

Displacement, Trauma, Memory and Migration: Recognizing a Socio-political Struggle of the Indian Subcontinent from Saadat Hasan Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' (1955) to Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019)

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Abstract

For Indian literature, the partition of the Indian soil came as a catastrophe but it blessed the world with Saadat Hasan Manto. He had already established his name as a screenwriter in Bombay film industry and was a phenomenal part of Progressive Writers Association, before India was divided into two and he had to move to the other side of the border with his family. His life was nothing short of a rollercoaster ride and his experienced reality was captured by his pen in the stories like 'Toba Tek Singh' (1955), 'Thanda Gosht' (1950), 'Khol Do' (1948) etc. The minutest and the most emotional representation of the aftermath of partition in his works goes beyond the definition of fiction.

A modern day great and one of the finest postcolonial Indian Anglophone writers till date- Amitav Ghosh is another author whose writings often brood beyond the peripheries of fiction. His thoroughly-researched novels offer a scope of interdisciplinary, or even sometimes intertextual re-reading.

I plan to take up Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' (1955) and Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) as primary texts for a comparative study. The major themes common between these two texts, and between the authors as well, are displacement and migration. But drastic changes in approach towards memory and migration, from a personal and a political point of view, have taken place in between Manto's time and that of Ghosh.

I will largely be touching upon the junctures of the radical change with the help of theories of postcolonialism, trauma studies, memory studies and theories of migration put forth by the likes of E.G. Ravenstein and Everett Lee. Other works by Manto and Ghosh will also be referred to on purpose. My paper will try to the metaphorical journey of Indian subcontinental sentiments from the historical past represented by Manto to the historic present that Ghosh writes about.

Keywords: memory studies, trauma studies, migration theories, mobility in and from Indian subcontinent, belatedness of trauma

(I)

The deadly COVID-19 has proved to the Indian subcontinent that calamities often transcend the physical and the material spheres to harm us in multiple ways. From 2019 to date, the Corona virus has caused diseases, deaths, the downfall of the economy and what not, but the subsequent lockdowns, at an emotional level, have seemed to be potent enough to trigger some serious trauma. On one hand, a privileged section of the population at least had the opportunity to lock themselves up inside their homes, but on the other hand, another section of the society was trying till the last grasp of breath to get back to their homes, to their loved ones. If we must take into consideration two popular statements by the nineteenth century American transcendentalist Ralph Waldo Emerson: “A house is made with walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams” and “Life is a journey, not a destination” (qtd. In Grégoire), and juxtapose them together, it can lead to a series of thoughts which prompts us to question the interrelation between the expressions: ‘home’, ‘journey’ and ‘destination.’ Where does a man begin his journey from? Where does he finally arrive? Is it possible for a man to ever have a ‘home’ in an Emersonian way? These questions can help us connect two different spatiotemporal schemas and two authors who are nothing short of oracles: Saadat Hasan Manto during the partition of the Indian subcontinent and Amitav Ghosh during the turn of the millennia. Their writing oeuvres indicate that the literature they have produced are not entirely fictional; rather they are non-fictions camouflaged as fictions: capturing reality with photographic precision and expressing it in a certain aesthetic pattern. Their aesthetics are their signatures, differentiating them from all the other existing literature of their respective times and spaces.

Human awareness hardly fails to distinguish between the material and the spiritual; the deductive and the inductive; and, the concrete and the abstract. But our existence often tends to blur the boundaries. A collective and consistent agony of a large section of the Indian subcontinent is coherently presented by Alok Bhalla: "Memories of the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 have haunted me all my life and have marked with fear many of my personal, ethical and political decision" (Bhalla 3119). An Indian or a Pakistani or a Bangladeshi can hardly be separated on the basis of their skin colours or their cultural practices and yet the colours of their national flags vary. Our identity is genuinely multidimensional and often existing at the "liminal spaces" as we do not conform to any binary. The identity of a living phenomenon is as much social, political and demographical as it is emotional, spiritual and psychological. This multifacetedness of our identity is the root of a crisis which gives the ideas of stability, displacement and migration a higher magnitude of academic gravity when it comes to the Indian subcontinental context.

