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## TRAUMA AND JOY OF BECOMING AND BELONGING OF INDIGENOUS CHARACTERS IN DIASPORA WRITINGS

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**Abstract:**

Amitav Ghosh proposed stirring narratives regarding the subcontinent's complex and convoluted past trenching upon its development of postcolonial evolution. His works are produced in a detailed way with acute themes, universal perspectives, and assorted sketches. Thamma also felt joyous to return to her homeland where she belongs when Maya calls Thamma to inform that May is coming to Calcutta for her holidays and Maya asks whether they have any objection or not?. Thamma says that she has no problem in receiving May. Thamma after the retirement to her job, Head Mistress to a Girls' High School, she has no regular work to do, so she used to feel a lot of tedium. Now and then she used to nag behind for the disorderly actions of the Narrator's mother. BapsiSidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* deals with the times of 1947, the partition of India and the consequences. It is the story told by Lenny, who is a small lame girl; in fact, the main plot of the story revolves around the character of Lenny's Aayah, Shanta. Shanta is betrayed by Ice Candy Man, who is a pimp. Thus the characters from these examples have a plight from their homelands to foreign lands but they are connected with the sense of becoming one and belonging together. Irrespective of the desperate conditions they are united with their homelands with a deep sense of love for their birthplace as well as the solace that they get like a child seeks comfort and ease in its mother's lap.

Keywords: stirring narratives, universal perspectives, postcolonial evolution, mother's lap, .etc

Amitav Ghosh proposed stirring narratives regarding the subcontinent's complex and convoluted past trenching upon its development of postcolonial evolution. His works are produced in a detailed way with acute themes, universal perspectives, and assorted sketches. The emotions of human drama which stand out in global fiction not only making Ghosh a striking evolution but also providing thought-provoking ideologies to the society through the fictional narratives. Ghosh's novels showcase how their lives are driven by diversified forces. The characters are being endangered, taken exception and determined. Every writer will have his or her own way of depicting the characters of which some of them may be varied sometimes and some of them may have a significant feature in resembling the characters. For example, Thamma in *The Shadow Lines*, Alu in *The Circle of Reason* and Murugan in *The Calcutta Chromosome*, are exclusive examples. Thamma is a retired Principal of girls' school in Calcutta who was desperately moved from Dhaka to Calcutta, making her feel repent for leaving her homeland as though she has had her full life in Calcutta. Alu is another character who is displaced to foreign land due to the unavoidable reasons. Murugan, though a dotty character, is desperately moved from one place to another place for his passion of archaic inventions of Ronald Ross. The similarity of these three characters is the sense of displacement as well as they experience the equal trauma and joy of becoming and belonging to the places they dwell and their notions. When Thamma's husband was 32, he died of Pneumonia and she had to work for her son with the degree, she earned from Dhaka's University. After 1947's partition of India and Pakistan, Dhaka was made the capital of East Pakistan. Since then Thamma didn't return to Dhaka. She says that:

“But now, she said sadly, ruffling my hair, it’s all gone. They are all dead and have nowhere to invent stories about nowhere to escape to”. (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 188)

Here we can notice the trauma of an indigenous character that tries to become the part of her homeland nearly after four decades. One evening Thamma enquires the Narrator’s father whether she could see any borders in between Dhaka and India, showing her innocence, but she was not so much offended as puzzled.

But surely there is something – trenches, perhaps soldiers held guns pointing at each other, or even just barrens strips of land. Don’t they call it no- man’s – land?” (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 167)

Thamma also felt joyous to return to her homeland where she belongs when Maya calls Thamma to inform that May is coming to Calcutta for her holidays and Maya asks whether they have any objection or not?. Thamma says that she has no problem in receiving May. Perhaps there may be an influence on Thamma during her childhood when her father and Jitamoshai divided their house and properties in order to make a difference in their lives i.e., not only to stop the quarrels but also to change their lifestyle. This can be seen in her attitude when she says:

"But if there are not 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; when we used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta the next day without anybody stopping us" (*Then Shadow Lines*, 1988, 167)

When Thamma came to know about the messily odds in her birthplace Dhaka. It worried her so much as the dirty school books worried her – because she likes the things to be neat and clean. Thamma was messed up with the odd thoughts of her nationality and her birthplace the Narrator's father notices it and asks her what the matter is. In reply she says:

"Oh that, my grandmother laughed. It was not the same thing. There were not any forms or anything or anyway traveling was so easy then. I would come home to Dhaka whenever I wanted". (*The Shadow Lines*, 168)

The very thought of going to the homeland itself makes Thamma be happy. She excites so much so that the Narrator even teases Thamma, that she does not know the difference between coming and going! Eventually, the phrase becomes the secret lore. When it comes to severity, the Narrator would explain

"that it's all his granny's fault. But of course, the fault was not theirs at all and it is in the language. Every language assumes a centrality, a fixed and settled point to go away from and coming back to, and what my grandma was looking for were a word for a journey which was not coming or going at all; a journey that was a search for precisely that fixed point which permits the proper use of verbs of movements." (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 169)

Thamma is a lady with sheer confidence and courage. This is proved when her husband died of pneumonia; she had no savings at all, except the Bachelor's Degree that she earned from Dhaka University.

