

Globalization and Culture
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Lecture - 25
Cosmpolitans the Borderless World

Hello, we looked at the interrogations of the nations from different prospective. We looked at some writers who have interrogated the nation. In this unit we were look at writers who talk about reality of boarders, which confess the idea of nations, and which reveal about world in the past, which was a borderless world, where boundaries could be crossed, and these worlds also have become possible, now in the era of globalization, but the basic argument that I am trying to make here, is that, unlike the era of the nation, unlike the period of modernity and the era of nationalism.

This presence of boundaries as opposed to borders, which per permitted the flow of people ideas trade finance and so on, was a reality as much in the pre national world, as it is in the present borderless world of globalization. And the writers who have tried to narrate this reality thus these are overlapping boundaries, between national boundaries, the moments of the people across national boundaries, which interrogate the boundaries of the nation. We would look at some of those writers, unlike the writers who helped them narrating the narrative of the nation, we find that this script of writer, is contesting the idea of the nation thorough revealing the presence of these overlapping boundaries.

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So, I call these writers cosmopolitans of the borderless world. And look at cosmopolitanism as a concept or as a notion, an idea that questions the essentialist boundaries of the past. It questions the idea of identity, nations culture organic and rooted, and it close attention to (Refer Time: 02:55) and independency, and as opposed to nationalism we look at globalization.

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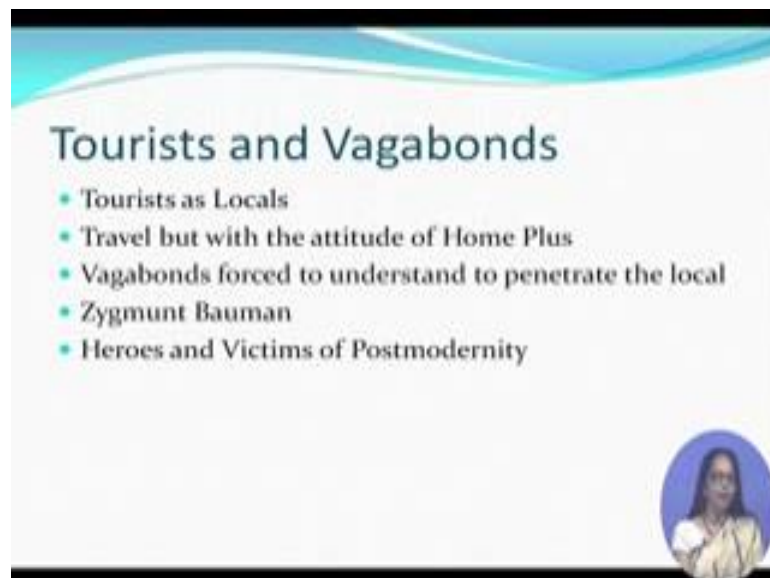


Locals and Cosmopolitans

- Locals as those who stay at home
- Cosmopolitans as those who move
- Movement
- Physical
- Psychological
- Those who move physically may not move at all
- Ulf Hannerz
- Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture

Now, about of Ulf Hannerz ideas of cosmo, in his essay cosmopolitans and local symbol culture to distinguish between locals and cosmopolitans as high as expected; normally we understand locals as those who stay at home, and we look as cosmopolitans as those who move, but here we are not equating movement with physical movements, but we are also looking at psychological movement. So, those who move physically, may not move at all, and there are those who move psychologically, actually move without movement.

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Tourists and Vagabonds

- Tourists as Locals
- Travel but with the attitude of Home Plus
- Vagabonds forced to understand to penetrate the local
- Zygmunt Bauman
- Heroes and Victims of Postmodernity

I read it together with Zygmunt Bauman idea of tourist and vagabonds of the two kind of the people who move in the present borderless space, and he calls them tourist and vagabonds. He distinguishes between the tourist and the vagabonds, as those who tourist. He defines tourist as locals who travel, but with the attitude of home plus. On the other hand vagabonds, because of sheer contingency. They are forced to penetrate the local, because they do not have luxury of moving between the non places of hotels, office complexes, airports, shopping malls and so on, and because of the economic constraints they are forced to take buses, they are more forced to live in the more interior areas of the city and that makes them come into to contact with the local people, and penetrate the local in the way tourist cannot track penetrate.