(II)

Manto's 'Toba Tek Singh' (1955) and Ghosh's *Gun Island* (2019) are the primary texts for this research though their other works will also be referred to at times because the primary texts are only specimens of their stylistic features and content-wise approaches. Mahnaz Ispahani notes that Manto often talks about “the haphazard relationship between great events and small people” (Ispahani 187). In *Gun Island* or, in *The Hungry Tide* (2004) or in *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Ghosh too does the same: he decides to approach events like the 21st Century concern of global climate change or the Marichjhapi Massacre or World War II respectively from the perspective of the common people. But

there already exists an abundance of research works which deal with the issues of the formal structure and political realism in Manto and Ghosh's writings. This work attempts to connect the two in terms of their differences. The India that Manto describes in his partition narratives like 'Toba Tek Singh' and the India that Ghosh captures in *Gun Island* are different, though it remains that in both cases, the narratives are set against the backdrops of geographical borders, with the one difference being that Ghosh's world is globalized, unlike that of Manto. Another point of difference can be the felt experiences. Manto's case can be efficiently described by Manto's own words.

"The Partition of the country and the changes that followed left feelings of revolt in me...when I sat down to write I found my thoughts scattered. Though I tried hard I could not separate India from Pakistan and Pakistan from India...my mind could not resolve the question: what country did we belong to now, India or Pakistan?" -Manto, 1950. (Qtd. In Tiwari 51)

For Manto, the biggest source of problems and instability stemmed from the cross-border migration that he had to undertake. It certainly helped a few from both sides of the border to attain a state of compromised peace but it was never the best solution. Amrita Pritam, one of the most celebrated Punjabi writers of all time, was one of the many to have moved from Lahore to Delhi in 1947, and she notes something which seems particularly important if we detect the very much intentional strategy of 'divide and rule' followed by the British colonial machinery to divert the spirit of nationalism into the ways of religious extremism. Pritam recalls:

"What I am against is religion- the partition saw to that. Everything I had been taught- about morals, values and the importance of religion- was shattered. I saw, heard and read about so many atrocities committed in the name of religion that it turned me against any kind of religion and revolution." (Qtd. in Hasan 2662)

For Ghosh, we must understand that he, as a person, has also seen migration and has also faced the question of national identity being a diasporic anglophone writer. But his religious identity did not affect him like it did Manto. Ghosh moved a much longer distance compared to Manto, but it cannot match the suffering of Manto. It is safe to say that Ghosh's migration offered stability to him, but migration made Manto unstable-physically, economically, socially and emotionally. Ghosh's moving away displaces him from the site of his narrative but one of Manto's biggest constraints was that he and his characters had to live through the hell which he despised in his writings. It is a task to measure out the differences in the trope of journey between Manto's space(s) and time and those of Ghosh to chalk out the differences and the causes behind them.

Whereas Manto's short fiction deals with psychological, emotional, existential and geographical displacement, *Gun Island* does not deal with the partition directly. Rather the novel can be described as a collage of vital contemporary themes as a review published in *The Hindu* read: "*Gun Island* has bits of everything — magic, myth, history, science, zoology, etymology. It's about climate change, but suddenly it's also about migration and trafficking, and with the feeblest linkages. The result is not so much a Persian carpet as a patchwork quilt" (Roy). On the other hand, there are thinkers like Mushirul Hasan who feel it necessary to locate the partition debate "outside the two-nation theory or the rhetoric of Indian nationalism" (Hasan 2662). And this opens up a

scope to observe a novel like *Gun Island*, whose settings span over South Asia, Europe and America, through the lens of partition and migration studies to establish a connection between the two writers and the two scenarios. Before moving on to the next section, it is important to note that the goal of this paper is to explore the themes of memory, displacement and trauma in 'Toba Tek Singh', *Gun Island* and some other works of the writers concerned and that restricts the scope to throw light on every major theme present in those texts.

