CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

Literature is defined as a single body of written work which is in the form or art and consists of artistic or intellectual values. The literature is interpreted as reflecting the norms and values, it also reveals the ethos of culture, the processes of class struggle and certain types of social facts on the whole literature reflect society and society creates literature. History of Indian novel is grossly and sublimely based upon and inter linked with definition and delineation of the Indian writers. In the early days the Indian writing in English were heavily influenced by the western art form of the novel. The study of English has always been a densely political and cultural phenomenon and a practice in which language and literature how both been called into the service of a profound and embracing nationalism. This type of study is called post colonial literature and the idea of post colonial literary theory emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post colonial writing. The political and cultural monocentrism of the colonial enterprise was a natural result of the philosophical tradition of the European world and the system of representation with this privileged post colonialism represents neither speech nor local reality but constructs discourse which intimates the post colonial area is subject to the political imaginative and social control involved in the relationship between colonizer and colonized. Post colonial world in which destructive cultured encounter is changing to an acceptance of difference on equal terms modernism is a philosophical movement that along with cultural trends and changes arose from wide scale and far reaching transformation in Western society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s modernism in general includes
the activities and creations of those who self the tradition forum of art, architecture literature religious faith philosophy.

**INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH**

As we come to the Indian writing in English, Indian English is different from the English of the native English speaker Indian English is strange swipe and also complex because it is influenced by the thoughts, philosophy and even the dialects of the sub-continents Indian writers use the English language according to their needs and convenience they use the alien language to express their indigenous culture and tradition. There are many writers who sprouted up after the end of the colonization and are basically called as postcolonial writers. Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy and Amitav Ghosh are the notable Indian writers of English post modernism a reaction against modernism.

The parameter of the “post” in the context of Indian English writings in considered the literature after 1947. The post colonial consciousness begins a century before the First war of Independence in 1857. Bill Ashcroft states in *The Empire Writes Back* the term post-colonial applies to “all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day”.

**POST -MODERNISM**

Post modernism was a continuation of modernism, a revolt against authority and signifies the remarkable change that was prominent in the novel published after the First World War, is called Modernism. The literature within last 20th Century, especially after the Second World War is considered Post Modern literature. Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Upamanya
Chatterjee, Ruth Prawar Jhabwala and Amitav Ghosh are the Makers of new pattern in writing novels with post modern thought and emotions in India. They perfectly blend fact and fiction with magical realism. And also weave magical and realistic plots with post modern themes. Post modern elements are abundantly present in Amitav Ghosh’s novels. According to post modernist, national boundaries restrict human communication and Nationalism leads to wars. Crossing the boundaries in the mindscape over the landscape is the specialty of Amitav Ghosh and this makes the whole of literary arena to do research in his works.

Post modernist speaks in favour of globalization. Amitav Ghosh’s novels focus on multi-racial and multi-ethnic issues as challenging competition, he moves around and weave them with his narrative exquisiteness. Postmodernism rejects western values, beliefs, ideas, belies, culture and norms of life. Displacement is the central process in his fictional writing where departure and arrival haste a permanent symbolic relevance in his narrative structure. Post modernism gives voice to insecurities, disorientation and fragmentation, his novels deal with the insecurities in the existence of humanity which is one of the post modern traits.

**POST-COLONIALISM**

Post colonial theory explores the textual criticism of post colonial literature. Franz Fanon’s *Black Skin White Mark* (1952) and *Wretched of the Earth* (1967) and Edward Said *Orientalism* (1993) are considered to be the promulgators of post colonialism. These works has strongly recommended the reclamation of the past of colonized nation only to subvert the hegemony of the colonial nations. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin’s *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) with
a broader cultural circumscription of all the colonized nations provided a strong base for post colonial criticism. This is further continued and consolidated by Gayathri Spivak Chakravarthy in *Other World Essays in Cultural Politics* (1988) and Homi K. Babha’s *Nation and Narration* (1990) and *Location of Culture* (1994). These works have derogated the identities of colonialism, the concentrate colonial identities of ‘Nation’, ‘Nationality’ and ‘National’ representation are interrogated leather workers, boatmen and fishermen and so on, for they were considered as untouchables in colonial period. The lower caste refugees were treated different from the early Hindu refugees. These dalit refugees faced number of problems which included unemployment, denial of the refugee status, in adequate rehabilitation and forcible relocation. The west Bengal government implemented a new resettlement scheme for their refugees far away from Bengal in Bettiah in Bihar, Andaman and Nicobar islands and Dandkarnya in Madhya Pradesh.

One of the key issues is the superiority/inferiority of Indian Writing in English as opposed to the literary production in the various languages of India. Key polar concepts bandied in this context are superficial/authentic, imitative/creative, shallow/deep, critical/uncritical, elitist/parochial and so on.

The views of Salman Rushdie and Amit Chaudhuri expressed through their books *The Vintage Book of Indian Writing* and *The Picador Book of Modern Indian Literature* respectively essentialise this battle. Rushdie’s statement in his book – "the ironic proposition that India’s best writing since independence may have been done in the language of the departed imperialists is simply too much for some folks to bear" – created a lot of resentment among many writers, including writers in
In his book, Amit Chaudhuri questions – “Can it be true that Indian writing, that endlessly rich, complex and problematic entity, is to be represented by a handful of writers who write in English, who live in England or America and whom one might have met at a party?”

Chaudhuri feels that after Rushdie, Indian writing in English started employing magical realism, bagginess, non-linear narrative and hybrid language to sustain themes seen as microcosms of India and supposedly reflecting Indian conditions. He contrasts this with the works of earlier writers such as R. K. Narayan where the use of English is pure, but the deciphering of meaning needs cultural familiarity. He also feels that Indianness is a theme constructed only in Indian Writing in English and does not articulate itself in the vernacular literatures. He further adds "the post-colonial novel, becomes a trope for an ideal hybridity by which the West celebrates not so much Indianness, whatever that infinitely complex thing is, but its own historical quest, its reinterpretation of itself”.

Some of these arguments form an integral part of what is called postcolonial theory. The very categorisation of Indian Writing in English – as Indian Writing in English or under post-colonial literature – is seen by some as limiting. Amitav Ghosh made his views on this very clear by refusing to accept the Eurasian Commonwealth Writers Prize for his book *The Glass Palace* in 2001 and withdrawing it from the subsequent stage.

The renowned writer V. S. Naipaul, a third generation Indian from Trinidad and Tobago and a Nobel prize laureate, is a person who belongs to the world and usually not classified under Indian Writing in English. Naipaul evokes ideas of homeland, rootlessness and his own personal feelings towards India in many of his books.
Indian authors like Amitav Ghosh, Anita Desai, Hanif Kureishi, Rohinton Mistry, Meena Alexander, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai have written about their postcolonial experiences.

**BIOGRAPHY OF AMITAV GHOSH**

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta and grew up in India, Bangladesh and Srilanka. He studied in Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria. Amitav Ghosh is one of the great Indian novelists, who have written in English. The five works of Amitav Ghosh has been taken for the research purpose, they are *The Shadow Lines* (1998), *The Calcutta Chromosomes* (1996), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungry Tide* (2004), *The Sea of Poppies* (2008). The researcher has made a modest attempt in bringing out the postmodern and postcolonial aspects of Amitav Ghosh. Especially the postcolonial concept of ‘nation’, ‘nationality’, ‘national’ and postmodern concept of erasure of boundaries is dealt by Amitav Ghosh. This made the researcher to develop deep into the concept and further venture multiple layers of meanings and interpretations. He is the author of eight novels which deals with cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of his homeland. He has won accolade around the world including the Arthurs Drake award for excellence in science fiction. He lives in America with his wife and two children and in 2009 was elected to the Royal society of literature, the senior literary organization in Great Britain.

Ghosh is one of the few post colonial writers who has expressed in his work, a developing awareness of the aspirations, defeats and disappointments of colonized peoples as they figure out their place in the world. Ahdaf Soueif’ s *This is east as seen by its own people*. 
Post modernism is a reaction against modernism. It gives voice to insecurities, disorientation and fragmentation. Post modern literature explores subjectivism, turning from external reality to examine inner states of consciousness. Post modernism is Anti-modernist tendencies which have psychological and intellectual impact.

In post modernism there is a preoccupation with insecurities in the existence of humanity the picture of life delineated by them accommodates meaninglessness, purposelessness and absurdity of human existence through the employment of devices such as contradiction, permutation, discontinuity, randomness, excess, short circuit and so on. Post modernist literature manifests chaotic condition of the world. Post modernism of Indian English literature is however, different from that of England and Europe, which rejects westerns valves and beliefs as only a small part of the human experience and reject such ideas, beliefs culture and norms of the western post modernism focuses on de-structured de-centered humanity. It also accepts the possibility of ambiguity. The Indian literature after 1980 is typically post modern till 2010. There are number of books produced by literary stalwarts like Srinivasa Iyengar, C.D. Narasimmaiya M.K. Naik explaining the beginning and the progress up to 1980.

Post modernism is the term used to denote the representation of life after World War II in Art, literature and culture and the kind of changes that manifested due to this in all walks of life across the world. The study of Post colonial features and its consequent outcome in many creations, foregrounding fragmentation and a sense of alienation is post modernism.
Post modernity is said to be a culture of fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia, disposable simulacra and promiscuous superficiality. In which the traditionally valued qualities of depth, coherence meaning, originality, and authenticity are evacuated or dissolved. Post modernism may be seen as a continuation of modernism alienated mood and disorienting techniques and at the same time as an abandonment of its demined quest for artistic coherence in a fragmented word in very crude terms, where a modernist artist (or) writer would try to wrest ‘a meaning from the world through myth symbol, or formal complexity’, the post modernist grades the absurd (or) meaningless confusion of contemporary existence with a certain number (or) flippant indifference, favouring self consciously depthless works of fabulation, pastiche, bricolage, …disconnections described above (Simon Malpas 174-175).

Post colonialism is concerned with the situation of former subject nations and cultures those histories have been irremediably altered by the experience of colonialism. Post colonialism looks critically imperialism and its legacy and seeks to undo the ideologies that justify imperialist practices post colonial writers also work to reclaim the Past, because their own histories were often erased or discredited under imperialism and to understand their own culture and personal identities and chart their own futures on their own terms superimposed on them by imperialist Ideology and practice (The Empires Writes Back 151).

In India past 1980 is described as the post modern period. After 1980s India realized itself as a multicultural, multi ethnic, multi lingual, Post colonial and Post modern nation as the many post colonial and post modern authors
emerged. Some post modern authors and works are Arun Joshi’s *The Last Labyrinth*, *The golden Gate* by Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh *The Shadow Lines*, Sashi Deshpande’s *The Dark Holds No Terror*, and Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger*. These people are considered as the makers of new pattern in writing novel with post modern thoughts and emotions.

Amitav Ghosh, as a post colonial and post modern Indian writer, has thrown a light on the History of Indian culture and literature and also some unknown History of India. The problem of Indian faced during the post colonial and post modern period such as search for Identity, struggle for survival, imagination, essentialism, otherness, nationalism, Diaspora, by hybridism unbelonging etc. His novels throws light on initial awareness of the social, psychological and cultural inferiority enforced by colonizers and displays the struggle of subaltern people for their ethnic, cultural and political autonomy.

