

# EVOLUTION OF I (SELF- IDENTITY) IN WOMEN IN SELECT FICTIONS OF AMITAV GHOSH AND MANJU KAPUR

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**ABSTRACT:** Amitav Ghosh and Manju Kapur Dalmia are very prominent in the Indian Literary field. They both have contributed a lot in regard to women fiction novels. The evolution of women remains pertinent in context to the novels written by Amitav Ghosh and Manju Kapur. This study reflects how both the authors have uplifted women and presented them as heroes in their novels. Self-identity of women were imparted in significant terms by the novels like the *Shadow Lines* and the *Glass palace*. The new women came into being in context to the writings of Manju Kapur in her novel *immigrants and the custody*.

**Key Words:** Self Identity, Women, Evolution of I, Fictions, manju Kapur, Amitav Ghosh

## Introduction

Amitav Ghosh and Manju Kapur are well known writers in Indian literature. Manju Kapur is regarded as a star in portraiture of Indian women. In all her work, she deals with the problems of women who suffer. All her novels beautifully describe women in the long struggle to reach their own identity. In contrast, in the eyes of contemporary Indian literature, Amitav Ghosh was the only author who reflected the truth of Indian reality. In the world of literature, he carries many responsibilities. The reception of feminist criticism in Amitav Ghosh's novels marks a significant gap between the feminist critique of the Western Academy and the Indian Sub-Continent. The feminist critique of Indian academics is at the centre of Amitabh Ghosh's novel.

## Perception of the Manju Kapur and Amitav Ghosh

In the context of the writings of Manju Kapoor and Amitabh Ghosh, we found that their perception was to portray women and female characters as heroes in their novel. These writers were first made more active in their work to combat the culture that developed between men and women. They started writing results and writing other reviews. It is transparently presented in novels: *Glass Palace and Shadow Lines*. In his novels, Amitabh Ghosh describes women as the main spirit. Both do not fight men with their feminine sensibilities and do not live as women in a male-dominated society. But they try to assert their rights as a people in society by adopting a rebellious attitude towards education, employment and life. Amitabh Ghosh tries to discover the sensitivity of women through his female characters that help readers understand feminist sensitivity and psychology. The world is unique in its female characters because they are not covered by the term "stereotypes." They fought for various reasons and ultimately became revolutionaries<sup>1</sup>.

On the other hand, Manju Kapur deals with the problem and suffering of women to attain their identity. Women face problems and difficulties with identity. His novel beautifully describes the women's long struggle to find their identity. She usually draws on her thoughts and ideas, which she later transforms into writing through her female characters. She is deeply influenced by feminist thought. She believes in the idea of describing the relationship between men and women from the point of view of women. Her novels emphasize the character of women more than men. She has dealt with major issues of middle-class women in all her novels. Manju Kapur is a notable author who skilfully describes the fate of middle-class Indian women. Her writings explore the cultural identity and self-struggle of women. Kapur's perception of women's liberation extends deeply into social and cultural issues. Her novels play a significant role in emphasizing the personal development of each woman for the betterment of Indian society.

## Evolution of self-identity in two novels of Ghosh: *Glass Palace* and *Shadow lines*

*Glass Palace* represents the female characters, who presents it to the reader, not only explicitly, but also clearly states the difference between the ruling class and the subordinate. Examining the novel of feminist discourse on the dignity of women in the royal family shows that even among the princesses, a woman is

<sup>1</sup> Iyengar, K.R. Srinivas. "Indian Writing in English". New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1994. Print

more dependent on a man and her marriage is no less a matter of personal choice. Marriage is a political event in India.

Glass Palace, the story of three families, epic in India, Burma and Malaysia, covers the three most turbulent countries in their history. Family relationships reveal social and cultural complexity, feminine mentality and consciousness. An important event that occurs early in the novel determines the tone of the female characters. The character of Ma Cho expresses the struggle of a single woman who enjoys dignity in life. Amitabh Ghosh mentions Ma Cho just in the first part of the Glass Palace. She was half Indian and half Burmese. She has no family, so she lives alone. She has a small food stand on her own. She was in his thirties, more Burmese than Indian presence. Ma Cho manages her life very freely without relying on others. However, she is still suffering from human condition. She sexually assaulted some of her clients, such as Saya John<sup>2</sup>.