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So, we look at cosmopolitans of people who dwell and travel in cultural places that flow across borders and these are the writers, and as well as individuals who question the shadow lines across modern states. They also questioned the myth of lost origins or homelands, and engage with the ongoing histories of migration and transactional flows. We are looking at Diaspora cultures, and we are looking at the idea of dwelling in travel and places across the borders.

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And we are not looking at borders as, transitional zones, what we are looking in borders as sites of creative cultural production, which denotes movement travel and inter cultural crossings. We are also looking at dwelling and travel, as opposed to the earlier movement of people in the pre global or pre national era, in the era of globalization, everyone is on the move producing a culture of circulation.

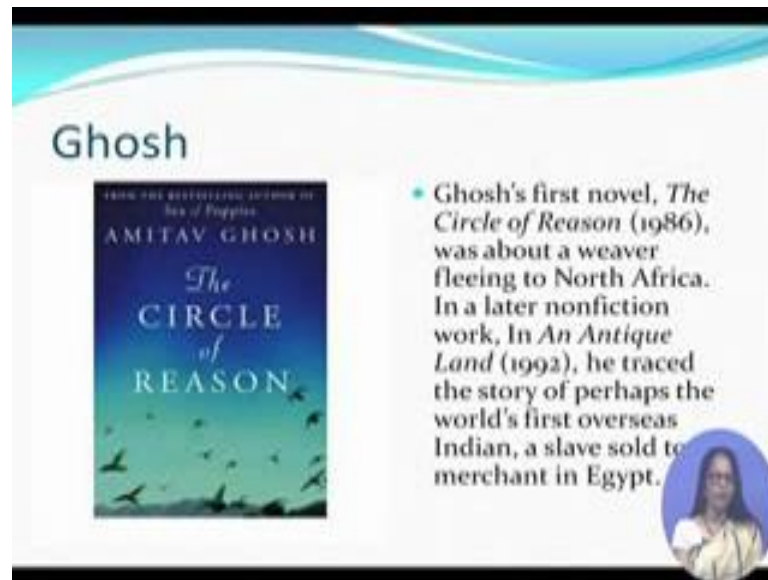
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So, when we look at the boundaries of movement across boundaries, we look at the boundaries within the Indian Ocean, and across the Indian Ocean, and we find, maybe

there would be several other reasons, but four main reasons, for their movements which took ways across these boundaries. So, conquest trade indventurement and travel are generally agreed to be the reason for more drivers for movement.

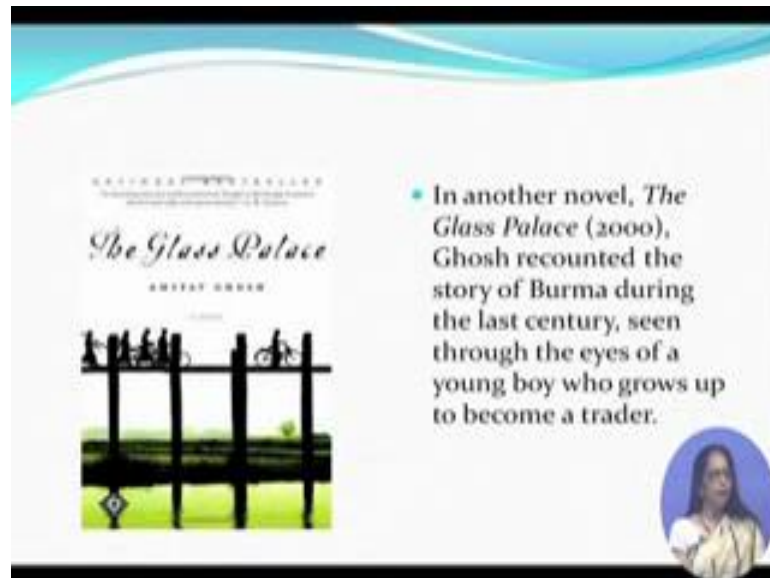
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And now we look at the novelist, who a forms the reality of these boundaries crossings in the, not only in the present, but refers to an earlier era; the pre global, or pre national era to talk about how people, goods, ideas, travel cross the boundaries of physical and geographical boundaries of regions, nations, and came into contact with one another. So, he testifies to the presence of existence of contact zones, as much in the past as they are in the present. So, his first novel, the circle of reason, it is about a weaver fleeing to north Africa in a later nonfiction work, in an antique land he traced the story of perhaps the World's first overseas Indian a slave sold to merchant in Egypt.

