma does not understand Ila's desire for freedom.

Nor does she understand Tridib's concept of freedom, who does not believe in physical boundaries, can cross any distance through his imagination. But Tha'mma who talks much about freedom and sacrifice leaves the old man, her Jethomoshai to his fate during the riot of 1964. It is Tridib, the wastrel who goes to save him and embraces death for the sake of others. However, after Tridib's death, her unrealistic notions about freedom are shattered totally, as she comes to know that freedom cannot be achieved by drawing lines; it can never ensure safety of people. "Tha'mma's nationalist faiths fail her because she comes to realize that borders have a tenuous existence and that not even a history of bloodshed can make them real and impermeable" (Kaul 279). The novelist here questions the validity of freedom through Tha'mma's realization.

Robi, the brother of Tridib, also interprets how freedom causes untold violence and hatred. When Robi was a district officer, he told policemen to stand against the dissidents and kill them if necessary in order to protect the region's freedom and order. And yet, he received almost identical letters from the terrorists in which they threatened to kill him for their freedom. He feels "... like reading my own speech transcribed on a mirror" (Ghosh 247). A minority group considers itself to be a nation, acts against an oppressive state and calls it their fight for freedom. And for majority group, terrorists have to be demolished at any cost to preserve the state's "unity and freedom" (Ghosh 246). One is ready to kill another for getting freedom. Robi then comments that freedom can never be achieved and nothing will change if thousands of lines are drawn between the whole subcontinent, because "It's a mirage; the whole thing is a mirage" (Ghosh 247). Freedom can never be possible, as no one can divide memory. He also can never be free from the memory of Tridib's death.

There are many who come to realize the futility of freedom before the partition. They may be called mad, but actually they are rejecting the madness of partition. Jethomoshai is one of them who reject the concept of partition from the beginning. He refuses to leave his house in Dhaka for the safety that India has to provide. According to him, there is no logic of leaving. What will he do if they draw another line there? Where will he go then? He asserts his nationalistic view that "... I was born here, and I'll die here" (Ghosh 215). His rejection questions the efficiency of borders.

During partition there was a belief that Muslims and Hindus are separate peoples with their own culture and religion, unable to live together peacefully. The animosity and differences are highlighted excluding the truth that the two communities shared their living space peacefully until concept of partition is emerged. For this reason both countries continue to take interest in each other's affairs even after partition. Thus, partition or boundary could not ensure freedom because two nations have a shared history. The borders only initiate never ending enmity between two nations. Partition of Tha'mma's house is similar to the partition of nation and impossibility of becoming free from a memory of shared lives. After the death of Tha'mma's grandfather, their house is divided as Tha'mma's parents and Jethomoshai quarrel over trivial matters. The two families have no further communication and there exists a great bitterness. But the women of the house continue to take interest in each other's affairs, even in the marriage of daughters on the other side of the wall. After marriage when Tha'mma and Mayadebi visit their home they find that the two families do not quarrel like before but the passage of time does not diminish their hatred. "They liked the wall now; it had become a part of them" (Ghosh 124). Their situation echoes the situation of partition.

4. TRAUMATIZED CHARACTERS IN THE SHADOW LINES

4.1. Tha'mma

Tha'mma is the grandmother of the narrator, sister of Mayadebi and a strict school mistress. The most important feature of Tha'mma's character is her concept of nationalism. She has a romantic view of nationalism and tends to relate bodily strength, sacrifice, and blood baths with the creation of nations. She values physical strength, as she is influenced by the freedom fighters of Bengal of her time who wanted to fight against the British with all their strength. She considers them as her true heroes and secretly desires to be a part of them or to help them. Again, her passion for freedom is reflected when she tells the narrator about an incident of her college life when one of her classmates was arrested by the police for terrorism who looked very shy but had a great courage to work for the cause of freedom. Tha'mma wished to help him, she even wished to kill the British for freedom; "... I would have killed him. It was for

our freedom: I would have done anything to be free" (Ghosh 39).

Tha'mma is a victim of partition who experiences the trauma of identity crisis. At first she is not conscious and thoughtful about the duality of her national identity and her birthplace. But when she decides to visit Dhaka she finds her birth place to be messily at odds with her nationality. Her identity crisis is reflected in the novel by the terms "coming" and "going". A Bengali speaker always says, "I am coming" instead of "I am going". This Bengali language feature actually shows the confusing migration or movement of populations during the partition of 1947. Their movement is confusing; they do not know whether they are "going away" or "coming home". There is no place to which they belong. Tha'mma is also displaced and rootless like them. Her identity is confusing and she is torn between her two identities.