*The Circle of Reason* was awarded France’s Prix Medicis in 1990, and *The Shadow Lines* won two prestigious Indian prizes the same year, the Sahitya Akademi award and the Ananda Puraskar. *The Calcutta Chromosome* won the Arthur. C. Clarke award for 1997 and *The Glass Palace* won the international e-book award at the Frankfurt book fair in 2001. In January 2005 *The Hungry Tide* was awarded the Crossword book prize, a major Indian award. His novel, *Sea of Poppies* was short listed for the man booker prize 2008 and was awarded the crossword book prize and the India Plaza Golden Quill Award. His works have been translated into more than twenty languages and he has served on the Jury of the Locarno Film Festival (Switzerland) and the Venice Film Festival (2001). He has been published in *The New Yorker, The New Republic* and *The New York*
In January 2007 he was awarded the Padma Shri, one of India’s highest honours, by the President of India. In 2010, he was awarded the honorary doctorates by Queens College, New York, and the Sorbonne, Paris. Along with Margaret Atwood, he was also a joint winner of a Dan David Award for 2010. In 2011 he was the International Grand Prix of the Blue Metropolis Festival in Montreal. In foot note of *The Glass Palace*, Amitav Ghosh mentions: “He was thus among those loyal Indians who found themselves across the lives from the trailers’ of the Indian national army who died in 1998”. Amitav Ghosh in his article, New Yorker [23 and 30 June 1997] says. “My mother grew up in Calcutta and her memories were of Mahatma Gandhi, nonviolence, civil disobedience, and the terrors that accompanied partition, in 1947”.

In the same article Ghosh says:

My father came of age in a small provincial town in the state of Bihar. He turned twenty one in 1942, one of the most tumultuous years in Indian history. That was the year, the Indian national congress, the country’s largest political party launched a nationwide movement calling on the British to Quit India it was when Mahatma Gandhi denounced the Raj as a ‘Position that corrupts all it stanches’ And in that historic year of anti-imperialist discontent my father left home to became an officer in the British colonial army in India.

Amitav Ghosh had been educated in West Bengal, Bangladesh, and Northern India. For higher study, he went to Delhi and joined St. Stephen’s College, University of Delhi. He became a graduate of St. Stephen’s College, University of Delhi and his special subject was history. One would say it a very
right choice to know the past for framing bright future. He possessed the
knowledge of boundaries arising out of a cultural, racial, religious and languages as
well as geographical drawn by rulers of land. He was offered sociology in his post
graduation in arts from University of Delhi and acquired Master’s degree in
Sociology. After this, he joined various universities and colleges and educational
institutions as a lecturer and visiting professor. During this period, a scholarship
was granted to him for studying abroad, he joined Oxford University to complete
D. Phil. In 1982, he had been awarded Doctorate in Philosophy in Social
Anthropology from Oxford University. It is this anthropological study which took
him to Alexandria University and he also went to Egypt for field world in the Fell
Allan village at Lata in Egypt.

After his academic study, Amitav Ghosh decided to remain amid
educationalists and so he was a lecturer in Thiruvananthapuram Kerala and also
at the University of Delhi. He also worked at the Indian Express as a journalist
during emergency period in India around 1975. He also remained the fellow of
centre for studies in social sciences – Calcutta.

As a visiting professor, Amitav Ghosh has disclosed intellectual lectures
at various American universities such as Virginia, Columbia and Pennsylvania.
He further took up lectureship in the department of sociology as well as in the
Department of Anthropology of Delhi School of Economics. Amitav Ghosh
published his first novel, The Circle of Reason – in 1986, when he was teaching at
Delhi School of Economics University of Delhi and he depicts in his first novel,
the break through from traditional themes and showing ironic mode of narration
and outlines of the plot moving transcontinental territories. And during this
period of his life, he established his true intellectual stature and degree of eminence in circle of philosophy and literary writers.

Amitav’s interest in America is profound in spite of the fact that he visited America for few times to deliver lectures as a visiting professor in American Universities. Like Tagore, Amitav also tends to see his brighter side of what is termed as the materialism of the west. He regards an American intellectual as deeply committed to the search of philosophical truth. Seeing great splendor of America, Amitav Seems inclined upon his country as homeland of brave new world. Since America was making a great classical civilization which symbolizes the true worth and dignity of man and since America is based on moral promises and the only country where one could be free to write, he has settled in America and presently, he is professor of comparative study of literature at New York University – New York, USA.

LITERARY CAREER

He is a prolific writer in the field of fiction, in fact his output has been numerous. This might be the result of his way of thinking and writing which is methodical and philosophical involving touch of human feelings. Amitav Ghosh’s first novel, The Circle of Reason shows deviation from traditional themes of Indian novel, has become so popular among literary writers that it has been translated in many European languages including French, Italian and German and placed Amitav Ghosh immediately as a master craftsman in the art of fiction. The year 1984 was somehow a turning point in the literary career of Amitav Ghosh. During this period India witnessed violence in Punjab, attack on great Sikh Temple of Amritsar, and events that followed relentlessly. In 1988, Amitav Ghosh published
his second novel, titled as *The Shadow Lines*. This novel is considered Amitav Ghosh’s masterpiece is a family saga covering a large span of period of three generations, story ranging from one country to another. In *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav brings out futility of drawing lines across nation’s humanitarian ties among cultures, over-looking personal, regional and political considerations. This novel is the work of an eminent writer, whose vocation is evident on every page. This novel is also translated in other language, Such as French, Italian and German.


i. The Hunger of Stones [Kshudhita Pushan] of Rabindranath Tagore.

ii. Winter in Calcutta, Noon in Calcutta, Bengali Short Stories.

He also published his essay, *Countdown* in 1999, which exposes nuclear arm race in both India and Pakistan. In 1998, he published his travelogue, *Dancing In Cambodia at large in Burma*. Thus, Amitav Ghosh is the most successful writer of last decades of the 20th century and his literary output has acclaimed world-wide
fame on account of his positive human approach for existence in the shadow line of
demarcation created for social, religious, and cultural segments. He is a freelancer
among the Bengali Writers. Amitav Ghosh has written for the journals such as

Amitav Ghosh is one of the writers who achieve fame and eminence with
their very first work. Amitav published his first novel, The Circle of Reason in
1986 and it became world famous among 15 contemporary literary writers of the
west. This novel is translated in many western languages. Like French, German
and Italian. Its French edition received the prix Medici-estranger awards in
was awarded India’s most coveted Sahitya Akademi Award in 1989. The
translated version of this novel in French, German and Italian brought global
acclaim of Amitav Ghosh. Amitav Ghosh – writer, researcher, traveler, journalist
and social anthropologist – has won, Pushcart Prize – leading literary award for
this two essays, viz.

i. The march of novel through History

ii. The testimony of my Grand Father’s Book Case.

The above two essays have been published in, Genyan Review and in several
other publications. Amitav Ghosh’s fourth novel, The Calcutta Chromosome
1996 was awarded, Arthur C. Clarke award for science fiction in 1997 and it has
captured the attention for a film by Gabriak Salvatores, The Oscar winning director
of Mediterranco.
Ghosh’s fifth novel, *The Glass Palace* published in 2000 has also remained as the best-seller book in Germany and in India ever since it was published. It is also on best-seller list in Europe and was also awarded. Frankfurt Book Award for the year 2007. The publisher of *The Glass Palace* had submitted this book for commonwealth prize, but Amitav Ghosh withdrew *The Glass Palace* from consideration for the commonwealth prize, as he had no idea about the prize and also the whole business of the commonwealth is repackaging of empire. Most of his novels are bestsellers in India and in western countries. He was a finalist in the reporting category for national magazine award, one of the most important magazine prizes in the USA in 1999 fourth story he wrote previous year for the New Yorker. All these honours showered on Amitav Ghosh are the proof that Amitav has been recognized in European, Asian and American literary circles, as well as literary critics. His popularity graph has been rising ever since he published his first novel, *The Circle of Reason* in 1986.

Amitav Ghosh is of good height and has a commanding personality. His features are in keeping with his descent. He gives one the look of a great intellectual. He is a great writer, researcher, traveler and socio-anthropologist. He is a great novelist philosopher who is full of joy of life. Amitav Ghosh has the travel writer’s infallible eye for the quirk that lays bare the soul of a people. Amitav Ghosh describes himself as a traveler interested in men, places and scenery. He advocates that traveling enables man to expand his awareness into realization. This is due to the fact that Amitav has traveled extensively in the Middle East, south Asia, North Africa, Europe, America and Egypt.
Amitav Ghosh’s personality is stamped in his fictions, which show that he appears as a scholar-writing fluently with exactness of what he wants to tell. Ghosh has the ability to combine personal and the historical events in an aesthetic manner. Better sense of personality is revealed in his personal life’s decision pertaining to his doctoral study at Oxford, London and finally settling in New York, USA. Even though, as a post-colonial writer, cultural heritage and identity have become important facts of Amitav Ghosh’s personality.

Amitav knows many languages such as English, Bengali, Hindi, French, Arabic and Italian. The Cultural, social and political environment of present and past of various countries have great influence on Amitav Ghosh. Besides this, Gautam Mukopadhya Renst, Guha, Dipesh Chakraborty and Parth Chatterjee are dear friends of Amitav Ghosh and all have influenced his thinking about present and past and he is very much preoccupied with all of them. During interview given to Biswarup Sen in Charlottesville, Virginia, Amitav Ghosh admits Ranjeet Guha, Dipesh Chakraborty, and Parth Chatterjee, who is a dear friend, have all been very influential in my thinking about the present and past, and I feel, I am much in an engagement with them. With Rushdie’s, *The Midnight Children* many novelists were inspired to take up the relationship between national issues and the individual. This seems to have influenced Amitav Ghosh who focuses on an individual quest for his personal meaning and existential problems. American way of life has also influenced Amitav Ghosh. In fact, the cultural conflicts, linguistic boundaries, partition of nations, riots etc. have great influence on Amitav Ghosh. He has been deeply influenced by historical events of the eastern and the western countries. In fact, many catastrophes sectarian violence following Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s assassination had the deepest impact on Ghosh’s life and also on his creative mind.
Moreover, in an interview with Subha Ranjan Dasgupta, published in the Bengali Daily, Anand Bazar Patrika dated 14th August, 1994; Amitav Ghosh acknowledged the influence of the writers of the Arab World in his writings. Moreover, the major influence on him was of his parents and more particularly his Grandmother. The stories and events of war and Mahatma Gandhi’s non-violence and disobedience and terror of partition of 1947, which he inherited from his parents and Grand novel during his childhood have great indelible impression on his mind. The works of Leo Tolstoy and Satyajeet Ray and their ideology had a deep impact on Amitav Ghosh.

His peripatetic life has taken him from India to England and finally to America his literary works show deep insight to the study of man during traveling in many parts of the world including Middle East, South Asia, Africa, Europe and America. Though his mother tongue is Bengali, English language is his choice to write novels and other forms of literary works.

In the novel The Hungry Tide Ghosh brings out how living in Dand Karanya proved very difficult for these refugees as the land was infertile, the infrastructure relief was in adequate and the employment opportunities were negligible. The place appeared to be prison like for their refugees. So the refugees refereed to west Bengal in 1970 and limit the resettlement on the island Morichjhapi.

The Morichjhapi massacre is narrated by Nirmal in his diary which he left for his nephew, Kanai chapter 19 of the novel is entitled as Morichjhapi in which the facts of the incident are revealed. Nilima, the aunt of Kanai informs him that Piya, the westerner and Fokir the easterner communicate through gestures and
symbols, they create their own form of language. Ghosh introduces globalization through their two characters. They explore a new method of communication. Their inability to communicate through verbal language strengthens their relationship and also develops the respect for each other.

