



The Poetics of Borders and Identity: Representation of Culture and Transcultural in The Shadow Lines



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Abstract: *The formation of an individual's identity is marked by a singular integration of borders and cultures. The phenomenon of transculturalism has contributed to an increase in the breadth of debate over the nature of the connection between the two. This analysis aims to analyze the novel The Shadow Lines by Amitave Ghosh from the viewpoints of boundaries, transculturalism, and the building of identities. It will be claimed that boundaries in this context imply both possibilities and restrictions, a point that is fully reflected upon in the contrasting viewpoints of nationalism and transculturalism. Epstein's transcultural vision of "crossroads of civilizations," will provide the framework to debate interlinks of border and possibilities of being transcultural in a rigidly nationalist context.*

Key Words: Borders; transculturalism; Amitave Ghosh; the Shadow Lines

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Introduction

This study is an effort to debate the cultures and transculturalism that are presented in Amitave Ghosh's The Shadow Lines through the lens of the concepts of border, identity, and nationalism in transcultural perspectives. While borders in this context denote a particular attitude of aversion to division (implying the cultural specificity), the tendency to obliterate borders through the symbolic value of atlases, imagination, imaginative impulse to travel beyond geographical limits, and travel signify the transcultural fluidity and acceptance of values that extend beyond your specific

ideologies . The transculturalism, in this context supports valuing acceptance of a transcultural diversity which is presented here as an alternative version to rigid nationalist/border specific stance. This appeal for diversity uniquely interfuses postcolonial with attempts to decentre binaries techniques that combat "any and all" attempts at homogeneity (such as modernisation, Westernization, imperialism, or nationalism (Krishnaswamy, 2005, 70)

First the borders. The concept of "border" is multifaceted, since it may refer to geographical, ideological, cultural, and even

intellectual dimensions (Hannerz 1997; Rumford 2006 & 2012). In addition to this, it is connected to Bhabha's idea of a "third place" (Kalua, F. (2009) and the notion of transgression (Ewing, K. P. (1998). Ilcan, S., & Phillips, L. (Eds.). (1998), which may refer to a physical, ideological, cultural, or intellectual act of moving beyond specific and or undergoing a process of hybridization. The act of crossing a border implies opening oneself up to possibilities while simultaneously closing oneself off to them. It also refers to the act of shutting down a country while yet leaving it open to the influences of other countries. From an ideological standpoint, a boundary represents the delimitation of cultural, historical, social, and linguistic spaces. Because of this, a boundary transforms into a living thing that has a strong correlation with identity.

In postcolonial philosophy, the mere concept of cartography (Wainwright, J., & Bryan, J. (2009). Cartography, territory, property: postcolonial reflections on indigenous counter-mapping in Nicaragua and Belize. *Cultural geographies*, 16(2), 153-178.) entails the existence of a boundary (Mahmud, T. 2010). Colonial cartographies, postcolonial borders, and enduring failures of international law: The unending wars along the Afghanistan-Pakistan frontier. Brook. J. *Int'l L.*, 36, 1.). Here the border serves as a metaphor for an important concept: the crossing of "cultural boundaries that construct racial and ethnic 'otherness.'" (Ball, 2014, p.1) When the border is seen not just as a margin but also as a junction into borderland, it causes the border to become an appealing destination for cultural self-seeking who want to transgress its marginal cultural location. (Ball, 2014, p.4). In many postcolonial works, a boundary is also tied to the desire to cross or transgress that particular line. This theme may be found in both fiction and non-fiction.