(III)

In 1947, the newly planted barbwire were certainly more physically concrete than ever but this action led to the installation of a sensitive and psychological border as well. People feared the border and yet they tried transgressing it. People's homes became bereft of "love and dreams" and the houses remained vacant with their "walls and beams." This was a point of historical shock and distress and it caused a serious trauma that was meant to linger there for a long time. Cathy Caruth explains: "The trauma is a repeated suffering of the event, but it is also a continual leaving of its site. The traumatic experience... carries with it what Dori Laub calls the 'collapse of witnessing'" (Caruth 204). Witnessing the event with bare eyes which causes the trauma can sustain the impact of it for a much longer period of time and that holds true for Manto. He simultaneously 'witnessed' the joy of freedom and the agony of partition and he found it difficult to come to terms with the changed scenario. After moving to Pakistan, he writes in "Letter to Uncle Sam" (1951):

You should know why my country, sliced away from India, came into being and gained independence, which is why I am taking the liberty of writing to you. Like my country, I too have become independent and in exactly the same way. Uncle, I will not labour the point since an all-knowing seer like you can well imagine the freedom a bird whose wings have been clipped can enjoy.

My name is Saadat Hasan Manto and I was born in a place that is now in India. My mother is buried there. My father is buried there. My first-born is also resting in that bit of earth. However, that place is no longer my country. My country now is Pakistan which I had only seen five or six times before as a British subject. (Manto)

In the same piece, while expressing his distress regarding the trials he had to face for his writings, he says, "My Country is not your country which I regret."

The character of Bishan Singh aka Toba Tek Singh is almost a mirror image of Manto's emotional roller-coaster ride during the partition. In the words of Ispahani, Toba Tek Singh is "Manto's supreme hero: the uprooted man, the man robbed of home, the victim of partition, who wins a strip of land all his own only in death" (Ispahani 191). Manto's own life proves that the story is a strong testimony to the immense psychological trauma that people went through during that time. The emotional aspects of rootlessness, trauma and pain caused by the realisation that the space upon which a memory is created would be out-of-reach hereafter, came together to increase the depth of the scur.

Ghosh, supposedly, never had to 'regret' like Manto because the moving away from the place where he was born, from the place he frequently writes about offers him the much-needed distance to emotionally detach himself from the narrative space and its reality;

and this helps Ghosh to objectively introspect into his own time. Another factor which favoured Ghosh but not Manto is time. People need time to heal from shocks, to deal with trauma.

It is essential to discuss, from a temporal perspective, the relation between trauma and memory- how trauma is generated and sustained in the memory of a person. It is also a point of speculation whether a person, who has not experienced the event leading to the trauma originally, can be a victim of the repetitive and prolonged impact of trauma. Andrew Barnaby deals with these fundamental questions and to refer to him we must consider the comparison he makes between the descriptions of trauma put forth by Cathy Caruth and van der Kolk and van der Hart. He quotes Caruth:

The wound of the mind—the breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world—is not, like the wound of the body, a simple and healable event, but rather an event that ... is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known and is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and 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... (Qtd in Barnaby 121)

Barnaby addresses the paradox in Caruth's discussion as she says that the event causing the trauma arrives "too soon" for the subject but the impact or the haunting of it comes later on- delayed; Barnaby resolves the issue by noting that the phrase "too soon" is used by Caruth only to emphasize the unexpectedness of the "original event."

It can be said that, "Belatedness is itself a sign of trauma" (Hepburn 380-1). Manto's series of writings on partition are the belated hauntings- the returning of the traumatic experience of the partition for which event, Manto was not ready. One may question here, how does the personal trauma of Manto serve to be a scale for comparison in this comparative study that involves Amitav Ghosh alongside Manto? For an answer, we have to consult Gilad Hirschberger for his definition of "collective trauma." Hirschberger defines the term as:

... the psychological reactions to a traumatic event that affect an entire society; it does not merely reflect an historical fact, the recollection of a terrible event that happened to a group of people. It suggests that the tragedy is represented in the collective memory of the group, and like all forms of memory it comprises not only a reproduction of the events, but also an ongoing reconstruction of the trauma in an attempt to make sense of it. Collective memory of trauma is different from individual memory because collective memory persists beyond the lives of the direct survivors of the events, and is remembered by group members that may be far removed from the traumatic events in time and space. (Hirschberger 1)

But the way Ghosh pens *Gun Island*, he seems to be outside the peripheries of collective trauma. Ali Behdad says his writing "involves displacement in time and space: writing about colonialism in a postcolonial era, and writing it in the West" (Behdad 1) in the preface of *Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution* and these words are more than capable of particularly describing Ghosh's privileged position.