Ghosh represents cooperation between the educated and the uneducated, when there is communication, compassion, and mutual understanding between the rich and the social discrimination comes to an end and the society proceeds towards the progress. The post-colonial element such as search for identity is mainly focused by the author Ghosh. Among many themes, searching is shown through the Morichjhapi Massacre which throws light on the history of partition, and the events that explore the plight of displaced people. The Sundarban was divided into India and East Pakistan which was created for Bangla speaking Muslim majority and which leads to the influx of Hindu, from East Pakistan into India’s west Bengal region. After the partition, the bhadralok the term refers to the privileged, upper caste Hindu, of landed wealth, were relocated in India. In the second waves of refugees there were the Nimnobaruo ‘literary means Inferior Varna’ or caste of Dalit included the people like in this place where there had been no inhabitants before there were new thousands, almost overnight within a matter of weeks they had cleared the mangroves, built badhs and put up huts. It happened so quickly that in the beginning no one even knows who these people were. But in time it came to be learnt that they were refugees, originally from Bangladesh. Some had come to India after partition, while others had trickled over later. In Bangladesh they had been among the poorest of rural people, oppressed and exploited both by Muslim communalists and by Hindus of the upper castes. Most of them were Dalits, as we say now, said Nilima (118).
The people in the Morichjhapi refugee settlement were displaced, dispossessed and homeless; they move from place to place they move from East Pakistan to west Bengal from west Bengal to Madhya Pradesh in Dandkarnaya and from Dandkaranya to the tide country sundarban. In Morichjhapi they had found a place to which they called a hove, there they were no longer at the mercy of the local people or to the government. Bhagabt Nayak in this case remarks that the history of the tide country is the history of India’s national geography, and of the home searching refugees their homelessness. There refugees found vast free land in the sunderbans and created a world of their own and thought that they were at their home.

Exploitation of the refugees by the political parties took place in 1979 before this incident took place the communist party of India encouraged the refugee settlement in the sundarban until the last 1970s when they were not its owner. It is very clear and open that the refugees’ settlement was encouraged by the left party only for the sake of electoral politics. They were used as political capitals by that party. Because in 1978 the same party came to the power in west Bengal but the refugees did not receive any sympathies from the government on the other hand they left government betrayed them in 1979 and they were forcibly evicted from the island and warned by the government to return to their original resettlement camp. The decision of the government was based on the dictum that the refugees were settled in the unauthorized place of Sundarban (Morichjhapi) reserved for forest, mangroves and tiger project because of the presence of these refugees the flora and journey nature is disturbed and it creates ecological imbalance.
Nirmal recorded the Morichjhapi massacre in his diary to witness the subaltern world. The Morichjhapi settlers became the victimized to the environmental politics played by the left government and the massacre is a conflict between different ways of thinking, between the logic of modernity and development, the politics of ecology and the ways of life of the refugees and their relationship to the environment, the tensions between humanity and the environment, the settlers and the government intent on preserving the sundarban show the post colonial aspect in the form of class, caste, politics, which leads to displacement of the refugees.

When the refugees refused to leave the settlement on Morichjhapi the government ordered the policemen and criminal gangs to clear Morichjhapi and the government launched an economic blockade on the island. Huts were torched and the island was patrolled by police the refugees were prevented from obtaining supplies including food water and medicine. The hungry and helpless people were killed by the police bullets. Boats were sunk and several were arrested and many were butchered and fling in the water the official estimates claimed that only 36 refugees were killed but the actual gate is several hundreds. The Morichjhapi massacre history was erased in the government records. The police exploitation continued but the refugees refused to move in turn “they joined their voices and began to shout Amra Kara? Bastuhara. Who are we? We are dispossessed” (270). The government was indifferent to the problems of the refugees, the reason for the indifference was that these were the illiterate people and too poor and they were dalit.
The novel *The Shadow Lines* incorporates perspective of time and events. The novel functions between the physical and mental boundaries probing memories of people through linking past and present. The novel recollects historical events such as Swadeshi movement, Second World War, partition of India and riots of 1960s in Dhaka and Calcutta. As a postcolonial literary work, the novel turns round self conscious contemplation of themes such as nationality, internationality, cultural and historical self determination. The novel examines the transitional days of 1960s from elevated desire of struggle for nationalist freedom, awareness and enlightenment. *The Shadow Lines* address the problems and consequences of a de-colonized nation and brings into surface the political and cultural difficulties that any de-colonized nation normally faces. Problems as identity crisis, suppression, resistance, gender and exploitation are mainly highlighted within the novel that discloses cultural difference. The way in which race, religion, class, gender, sexual orientation cultural beliefs and customs combine to form individual identity in shaping our perceptions of ourselves, others and the world in which we live, it also includes the relationship between personal and cultural identity and such. Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* is intimately concerned with the tenuousness of national and other boundaries.

Thammas’ desire for nationhood is historically determined, as the only woman in this novel whose convictions translate into meaningful action. Her actions and beliefs represented as dated are problematic. Her natural inheritor Ila is allowed only the meanest motion of freedom for to Ila freedom means the freedom to choose to dance in a disco in Calcutta as she would in London. Thammas has no respect for such an idea of freedom. As the narrator sums up Thammas response he
says, “I should have known that she would have nothing but contempt for a freedom that could be bought for the price of an air ticket. For she too had once wanted to be free. She had dreamt of killing her freedom” (87)

The narrator emphasizes that a place’s identity is formed and established through stories, photographs, maps and memories as it is essentially invented through the eyes of Imagination from a very young age, Tridib stimulates the narrator’s ability to imagine places he has never been to visualize events he has never truly experienced. ‘Tridib had given him worlds to travel in through the stories, historical facts and personal experiences that he shared with him eventually imagination becomes the narrator’s guide into perceiving the unknown world outside Calcutta and he even resorts to the conclusion that visiting a place is never enough if one is not able to re-invent it in one’s mine being unable to perceive a place through imagination is like not traveling at all. Ghosh sees history as the trajectory of event that causes dislocation, imagination and eventually replacing solid markers with shadow lines, destabilizing our nations of the past in the reverberation of the present.

In The Shadow Lines Ghosh deals with the issues of Identity Vs nationhood, the representation of history and ultimately concludes that all borders are imaginary constraints. He dismantles history, the frontiers of nationality, culture and language. The novel is a manifestation of the desire to validate the post colonial experience and to attempt a reconstruction of public history. It depicts the suffering, the death and the devastation caused by a shadow line of division that could not undo the shadow line of connection. In the novel the past merges fluidly with the present as it reflects the restlessness and turmoil of the
times and its meaning in the present context. The novel deals with the history of World War II, the freedom movement, the partition and the subsequent communal outbreak. Amitav Ghosh explores the historical variables, the meaning of contemporary India, the cross cultural friendship and feelings.

In *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh weaves the temporal and spatial dimensions into a personal texture on which the anonymous narrator builds his identity “The Narrator” or ‘I’ the central voice powerfully controls the meaning and the understanding of the novel. The novel is divided into two parts “Going away” and “Coming home”. The novel narrates the history of an Indian family that lives in Calcutta but has its roots in Dhaka on the border of Pakistan. The assassination of the Prime Minister Indhira Gandhi in 1984 and the violence and the unrest that followed have contributed the background of the novel.

The story juxtaposes the lives of two different families, one an Indian family and the other, and English family. The story shifts from London to Calcutta to Dhaka. The real luminaries of the plot are the Youngman’s grandmothers and his cousin, Tridib. The story interweaves life in Dhaka before partition, life in London during the war the life the narrator leads in Calcutta during 1960’s the nameless narrator recounts in flashback the people and places Tridib had described to him twenty year before. It is an undeniable fact that the narrator considered his imaginary reconstruction of the past as more real than that of the present. It is because he lives through the stories of other people the idea of his cousin is contradictory of the narrator lla treats the actual present alone is the real one unlike the narrator. The two sections of the novel clearly indicate this enigma (i.e. Mystery) of having to decide where home is Calcutta (or) Dhaka or London. When home is an uncertain place, borders too compound the problem.
The novel is full of symbolic references to houses old and new, maps and mirrors, borders and boundaries. All there symbols in one way or other deal with the theme of man’s search for identity, his search for roots. This is the story of the eternal suffering of everyman who turn between the past and the present. It raises several questions about war, roots, Identities, borders and so on. The blurred lines between nations, land and families as well as within one’s own self identity are shown in the novel.

The novel narrates the story of 3 generation spread over Calcutta, Dhaka and London and has characters from different nationalities, religion and cultures of the world. The grandmother, Jetha Moshai, Mayadebi and Shaheb are the characters of first generation. The father, mother and Jatin are the characters of second generation, Illa, Nick may and the narrator is the characters of third generation.

*The Shadow Lines* is about partition and immigration explores man’s quest for freedom. He clearly shows that it is not possible to be totally free. One can only attempt it though all the characters in the novel urge to be ‘free’ none of them are totally free in the end this can be exemplified by the character Illa. She shocks her people, particularly the grandmother by her western dresses and subsequently she shocks Robi and the narrator by her uninhibited behaviors in a hotel in Calcutta where she wanted to dance with a stranger. When her uncle Roby, does not permit her to do so, ‘She cries out, do you see why I have chosen to live in London? It’s only because I want to be free…. Free of your bloody culture” (88)
In post colonial societies even the colonizers attitude undergoes a change. They try to understand the colonized culture and take care not to offend those who subscribe to that culture. To illustrate this we may cite the following incident when May price come to Calcutta, She greets Tridib on the railway platform by hugging and kissing him, but she soon realizes her mistake. Thamma the grandmother who is fond of her nation fed and shared the narrator with her nostalgia of east Bengal where she was born and spent her childhood Illa the daughter of Tridibs elder brother who travels all over the world Illa travels with her globe-trotting parents and occasionally comes home. Illas travelling is basically physical travelling but narrator Travels in mind and imagination. He travels time and space. The narrator acknowledges that he has created his own secret map of the world. These memories say the narrator “From a part of my secret map of the world, a map of which only I know the keys and co-ordinates, but which was not for the reason any more imaginary that the code safe to a banker” (TSL-196).

Illa and Tridib are the two character’s who contributed the narrator a 8 years old boy to see the world and help in the voyage of self discovery. The grandmothers anxiety in the novel to protect her grandson from Illa corrupting western influence. She thinks that Illa is misguided and that she loves the west for wrong reasons (permissive culture and freedom to do whatever one likes, etc). But the grandmother admires the west for its spirit of nationalism sacrifice and courage, which the younger generation fails to understand. She quotes the western culture of 60’ s and 70’ s which is associated with international black consciousness. She wants India to achieve a cultural nationalism. To give a shape to her Ideas as the headmistress of her school, she initiates here students to cook food of different
states of India so that they become aware of the diversity and unity of Indian culture and she wants the Indians to become self defeating.

