

PROJECT WORK

ENGLISH ASSIGNMENT (Six Semes)

2nd Assignment
(6th Semes)

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Comment on the idea of partition in the novel
The Shadow Lines.

The idea of partition in the novel The Shadow Lines is the Partition of India which was the division of British India in 1947 which accompanied the creation of two independent dominions, India and Pakistan. The narrative begins in 1939 and ends in 1964 when violence erupted in India and Pakistan.

The narrative excellently establishes the ineffectiveness of borders that were drawn during the ~~partition~~ partition, and how partition brings tragedy in the life of individuals and give traumatic experience that will haunt them in the future. Thus, in this novel, there is a constant continuation of the trauma of Partition, shown through the life and actions of the characters.

The partition also creates the feeling of humiliation and agony and for the near and dear ones who are compelled to migrate from their home or birth-place merely for the reasons based on whims

of political solution of the problem faced by the nation.

Three perspectives of borders are provided by three characters belonging to three adjacent generations as figured in *The Shadow Lines*. The first is spoken by Thamma, the narrator's grandmother; the second by her uncle, Jethamoshai (granduncle of the narrator); and the third by Robi, Thamma's nephew, who is roughly the same age as the narrator and is his friend. The death of Iridib, the narrator's uncle, is the result of Partition because he died in Dhaka, at the time of coming back to India with his family. It shows the violence through riots and attacking nature which is the product of Partition.

It is in the wake of Iridib's death that Thamma realizes that borders do not create separation; it is only a shadow line that killed Iridib. Her perception is changed now. She is disillusioned about the reality of border, war, bloodshed, and killing, that there is nothing glory. All these can never bring freedom.

Rebi also experiences the incident of riot in which Tridib was killed. Rebi talks about that experience with a hyper emotionality characteristic of a traumatic childhood experience. Rebi wants to be free from the memory of Tridib's death, but he can never be able to rid himself of that dream. Rebi ~~finally~~ realizes that escape from traumatic memory is not possible; even not possible by creating lines. Memory does not heed the boundaries drawn by man, nothing can divide memory. He realizes that nothing would change as the concept of border is illusory. Everyone wants freedom and is ready to kill others for it. Rebi feels that nobody understand the meaning of freedom, "If freedom was possible, surely Tridib's death would have set me free". But Rebi's loss of his brother is still haunting him when he is in a Bangladeshi restaurant in London, far away from that place; from that incident. His memory also binds him with the trauma of other people who were affected by these riots on the other side of the border, it is an undesired bond; from which there is no escape.

Analyze the importance of Matthew Arnold as critic with reference to *The Study of Poetry*.

Matthew Arnold is an important critic of English Literature. Before him, English criticism was in fog, and whatever criticism we find, is more based on personal notions than on any consistent methods. Dryden is regarded as the first critic of English, but his criticism is based on personal notion - sympathy and knowledge rather than on any formula. It is the reason that even in his age, the authority of Aristotle remained unquestioned. The romantic critics besides their rich criticism were more lost in their theory of imagination and love for metaphysics. It is in Arnold that English literature could have a critic of real nature, who laid down certain principles following which poetry could be criticized.

Matthew Arnold practically stopped writing poetry after 1867. Henceforth, he appeared in the role of a critic. The function of criticism as he conceives it, is to make

is acquainted with the best that has been thought and said in this world; it is to turn a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits. When he demands that a critic should make known the best that has been thought and said in the world, he means that a critic should have a broad outlook, and be familiar with the thought-currents of the world. Arnold makes broad-based culture the main spring of criticism.

If we are to ^{take} a comparison between the difference of Arnold and Aristotle, we can say that Aristotle formulates the principles which govern the making of a poem; Arnold, the principles by which the best poems can be tested and examined. Arnold owes a duty to society. For Arnold poetry is not meant to delight, it is meant to provide food to soul. He defines poetry as a 'criticism of life', by which he means the noble and profound application of ideas to life and the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty as truth and seriousness to substance and matter, and felicity and

perfection of diction and manner. Arnold believes that poetry does not present life as it is. The poet rather adds something of his own from his noble nature to it and this something contributes to his criticism of life. Poetry makes ~~man~~^{men} moral, better and nobler, but it does so not through direct teaching, or by appealing by reason like science, but by appealing to the soul of man.

"English criticism", says Jones, "may be said to have begun and ended with Arnold. Before him there was a splendid chaos and after him an overwhelming flood". Saintsbury went to the extent of saying that Arnold was the greatest critic of Europe in the nineteenth century. It is evident, therefore, that Arnold was the greatest influence in nineteenth century literature in England. In the field of criticism he was an apostle.