As a physical reality, the border continues to be tamed, and as a result, the cultural and religious implications associated with it have been ineffectual and, at times, isolated (Irani, L. C., & Dourish, P. (2009, February). Postcolonial interculturality. In *Proceedings of the 2009 international workshop on Intercultural collaboration* (pp. 249-252). The tensions that exist in the interactions between colonizers and colonized people are the source of boundary violations. The cultural forms of dominance almost always established a central position, towards which all the peripheral expressions of culture and religion declined. This was the case the majority of the time. Gloria Anzaldua's explanation of the notion of border and border crossing provides valuable insight into the cultural tensions that exist in postcolonial cultures as well as the capacity for such civilizations to adapt. It contributes to a better understanding of borders, as well as the transgression of such borders, as a tool for change and transformation. Anzaldua's seminal work, "Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza," has a theoretical debate on the notion of border as a metaphorical idea. According to her, the distinction between the subject and the object may be attributed to the existence of geographical and ideological boundaries: A border is a separating line, often a short strip that runs along the top of a cliff. A borderland is a hazy and undefined region that is formed as a result of the emotional residue left behind by an artificial barrier. It is always going through various stages of change (Anzaldua, 1987). According to Anzaldua, the word "Border" connotes a restricted zone and serves to protect the national, social, cultural, and ethnic identities of a community. The territory on the opposite side of the border reveals a new world.

Borders, in the same measure that they provide boundaries, they bring to the surface new opportunities for interaction and trade. "borders take on a symbolic aspect and

represent a kind of initiation as transgression” (Kriha and Serani, 2009, p.14). “Borders,” “in both their geographic and metaphorical meaning represent intensely painful, yet also transformational spaces where opposites converge, conflict and transform” (Keating, 2009, p.319). Therefore, crossing borders requires both a physical and spiritual upheaval, which, on the other hand, results in an expansion of one’s worldview and the introduction of new opportunities. The experience of crossing a border may lead to the formation of identities that are both internal and external, with a third option existing somewhere in the center. Anzaldua emphasizes, although in a roundabout way, the discourse that takes place when different cultures meet with one another and attempt to reconcile their differences. Anzaldua maintains a dialogue with all of her incarnations by keeping her numerous identities and voices together in the same area, which is the borderland. Anzaldua makes the following statement on the numerous borders: “The borderlands do not represent merely a cultural or nation transgression [...] To live in the borderland means transgressing the rigid definitions of sexual, racial and gender definition” (Torres, 2000, p.117). The borderland is a transitional zone where significant change may take place. Anzaldua values the borderlands because it is the place where she first became aware of her mestiza identity. She refers to this awareness as the consciousness of the borderlands since it is the place where it first emerged.

In her 1987 book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Gloria Anzaldua celebrates the border-crosser, the outsider who crosses racial, socioeconomic, sexual, national, and linguistic boundaries with ease. The book’s title, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, reflects this multiculturalism. Since crossing the border is seen as a way to assert one’s individuality in this part of the world, it is often a source of

conflict. This highlights the stark contrast between Gottmann’s theory and Anzaldua’s idea.

Gottmann’s most compelling point is that individuals are proud of the cultural, physical, mental, and ethnic boundaries that define them. There is absolutely nothing wrong with valuing oneself and taking pride in one’s identity. It is something that is inherent in the human condition. It is not possible to remove it. Border, in its most fundamental sense, defends the intrinsic identity of a person. Being encircled by others who have the same distinctive qualities as oneself is a fantastic confidence booster, and there is no one who can fully outdo it. On the other hand, according to Anzaldua’s thesis, claiming one’s identity may be accomplished by crossing a boundary that has been established by various factors. Living on the precipice is not something to be proud of, for no good reason. The act of crossing a boundary signifies taking a stance for one’s identity.

Now what is relationship between borders, identity and cultures. We all have more than one identity, and the one that we choose to concentrate on depends on the circumstances and the environment in which we find ourselves. From borders point of view, identity is tied to the idea of Nation states which are never comprised of just one item; rather, they are home to a variety of diverse ethnic groups and cultures. Naturally, states have used a variety of unifying concepts in order to bring individuals of various racial and ethnic backgrounds together under the ideology of a single state. In the United States, for instance, the concept of the “American Dream” is a mythological endeavour to bring the country together and celebrate the uniqueness (border-less identity) of the nation state, which is founded on its common past. Likewise in India, the concept of “Unity in Diversity” is a similar mythical endeavour. However, in practise, the notion that all of

India is the same does not hold up very well. Racism, prejudice, discrimination, ignorance, superstitions runs predominant which speak of cultural collision. Therefore within the nation state, borders are constantly being constructed and redrawn, and they are too visible to ignore. It signifies that in Indian politics, culture, and history, as well as in Indian literature, there are various boundaries.