The motif of violence looms large throughout the novel *The Shadow Lines*. At the end, violence concludes the novel the narrative begins in 1939 the year of the outbreak of the Second World War and essentially ends in 1964 with the commencement of riots in Dhaka and Calcutta. Tridibs boy hand experiences of wartime in London in 1939 and the second event his own violent murder 25 years later by a rioting mob in Dhaka constitute the end points of the main narrative. This two events of the destructive force of violent nationalism, shows the legitimacy of the nation states. Thammas disappointment with the Indo-Pak border on her trip to Dhaka which she could sputa tangible difference a physical demarcation between the two nations. Her nationalist faith gets a severe jolt at such an absence, which actually lips apart her whole ideology. “What was it all for them” partition and all the killing and everything is there, isn’t something in between?

She would believe in the unity of nationhood and territory, of self respect and nation power that war all she wanted a modern middle class life. She is a rootless refugee from East Pakistan, suddenly thrown into a financial crisis owing to the partition. Consequently she gets declassed, much against her wish. Her predicament is that countless Bengali Hindu refugees in post-independence Bengal. Who had been rendered penniless is a haunting question.

Ghosh’s novels reveal the post colonial elements. In his novel *The Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh being post colonial historian shows a natural disbelief and dislike for grand natives like the bliss of “Freedom” and the power
of ‘nationalism’, His struggle at the core is against historiography, dominated by
the westerners has been misused and exploited in the name of nationalism History
shows how this nation building led us beyond wars, misguided riots and violence.
Bertrand Russell finds that nationalism is “The most dangerous voice of our time,
are more dangerous than drunkenness of drugs, of commercial dishonesty”
(Freedom and Organization 403).

Ghosh metaphorically presents the common thought of an ordinary
individual through Tridib. As he says, ‘Every one lives in a story, stories are all
there to live in…..” (TSL182). People like Thamma agreed to ‘dream’ a new nation
believing in the reality of borders beyond which existed another reality, permitting
only relationship of ‘war and friendship’ (219) and if me talk about partition, the
riots of 1964 takes an important part in the history, showing the suffering caused
by partition it killed many across borders in Indian subcontinent. In Bengal also the
same year Bangladesh and in India the sparked of communal riot happened. It is
really unforgettable for the victims of this cruel past.

In The Shadow Lines the fragmented reflection of the past characterizes the
Cultural differences and open up space for the hybridity. The idea of hybridity is
focused on the stories that takes place between the two families, one family is
Bengali (The narrators) and the other English. The whole story oscillates to and
from between Indian and England. The main character the narrator’s grandmother
who having a strong feeling of Indian nationalism and patriotism, strongly
disapproves this hybridity and identity of Diaspora, as she considers ideal a
homogeneous society with clear borders. Thus she does not accept “as decision to
life in London; she claims that each country solely belongs to the people that
fought wars through the year to set its borders firmly with their family’s blood. She claims that ‘They are a nation because they’ve drawn their borders with blood…….war is their religious and that this is what it takes to make a country’” (76), supporting that the same has to be done for India, in order to build a homogeneous national Identity.

In contrast to the grandmother’s view homogeneity is impossible to take place, because borders may attempt to produce fixed identities and nation. But culture is drivers.

The narrator shows the blurring of lines or boarders between east and west, castes and religious, here the colonized travel from the colonizer’s territory. This is illustrated by the words of the narrator in the novel. ‘In 1939 thirteen year before I was born, my father’s aunt Mayadevi went to England with her husband and Son, Teridib (TSL 1).

The narrator express that a places identity is formed and established through stories photographs maps and memories. The small boy Tridib stimulates the narrator’s ability to imagine places he has never been to and visualize events which he has never truly experienced. ‘Tridib had given (him) worlds to travel in” (20). Tridib shared with the narrator eventually imagination becomes the narrator's guide in getting the unknown world outside Calcutta and he even resorts to the conclusion that visiting a place is never enough if one is not able to re invent it in one’s mind. Being unable to perceive a place through imagination is like not travelling at all. In this novel the author expresses the meaning of contemporary India, the cross cultural friendship and feelings.
The characters in the novel live through emotional trauma; this is not for a particular community (or) people of one nationality but it takes characters irrespective of their geographical and social place in this world full of manmade division. The shadow line is that it gives us a representation of the nation both colonial and post-colonial times through characters who belong to three contiguous generations (Jethamoshai, Thamma, and Robi) and it shows how the narrator with the gift of vision bequeathed by Tridib not only uncovered but also bridges all the earlier perspective towards nationhood.

Ghosh discusses in his novel whether partition is a solution to the problem. The partition creates the feeling of humiliation and agony from the dear and near ones who are compelled to migrate from their home or birthplace merely for the reasons based on the political solution of the problem faced by the nation.

Ghosh explores the theme of partition of a modern nation and the characters in Ghosh’s novels do not occupy discrete cultures, the discourse of nationalism affects to make sense of the absurd loss of lives that occurs. The novel discloses that, the world is not a simple place that can be seen in atlas but there are so many inexplorable facts, hidden in that solid lines the boundaries between nations are like shadow lines of hatred and hostility out of national sentiments. The narrator also shows how ordinary people like Thamma believe in not only drawing lines as part of faith but respecting them with blood. The Border that arced at the time of Partition has led to further brutality in the form of riots.
NOVELS CHOSEN FOR STUDY

*The Shadow lines* is a highly innovative complex and celebrated novel of Amitav Ghosh published in 1988, it received the prestigious Sahitya Academy Award in 1989. The author displays incidents in the Indian History happened in 1964 and 1984. Themes of nationality and Individual Identity focused throughout the novels. *The Shadow lines* can be viewed at the political and economical development of India through the lives of two families, one Bengali and one English, as their lives intertwine on multiple levels through three generations.

Amitav Ghosh analyses problematical issues that are being debated in contemporary India. This story is about a boy who is the narrator living in India. The story moves through the narrator’s memories and concentrates on the memory of his cousin, who is also attracted to constrictions of his society. The narrator keeps on with a platonic relationship. The major part of the story focuses on the great love between the Indian and the English. The story first begins in Indian and later transfers to London. As the narrator goes on in his personal description of many historic events in India’s history are exposed.

Ghosh primarily focuses on the meaning of political freedom in the modern world and the force of nationalism. Through the memories of the family members, Ghosh also explores the history and growth of the city of Calcutta and India, from World War II, through the bloody partition years, the Dhaka and Calcutta riots in 1963 and 1964, and continuing to the late twentieth century. But after analyzing the real fact comes in the delineation of borders and boundaries between nations, hence the “shadow lines”.

The author shows how these lines are created, kept, broken, and even invisible. The concept of Post Colonial criticism talks about the negativity of
borders made by man. They pit one society against another. As is evidenced by the story, this was especially true in India when it was divided into three sections: India (proper), Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Only conflict resulted in that division.

At the beginning of the novel, the 8 year old narrator introduces the two branches of his family, represented by his grandmother, Thamma, and her sister, Mayadebi. Thamma, a retired school teacher, is strict, practical, and no-nonsense, having lived through the gruesome nightmare of the partition of her native Bengal region from India. Her chief ambition is to reunite the entire family, particularly to return her uncle, Jethamoshai, from Dhaka. Their family is middle-class. The narrator admires and adores Mayadebi’s son, Tridib, because of his deep knowledge of history and his perspective on events and people. However, Mayadebi despairs over her son’s, Tridib’s, lack of ambition.

The fundamental nationalism also emerged from the character of the narrator’s grandmother. She is a fundamental nationalist and wants freedom. She is very passionate for freedom. As we see that when she was young during the Swadeshi movement, she wanted to join it and could do anything for the country. She says, It was for our ‘freedom’. But the author shows that the so called nationalism has no value at all. Here Thamma fails to see that nationalism has destroyed her home and spilled her kin’s blood. As she says, “we have to kill them, before they kill us”. Till the end she fails to realize that national liberty in no war guarantees individual liberty.

The narrator grandmother’s nationalist faiths fail her because she comes to realize that borders have a tenuous existence, and that not even a history of bloodshed can make them real and impermeable. Lines on the map are the
handiwork of administrators and cartographers. In 1964, as she plan to fly to Dhaka, she wonders how she would be able to see the border between India and East Pakistan from the plane. When her son laughs at her, she replies “where’s the difference then? And if there is no difference, both sides will be the same, it will be just like it used to be before” (233). The grandmother has a typical view about nationalism, what she is unable to realize that one can be unsafe even in one’s own country.

On the other hand, the new generation is in the belief of internationalism. The novel has an unnamed narrator relating the story of his experience, or to be precise, his uncle Tridib’s experience most of the times. Tridib was the narrator’s guiding spirit and mentor, who taught him how to use his imagination with precision who gave him worlds to travel in and eyes to see them with. Tridib is an idealist and he dreams of a better place, a place without ‘borders and countries’. Tridib also do not believe in the borders and map and, in fact, in the nationalism. He really wants a world without a border. Tridib had told the narrator of the desire that can carry one beyond the limits of one’s mind to other times and other places and, if one was lucky, to a place where there was no border between oneself and one’s image in the mirror.

The author shows that the borders those are drawn on the surface of the earth are so called borders which cannot divide one’s mind and imagination and the sense of nativity and origin. The borders between India and Pakistan were drawn by administrators who believed in “the enchantment of lines, hoping perhaps that once they had etched their borders on lie map, the two bits of land would sail away from each other like the shifting tectonic plates of the prehistoric
Gondwanaland.” (238) But as the simultaneous riots show, there is a profound historical irony at work:

there had never been a moment in the 4000 year old history of that map when the places we know as Dhaka and Calcutta were more closely bound to each other than after they had drawn their lines-so closely that, I, in Calcutta, only had to look upon the mirror to be in Dhaka, a moment when each city was the inverted image of the other, locked into an irreversible symmetry by the line that was to set us free-our looking-glass border.

(240)

The family of Dutta Choudhury and Price in London defy the borders between them, in fact, they defy nationalism and there is a continuous to and fro movement between them. So, the novel questions the efficacy of borders. Although Thamma is in the ride of nationalism and wants self identity, but for a person locked in the present “like Illa” maps and memory are equally irrelevant.

Although the narrator himself goes to London later as a student and makes contact with the Prices and his cousin Illa, it is more a relieving of Tridib’s experiences and trying to make sense of, in particular, the mystery that was his death. The narrator is in love with Illa, his cousin who lives in London, but he never tells her of his forbidden feelings, she later marries Nick Price. Tridib is in love with May Price, and she is in love with him.

However, they are torn apart when Tridib rescues May from a mob during the Dhaka riots, and both Tridib and Jethamoshai are killed by the mob. Through
such events, Ghosh brings together the personal and the political; history, according to Ghosh, remains the accumulated experience and memory of those who lived through the events. Without memory, there is no history.

*The Shadow Lines* is a novel which stands out for its powerful imagination. Both Tridib and narrator are extraordinary men with magnificent memory and dominant imagination. Ultimately, Ghosh’s narrative highlights both the strength and frailty of human constructions of space, location, and time, wherein humans create nationalism, national, regional, and personal identities” the shadow lines to define themselves and their experiences, granting to themselves a story, thereby creating history. Since the central concern of the novel is not what happened, but the meaning of what had happened, and the meaning emerges only when the past and present are considered together, the narrative does not have a linear sequence. It shuttles back and forth in time indicating amongst other things, that the dividing line between past and present only a shadow line.

The next novel *Sea of Poppies* is a terrific novel, the first volume in a projected trilogy, unfolds in north India and the Bay of Bengal in 1838 on the eve of the British attack on the Chinese ports known as the first opium war. In *Sea of Poppies*, Amitav Ghosh assembles from different corners of the world sailors, marines and passengers for the Ibis, a slaving schooner now converted to the transport of coolies and opium. In bringing his troupe of characters to Calcutta and into the open water, Ghosh provides the reader with all manner of stories, and equips himself with the personnel to man and navigate an old - fashioned literary three decker.