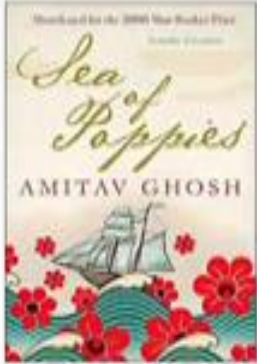
So, those of us who have been talking about, the inclination and zones of seclusion, where people did not come into contact with one another. The presence of these individuals or groups, and the tracing of the archives, which confirmed the presence of these contact zones, to the movements of people, who would be least except to travel shows that the contact zones, did exist in the past, and the nation far from being an insulated secluded zone, was an a site of multiple interactions between people from different paths of the world.

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When we go to the next novel in the glass palace, Ghosh's glass palace, where he recounts the journey of the story of Burma during the last century, seen through the eyes of a young boy, who grows up to become a trader. So, in the glass palace, its movement within south Asia, because the boundaries within the British empire with between India and Burma were not were quite permeable, and Burma was one of the earlier sites of Indian migration, not only of traders, but also of sea fairers, of policeman, and whole lot of people who, we can call about subaltern cosmopolitans as opposed to the elite cosmopolitans; like this orphan young boy called Rajkumar, who finds his way to Burma and becomes a rich trader, and through his eyes we see this movement of normally people like boatmen lascars, ordinary folks who travel.

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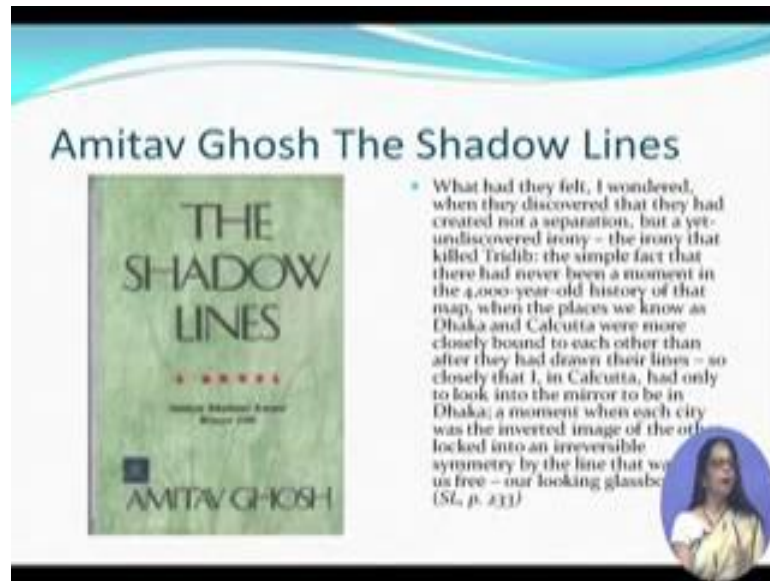


The image shows the cover of the book 'Sea of Poppies' by Amitav Ghosh. The cover features a central illustration of a three-masted sailing ship on a blue sea, surrounded by red poppies. The title 'Sea of Poppies' is written in a large, elegant cursive font, and the author's name 'AMITAV GHOSH' is printed below it. At the top of the cover, it says 'Shortlisted for the 2009 Man Booker Prize'.

- With *Sea of Poppies* (2008) and *River of Smoke* (2011), Ghosh has recreated the saga of individuals tossed around the world by the waves of economic forces and how in the process they shape language and culture, linking indentured laborers in one part of the world with mercantilist traders in the city, who want to keep China addicted to opium.

With the sea of poppies in 2008 and river of smoke 2011, Ghosh has created the saga of individuals tossed around the world by waves of economic forces, and how in the process they shape language and culture, linking indentured laborers in one part of the world with mercantiles traders in the city, who want to keep china addicted to co opium. So, it is an Ghosh's novel that we have a wonderful, and amazing documentation of the 19th century, movement of labor from India, from a villages of Bihar and up to Mauritius; one of the earliest migrations from India. And we had a brilliant recounting of the opium trade, which brings together unlikely people on the ship which sets sails for Mauritius forming new forms of community, new forms of subjectivity, and people who dwell in travel.