Ma Cho stand as a preserver of cultural and spiritual essence when she retaliates to Saya John. Her character gives leadership and vitality. She was superior to men in spite of women. In the novel, Dolly and Uma Dei are portrayed as lively women. The protagonist of the novel is Dolly; The novel mentions her entire generation. Dolly gives birth to Dinu and Neel. Dolly is a nine-year-old girl and she manages transportation with him. Gradually, childlike in character, she became a seductive and sensitive young woman

In the context of Amitabh Ghosh's feminine novels, evolution is associated with feminist consciousness, which is confronted by the social problems and masculine hegemony they face. They act as individual entities, grow and develop according to their own inclinations, seek social acceptance, determine their own place, set their own lives, fight and fight, enjoy the fruits of victory, and never be afraid to taste the bitterness of defeat. Amitabh Ghosh's fiction depicts two images of women: giving women the opposite in life, living life, sustainable and competitive life.

Amitabh Ghosh recognizes that humanistic viewpoint and the humble female characters voice the need for social reforms such as racism, gender discrimination, women oppression, child marriage, poverty, exploitation, abortion. He wants to relieve race, colour, gender, religion, untouchability and the geographical boundaries that hinder human development. It also shows that the omission of marginal characters and female characters goes unknown in the pages of the story.

Amitav Ghosh's *Shadow Lines* tells the story of a middle-class Indian family that is based in Kolkata. The narrator boons the perspective of his close and extended family members, giving everyone a golden character. The narrator's grandmother Thamma signifies the ideas and enthusiasm of idealism that led to the formation of the nation just after the independence of the people. It is through his character that Ghosh delivers the most powerful message of the novel: the ineffectiveness of the nation's institutions, the irrationality of the drawings that blindly divide people without leaving their memory intact. Ghosh gives enough room to the British-priced family, and unlike most writers, he doesn't stereotype them.

In this novel, self-identity was created with the character of Thamma. The character of Thamma is an acknowledgement to many eminent women in the nation who hold the creation of their children and loved ones through their work, the main motivation for the novel to stop hold was when his relative Jethomashai showed her a postcard and tears started flowing down her cheeks. The card tells her that one of Jethomashai's son, Mrinmoyee, lives in Kolkata with his family<sup>3</sup>. She decides to sort all the differences:

*"It does not matter whether we recognize each other or not. We are the same flesh, the same blood, the same bone and now at last, after all these years, perhaps we will be able to make amends for all that bitterness and hatred" (SL 129).*

The novel gives the most powerful message through a female character, calling it the inaction of nation-building, the absurdity of drawing a line that divides people indiscriminately with such memories intact. Despite all this, Thamma remains a great revolutionary in the novel.

May is another revolutionary character like Ila and Thamma. She is bold and practical in her discourse. In actuality, she knows about his obligations and her shortcomings. She communicated her feelings legitimately. As a British lady, her elucidation of Indian individuals, spots and occasions is extraordinary. She doesn't comprehend that the statue of Queen Victoria has a place with the historical backdrop of India and its kin. but when is encounters with a beggar, she provides him with money: She has thoughts too that: *"it was an act of helplessness. She wasn't used to being helpless" (SL 166)*

<sup>2</sup> Ghosh Amitav. "The Glass Palace". India: Harper Collins,2000. Print

<sup>3</sup> Ghosh, Amitav. *The Shadow Lines*. New Delhi: Ravi Dayal, 1988. Print.

In this way, Amitabh Ghosh presents his female characters as revolutionary. They have developed to be a revolutionary in their respective fields. They also have the courage to fight for the development of the people. Women who dominate themselves become synonymous with purity and self-control.

#### **Evolution of self-identity in two novels of Manju Kapur: Immigrants, Married women, custody**

Manju Kapur is a developing writer in the fiction of Indo-Anglian. In addition, her writings have had a profound impact on society. The main idea of women's lives in the novel of Manju Kapur is to release them from the repressive system of the patriarchal symbolic order. In doing so, the protagonists of her novel have suffered many psychological, physical, and emotional problems. However, these women have reached some degree of their long-awaited independence. In her novel, Manju Kapoor introduces women who have tried to set up their own identity. In the half-century of independence, Indian women have indeed to achieve their success, but true women have much to do to achieve their independence. The struggle for autonomy remains an unfulfilled struggle for its identity.

Other than that, the second novel of Manju Kapur, "**A Married Woman**", which is based on the story of Astha, who was educated and working women and she comes from the upper-middle-class family. Through her novel, Kapur totally tries to undo the tittle and the one-sided image of women for equality and independence. Seek it, so by denying the freedom to work and choose between them, the women are only in the realm of dreams, they can only dream and be enticed. Along with that, this novel provides an attractive sight into the working of a woman struggling to embrace her identity in society. Further, Astha is one kind of person who looks for her identity and can help her in her quest. Also, Astha forges several relationships with varied people<sup>4</sup>.