He begins in the villages of eastern Bihar with Deeti, soon to be widowed; her addicted husband, who works at the British opium factory at Ghazipur; and
Kalua, a low-caste carter of colossal strength and resource. Moving downstream, we meet a bankrupt landowner, Raja Neel Rattan, an American sailor, Zachary, Paulette, a young Frenchwoman, and her Bengali foster-brother Jodu; Benjamin Burnham, an unscrupulous British merchant, and his Bengali agent, Baboo Nob Kissin, and every style of nautch girl, sepoy and lascar.

On their way to the black sea, these characters are exposed to a suttee or widow-burning, a shipboard mutiny, a court case, jails, kidnappings, rapes, floggings, a dinner party and every refinement of sex. The story proceed at pace with coincidences, dreams or the supernatural effects. This volume ends with the Ibis, storm-tossed, off Sumatra. “I cannot tell whether we are headed for Mauritius or China, but am happy to sail”.

Yet *Sea of Poppies* is a historical novel, which means that the story is only half the story. Ever since Walter Scott published *Waverley* in 1814, readers have turned to historical fiction not just for escape from a straitened and conventional present, but also for instruction. Scott gave his readers not merely the bizarre character, types and wide open spaces of a fantastic pre-industrial Scotland, but antiquities, dialect, history, geography and lashings of political economy. Ghosh finds the educational programme of the Scottian novel very much to his purpose.

He thus dramatises (or rather romanticises, in the sense of makes a novel out of) two great economic themes of the 19th century: the cultivation of opium as a cash crop in Bengal and Bihar for the Chinese market, and the transport of Indian indentured workers to cut sugar canes for the British on such islands as Mauritius, Fiji and Trinidad. At a more everyday level, Ghosh creates an encyclopedia of early 19th century Indian food, servants, furniture, religious worship, nautical
commands, male and female costume and under linen, trades, marriage and funeral rites, botany and horticulture, opium cultivation, alcoholic drinks, grades of clerk and non-commissioned military officers, criminal justice, sexual practices, traditional medicines and sails and rigging.

His technique, which was also Scott’s, is to supply the maximum information that the story can support. For example, he has read the description of the great Sudder opium factory at Ghazipur published in 1865 (a little late, but it will do) by the factory superintendent, JWS Mac Arthur. Given that there are probably not 20 copies of MacArthur’s Account of an Opium Factory on earth, Ghosh is amply justified in using it. His device is brilliant. He has Deeti rush in terror through every single shed of the factory in search of her dying husband. Yet whereas MacArthur wanted to show how the factory operated in each season, Ghosh makes all its activities simultaneous. Poppy flowers, sap and trash are processed before Deeti’s terrified village eyes. Ghosh has not forgotten the agricultural calendar; it’s just that he will no more waste a fact than MacArthur wasted poppy.

Indian writers in English of an earlier generation, such as the late R.K. Narayan or V.S. Naipaul, aspired to a pure metropolitan or "Oxford" English. Ghosh, like Salman Rushdie, introduces words from the Indian languages, and from the various creoles, pidgins and slang’s that have arisen in India and the Asian seaports since the 18th century. He has combed the colonial-era dictionaries and lexicons for nautical speech, barrack-room slang and all sorts of thieves and whores got. The most important of these sources is Sir Henry Yule’s Hobson Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo Indian Words and Phrases (1886), which is also a particular favourite of Rushdie’s. Some readers may be perplexed by
such sentences as: Jodu had been set to . . . stowing pipas of drinking water, tirkaoing hamars, hauling zanjirs through the hansil-holes. Even those who have spent years labouring at eastern languages may be baffled by Anglo-Indian transliteration and not recognize Mrs.Burnham’ s cubber, meaning “scandal”, from the Arabic Khabir, meaning “news”. Yet for all its research, *Sea of Poppies* is full of the open air. It never, as the 18th century used to say, “Smells of the lamp”. Nor does it matter that Ghosh, like Rushdie, sometimes reads like Kipling and Jim Corbett and those British memoirists of the Camp and Cantonment school. This is the alchemy of Indian independence. What was reprehensible in, say, E.M. Forster becomes meritorious in Ghosh. Ghosh’s Baboo is not far from the ugly colonial stereotype, but is also a character of wit and great service to the plot. With the Europeans, the chemistry is reversed. They are Indian stereotypes all filthy manners and disgusting personal habits but also characters of force and imagination. Raja Neel gets them in one: ‘It would be all but impossible, surely, to deal with them, if not for their drink?’.

Historical novelists, even Scott, are often bad at love. As one might expect, Ghosh passes over for his chief romantic interest both English and natives. He lights instead on an octoroon from Baltimore and a Frenchwoman brought up in the Calcutta Botanic Garden by a Bengali wet-nurse. Their speech, respectively the tall. American English of the 19th century frontier and franglais, bores him silly and he does it badly. Confined by the manners of Jane Austen, these young people simply cannot get going. Ghosh loses patience and in comes a cutless-heaving lascar or a farting Sahib.

The next novel for analysis is *The Calcutta Chromosome* is a multi-layered novel, presenting different storylines from different times. The idea, of course, is to
have them merge neatly in the end. Ghosh does bring them together, but not nearly as nicely as one might hope. *The Calcutta Chromosome* begins in the near-future, in New York, where Antar’s works for the mega organization the International Water Council. The IWC had swallowed up Antar’s previous employer, an NGO called Life Watch ("that served as a global public health consultancy and epidemiological data bank"). Now he works from home, linked up by computer, doing drudge work.

Ghosh offers a mild dystopia here. Antar’s New York is a more desolate, decrepit, and impersonal one than the present day city, but Antar can still find convivial souls and his life isn’t all too bad. Ghosh doesn’t expand much energy on working out a vision of the future, and didn’t put too much thought into it. Antar’s computer, known as Ava, is a pretty neat thing, able to speak in any dialect and do a good number of things, but otherwise Ghosh’s future sounds out of date even these few years after he wrote it. His Internet is still expensive and slow, for example. And Antar’s friends discuss “some new scam for saving on subway tokens” when it must have been clear even in 1995 (when the book was first published) that the subway token would soon be phased out, replaced by a more flexible electronic card system. (Tokens are still in use in New York, but for years the preferred system has been the so called Metro Card).

Ghosh’s quaint lack of imagination about the future is only appropriate, because the focus of the book is on the past. The past first drops into Antar’s lap or rather: appears on his computer screen in the form of a piece of an ID card from another Life Watch employee, L. Murugan. Murugan went missing in 1995 in Calcutta and, as it happens, Antar met him before then.

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Murugan was obsessed with Ronald Ross, who had received the Nobel Prize in 1902 for his work on malaria. With that the three timelines are set, and the novel shifts back and forth between them: there is Antar’s present, as he investigates the ID card and what might have happened. There are the events leading up to Murugan’s disappearance in 1995, which include his discussions with Antar and then his adventures in Calcutta. And there are the events from the late 19th century, as the malaria discoveries are being made (these events are largely and confusingly related by Murugan, though often based on accounts and letters from that time).

It is complicated and it gets more so. There are different casts of characters: few in New York, more in Calcutta, and a whole slew in 19th century India. The story switches places and periods to tell us stories that have are connected to Murugan’s story. We go back to that period when Ross was doing the research and even before that when Cunningham was attempting the same thing. There are a lot of characters and the story moves back and forth and sometimes there is a story within a story and another within it and it got confusing for me. The main plot is very interesting, to suggest that someone wanted Ross to identify the cause of malaria in order to hide some other bigger secret. Ghosh adds a touch of Hindu background to the sci-fi story by bringing in a character. Who is seen as God woman and adding incidents of Puja and Shrine and Festivals and Reincarnations. He even gives a glimpse of a ghost – trains appearing out of nowhere and tracks being changed automatically.

Ross malaria-related discoveries are the key. It turns out the discoveries are surprising, as is how he came to make them. And Murugan thinks there is more to
them to the Calcutta chromosome, for one. The steps of Ross’s discovery were also remarkably fortuitous: they almost seem to fall into place for him, and this is where Murugan focuses his attention.

Murugan wants to follow Ross’s trail and that of some of the mysterious figures around him. That, of course, snarls him in complications as well. And Antar, following Murugan’s trail … well, it’s pretty clear where that is going to lead. The malarial theories and what Ghosh does with them aren’t bad. Ghosh has some clever ideas, and the stories meander along quite entertainingly for the most part. There are other figures in Calcutta a journalist, a writer, and others who play larger roles, and some of the story comes together quite nicely. Unfortunately, however, Ghosh eventually settles for hokey mysticism rather than anything more soundly scientific and the book tapers off to its predictable but unsatisfying conflation.

In the end, all the characters in the book are involved in the story somehow and we have this long chain of events happening over centuries and the characters spread across places and periods and we don’t know what actually is happening in the novel. It’s good to end the book on suspense and let the reader interpret the ending in his own way, but what the ending of this particular novel is too abrupt for the reader to come to a conclusion on their own.

Much of the novel and many of the stories are entertaining, and for most of the way it is a quick, compelling read. But much of Ghosh’s dénouement which one can see coming after a while disappoints. The book does not live up to the promise it occasionally shows.
The next novel taken for analysis is *The Glass Palace*. There was only one person in the food-stall who knew exactly what that sound was that was rolling in across the plain, along the silver curve of the Irrawaddy, to the western wall of Mandalay’s fort. His name was Rajkumar and he was an Indian, a boy of eleven not an authority to be relied upon.

The noise was unfamiliar and unsettling, a distant booming followed by low, stuttering growls. At times it was like the snapping of dry twigs, sudden and unexpected. And then, abruptly, it would change to a deep rumble, shaking the food-stall and rattling its steaming pot of soup. The stall had only two benches, and they were both packed with people, sitting pressed up against each other. It was cold, the start of central Burma’s brief but chilly winter, and the sun had not risen high enough yet to burn off the damp mist that had drifted in at dawn from the river. When the first booms reached the stall there was a silence, followed by a flurry of questions and whispered answers. People looked around in bewilderment: What is it? Bale? What can it be? And then Rajkumar’s sharp, excited voice cut through the buzz of speculation. English cannon, he said in his fluent but heavily accented Burmese. They’re shooting somewhere up the river. Heading in this direction. (Keyur 121)

Frowns appeared on some customers “faces as they noted that it was the serving” boy who had spoken and that he was a kalaa from across the sea an Indian, with teeth as white as his eyes and skin the color of polished hardwood. He was standing in the center of the stall, holding a pile of chipped ceramic bowls. He was grinning a little sheepishly, as though embarrassed to parade his precocious knowingness.
His name meant Prince, but he was anything but princely in appearance, with his oil-splashed vest, his untidily knotted longyi and his bare feet with their thick slippers of callused skin. When people asked how old he was he said fifteen, or sometimes eighteen or nineteen, for it gave him a sense of strength and power to be able to exaggerate so wildly, to pass himself off as grown and strong, in body and judgment, when he was, in fact, not much more than a child. But he could have said he was twenty and people would still have believed him, for he was a big, burly boy, taller and broader in the shoulder than many men. And because he was very dark it was hard to tell that his chin was as smooth as the palms of his hands, innocent of all but the faintest trace of fuzz.