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But one of its early novels the shadow lines, that Amitav Ghosh had first contestant the idea of the boundaries of nations, and the idea of borders as artificial, as shadow lines. I quote from the text, from the first person narrator, when he talks about the boundaries between the presently Bangladesh and India, and how these artificial shadows lines drawn between people who shared the culture, who shared the language, who shared an identity, create destroyed these synchronic shared boundaries, which existed in India in until 1947, with the formation of Pakistan.

What had they felt I wondered when they discovered, that they had created not a separation, but a yet undiscovered irony; the irony that killed to deep, a character in this story. The simple fact that there been a movement in the 4000 years old history of that map, when the places we know is Dhaka and Calcutta, were more closely bound to each other, then after they have drawn their lines so closely that in Calcutta had only to look into the mirror to be in Dhaka. A movement when estuary was a inverted image of the other, locked into an irreversible symmetry, by the line that was a set as free, all looking glass borders. So, being a writer there is no better way of putting, the talking about the ridiculousness of forming boundaries between two cultural entities, which have a much older history of sharing, rather than of fragmentation.

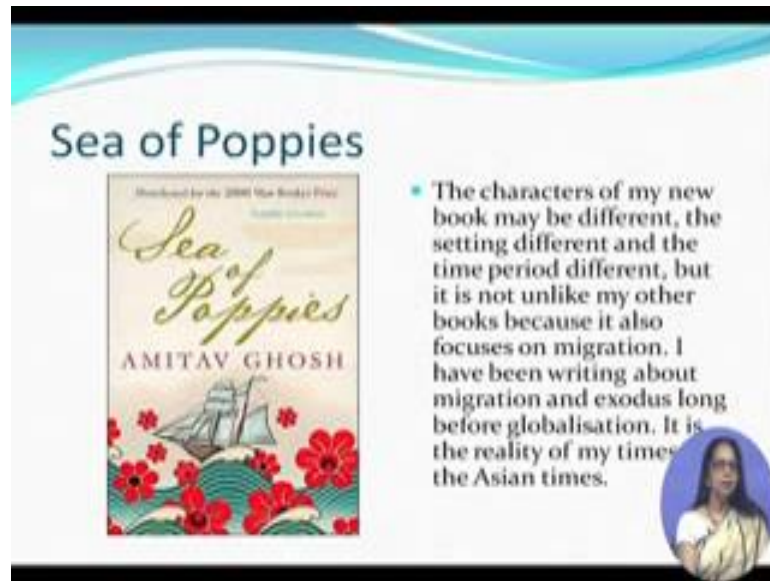
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And once again when we talk about contesting the boundaries or borders created by the partition of India in 1947, the consternation of a character in the shadow lines in Amitav Ghosh's novel, a character called a Thama, which means grandmother, who is originally from Dhaka, who considers Dhaka as her home land, and she is forced to migrate to India in 1947, and when she get an opportunity to travel back to Dhaka seven years later, she wonders what if there are any borders between Calcutta and Dhaka, and if there are actual borders, boundary lines which separate the two regions. And she is totally flummoxed, and totally flabbergasted that there are no real physical boundaries between the two nations.

She expresses the consignment in these words when she says, and if there is no difference, both sides will be the same, it will be just like it used to be before, when we used to catch a train to Dhaka and get off at Calcutta, the next day without anyone stopping us. So, the idea that borders are political rather than real, border are political rather than physical, and they are imaginary, what was it all for? So, we can ask the same question along with Thama what was it all for. Then partition and all the killing and everything, if there is not anything in between, but there is nothing in between, because there is no there is no culture cultural contiguity between Dhaka and Calcutta then between Calcutta and Delhi, and there is no cultural contiguity between Amritsar and Lahore then between Amritsar and Calcutta.