But Ghosh takes up a certain responsibility to look back at the event with which the colonised era officially ended in India. While discussing Homi Bhabha's remarks on Edward Said's works and how "postcolonial studies are on the side of memory", Behdad marks that postcolonial criticisms are "the belated return of the repressed, disrupting that structure of colonial amnesia that denied the colonized his or her history" (Behdad 6). Ghosh's *Gun Island* is not only a postcolonial critique, it is a rebellion by a writer of Indian origin to show with his characterization that India can now deal with the tragic history which had to be told in fictions by the likes of Manto and the trauma that made Manto write 'Toba Tek Singh'. In the process, Ghosh also brings together the two dissected pieces of Bengal and when characters like Tipu makes it a cakewalk to make cross-border travels between India and Bangladesh- a rebel screams in the ears of our former rulers that the border they put to divide India is losing its ground.

(IV)

As per a recent report by *The Times of India*, four Indians including an infant- Jagdish Baldevbhaipatel (male, 39), Vaishaliben Jagdishkumar Patel (female, 37), Vihangi Jagdishkumar Patel (female, 11) and Dharmik Jagdishkumar Patel (male,3)- passed away in an unfortunate case of freezing to death in Canada and their bodies were found on 19th of January, 2022 in Manitoba near the Canada-US border. A follow-up report by *The Times of India* reveals that the Patel family tried to smuggle themselves to the USA through the Canada-US border with the help of some 'agent' but fell short for hardly 10 meters from the border (Chauhan and Yagnik). The report claims that the Patel family might have paid a whopping amount of Rs. 1.5 crore to the agent who has already dealt with around 10 families from the Dilgucha village in Gujarat- the place the Patel family belonged too (Ibid.). The agent capitalizes on the families' attempt to "give the elusive 'American dream' a shot" (Ibid.). The Patel family or the other people from Dilgucha who wanted to realize the 'American dream' are not the only one of its kind. People smuggle themselves for various better socio-economic reasons which we will discuss later in this paper. First, it is important to not confuse human smuggling with human trafficking. Human trafficking is an "involuntary" action which can be explained as "an exploitation-based offense against a person and does not require movement across borders" whereas human smuggling is a "voluntary" process which includes "deliberate evasion of immigration laws" by individuals who are on the move (Guidroz).

In *Gun Island*, Amitav Ghosh portrays Tipu as a part of the network of "the people-moving industry" (Ghosh 60). He capitalizes on his technological expertise and smartly plants his innovative stories for "clients" who depend upon the network of "connection men" or 'dalals' "who make all the necessary connections for migrants" (62). When asked for an example of those stories by Deen, the narrator, Tipu explains:

Suppose a guy's applying for asylum in in Sweden- he will need a story to back him up... It's gotta be a story like they want to hear over there. Suppose the guy was starving because his land was flooded; or suppose his whole village was sick from the arsenic in the ground water... none of that shit matters to the Swedes. Politics, religion and sex is what they're looking for. (Ghosh 62)

Tipu gives his clients stories about subjects that European wants to hear and believe because the West understands only a little of the East. This is substantiated by Ghosh towards the end of the novel. The narrator comments on the refugees: "...they, like me,

were completely conversant with the laws and regulations of the country they were heading to. Instead, it was the countries of the West that now knew very little about the people who were flocking towards them” (278-9). We see sympathy for the refugees as well as hatred towards them when the “angry roars” of the native Europeans scream, “Go back where you came from... Europe for Europeans” (276). Ghosh’s wordings are politically charged:

I saw now why the angry young men on the boats around us (the Europeans) were so afraid of that derelict refugee boat: that tiny vessel represented the overturning of a centuries-old project that had been essential to the shaping of Europe... European imperial powers had launched upon the greatest and most cruel experiment in planetary remaking that history has ever known: in the service of commerce they had transported people between continents on an almost unimaginable scale, ultimately changing the demographic profile of the entire planet. But even as they were repopulating other continents they had always tried to preserve the whiteness of their own metropolitan territories in Europe.

This entire project had now been upended. The systems and technologies that had made those massive demographic interventions possible- ranging from armaments to the control of information- had now achieved escape velocity: they were no longer under anyone's control. (279-80)

Manto and his characters like Toba Tek Singh were at the receiving ends of the shock of partition. The partition of India was the effect of the British imperialists not understanding, or intentionally devaluing the idea of Indianness. Ghosh’s rebellion lies in his description of the geo- political inversion.