"On the strength of that, a sympathetic railway official managed to arrange a job for her in school in Calcutta – the school she was to work in for the next twenty-seven years". (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 138)

Thamma after the retirement to her job, Head Mistress to a Girls' High School, she has no regular work to do, so she used to feel a lot of tedium. Now and then she used to nag behind for the disorderly actions of the Narrator's mother. Their family was terrified with her behavior at one moment i.e., nothing but when she listened to the news about the wars between India and Pakistan, she changes into a mischievous person which makes the Narrator panic a lot.

"Who's that in Thamma's room? I whispered breathlessly. She raised a finger to her lips and gave me a warning tap on the shoulder, but ignoring her, I ran straight into my grandmother's room.

She was sitting on a chair in front of the open window with her head wrapped in a wet sari.

Speechless, I withdrew backward, step by step, and fled to look for my mother". (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 130)

In spite of these many virtues, her ludicrous attitude makes the characters in the novel as well as the readers exclaim, a sort of displeasure. It can be seen in situations like when the driver points out every place as they go by like this is the Plaza Picture palace, the Gulshan Palace Hotel, Ramna Race Course and so on. But she can't see that the place itself is Dhaka, as there are a lot more changes in the places since she saw them in her childhood. The attitude of Thamma seems to be so childish from one side and on the other side she seems to be a stubborn and strong woman who can't accept the new changes.

Thamma would like to see the lines that are drawn in the border of nations. Being elders they can't accept anything either as a child or as an adult, besides having vast knowledge in so many other aspects, as Thamma being headmistress.

"The driver pointed out the sights to my grandmother as they went by the Plaza Picture Palace with a fifteen- foot hoarding of Ben Hur hanging outside. The Gulshan Palace Hotel, Ramna Rae Course and so on. It's all wonderful, she said. But where's Dhaka?" (*The Shadow Lines*, 1988, 227)

In *The Circle of Reason*, the central character is Alu, who is marked for his lumpy head, is considered the most unfortunate one. The same reason not only forms like a 'Circle' but also revolves around the central character, involving the other prominent characters in further happenings. Alu is not intentional in moving around the globe, but still, due to his desperate conditions, he faces all the difficulties with silence, confidence, and courage. He too mystically rectifies the real problem of the society in the name of purity. Alu settles in Lalpukur, but his troubles do not. He is admitted to Bhudeb Roy's school. Roy's son Gopal bullies Alu and finally, Alu is forced to leave school. Focusing on a Motley group of migrants drawn from various parts of India on an imaginary island al- ghazira and then Algeria, the novel marks this history. The chapter entitled "Becalmed" is the most revelatory and powerful in articulating Ghosh' vision of globalization.

Bapsi Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* deals with the times of 1947, the partition of India and the consequences. It is the story told by Lenny, who is a small lame girl; in fact, the main plot of the story revolves around the character of Lenny's Aayah, Shanta. Shanta is betrayed by Ice Candy Man, who is a pimp. During the communal riots between India and Pakistan, thousands of people were killed. All the characters who are related to Lenny in something or the other way become the victims of the communal riots. This was clearly portrayed by Bapsi Sidhwa in the novel as Rama is victimized due to the communal riots that were spread from towns to small villages called PirPindo.

During the course of the novel Ice- Candyman takes different avatars as Birdman during seasons, as a pimp, sincere lover, a faithful husband but finally remains a dejected wandering Rover searching for his lost love, Shanta. The novel ends as Shanta is shifted to Amritsar,

along with her family over there. Prior to the partition, in Lahore, Shanta's circle had an argument at restraint of wrestlers which heated the conversation. It is about the mischief of the Britishers during the partition which caused all the conflicts between the Hindus and Muslims. The Government of Hindustan tries to rationalize the argument whereas the Muslim (the butcher) argues that it is the fault of Hindus to join the hands in ignoring the Muslim league.

"Just the English? (...). Haven't the Hindus connived with the Angrez to ignore the Muslim League, and support a party that didn't win a single seat in Punjab? It's just the kind of thing we fear. They manipulate one or two Muslims against the interests of the larger community. And now they have manipulated." (*Ice Candy Man*, 1989, 92)

Thus the characters from these examples have a plight from their homelands to foreign lands but they are connected with the sense of becoming one and belonging together. Irrespective of the desperate conditions they are united with their homelands with a deep sense of love for their birthplace as well as the solace that they get like a child seeks comfort and ease in its mother's lap. The trauma and joy of becoming and belonging are being experienced by many other characters in many other diaspora writings of which these are the few examples.

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