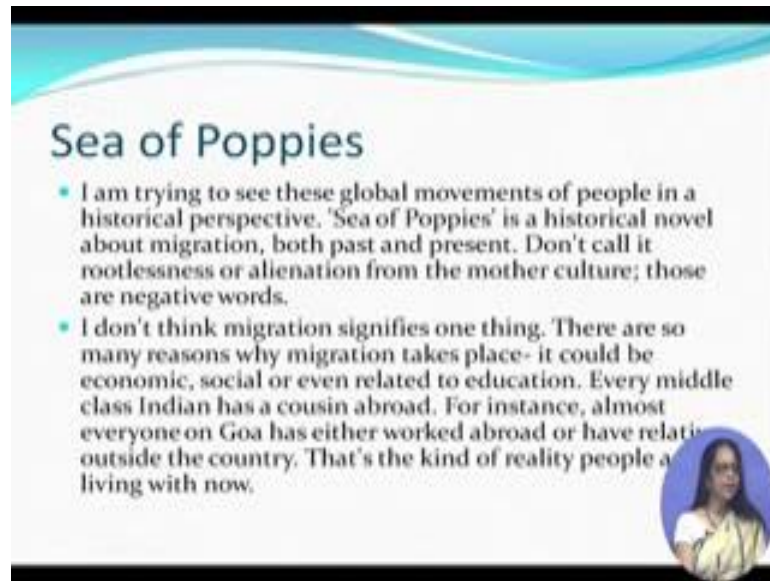
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The slide features a title "Sea of Poppies" at the top. Below the title is the book cover for "Sea of Poppies" by Amitav Ghosh, which includes the text "Shortlisted for the 2009 Man Booker Prize" and "Amitav Ghosh". To the right of the book cover is a quote: "The characters of my new book may be different, the setting different and the time period different, but it is not unlike my other books because it also focuses on migration. I have been writing about migration and exodus long before globalisation. It is the reality of my times, the Asian times." A small circular portrait of the author, Amitav Ghosh, is located in the bottom right corner of the slide.


So, in sea of poppies, after having interrogated the borders of nations in his earlier novels the shadow of lines, Ghosh moves on in the sea of poppies, to talk about the histories of migration, and moves into talks about globalization in an era much before globalization. the characters of my new book he said in an interview, maybe different, the setting different, time period different, but it is not unlike my other books, because it also focuses on migration as with his other novels which focus on migration, sea of poppies also focuses on migration. I have been writing about migration and exodus long before globalization. This is very important, as the very beginning that pointed out that those of us who thought that globalization began in the late 90s or late 80s, or in the 90s. We are mistaken, because the way we define globalization, those variables, those parameters of globalization if we apply to an earlier era, we find that those parameters are as true for that era as they are for now, and they predate the history of globalization, is the reality of my times, this is what he said in an interview to the Asian times.

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Sea of Poppies

- I am trying to see these global movements of people in a historical perspective. 'Sea of Poppies' is a historical novel about migration, both past and present. Don't call it rootlessness or alienation from the mother culture; those are negative words.
- I don't think migration signifies one thing. There are so many reasons why migration takes place- it could be economic, social or even related to education. Every middle class Indian has a cousin abroad. For instance, almost everyone on Goa has either worked abroad or have relatives outside the country. That's the kind of reality people are living with now.



And he said in the sea of poppies; I am trying to see these global movements of people in a historical perspective. Sea of Poppies he calls historical novel about migration, both past and present. Do not call it ruthlessness or alienation from the mother culture, those are negative words. So, we are looking at how the histories of migration, as narrated and immortalized in Ghosh's novels, contest the idea of nationalism, and point to a borderless world. They contest the idea of state centering boundaries; they contest the idea of nations as discrete separate disconnected entities, and show how the different nation states or different ideographical regions are connected through these histories of migration of people and also goods.