An infographics by Eu-India Partnership on Migration and mobility states that there are legislative acts in India that are meant to regulate migration and safeguard “the welfare of Indian migrants.” They are- The Emigration Act, 1983, The Foreigners Act, 1946, The Passport Act, 1967. Manto’s cross-border journey was an act of compulsion for the sake of his physical and emotional safety and the law of that time did not prohibit him to do so. More importantly, it was only suffering on both the sides of the partition, spatiotemporally. Tipu and the people he helps, on the other hand, migrate for a dream or because they cannot tolerate what happens to them in their native land; and they migrate illegally because there are certain legal steps that might restrict them. This kind of immigrants smuggle themselves to the land of their dreams by air, water or land. While travelling, in fact, until they somehow manage to settle down peacefully in the foreign land, they are refugees. Many Indians face legal refusals of entry to the European countries. As per a research recognized by the likes of International Centre for Migration Policy Development, India Centre for Migration and International Labour Organization, the two major reasons why the Indians were not permitted an entry to the European nations are- not having a valid visa or residence permit and not carrying the valid travel documents – in 2019 only, of all the reasons for refusal of entry, 1240 of the total tally of 1750 were refused for these two reasons (Sethi et al. 58). The same report shows, that 15 of the total 1750, were refused for carrying false travel documents. In another segment of that research work, the researchers have found that the air borders are the most important route (and the sea is the second important in the list) through which the Indians attempt to migrate irregularly. Though, the ‘dalals’ or the agents who help people get into

Europe, hail from Bangladesh as per Tipu's description in *Gun Island* (Ghosh 63), we cannot deny the fact that people of a similar socio-economic background, on either side of the border can think similarly.

When it comes to the point of displacement and mobility, Manto and his characters' reason and purpose of displacement were obvious- partition and the violence it begot. But in Ghosh's novel, though Tipu makes the virtuality provided by the mobile phones- the majorly responsible and most helpful entity, it is hard to deny that there are certain demographic and socio-economic factors which determine the course of not only human migration but also that of the intranational and international legally permitted movements of people. The reasons, possibilities and trends of migration are so varied and vast that there is hardly any single concrete theory or formula of the phenomenon. But by observing the behaviours of the migrants according to the effects of space and time, there have been some general theories of migration. We can venture to look out for some of them to try to relate the hypothesis to the immigrational tendencies, both legal and illegal.

Ernst Georg Ravenstein was the first theorist to list 'laws of migration' in his article published in the *Statistical Journal* in 1885, though he made attempts with certain differences in 1876 and 1889 also (Grigg). D.B. Grigg restates the laws by numbering them. There are eleven of them, of which we would pick six for our discussion which are as follows:

1. The majority of the migrants go only a short distance.
2. Migrants going long distances generally go by preference to one of the great centres of commerce or industry.
3. Each current of migration produces a counter current.
4. The natives of the town are less migratory than those of rural areas.
5. The major direction of migration is from the agricultural areas to the centres of industry and commerce.
6. The major causes of migration are economic. (Grigg 42-3)

The above list includes those of Ravenstein's laws which are prevalent in Ghosh's novel and the time that this narrative represents. We see women from Sundarbans who flew to the urban space of Kolkata to work and earn their breads as prostitutes getting evacuated back to where they belong to by the Badabon Trust which looks to rehabilitate them (Ghosh 47-8). Sundarban is a rural agricultural space and Kolkata for them was the closest urban hub of commerce and industries and this affirms the validity of many of Ravenstein's laws in Ghosh's not-so-fictive world of *Gun Island*. The likes of Tipu and Rafi look beyond the borders to the great European cities because they are even bigger centres of commerce and industry than Kolkata and thus can offer a prodigious economic scope.