Borders and identity is a part of psyche of the postcolonial subcontinent. The inconsiderate and hasty partition of India in 1947 generated a severe schism between the Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus who had previously coexisted, as well as between the areas (homes) that each group considered to be their own. As a result of this, the borders of the Partition of 1947 were established, leaving the subcontinent with a geography of agony. Despite the almost seventy-five years that have gone since the event in question, the South Asian continent continues to struggle to come to terms with it. Even inside the countries that were partitioned, such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, it has created various kinds of upheavals, such as wars, terrorist attacks, sectarian riots, and a wide variety of other kinds of microaggressions amongst identity groups. The pain that was caused by the violent splitting of geographies, communities, and cultures has resurfaced in contemporary political and social life.

Discussion

By reassessing the boundaries between cultures, this research seeks to offer insight on the manner in which South Asian literature incorporates transcultural elements. Epstein views "Transculture" as a method of identity development, a culturally independent existential dimension, and a coping mechanism for navigating life at the "crossroads of civilizations" based mostly on contextualization (2009). He refers to it as "a

theory of cultural progress that frees people from the "prison house of language" and their "unconscious predispositions and biases of the "local," naturalised cultures." It's like this, in his words." (2009: 330, 327). Transculturation liberates us from the conditioning effects of culture, with its predetermined, imposed habits, customs, assumptions, and dynamics of group identity formation, primarily through "interference with other cultures," just as culture liberates us from the constraints of nature and its biological, preliminary, non-cultural world (Epstein 2009: 339).

South Asian literature alternates between postcolonial resistance and continuity. Alex Tickell writes in the book's preface that it "brings together fresh critical readings that all respond, in various ways, to contemporary South Asian anglophone fictions in English that reflect on, react to, or are materially entangled in this new century." The assertion is promising because it challenges us to examine and comprehend South Asian literature in the perspective of its historical development (in connection to colonialism) and its relevance to the modern world (in relation to globalization). The study will solely use transculturalism as a theoretical framework for comprehending the above. It explains how the link between colonialism and postcolonialism is bidirectional, with postcolonialized social and cultural factors responding positively and constructively despite a (un)favorable inclination towards colonialism. The term "modern" "speaks a double-gesture," in that it denotes both openness and distance, according to Dipesh Chakrabarty (1997, pp. 49-50). The contemporary includes everything "together," but it also refers to a particular entity that is evolving into the future (its dynamic aspect), therefore it has an inclusionary-exclusionary character. (Alex Tickell 3).

In the first place, in the aftermath of colonialism and within the backdrop of the

new ways in which the world is built up, this study examines how modern Indian literature produced in English deals with the "poetics of the border." At the same time as the border is perceived as a site where people migrate across borders, it is also seen as a place where violent divisions and/or connections between communities are re-established. The same is the case with Indian literary narratives. On the one hand, Indian novels recognise the rigid lines and frames that define the person, community, and country. This gives the reader a sense of stability as well as fixity and confinement. On the other hand, they propose courses of action that call into question binary distinctions and arbitrary partitions and, as an alternative, favour the blurring and crossing of boundaries. Indian contemporary writing re-imagines the border as a location that is transitory, shifting, and fluid by exploiting the conflict between the establishment of limits and the eradication of such barriers. A stable boundary is not shown in modern literature. When applied to the understanding of transculturalism, the above outlined meanings of borders and their representation in Indian Fiction embody a position of cultural confinement and cultural plurality respectively.

Amitave Ghosh, a writer from India, is the author of the novel *The Shadow Lines*. When it was first released in 1988, the novel received acclaim for the inventive structure and difficult tone that it possessed. *The Shadow Lines* does not even attempt to pretend that it has a coherent storyline. Rather, it is a collection of memories that are conveyed to the reader in a stream-of-consciousness style by an unknown figure who is referred to as the Narrator. The narrative jumps about in time from 1939 to the middle of the 1970s as the narrator recalls various family members and acquaintances and how their lives connected with a series of tragic riots that occurred in Calcutta and West-Pakistan in 1963 and 1964. The story's

timeline is all mixed up. The most important events happen in the 1960s, but the narrator is telling the story in the 1980s, and they are "rooted" in the time just before the First World War. So, thirteen years before the narrator was born, in 1939, his great aunt Mayadebi, who was then 29 years old, went to England with her husband and their son, Tridib. For the narrator, she always seemed like a movie star in her later years, someone who was a bit bigger than life and had seen the world. She was the only sister of his grandmother. Tridib's grandmother never liked him because she thought he was lazy, and she thought that wasted time soon started to smell. The narrator differed with his grandmother's assessment since he admired Tridib's vivid imagination, which led to an infinite supply of tales that were never given the chance to "stink."