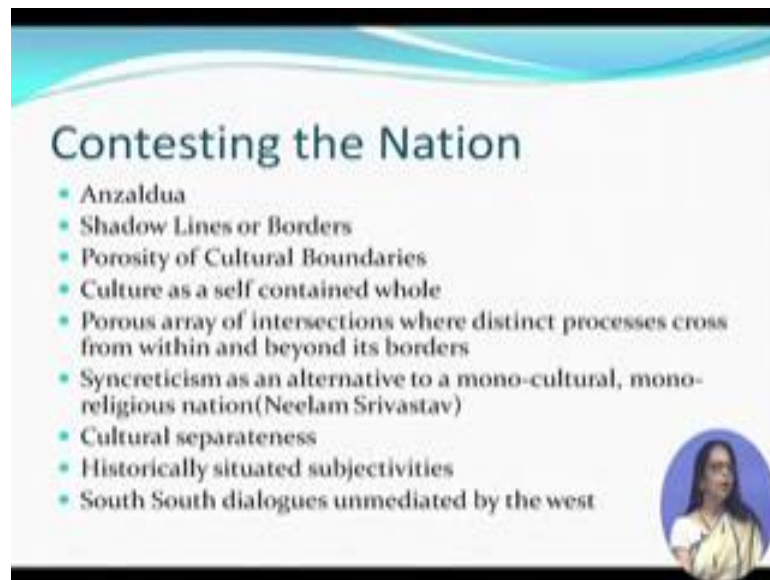
I do not think migration signifies one thing he says there are so many reasons why migration takes place; it could be economic, it could be social, or be even related to education. every middle class Indian has a cousin abroad, for instance everyone in Goa has either worked abroad, or has relatives outside the country; that is the kind of the reality people are living now. So, in his novels, Ghosh directly addresses the movements of people which Ajanapudurai puts so memorably in his idea of escapes.

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Now, I call these movements. Now, when we talk about movements of people or migrations; we tend to focus on the migration of elite professionals. We tend to focus on elite movements of professionals, intellectuals, artist in the present global context, as well as in the past, when we talk about the oldest days of migration. We talk about high profile migrants; such as kings, princes, students, political leaders and so on, but the histories of the ordinary people who move; such as lascars, ayas, soldiers, those histories has been marginalized when we talk about history of migration. Ghosh's novels show the non elite movements, not just of urban, but also of rural of working class and women in the past.

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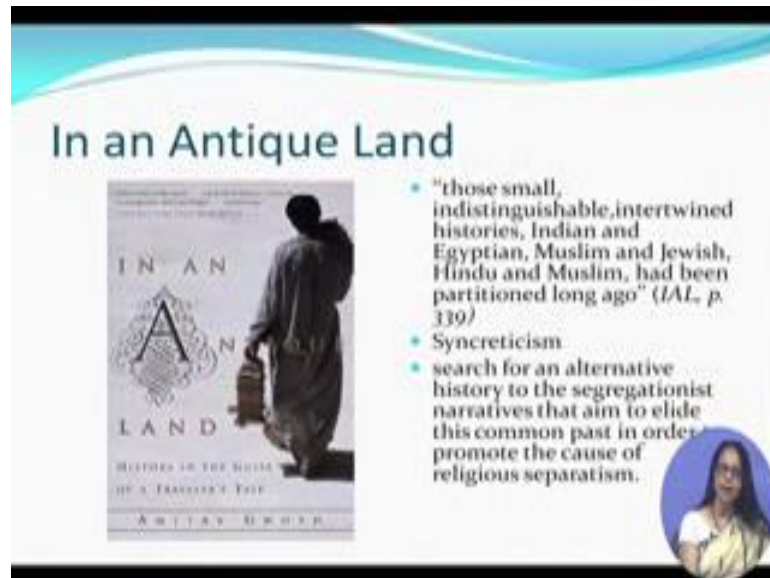
Contesting the Nation

- Anzaldua
- Shadow Lines or Borders
- Porosity of Cultural Boundaries
- Culture as a self contained whole
- Porous array of intersections where distinct processes cross from within and beyond its borders
- Syncretism as an alternative to a mono-cultural, mono-religious nation (Neelam Srivastav)
- Cultural separateness
- Historically situated subjectivities
- South South dialogues unmediated by the west

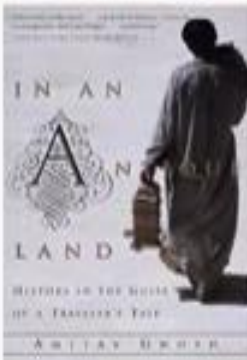
The idea of the nation has increasingly been contested, interiors of globalization, particularly in Anzaldua's idea of borders, this theory of borders, and which looks at borders as shadow lines, and insist on the porosities of cultural boundaries. And in light of these, in view of these it is impossible for us to think of culture as a self contained whole. Instead what we see is a porous array of intersections, where distinct processes cross from within, and beyond its borders. So, the idea of culture as a self contained whole, is proved to be a myth, is revealed to be a myth by writing of this kind; instead it shows a ray of intersections, where distinct processes cross from within and beyond its borders.