Tha'mma can be termed as a nostalgic character. Her life was spent in a joint family in a big house. She had left that life long ago. She believes that nostalgia is a kind of weakness and everyone's duty is to forget the past and look ahead for future building. But when she moves into a large house after her son's promotion, the new house brings back memories of her childhood home in Dhaka. The past becomes important to her now. She feels a deep desire to go back to her past, to bring back her old uncle. Separation from own people and country gave her pain though she is not conscious about it before. But when she goes to Dhaka, she finds everything changed. She asks, "Where's Dhaka?" (Ghosh 194). Her reactions express her emotions when she tries to recognize her old house. Their ancestral home is now occupied by refugees. To her the house bears the memory of her past, balconies, terraces, the garden where she and Mayadebi had once spent their evening. She still remembers how she would make up stories about the other part of the house to frighten her young sister. Now she likes to live in those memories. At this stage, she understands the harsh reality that dislocated people like her have no home, only have memory, a traumatic memory which will haunt her always.

The trauma of partition is further experienced by Tha'mma when she loses her uncle and nephew Tridib in a communal riot - a fruit of partition. Tridib's death in riot changes her beliefs; the agony turned into hatred in her. Now she talks of fighting out of her hatred for Pakistanis who were her countrymen twenty years ago. Tha'mma's ideals of nationalism that she reared since

her childhood, fails with the reality of borders. Her idea of drawing lines with bloods for freedom is proved wrong. During the 1965 Indo- Pak war she sells her most valuable jewellery to help fund the war - the chain that her husband gave to her; that she had never put off even in her surgery. She declares, "For your sake; for your freedom. We have to kill them before they kill us; we have to wipe them out" (Ghosh 237). She breaks the radio on which she continuously hears the news of war cuts her hand and wants to donate her blood to the war fund. All these reflect upon the trauma that she experiences after the death of Tridib. She realizes that borders do not create separation; it is only a shadow line that killed Tridib. Her perception is changed now. She is disillusioned about the reality of border, war, bloodshed, and killing; that there is nothing of glory. All these can never bring freedom.

As a traumatized individual, Tha'mma is "... unable to separate the traumatic situation from the normal environment" (Hunt 61). Again, "In Freudian psychology, the individual has little control over the contents of the unconscious, and uses defence mechanisms to deal with information contained therein" (Hunt 77). She takes partition and borders normally. She does not realize her pain, homesickness and nostalgia. Being traumatized she tries to repress her memories of past and terms nostalgia as weakness. Freud further suggested that,

... repression was an ego defence that suppressed traumatic memories. Once these memories were in the unconscious, neurotic symptoms might arise as a result of active forces being applied in the unconscious. Modern theory generally uses the concept of avoidance in place of repression, where the individual may actively avoid reminding situations. But once the traumatic memories are repressed, they do not change, but are retained in an inactive unconscious (implicit memory) and emerge via the activation of situational reminding cues (Hunt 77).

In case of Tha'mma, repression serves as an ego defence against her traumatic memories emerging into consciousness. The death of Tridib serves as a blow to Tha'mma's psyche so abruptly that she cannot react to it properly. She bears the memory of trauma and realizes the truth about Tridib's death but only unconsciously. She also tries to repress this experience of trauma. But repressed memories are not changed and emerge via

the activation of situational reminding cues. When she continuously hears the news of 1965 war, she recalls the incident of riot, and her anxiety of keeping it repressed is found through her acts like donating her chain to war fund, breaking the radio, cutting her finger. Thus trauma repeats itself through the unknowing acts of the victim. Her trauma comes from the tragic death of Tridib before her eyes as well as her attempt to repress the experience.