The research presents a contentious discussion regarding the many ways in which the text may be understood in line with the transcultural issues described earlier. The presence of nationalism and limits is indicative of a restricted and traditional narrative, which impedes the development of transculturalism in literary works. However, this will be a contextual feature of the research, since the major emphasis will be on finding how Ghosh deals with the issue and identifying transcultural motifs in the story. In other words, the study will look at how Ghosh deals with the situation. As the title of the novel indicates, borders in terms of lines are part of thematic concerns. People are separated by politically carved borders which are imaginatively construed as lines in the novel. which also serve to define their identities on other levels, including the political, the cultural, and the religious. All of these lines that help individuals build their identities function openly in people's lives, just as boundary marks do on a map. In addition, these dividing lines have an effect on an individual's nationality. The destiny of individuals is irrevocably decided the

moment they choose to stand on one side of a divide, whether they do so voluntarily or because they are coerced. To be more explicit, they are not permitted to return to their previous residence, nor are they permitted to claim that it is still their residence after having been "placed outside". These lines do not contain any shadows; rather, they are illuminated with various meanings.

Nearly all of the characters in *The Shadow Lines* encounter these lines, not in the form of shadows but as actual lines, during the course of their lives. As a result of the division, the narrator's grandmother was subjected to a terrible experience, struggled with her identity, and developed new feelings towards her nationality. The tragic death of Tridib as a result of his separation is an aftereffect of the separation. Every single character in the book comes to the realization that they are surrounded by a number of distinct and enduring lines, despite the fact that these lines are murky, and that they are unable to eradicate these lines from either their memories or their lives. They are obliged to take a position on either this side of the line or that side of the line. The purpose of this essay is to reevaluate the characteristics of the lines that appear in *The Shadow Lines* in order to determine how the shadow lines are brought into relief.

Briefly, Although it may be difficult to recognise them, the novel contends that the boundaries that exist between individuals on the basis of the political and religious perspectives they hold are quite substantial. Early on in the novel, Ghosh narrates the way borders and movements across borders are a part of contemporary livings:

Tridib, his father, served in the Foreign Service and was a career diplomat. Every two or three years, he and Mayadebi seldom stayed in Kolkata for more than a few months. Perhaps they were globetrotters or Delhi residents. Tridib's two-year elder brother Jatin-kaku was an economist for the

United Nations. Also, he never appeared to be around; he and his family, including his wife and his daughter Ila, who was my age, constantly travelled between South East Asia and Africa. (Ghosh 6) .

Likewise, the borders that divide the grandmother from her ancestral home are so clear and unmovable that, on the one hand, they change the grandmother's nationality, and, on the other hand, they determine her identity. Everyone in the novel, regardless of gender, age, or religious affiliation, is subject to the effect of lines like these. There is no way around it. Nobody can dispute the existence of these things in the life of the individuals who have been uprooted. They are everywhere and the consequences of such lines are inescapable for the millions of individuals who lived through the division in 1947, and that nobody can eradicate them.

On the one side, we have a grandmother Tha'mma, who has a patriotic perspective and dislikes the idea of separation through borders. The sentiments that the grandmother had for her childhood house after she retired had, for a considerable amount of time, stayed dormant in her brain. Her conviction that it is everyone's obligation to forget the past and look forward and get on with developing the future" will remain unshaken until such time as it arrives (Ghosh, 1999). Ideologically speaking she is a representative of rigid and constrained outlook, which hardly gives space to the other's perspective. This is an early indication of how judgmental and absolutist she is. There is nothing wrong with saying that time should be used well, but she also declares herself the arbiter of what time well spent looks like. Even the activity of a youngster just playing is seen by her as a potential chance to do labor for the state. Tha'mma is of the opinion that a country is made up of its citizens, each of whom has a vested interest in the prosperity of the nation. Therefore, in order to preserve a powerful nation, its people need to be strong.