As Neelam Srivastav has suggested; syncretism can be viewed as an alternative to a mono cultural, mono religious nation, and this perspective, this idea of syncretism or syncretic boundaries has come from some of the new writing in English, as well as Indian languages. So, the idea of cultural separateness and historically situated, subjectivities and there is a need for south dialogues, the movements within the south. The movements which were not mediated by the west, which were outside the dragnet of interior movements, these movements need to be investigated and it is to Amitav Ghosh's credit that, he has focused our attention on these movements, not the movements from the non west to the west, and the west to the non west, but movements within South Asia, within the East, and within the global south that have been marginalized in histories of migration and Diasporas.


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In an Antique Land



- "those small, indistinguishable, intertwined histories, Indian and Egyptian, Muslim and Jewish, Hindu and Muslim, had been partitioned long ago" (*IAL*, p. 339)
- Syncreticism
- search for an alternative history to the segregationist narratives that aim to elide this common past in order to promote the cause of religious separatism.



In an antique land it was the first novel, in which he talks about those, small indistinguishable intertwined histories Indian and Egyptian, Muslim and Jewish, Hindu and Muslim which had been partitioned long ago. And Ghosh shows that these how histories had always been indistinguishable, had been had been in inter twined. Not only in Hindu and Muslim, but Indian and Egyptian, Muslim and Jewish, so when we look at syncreticism, which under prints all of his writing, and also its points to a search for an alternative history to the segregationist narratives that aim to elite this, common past in order to promote the cause of religious separatism.

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Globalization from Below

- Movements from the village
- Circle of Reason
- The Glass Palace
- The Sea of Poppies
- The Hungry Tide



It also causes attention to globalizations. We are focus of far and globalizations from above, but we also looked at several instance of globalization from below, when we look at the movements of the Roma people. We looked at these non elite singers, who have become global celebrities. We looked at several forms of globalization, from below. We looked at the networks formed by cable operators, by so called pirates to exchange cultural forms; such as music and films.

So, when we look at this globalization from below. If we look at one idea of globalization as some imagination of the planet from above, it coexist with the globalization from below, and Ghosh's writing narrates these several instances of globalization from below, in all his novels; such as a circle of reason, the glass palace, the sea of poppies, the hungry tide, each of these novels engages with the histories of globalization, and it also engages with these histories of globalization, which are movements of, which focuses on the movements of non elite people, non elite movements of rural people of the working classes, to places we could not have imagined

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Now, subaltern cosmopolitanisms we see in the circle of reason, for instance the main character the viewer aloo, and all other characters who land up in the zouk. The glass palace, this little orphaned boy called Rajkumar, who finds his way into Burma and the maid, the princessess maid dolly, who travels to India, and the sea of poppies we have a rural women, who by the vagaries of fate, lands finds herself travelling in a ship, a

women who has never seen a ship, has a dream of nightmare about a ship, and that is a premonition of things that are going to unfold at the course of the novel. And the lowest of these denominators, when we look at the travelers, we meet in Amitav Ghosh's novels is this unnamed slave in an antique land, who confirms the history of movements from India. Movement of a person who is at the bottom of the of all forms of hierarchy, finding his way, finding himself travelling in different parts of the world, testifies to these histories of globalization from below.

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So, when we look at circulations, we look at this oceanic trade of 12th century A.D. of coastal regions to Middle East. We look at the moved circulations of lascars; like Rajkumar. We look at the movements of indentured workers like Diti. Soldiers like Diti's husband, Indian soldiers in Burma and Singapore, and then we move to the more recent circulations, the more recent migrations, caused by the artificial creation of borders, after the partition of 1947, and the movement of displaced people to Morichjhapi, and to Sundarbans in Amitav Ghosh's novels.

So, with this we close this discussion on how the Indian novel, both in languages, in the bhashas and also in English, is initially complicit in the imagining of the nation, but after period of time, there is discontent with the nation, voiced by different writers, which reaches, which culminates in the publication of Salman Rushdie's 'midnight children', and then onward though the 'midnight children' is published before the official onset of

globalization. So, first novel which contested the idea of nations; I am sure the nations to be narrations or myths, and then the writing of Amitav Ghosh and several others we see how, we look at novelist, and we look at characters who are not local, but who are cosmopolitan of a borderless world.