*"She represents the whole woman race, the changing Indian society where the upper-middle-class educated woman who, although financially independent, is still facing the problems of adjustment between the old and the new, between appearance and reality and between theory and practice. It explores the space of such women through Astha and boldly presents a new perspective".* (Gunjan 97)

In this way, Manju Kapur has created a story in context to the idea that the women of today's society are at the gates of social change under incredible circumstances. Further, this novel gives the voices to the alienation, disappointments, and frustrations of women in the post-feminist world. This novel that provokes our thinking that a married woman named Astha, looking for her identity, and registered her protest against the present patriarchal system and debuted as a self-determining woman. In this manner, Amar Nath Prasad observed in this background:

"Women are no longer flowers of the pot for only decoration; rather they are fragrant flowers of the open garden diffusing aroma to all comers, braving the storms and rains" (qtd. in Gunjan 98).

This possibility is also the underlying theme of the exploitation of Manju Kapoor's second novel, "A Married Woman", where Astha Vadera, the main protagonist of evolution in India. Values change and women begin to recognize them as the co-equal of men. Although the high expectations of feminism have faded in today's social environment, the relationship between women and is becoming structurally interdependent. Nevertheless, the woman must work for her freedom without quitting herself to her destiny<sup>5</sup>.

Then again, the primary intention of this novel is to analyse issues in context to middle and upper-middle and middle-level women. The question of women is no longer limited to the right to equality with men in the field of women in the family or in different areas of social life. In addition, this is a part of a broader and broader question of women in context to the directions for many changes that our society is taking political, social, economic, social, and intellectual insight and analysis of the process. It is in this context that the role of women is addressed in Manju Kapoor's novels. When we read Manju Kapoor's novels, all the women were supposed to get married and be obedient towards their husbands.

Her feminist view of the novel **Immigrants** has taken a new route, and she is looking for a feminist mindset, not as a logical partner, but as a logical advisor to determine how she balances sexuality. Most of Manju Kapoor's novels relate to the sensitive nature of women from an early age.

Immigrants enjoy conversations such as narratives, prophetic plots, and other attributes. Sometimes there are bright scenes, but these are far from any difference in distance. In New Delhi, thirty-year-old English speaker Nina lives with her widowed mother and is frustrated with how short she can live. Ananda recently moved to Halifax, Canada, and spent the twentieth decade trying to build a career that was looking for something to end her new life, when joint marriage was offered, Nina unsure: Do you really know that she's

<sup>4</sup> Jha, Ira. "Manju Kapur's A Married Woman: An Ode to Woman's Psyche." *Cyber Literature* 23.1 (Jun 2009): 73-85. Print

<sup>5</sup> Kapur, Manju. *A Married Woman*. New Delhi: India Ink, 2002.

going to find a new life with her husband? Can you leave home and country? The consequences of the change are far more serious than he could have imagined. Nina's entire world has been questioned as a fight to make a difference in the married life of both. And as a real threat to marriage; her new fragile life has begun to unfold in Canada<sup>6</sup>.

In this novel Kapur re-established the identity of women by adhering the sensitive and the exotic side of her character. Women were depicted as powerful to establish their own identity.

Self-identity is pretty well structured in context to the novel **Custody**. In Custody, Kapur depicts a good picture of the gendered nature of warring parents in India. Usually men refuse to divorce and women generally demand more from their children, but she refuses to do so. Both parties give legal advice. The battle lines are drawn first and both sides are fifth. The cycle of outrage between Shagun and Raman is not only fuelled by fuel, but the new step-father and mother-in-law. Kapur is skilled at managing this complicated family arrangement, and the frailty it brings to the step-parents just as children. In Ishita's predicament, as observe the second spouse's edgy battle to supplant the organic mother, while Ashok presents an increasingly equivocal sort of consideration. Neither does she spend too much time on whether Shagun's treachery outrages society, yet centres around how it influences her characters. The idea of family disgrace and social respectability is immovably out of sight. Shagun in Custody depicts as a 'new women'. Kapur is settled as an attentive and engaging recorder of the Indian middle classes<sup>7</sup>.

### Conclusion

Manju Kapur is a notable author in context to the presentation of the female characters. Kapur's novel deeply analyses the fate of many women who have experienced many family problems. Her quest for the fate of a novel is the key theme taught by her heroes, helping them think elegantly in the face of all the trials of their lives. Through her female character, she successfully describes the traditions of modernism and vice versa. Kapur has shown in his novels how women have been obscured in the name of masculinity or tradition in Indian society. Indigestion and illness for women, unfortunate condition of Indian women is subjected by Kapoor in a very suitable way.

Amitabh Ghosh's novels describe the self-identity of women by enhancing the character of women. Amitabh Ghosh describes his women with sensitivity. In fact, they are the main spirits of his fiction. They are distinct representations of a cultural construct. Cultural constructions help justify the feminine position, and feminist interpretations can occur even through absenteeism and neglect. He does not describe his women as radical feminists or stereotypical images.

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