She dislikes feeling nostalgic because she believes it is a sign of weakness. On the other hand, now that she is retired, she exhibits an interest in the old house in Dhaka. Later on, she came to the conclusion that the individuals who had been displaced were without a home of their own since "one can't go home again". When she returns to Dhaka, she finds that she no longer recognizes the place where she once lived. As a result of the fact that the region that she referred to as "Dhaka" has been altered, she is oblivious to the fact that Dhaka is no longer restricted to the area that is immediately next to her home. She is a superfluous person here and pays a hefty cost for visiting Dhaka in the form of losing Tridib and the uncle. She no longer has any grasp on her home since she is no longer a resident of Dhaka. She has come to the full comprehension that once the borders are formed and the people are separated, the only place that one can call "home" is in their memories of it. Her birthplace, Dhaka, is separated from her by a history of carnage and lines on a map. She was born in Dhaka (Kaul, 1999). She goes completely insane if she entertains the notion that the concept of her home and her nationality are in competition with one another. She suffers from trauma as a result of the psychological struggle that the division produces. In the middle of such an oppressive environment, she is completely bewildered and unable to comprehend the "different between arriving and departing" (Ghosh, 1999). She uses the term "coming home to Dhaka" rather than the word "going home" to refer to her destination.

This research emphasises transcendentalism, or cultural integration. The author first demonstrates that a person's brain, imagination, and feeling of origin are not divided by physical bounds. Tridib travelled to London on a one-year research stipend to collect information from the India Office Library, which housed all the ancient colonial documents, for a dissertation on the

textile trade between India and England in the nineteenth century. Following my arrival in London, I did not see May for approximately one month. Dhaka and Calcutta too. Dhaka's history parallels that of Calcutta. The "looking glass" border, which highlights the similarities between the two cities, dates back to a time before passports and other forms of government-issued identification were required for travel: "the simple fact that the places we now know as Dhaka and Calcutta were never more closely linked than after they drew the lines." (Ghosh 233).

India and Pakistan's border planners may have anticipated the lines would eventually separate the two countries like the Gondwanan tectonic plates. s Borders and nationality don't bother Choudhury and Price families. . The story doubts constraints' utility. Ila doesn't care about maps or history, but Thamma does.

Transcultural Borders

The book creates a significant transcultural area, yet it does it in a way that defies nationalism and orthodoxy.

Tridib, a self-described utopian, envisions "a land without borders and nations" as humanity's ultimate goal. Tellingly, Tridib is not a nationalist and doesn't even acknowledge the validity of any maps or physical boundaries. Continue to read novels, please. He longs desperately to live in an unrestricted universe. Tridib described to the narrator a dream that, if realised, might "transport one beyond the boundaries of one's consciousness to other times and other places and, if one was fortunate, to a place where there was no barrier between oneself and one's image in the mirror."

The unidentified narrator of the book then gives a thorough history of the Datta-Chaudhuris. In this story, the fractured family of the Datta-Chaudhuris disperses

over the world, destroying regional and national boundaries. This introduces the story's diverse variety of settings fast. The inclusion of the Datta-Chaudhuris' symbolically expanding family tree throughout the world from the very beginning of the book represents transculturalism, which is represented by a plurality of space. Family members of the Datta-Chaudhurys, who originated in Dhaka, are distributed all over the world. The holiness of many historically remote national areas has been destroyed as a result of the emergence of a global spatial network. Indian national space is a heterotopia because it is diverse rather than confined and homogenous, unlike other national spaces throughout the globe that are constantly destroyed by transnational events and people. Due of population migration, many nations have similar traits.