A more recent theorist on migration is Everett Lee who in 1966 considered that there are certain positive and negative factors and also formulated upon factors like:

- i. Factors associated with the place of origin,
- ii. Factors associated with the place of destination,
- iii. Intervening obstacles, and
- iv. Personal factors. (Verma)

Lee's hypotheses regarding the development of streams and counter-streams of migration accepts Ravenstein's point that, for every current or stream of migration, a counter current or counter stream is developed. In the novel, we find people- from the place with more negative factors- Sundarbans, fleeing to the large urban centres of industry and commerce, but from the cities with more positive factors, the narrator Deen, Piya and even Cinta coming to remote corners of Bengal for academic or personal interests forming a counter-stream. As per Lee's hypothesis, the counter-stream being numerically weaker than the main current of migration, makes it a stream of high efficiency (Verma) and adding to it, the plethora of negative factors or the lack of opportunity in the place of origin makes "the development of stream" (Verma) more prominent.

(V)

In a letter to the renowned poet Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, Manto wrote: "Life should be portrayed as it is, and not in its ideal, past, future form" (qtd. in Rasheedi 105). And it is the idea which he maintained throughout his range of short-fictions. Moid Rasheedi considers Manto's realism as distinctively different from that of Premchand or Dipti Nazir Ahmad, as he opines that Manto's reality "surprises us and compels us to stop and think" (106). In 'Toba Tek Singh' too, we are surprised to see the madmen of the asylum showing rationality, certainly more than the people who decided to divide the country and then came up with the idea of exchanging the lunatics on the basis of their newly formed national identities. Rasheedi agrees on this and also on the fact that the lunatics in the story have shown a sense of "belongingness" in them (107). The most powerful claim that Rasheedi makes in his seminal work on Manto is the following: "Manto migrates to the internal reality from the external reality in his short stories. Each destination of this journey is a question. Most of the climaxes of the short stories are either a sign of resistance or a dream of a new journey" (108). The description by Ghosh and his tackling of the refugee boat scenes towards the climax of the novel proves that what Rasheedi says about Manto, is a legacy that Ghosh proudly carries forward, consciously or unconsciously. As we have previously hinted, Ghosh's *Gun Island* can be interpreted as a literary resistance which promotes dream and hope for the people who have suffered from a trauma for generations.

Urvashi Butalia in her article "Community, State and Gender: Some Reflections on the Partition of India" raises a series of questions which are speculative of the post-partition future of people whose lives were impacted by the catastrophic event. Some of these questions are: "Within a short space of time, sometimes overnight, millions of people were turned into refugees. How did they cope with this dislocation? What equipped them to deal with the trauma that must have accompanied this uprooting? How did they rebuild their lives" (Butalia 31)? Tipu, in *Gun Island*, probably presents the best yet short answer. Resounding much like Newton's laws of motion, he says to Deen, "once they got moving they never stopped" (Ghosh 63). Once the circumstances make people helpless, they are out of a land- they are refugees and they migrate. In the novel too, we find that even Deen has a family history of cross-border migration from Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) to India (Ghosh 22) and it is imperative that they did not have any concept of visa or passport during that time. And the legacy of movement was carried forward by Deen who in his life has contributed to streams and counter-streams of migration. In *Gun Island*, the highly efficient migration stream from the interiors of the

Indian subcontinent to the large cities of commerce in Europe proves that India has moved way forward from Manto's time. And that means there is an undermined process of forgetting which we cannot leave out of our discussion. Earnest Renan has opined in his essay "What is a nation?": "Forgetting, I would even go so far as to say historical error, is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation, which is why progress in historical studies often constitutes a danger for [the principle of] nationality" (qtd. in Kaul 125). It is the process of a systematic forgetting, or a selective amnesia carried out by generations that enables the Tipus of *Gun Island* to differ in nature from characters like Thamma from Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*. Not only the epoch of technological revolution, but thanks to the forgetting of "the principle of nationality" and the tragic memory associated with it- characters like Tipu or Rafi can show a possibility of virtual identity overpowering national identity. This may lead to a speculation about how much rigid the concept of "root" is.

Van der Veer wrote, "History is the grand narrative of the modern nation-state" (qtd. in Gilmartin 1070). And this paper applauds both Manto and Ghosh's expertise to bring out the micro-narratives by wrapping them as fictions worthy of an array of academic discussion. Whereas Manto both lived in and exploited variously in his literature the sensitive liminal spaces, Ghosh grows beyond them. It should be clarified that this paper does not encourage travelling or migrating without proper legal documents but it dares to reach the finale of the discussion by dreaming that- a world would exist where refugees are not 'problems' but are as human as the people who have proper residential documents; a world would exist where people are respected irrespective of their national, religious or racial identities.

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