It was chance alone that was responsible for Rajkumar’s presence in Mandalay that November morning. His boat the sampan on which he worked as a helper and errand boy had been found to need repairs after sailing up the Irrawaddy from the Bay of Bengal. The boat owner had taken fright on being told that the work might take as long as a month, possibly even longer. He couldn’t afford to feed his crew that long, he’d decided: some of them would have to find other jobs. Rajkumar was told to walk to the city, a couple of miles inland. At a bazaar, opposite the west wall of the fort, he was to ask for a woman called Ma Cho. She was half-Indian and she ran a small food-stall, she might have some work for him.

It happened that at the age of eleven, walking into the city of Mandalay, Rajkumar saw, for the first time, a straight road. By the sides of the road there were bamboo-walled shacks and palm-thatched shanties, pats of dung and piles of refuse. But the straight course of the road’s journey was unsmudged by the clutter that
flanked it, it was like a causeway cutting across a choppy sea. Its lines led the eye right through the city, past the bright red walls of the fort to the distant pagodas of Mandalay Hill, shining like a string of white bells upon the slope.

For his age, Rajkumar was well traveled. The boat he worked on was a coastal craft that generally kept opening waters, plying the long length of shore that joined Burma to Bengal. Rajkumar had been to Chittagong and Bassein and any number of towns and villages in between. But in all his travels he had never come across thoroughfares like those in Mandalay. He was accustomed to lanes and alleys that curled endlessly around them so that you could never see beyond the next curve. Here was something new, a road that followed a straight, unvarying course, bringing the horizon right into the middle of habitation.

When the fort’s full immensity revealed itself, Rajkumar came to a halt in the middle of the road. The citadel was a miracle to behold, with its mile-long walls and its immense moat. The crenellated ramparts were almost three stories high, but of a soaring lightness, red in color, and topped by ornamented gateways with seven-tiered roofs. Ma Cho was small and harried-looking, with spirals of wiry hair hanging over her forehead, like a fringed awning. She was in her mid-thirties, more Burmese than Indian in appearance. She was busy frying vegetables, squinting at the smoking oil from the shelter of an up thrust arm. She glared at Rajkumar suspiciously and asks what he wants.

He had just begun to explain about the boat and the repairs and wanting a job for a few weeks when she interrupted him. She began to shout at the top of her voice, with her eyes closed: “What do you think” I have jobs under my armpits, to pluck out and hand to you? Last week a boy ran away with two of my pots. Who’s to tell me you won’t do the same? (Tiwari 131) and so on.
Rajkumar understood that this outburst was not aimed directly at him, that it had more to do with the dust, the splattering oil, and the price of vegetables than with his own presence or with anything he had said. He lowered his eyes and stood there stoically, kicking the dust until she was done.

She paused, panting, and looked him over. ‘Who are your parents?’ she said at last, wiping her streaming forehead on the sleeve of her sweat-stained aingyi, she don’t have any. They have died. In a review in *The New York Times*, Pankaj Mishra describes Ghosh as one of few postcolonial writers "to have expressed in his work a developing awareness of the aspirations, defeats and disappointments of colonized peoples as they figure out their place in the world."(Indira Bhatt 140) The novel is set primarily in Burma and India and catalogs the evolving history of those regions before and during the fraught years of the Second World War and India’s independence struggle.

*The Glass Palace* begins in Burma, literally in its last days of independence before the British finally completely subjugated it in 1885. Ghosh starts off nicely, contrasting the story of a young orphaned Indian boy, Rajkumar, with that of the imperious but doomed Burmese royal family.

Rajkumar’s family comes from Akyab, “the principal port of the Arakan” that tidewater stretch of coast where Burma and Bengal collide in a whirlpool of unease. (Ravi Dayal 131). All his family died of a fever that passed through the town, including the last survivor, his mother, who had tried to ship back to the ancestral home of Chittagong with Rajkumar. After his mother died the boy stayed to work on the boat, having nowhere else to go. In Mandalay, the Burmese
royal capital, the boat needed extensive repairs, and during the wait Rajkumar went to work and live at a small food stall in town. He is there when the British invade and overthrow the monarchy.

Ghosh describes the court of Queen Supayalat and King Thebaw, focusing especially on one of the attendants, a young girl named Dolly who is the only one who can handle one of the infant princesses. Ghosh’s account of the British invasion “calm, forceful, overwhelming” and the brief chaos in the great palace afterwards is very good. For much of the novel he then also follows the story of the royal family in their sad Indian exile.

The novel also follows the change in Burma, as the British exploit their colony and the teak industry comes to dominate the nation. Rajkumar remains in Burma, taken under the wing of Saya John, another orphan, from Malacca, who looks Chinese but is a sort of everyman, comfortable in the entire South-East Asian area. They work in the lumber industry, accumulating some wealth, gaining greater independence.

One of the most successful aspects of the book is that Ghosh has outsiders and foreigners, Indians in Burma, for example taking advantage of the situation the British have created. The Indians themselves are victims of colonialism, but they also use it. Rajkumar and others are compromised, owing much of their success to the British, while the Burmese are presented entirely as victims. Complicity with Empire also crops up in a different guise later specifically regarding Indians serving in the British armed forces.
The first chunk of this large book has a number of strands, but Ghosh manages to hold the reader’s interest easily with the exotic locales and swift changes forced on them and the characters. He does, however, get bogged down at times. History is part of the problem. Ghosh feels compelled to explain the events not just from the characters’ point of view but also to provide a gloss for readers who are unlikely to know the details. He tries a variety of approaches in providing this information, but they rarely fit smoothly in the rest of the story. This continues to be a problem throughout the novel, growing worse towards the end.

Ghosh also feels compelled to explain details about logging and elephant-handling and the motor-cars of the day and much else. The information is interesting, but rarely does he integrate it smoothly in his narrative. Certain details—a page on anthrax, for example—read as though they had been cut out of an encyclopedia and pasted in the text: “The word anthrax comes from the same root as anthracite, a variety of coal and et”.

History speeds up. Rajkumar grows up and, with Saya John’s help, becomes a successful businessman as well. Eventually he will go seek out the girl he saw only briefly in Mandalay years before, the young attendant Dolly. Rajkumar is happy in Burma, but times move on. The next big thing is rubber, and many of the multiplying characters head to Malaya to make another fortune. World War II rolls around and brings turmoil. The Japanese invasion of Malaya means everyone must flee or at least try to. The novel then careens to its end in modern Myanmar (Burma).

The family saga “centered mainly on Rajkumar and Saya John and their families and circle” is much like the usual big family novel. All the types are present. In the later generations there is the sensitive photographer Dinu and the
soldier Arjun (and Alison, the woman they are both attracted to). There is Uma, greeted by huge crowds wherever she appears and many more.

There is a great deal of good material here and fine local colour and exciting times. Surprisingly, then, it is also a plodding novel, advancing in fits and spurts, with Ghosh uncertain of where and what and who to focus on. The stories he ties together are occasionally too disparate, the links seeming too forced.

In large part this seems to be because Ghosh seems uncertain of what he wanted the novel to be. Because, beyond presenting a family saga of turbulent times, Ghosh also wrote a commentary on the colonial experience and its legacy. One might have expected any such theme to be neatly woven into the story itself, but in Ghosh’s novel it largely stands out, too separate and distinct. His efforts in this direction, though occasionally successful in their own right, don’t work particularly well in this setting. The novel tries to be too many things, without being any of those exceptionally well.

It is unfortunate: Ghosh’s political strand is an interesting one. He brings a welcome focus on Indians in the military service, doing the British Empire’s dirty work. Two-thirds of the soldiers that routed the Burmese in 1885 were Indian sepoys, he reminds readers early on. The role of Indians in the British armed forces remains a significant one throughout the novel. As cries for Indian independence grow louder the role of Indians in the armed forces becomes more controversial. Here it culminates with Arjun and his fellow-soldiers and the issues they face in World War II. It is worthy stuff, and Ghosh presents much of this well, painting the issue not merely black and white but in its whole (and often very human) complexity.
Unfortunately, much of this sticks out like a sore thumb in the book. Ghosh often writes quite well, but the shifts from these issues to some sappy romance scenes to lumbering explanations of the businesses of the day to airy photography-talk make for a muddle. Often it feels like *The Glass Palace* is several novels, spliced up and edited into one. The continuing story of the Burmese royal family in exile and then back in Burma is quite fascinating and well-done. Ghosh gets the noble tragedy of it down well. But it also dangles at a loose end for much of the novel, too significant to just be background, but not sufficiently integrated into much of the story.

The history and politics are also a problem. Ghosh feels he needs to explain (as perhaps he does to a Western audience), but he does so neither well (the textbook-like interruptions bring the narrative to screeching halts) nor adequately. Only a few incidents are covered in sufficient depth. Important figures are thrown into the fray, briefly mentioned, and then disappear again. The historical complexity is reduced to stick-figure simplicity problematic in a book ostensibly dealing with these issues. Ghosh does fine in the Malayan jungle, with isolated troops figuring out the meaning of all this, who they should be loyal to, what they are fighting for. But the true historical picture, the political issues and conflicts, remain largely incoherent.

The book’s rushed end, dealing with Burma’s recent history, is also less than satisfying. Ghosh clearly meant to comment also on the tragic current situation in Myanmar/Burma, but he approaches it warily. The ostensible connexions to the rest of the book also seem forced.
The Glass Palace is an often interesting and engaging read. It is also frustrating and often disappointing. Early on Ghosh describes the Burmese Queen in exile, suggesting one of the thoughts in her head as rare visitors see how far she has fallen:

We were the first to be imprisoned in the name of their progress; millions more will follow. This is what awaits us all, this is how we will all end as prisoners, in shantytowns born of the plague. A hundred years hence you will read the indictment of Europe’s greed in the difference between the Kingdom of Siam and the state of our own enslaved realm. (Hoagland, Ericka 210)

The passage makes clear Ghosh’s stance: modern Myanmar - bad, modern Thailand - good. (It is again a gross simplification but it is clearly a point Ghosh wishes to make: the passage would have been equally effective without any mention of Siam or prospective comparison.)

Far more significant is that Ghosh implies the horrors of colonialism truly only began at this time, in the 1880s, and that what happened before pales against the harmful imprisonment and the specific type of capitalist exploitation that followed. Some argument can be made for this: many outrages of Empire did occur in these times, from the carving up of Africa to the use of Indian sepoys to subjugate Indians themselves, and others, in the name of England to the economic, ecological, and moral devastation wreaked in much of the world. Still, it is a curious spin to put on colonialism.
In his extensive Author’s Note Ghosh mentions he read hundreds of books and travelled thousands of miles researching his novel. The surfeit of material and impressions seems to have done far more harm than good. Ghosh also thanks numerous people, including four editors. And here we were, thinking there were no more editors out there in the publishing world! This begs the question, however, of what these editors were doing. Ghosh’s sprawling, unevenly written book does not read like a finely-edited novel. On the face of it doesn’t look edited at all (though admittedly we are not familiar with Ghosh’s original draft, which might have looked far different from this version). The novel fits together badly so perhaps different editors were responsible for different sections of it? Or perhaps it is merely proof that too many editors spoil the soup.