When the Atlas sign is connected to Tridib, it symbolises transcendence across civilizations. The strongest evidence that the narrator is beginning to understand the nature of false limits is the atlas that Tridib created. An atlas, said simply, is a collection of maps, and maps naturally demonstrate how mankind has divided the world into different regions in line with its ideals and standards. The narrator uses the compass to make a circle on the map and realises that nationalised cartography removes any traces of personal identification in favour of the neatly labelled states and the straight lines that link them. Tridib has a diverse range of interests, which makes sense considering his love of collecting and analysing atlases. He wanted to know more about the geography and people of Earth. Each map in an atlas demonstrates how people have arbitrarily divided the globe based on their own ideas and views. The narrator realises that without individuals, the universe is reduced to a collection of states and lines and uses the compass to form a series of concentric circles. It seems sense that Tridib was interested in a

wide range of topics given that he possessed and often used an atlas. He wished to deepen his knowledge of the world and its inhabitants.

Tridib's projected images of "cafes on the plaza Mayor in Madrid," "the crispness of the air in Cuzo," the printed arch of IbnTulun's mosque, and the stones of the Great Pyramid of Cheops are a great example of a transcultural atlas. (Ghosh 1988, 22). As the narrative progresses, the narrator's account of these events gets increasingly vivid and specific. As a result, one is able to simultaneously question, undermine, and cross these outside places' essential "closedness" within of their confined, occupied domain. To put it another way, Tridib and the narrator may use the atlas as a metaphor and a subversive tool to turn their hometown into a heterotopia that includes locations or spatial experiences outside of its own boundaries and geographical confines. This is made feasible by the atlas' inclusive character, which permits the inclusion of areas and spatial encounters outside of its own bounds.

The narrative relies heavily on the reader's capacity for imagination. According to the aesthetic importance of imaginative reorganisation, Ghosh aims to analyse the border and all it denotes in terms of enclosed cultures. It would be unfair to dismiss Tridib and the narrator's imaginative work as the result of two busy minds. This is a superb example of the novelist's attempts to rethink the transient character of "space" in the contemporary world, demonstrating how it may be fluid and evocative of elements that appear to defy its limited geographical nature and giving birth to a transcultural viewpoint.

The mirror's symbolic significance in the book is significant and plays a significant role in the effort to portray the tearing down of limiting boundaries in favour of variety and plurality. This occurs as a result of the mirror creating a dynamic environment where "actual" and "imaginary" places converge.

Amitave Ghosh employs mirror images as a metaphor throughout the novel, but particularly at crucial moments to support his assertion that both the countries and the borders are always altering. Since Nick lives hundreds of miles away and the narrator has never met him or her, maybe we can think about how the narrator comes across as knowing Nick, Mrs. Price's son. The Big Apple is where Nick calls home. Nick is first described as having "no features" and "no shape," and then the narrator places oneself on a mirror, where Nick transforms into a "double" of themselves. A closer look shows that the mirror also combines the many and unique places that the narrator and Nick each represent in addition to connecting them in an illogical fashion. As a result of its tendency to generate illogical connections between distant and unfamiliar people and places, the symbolic mirror produces an illusory fluid field. This outcome is made possible by the symbolic mirror's capacity to create irrational connections between people and places.

My research's goal is to confirm the consistency and realism of Amitav Ghosh's depictions of social gatherings, including those captured in photos and imagined tales of real-life dwellings. This category includes several different groups of people that are depicted in various photographs at various points throughout the text, including the multicultural and international gathering that took place in the apartment on Lymington Road, the fictitious gathering that took place in the cellar of Mrs. Price's house nearby, and a few others. Ghosh paints a wide range of people within the Lymington Road apartment. A few instances are Dan, "a bearded Irish computer scientist," "a woman from Leicester," and "a sad young Ghanaian" (Ghosh 1988, 106–107). This means that just a small number of individuals who represent the whole world are included in the organisation. These individuals either make up a kaleidoscope or represent a diverse

range of ethnicities, professions, philosophies, and political viewpoints.