4.2. The Narrator

"The gap between event and representation can be conceived as the trauma process" (Alexander 15). The narrator's trauma originates from the gap between knowing and not knowing. When he tries to solve the mystery of Tridib's death he finds silence and absence. The silence is about inability to talk about the traumatic impact of partition and the riot of 1964. The narrator is struggling with this silence to discover the truth of the event of 1964. There always lies a border between words and the world, between what is known and what is unknown as he does not know the meaning. Sometimes history imposes itself upon an individual, and it becomes perplexing and traumatic for individual when there is an incongruity between historical records and individual memory. The Narrator still remembers his horrible bus ride during the riot in Calcutta. But Fifteen years later the narrator is shocked to see that no one remembers that riot of Calcutta. The riots that are haunting the narrator are disappeared from the historical records, and it is challenging his individual memory. When he goes to Teen Murti House Library in New Delhi to see information about the riot, he finds nothing except a short report including the news that twenty nine people were killed in riots. But it was happened in Khulna, in East Pakistan, across the border from Calcutta. Then the riots spread from Khulna to Dhaka. In Calcutta there was rumor that Hindus were killed in train from Pakistan, and they erupted on the Muslims in Calcutta. At that time Tridib was killed in a riot in Dhaka. What Tridib had wanted is finally realized by the narrator fifteen years after his death. After knowing the truth of Tridib's death, it seems to him that an individual story was not important enough to find place in any newspaper. There were many like Tridib who were killed, but they were the victim of silence. There is only silence and absence of meaning. In this way "... he realizes that just as traumas might be repressed by individuals in order that a

coherent sense of individual identity may be maintained, so too do collective identities repress those things which disturb their self-image, those events that might fragment the coherence of the larger narratives of history, nation and state" (Mondal 10).

4.3. May Price

"... the term trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" (Caruth 3). Freud suggests in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that the wound of mind is not simple and healable event like the wound of the body. A bodily wound is experienced too soon, to be fully known and is not fully available to consciousness until it imposes itself again in the repetitive actions of the survivor. "... trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual's past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature - the way it was precisely not known in the first instance - returns to haunt the survivor later on" (Caruth 4). In the novel, *May Price* also experiences the unflinching trauma of Tridib's death. May Price, daughter of Tresawsen, is a kind and simple girl. The riot brings tragedy in the life of Tridib and May at individual level. The sweet memories of their relationship have faded away. It becomes a great trauma for a person whose lover is brutally killed in front of her eyes. The two would have been happily married if the incident of riot had not happened. For seventeen years the traumatic memory haunts her like a nightmare. She is not at ease. She believes that she had killed him and is not able to forgive herself. May gives an account of her traumatic experience of how they had killed Tridib by cutting his throat from ear to ear. The incident is resulted in a deep wound in her mind that is not simple and healable wound like the wound of physical body. May continually feels guilty. She experienced the death of Tridib so suddenly and unexpectedly that she did not realize it consciously. But later the event is fully known to her and begins to encroach into her consciousness. In this way, she encounters the trauma of Tridib's death. His death has an endless impact on her life, and there is no escape from it. She has to live with the traumatic reality of his death.

4.4. Robi

According to Freud, "For what returns to haunt the trauma victim... is not just any event but, significantly, the shocking and unexpected occurrence of an accident" (Caruth 6). Freud terms it as the traumatizing shock of a violence that occurs commonly. Robi is the younger brother of Tridib and son of Mayadebi. Robi also experiences the incident of riot in which Tridib was killed. Robi talks about that experience with a hyper emotionality characteristic of a traumatic childhood experience. Robi wants to be free from the memory of Tridib's death, but he can never been able to rid himself of that dream. Robi realizes that escape from traumatic memory is not possible; even not possible by creating lines. Memory does not heed the boundaries drawn by man, nothing can divide memory. He realizes that nothing would change as the concept of border is illusory. Everyone wants freedom and is ready to kill others for it. Robi feels that nobody understand the meaning of freedom, "If freedom was possible, surely Tridib's death would have set me free" (Ghosh 247). But Robi's loss of his brother is still haunting him when he is in a Bangladeshi restaurant in London, far away from that place; from that incident. His memory also binds him with the trauma of other people who were affected by these riots on the other side of the border; it is an undesired bond; from which there is no escape.

CONCLUSION

Partition is an event of undiluted madness in the history of Indian subcontinent. The year 1947 marked the ending of British rule, but people had to experience division, migration, and loss of their life. Though they suffered a lot, they did not get freedom in its genuine sense. In reality partition only paves the way to lifelong trauma. The adverse effects of this event are still visible in the form of hostility between Hindus and Muslims. The continuing communal riots, Indo -Pak war, terrorism and strife in Kashmir etc. bear the signs of the futility of freedom. Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Shadow Lines* excellently establishes the ineffectiveness of borders that were drawn during the partition. The existence of these borders is so tenuous that it can induce terror many years later on the both sides of the border as people are tied to each other due to their shared livings and emotions but this fact was ignored by the initiators of division. In this way, partition turn down people's hope of freedom and grant them never ending trauma.

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