The entire action of the novel *The Hungry Tide* takes place in India’s Sundarbans. The jacket of the book tells you about the setting. Between the sea and the plain of Bengal, on the easternmost coast of India, lies an immense archipelago of islands. Here there are no borders to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea, even land from water. For hundreds of years, only the truly dispossessed braved the man-eating tigers and the crocodiles who rule there, to take a precarious existence from the mud. However, the picture changed towards the start of the last century, when a visionary Scotsman bought a few of these fragmented islands from the British to form a utopian settlement, where people irrespective of race, caste, culture could live together.

At the beginning of the novel, Kanai Dutt, a middle-aged businessman from New Delhi, encounters Piyali Roy, or Piya, a young marine biologist from
Seattle. They are on a train to Canning, in southeastern India, from where they will go by boat to the Sundarban Islands, an archipelago in the Ganges Delta made up of a number of small, mangrove-covered islands. Piya has a grant to study a rare species of river dolphin, while Kanai has been asked by his aunt to peruse a notebook left by his uncle Nirmal Bose, who died under mysterious circumstances during a rebellion thirty years earlier. Before they separate at Canning, Kanai politely invites Piya to visit his aunt at her home on Lusibari, one of the Sundarbans’ most remote islands.

Piya makes arrangements for her studies, hiring the required forest guides and a boat, and heads out. However, almost immediately she begins to have misgivings, and after falling into the water and being rescued by a fisherman named Fokir, she decides to stay with him on his small boat rather than return to the guides, who seem excessively interested in her money and her equipment. Her decision proves to be a wise one. Although Fokir speaks no English and cannot read or write, he is so intelligent that Piya has no difficulty communicating with him. She has only to show him her equipment and several pictures of dolphins for him to grasp her reason for being in the Sundarbans and to understand that she wishes to hire him and his boat. Fokir and his young son Tutul make room for Piya on their boat, and they proceed.

While Piya explores the present, Kanai ventures into the area’s past. First his aunt, Nilima Bose, delivers a lecture about the early history of the Sundarbans, and then Kanai begins reading the notebook of Nirmal, his late uncle. From that point on, the narrator will periodically insert into the story a separate, italicized chapter representing a section of the notebook. Kanai will not read the final entry until about two-thirds of the way through the novel.
Fokir knows the area so well that he is soon finding dolphins for Piya to study. He also makes sure that, in her enthusiasm, she does not forget that they are in crocodile-infested waters and that there are tigers in the mangroves. The narrative now begins switching back and forth, with one chapter devoted to the adventures of Piya and Fokir in the fishing boat and the next to Kanai on Lusibari, and the past. Some of the Lusibari chapters are notebook entries. In other chapters, the narration offers background information. For example, in a chapter titled “Nirmal and Nilima,” the reader learns that the couple came to the Sundarbans in 1950, less than a year after they were married, because Nirmal’s political activities had attracted the attention of the authorities and he needed to “disappear” for a while. His notebook was written in 1979, at the time of the Morichjhapi rebellion, and it reveals the fact that Nirmal never changed, he was just as idealistic at the end of his life as he had been in the beginning.

Ghosh’s novel is textured and effortlessly transports you into the land he describes. Every swish of the wind and swirl of the water are beautifully captured. The novel does become tedious in the middle with scholarly details of every kind infused in the pages. If pitched as a travelogue this might have been excusable but otherwise most will just be sifting through these pages. Ghosh puts his interest as an anthropologist above the story, which brings the action to a complete standstill at one point. As for the characters, Ghosh approaches some of them with great understanding Piya’s character is beautifully sketched but there are others like Nilima, whose character slips into melodrama. Also, the manner in which Kanai is established as a cad in the novel is also a bit tastelessly done. Ghosh, while offering no real answers through his novel vis a vis the larger issues at hand, does offer an engrossing work of literature about a lesser known world.
The Hungry Tide 2004 is a fictional novel. The novel contains the colonial and postcolonial history of the sundarbans, the novel is set in labyrinth of island known as the sunderbands in the Bay of Bengal. The center themes are man and nature relations, man and animal conflict, inter cultural and cross cultural relations, elite and subaltern relation and urban and rural conflicts etc. The Sunderland is largely covered by mangrove forest, which forms the delta of gangs into the Bay of Bengal. Two third of the Sunderland are in Bangladesh and one third is in India.

The story shows the struggle for identity and survival. The main occupation of people of this region where the fishing, folk are easily traverse the imaginary boundaries of modern nation state, the wind and the tides take the fishing folk to the mouth of many revelry-channels that set up a unique turbulence of fresh and salt water washing the islands of the archipelago. The tidal surge from the sea covers three hundred kilometers, constantly reshaping or devouring island with just the tops of the jungle of ten visible at high tide. The story is narrated from the perspectives of two main characters, Kanna Duh, A Delhi based businessman and a teams. later, Piyali Roy, and expropriate, American cytologist who has come to study the rare Irrawaddy dolphin which lives in the river of the tide century Kanna Duh, an educated translator comes to the island of Lusikani to visit his aunt Nilima. But Piya is a research student in cytology at the Scripps Institute of oceanography in California and in her trip to India. she is interested in observing the marine mammals that she thinks are unique to the sunderbans.

Every year dozens of people perish in the embrace of that dense foliage killed by tigers, snakes and crocodiles (THT.8) Is that an invitation? Piya said, smiling absolutely, kanain responded. Come I am inviting you. Your company will lighten the burden of my exile.
Kanai and Piyali Roy meets one another in the terrain even though Piyali is an American, Kanai invites her to canning her the author express the post colonial aspect of accepting the colonizer. The post colonial writers also work to reclaim the past, because their own histories were often erased or discredited under in persialism and to understand their own culture and personal Identities and chart their four futures on their own terms super imposed on them by imperialist Ideology and practice (The Empires Writes Back 151).

The novel is a search narrative on race, movement and natural habitats. Ghosh is interested in environmental issues. The novel offers a very rich discussion of post colonial modes of environmental issues and the politics behind it. If we say more specifically, the novel is about the policies relating to wildlife conservation, class and cast in post colonial India and the opposition of policies made by the communist left-front government of west Bengal towards a community of refuges who occupied Morichjhapi Island in the Sundarban.

In the beginning of the twentieth century Daniel Hamilton, a visionary Scotsman, decided to create a utopian society at the sunderlan, offering free land to those willing to work as long as they accepted the others as equal, regardless of class, caste, creed and ethnicity. In the novel the tide country includes villages such as Lusibari, Cariontola, Canning, Gosala, Safjelia, Emilybari and Morichjhapi. These villages are surrounded by the sea water throughout the year. The settlers in the tide country were mainly the farmers who had been drawn to Lusibrari by the promise of free farm land by sir Daniel Hamilton who wanted to establish utopian society but the inhabitants of this land work on Boats and fishing provides them livelihood. The life at the tide country is not easy one. Since fishing and hunting is
there main occupation the result was disastrous. Many people died of drowning and many people were picked up by crocodiles and sharks. Thousands of people risked their lives in order to collect honey, was firewood and sour fruit of Kewra. Every day there was new of people being killed by a tiger, a snake or a crocodile. The hostile environment of the tide country victimizes the people in different ways.

Exploitation of women is seen in this novel. The real victims are the women whose men have been dead. If not dead also the women have learnt to live with the impending calamity of their lives. Widowhood has been naturalized into their everyday lives in such as way that they shed their marital symbols. Every time when their men go out for fishing Ghosh informs about the custom of the tide country.

When the men folk went fishing it was the custom for their wives to change into the garments of widowhood. They would put away their married reds and dress white saris they would take off their bangles and wash the vermilion from their heads. It was a through they were trying to hold misfortune at bay by living through it over and over again (HT 80).

The girls of the tide country become widow in their twenties and thirties, they have woven this assumption in their lives that one day they have to undergo the widowhood that is why they prepare themselves for it by shedding their marital symbols. The ethnographers in Ghosh notes that the observance of widowhood in the tide country differs from the usual Hindu norm: here, on the margins of the Hindu world, widows were not condemned to lifelong bereavement they were free to remarry if they could (81), though remarriage option in these casteless societies is seldom materialized as there was a dearth of marriageable
men. So widowhood often proved as life time dependence, years of abuse and exploitation for these women. Time evidence has been quoted in the novel the widows were tricked and forced by cruel men into the life of prostitution. Dililp Choudhury the nicked man forced Kusum’s mother to work at a brother house, he was also hunting lonely Kusum, hoping that she should take the place of her mother.

In this novel Ghosh presents intercultural and cross-cultural relations. The setting of the novel is in sundarban which is called the tide country where the river water mixes with the seawater and ecological riches provide the metaphor for inter-cultural and cross cultural. In this novel nature and animals are presented as the other human beings the novel reveals the relationship that exists between educated, privileged people and uneducated, impoverished people, and how the western and city cosmopolitans respond to uneducated rural countrymen. It also discusses how human relationship is formed in a post colonial world across divisions of class, caste creed and ethnicity and how they are developed through verbal and non-verbal language.

Piya is a young English speaking westernized women brought up in America But of Indian origin, Kanai, an educated and multilingual cosmopolitan urban dweller and Fokir, an uneducated Bengali speaking, rural dwelling Indian set the story of the novel.

Ghosh wants to suggest that if the people of both privileged and impoverished backgrounds are invited, then there will be prosperous future for the world’s poor. The relation between Piya and Fokir symbolize the union between two cultures, and is formed through verbal and non-verbal communication. Ghosh
represent Indian caste system in the casteless utopian society through the relationship between Kanai and Fokir while Kanai belongs to higher caste and Fokir belongs to the low caste, dalit.

City people impose their rule over the rural and confront them in their metropolis and language and lifestyle. But in this novel, Ghosh attempts to unite the urban and rural by allowing relationship between Kanai and Fokir. In the novel Fokir never speaks directly to the reader. It is Kanai who often translates Fokir and speaks for him. The cross-cultural relationship between Piya and Fokir develops on the basis of non-verbal communication.

_The Glass Palace_ is a book about geographical entities, space, distance and time. Ghosh uses the novel as an instrument of perception more like a lenses that a mirror for the objective representation of reality. The main character of this novel is Rajkumar an Indian orphan Boy who is transported to Burma by accident. He works in a tea stall which belongs to macho, he is a bold and remarkable boy he loves exaggerating his age first to feel like an adult. This exploring boy is a complete destitute in an alien city with absolutely no acquaintances but soon the boy develops his sense of belonging at the new place.

The complex story _The Glass Palace_ (2000) weaves historical facts with a family saga spanning three generation and examines the political and social issues of Burma, Malaya and India during a tumultuous century. The fourth novel of Amitav Ghosh opens the eve of war in Mandalay as the British prepare to capture the Burmese throne. The novel is set in Burma, Bengal, India and Malaya, spasm a century from the fall of Kombeaurg dynasty in Mandalay through the second world war to modern time. Focus is mainly on the early 20th Century. The Eurasian winner in the “Best Book” category of the 2001 commonwealth wiener prince

It was translated and published into over 25 languages. It was also translated into Burmese by weviter Nay win Myint. The Burmese translation won the Myanmar National Literature Award in 2012.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

*Khandoker Farzana, 2016, Subaltern’s power of silence and alternative history: Amitav Ghosh’s The Calcutta Chromosome.* Amitav Ghosh’s *The Calcutta Chromosome* is an attempt to rewrite the subaltern history. In this essay I would like to explore that how Amitav Ghosh makes the subaltern speak through silence. According to Gayatri Spivak the subaltern cannot speak or are not allowed to speak. She suggests that to make them speak, literary scholars should “speak to them.” Amitav Ghosh makes the subaltern speak through their silence. I will also explore how the unsolved mysteries indicate towards the science–fictional Utopian dream, the posthuman, and immortality. Ghosh shows a group of subaltern people who manipulate a scientific discovery. By placing science and counter-science together Ghosh challenges the Western scientific knowledge and the biased colonial history. We see Mangala and Laakhan who belong to the subaltern class of the contemporary society and for them “silence” is religion; however, through their “silence” they come to speak and play the influential roles. Ghosh also challenges the Western ideas of “fixed identity;” we see the subaltern characters of the book often change their identities. Though Ghosh represents two contradictory ideas, superstition and science together, at the end we see the fusion of these ideas. Ghosh represents the subaltern in a new way and challenges the biased history and takes an
attempt to rewrite the subaltern’s alternative history. He combines the counter-science with scientific investigation to promote the subaltern’s own kind of science and modernity. The subaltern, who do not have access into the biased history (the revised history) are shown to have a history of their own and to have great influence on the Western scientific discovery.