Ila is a key character in the book since she works in several global settings and highlights their disparities. A fantastic illustration of this sort of neighbourhood is Brick Lane. This area has captured Ila's attention for such a long time in large part because it links not just one, but two separate times. This is reinforced when she and Tridib discuss about why she prefers living there despite the continual danger presented by the Germans. When the former inquired as to why she like the surroundings, Ila provided an interesting but not pretentious response. The most important transnational global event of her time was World War II, and she said that she wanted to be an unchanging point in a world filled with memories, events, and reminders of the conflict. Brick Lane has become a genuinely transnational and transhistorical site as a consequence of its dreadful exposure to and involvement in this worldwide calamity. It serves as a focal point and nexus for a substantial amount of political and intellectual discourse when seen from a global viewpoint. It is a heterotopic setting, as Ila points out, that is often utilised to illustrate posteriority. We may not accomplish much in our little Stockwell house, but in the future, political leaders from all over the world—whether in Nigeria, India, Malaysia, or somewhere else—will look to us, adds Ila. This location crosses boundaries and eras (Ghosh 1988, 115).

Ila reiterates her unyielding obstinacy, a quality she has shown on several times. She takes this extreme step because she wants to make a permanent impact on the collective mind of the planet. She would rather mix with people from all over the globe on streets like Brick Lane than be a part of what she perceives as the oppressive social, political, and cultural elite.

Ila represents another structural character inside the subcontinent's territory by eluding the subcontinent's dominating

cultural domain and willingly moving into other global places, making her a heterotopic element within the subcontinent from the perspective of transculturality. She develops into a mystery, a conundrum, and a multicultural anomaly all inside the subcontinent itself. Characters that walk a fine line between closed and open systems maintain the subcontinent a place of inclusion and exclusion. While secluded from the rest of the world, it is both closed and open due to its receptivity to transnational and cosmopolitan influences. Characters like these enable Ghosh to successfully rethink the complex nature of our spatial existence, in which we do not live and work in homogeneous spaces but rather in heterotopias where many different kinds of spaces are possible. This allows Ghosh to bring his widely discussed themes of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism to the subcontinent.

It seems that a dialectical system, ideology, or discourse is at work in this situation. The Thamma-like individuals make up the first group. The protagonist of the novel, Thamma, desires for her country to become an isolated society. Nonetheless, the country seems to her as a heterotopia that is imbued with a set of cultural standards that she exemplifies but also contains its contestations and breaches in Ila's persistent and subversive disobedience of those principles.

Thamma has peculiar ideas about India as a constrained and inseparable cultural realm; this view is both broken and desanctified by the latter's willful non-conformity to this domain and her self-willed dispersion into the cosmopolitan zones. Without her, there would be no disruption or disruption point, there would be no flight path, and there wouldn't even be a piece of the Indian subcontinent. Unquestionably, a recurrent topic in the work is Ila's ongoing disintegration of the ostensibly constrained cultural domains of the Indian nation and her

consequent free voyage into a global open space. She stands for the subcontinent's cosmopolitan side as well as its embodiment, transcendence, and transgression in this way. Ila is a byproduct of the subcontinent as well as an outgrowth of it. The extended exchange between Thamma and her son sheds light on the country's "closedness" and "openness," respectively. Her son's conviction that doing so is practically impossible continuously contradicts Thamma's wish to perceive her nation as a closed zone.

Naturally, Thamma has always wished for her country to have an isolated cultural and geographic framework. Yet, her idea of a spatially closed nationhood is challenged by the fact that she is unable to identify any precise physical borders between the several countries that make up the border. When Thamma inquires about the alleged Himalaya-like barrier between India and Bangladesh, her son responds that there is no such thing as a border between these two countries and that the concept of a border between these countries is wholly fake. This assertion shows once again how ill-defined and flexible the idea of a country's geographical "closed-ness".

The comment made by her son gently draws attention to the barrier's fictitious "constructed-ness" while also casting doubt on its tangible presence. Thamma, who has an engrained propensity for things to be "neat and in place," is obviously bothered by this (Ghosh 1988, 168). The partitioned nations extend into one another despite their visible and asserted geographical rigidity, undercutting the fundamental ideas of spatial "closed-ness"; they are, in reality, transcultural locations. Without losing sight of the reality that a transcultural space subverts and overturns the established order by confining oppositional regions or spatial qualities inside itself.

Always remember. Thamma's ambition to enclose the nation with impenetrable walls is challenged, overturned, and mocked by the

idea that a boundary in this region of the globe is only a mental construct. This idea limits Thamma's attempt to shut the country. It indirectly develops the country as an expanding space rather than a fixed one. This theory challenges the nation state with united territory and society.

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