Shivangi Srivatsava, 2015. – LANGUAGE, HISTORY AND SOCIETY: AN ASSESSMENT OF AMITAV GHOSH’S SELECT NOVELS, University of Lucknow.

The present thesis is an analysis of the select novels of Amitav Ghosh, one of the most serious writers crafting fiction in English today, from the perspective of language, history and society. Post 1980 Indian English fictional scene has become variegated, complex and thematically richer. In the changed contemporary scenario reality, instead of being treated as stable, monolithic, absolute or transcendental in nature, is considered to be pluralistic, provisional and contextual. Corresponding to these ideas, the fictional reality depicted in contemporary Indian English writing is comprehended as constructed and discursive instead of being mimetic or representative. Postcolonial perspectives have also impacted the critical and the creative aspects of Indian English fiction. How the colonial rulers created a particular image of their subject races to perpetrate their hold on them forms an important feature of the emerging forms of narrative. The variety of life that forms the subject matter of postcolonial creative and the critical writings also includes different forms of oppressed human existence even after the end of British Imperialism.

Singha, Sankar Prasad & Dasgupta Samik, 2013, Across the Shadow Lines: Interrogating history in the novels of Amitav Ghosh. This thesis basically proposes
to present Ghosh’s novels as attempts on the part of the author to explore the rifts in
the modern society caused by religious, ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural
conflicts, and at the same time to formulate an ethos of multiculturalism through
historiographical reconstruction of the past. History, as Ghosh finds it, is an
instrument of representation that has been appropriated by the colonialists and
nationalists alike to produce totalitarian notions of identity. The historiographical
reconstructions in Ghosh’s novels are consequently attempts on the part of the
author to produce a postcolonial counter-discourse, intended to question the notion of
monolithic and exclusionist cultural identity created by the established canonical
history.

University.

Amitav Ghosh’s The Shadow Lines, published in 1988, is a political novel that
focuses mostly on nationalism, the meaninglessness of partition and the 1964
communal riots which occurred in Calcutta, Dhaka and Khulna. This paper attempts
to investigate The Shadow Lines from the perspective of nationalism to reflect on the
negative impact it had on peoples’ minds because of political uncertainties. This
paper will also discuss the patriarchal indifference to women’s contribution in the
Indian National Movement with extracts from the novel in the following chapters,
“The Shadow Lines & Nationalism” and “Criticism of Nationalism in The Shadow
Lines”. Ghosh’s The Shadow Lines chronicles three generations in a family saga
that spreads over Dhaka, Calcutta and London. The book is divided into two parts,
“Going Away” and “Coming Home”. In the first section, the narrator draws the
picture of a war-ravaged London and also depicts the family rapport between the
Prices and Mayadebi whose son Tridib enchants the narrator with his story telling and in-depth knowledge of many places. A love relationship between Tridib and May Price, the daughter of the Prices, develops when May returns to Calcutta. The narrator learns about the war from Tridib, his gifted uncle. In the second section of *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh pays attention to communal strife in Calcutta and Dhaka caused by the loss of the Prophet’s hair from Hazratbal shrine, Srinagar.

**Bhanumati Mishra, 2011**, *New Historicism in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines*. Language in India, Vol 11. Focusing upon New Historicism as an element of text and history in literary writings, I wish to elaborate on the historicist approach to literature as used by the contemporary Indian English writer, Amitav Ghosh, who has won many accolades for his fiction which is intertwined with history. What better reference can one give than his second novel

*The Shadow Lines*. Amitav Ghosh’s success as a historical novelist owes much to the distinctiveness of his well researched narrative. It brings a bygone era and vanished experiences to life through vividly realized detail. Ghosh’s fiction is characterized by strong themes that may be sometimes identified as historical novels. His themes involve emigration, exile, cultural displacement and uprooting. He illuminates the basic ironies, deep seated ambiguities and existential dilemmas of human condition. The narrator is very much like the chronicler Pimen in Pushkin’s drama *Boris Godunow*. But unlike Pushkin’s Pimen Amitav Ghosh is not a passive witness to all that happens in his presence, and absence. He is the very soul of the happenings, he connects the various clauses of life lived in Calcutta, London, Dhaka and elsewhere.
Abhigyan Prasad, 2009. Collapsing Boundaries Narrative Strategies in the fiction of Amitav Ghosh, IIT Guwahati, The researcher in his thesis has analyzed the novels of Amitav Ghosh in which Ghosh collapses many essentialist boundaries by employing diverse narrative strategies. The boundaries are various geographical, national, cultural, spatial and temporal. The one between form and content and most importantly, the boundary that defines the hierarchical terms within a binary and between the self and the other. The strategic use of diverse narrative techniques implies that in Ghosh, the form and the content, the narrative and the narration and the discursive and the creative seamlessly flow into each other.


This thesis analyzes the select novels of Amitav Ghosh critically giving importance to the themes, characters, Narrative techniques and critical theories that can be applied to the study of the novels.

Claire Chambers, 2006 Post Colonial Text, Vol 2 no.3, In the article entitled Anthropology as cultural translation: Amitav Ghosh’s In an Antique Land Amitav Ghosh is one of the most distinctive and influential writers to come out of India since Rushdie. Throughout his diverse and generically composite oeuvre one constant has been his attempt to find connections between seemingly unrelated subjects. Ghosh’s fiction challenges the artificial “shadow lines” that have been erected to separate, for example, nations from their neighbours, fact from fiction, and academic disciplines from each other. His interrogation of boundaries accords with the preoccupation with hybridity, “in-between” spaces, and diasporas in postcolonial debate. Although Ghosh dislikes being categorized as “postcolonial,” in his writing he frequently
focuses on the ways the partitioned South Asian subject has been affected by, and yet can to some extent resist, colonialism’s legacy. At the heart of Ghosh’s corpus is the contention that knowledge is produced by structures of dominance, particularly the military, economic, and epistemic strategies of colonialism. His main focus is the impact that Western paradigms of knowledge have had and continue to have on India. Ghosh is also crucially concerned with highlighting filiations and connections which go beyond the (neo)colonial relationship, such as the persistence of pre-colonial trade connections between the Indian subcontinent and the Arabian peninsula, or the existence of an Indian community in Burma which was almost entirely erased by nationalism. Finally, in his writing Ghosh constantly experiments with form and genre in order to adumbrate a dialogic, non-coercive method of knowledge transmission. Nowhere are these concerns more evident than in Ghosh’s third book, In an Antique Land(1992), a text that straddles the generic borderlines between fact, fiction, autobiography, history, anthropology, and travel book. Ghosh maps ethnographic fieldwork undertaken in the Egyptian villages of Lataifa and Nashawy onto his subsequent research into medieval Indian Ocean trade. In so doing he explores the connections and ruptures between two worlds, the medieval and the contemporary.

From the above Review of Literature we come to understand that Researchers and authors have analyzed and worked upon Ghosh’s novels under various heads. But it is found that no studies has been done on Post-modern or Post-colonial aspects in Ghosh’s novels. Ghosh presents multiple points of view of the dispersed people of different nationalities and makes a plea for internationalism. The First chapter introduces the theories, explains the key aspects
and traces the history of Indian Writing in English. The introduction of the thesis is a clear survey of the Indian Writing in English, History of Indian Novel and its growth and the work and the author taken for the research explaining the various aspects of the theories of post colonial and post modernism and the authors approach towards the theory in the select novels. The novels selected for the study are *The Shadow Lines*, *the Calcutta chromosome*, *The Hungry Tide*, *Sea of Poppies*, *The Glass Palace*. Ghosh in his novels presents identity, culture and nationalism which are the post colonial elements and pluralism and multiculturalism as post modern elements writing from the post colonial side Ghosh established nationality and cultural identity advocated by the colonial and nationalist history of India. He attempts to re-narrate the history of Indian nationalism through the natives of the country present in the form of characters in the novel.

The Second chapter deals with the aspects of Postmodernism in Ghosh’s novels. *The Shadow Lines* shows the human relationship which cut across the confines of nation boundaries and social restrictions. *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996) is not only a medical thriller but also a Victorian ghost story, a scientific quest. The technique of magical realism by mixing and comparing the element of fantasy with reality and carries in extra / supernatural machinery and mystery along with actual incidents “magical realism” was the postmodern element used in this novel. *The Hungry Tide* is far mere an epic than, the simple struggle of man verses beast. The different issues in the novel east west encounter, the expatriate sense, eco-friendly outlook are all seen from the angle of psychodynamics of women as a postmodern novel. The language used by Amitav Ghosh is simple and
it gives clarity to the reader. In *Sea of Poppies* the indentured laborers and convicts are transported to the Island of Mauritius on the ship Iris where they suffer a lot. In *The Glass Palace* Burmese Royal family after the exile lives an uncomfortable life in India. Rajkumar who piles heap of amount in Burma is forced to leave his home and business due to Japanese invasion.

The Third chapter discusses the post colonial elements that the author had soaked in the novels selected for study. *The Shadow Lines* we can see almost all post colonial concerns namely, the search for identity, the need for independence and the difficult relationship with colonial culture, and it also focuses on the issues of freedom and cross-cultural interactions in backdrop of communal violence. *The Calcutta Chromosomes* (1996) is also called as the novel of fever. Here the author writes science blending with religion of East with the west. The novel travels almost for the period of nineteen, twenty and twenty first century which covers the colonial and postcolonial year of Indian history. The novel *The Hungry Tides* is the adventure unlikely love, Identity and history which have been set up in the easternmost part of India. The novel explores topics like Diaspora, immigration, displacement, search for identity. The novel *glass palace* is a complex story that waves historical facts with a family saga spanning three generations and examines the political and social issues of Burma, Malaya and India during a tumultuous century. Excite and return are themes that lie at the Anglo Burmese war of 1865. In this novel the main character Rajkumar struggle for survival in the colonial turmoil. He was transported as indentured laborers from south India to other part of colonial world. His post colonial consciousness represents a conflict Ghosh writes about families and nation to highlight the sense of dislocation. He also talks about many places, war and displacement, excite and footlessness. The novel *Sea of Poppies*
depicts the tale of colonial India on the eve of first bank of the holy river Ganges and in Calcutta. The author compares the Ganges to the Nile. He portrays the characters as poppy seeds emanating in large number from the field to form a sea, where every single seed is in certain about its future.

The Fourth chapter deals with the craftsmanship of Amitav Ghosh as a post colonial and post modern writer. He has his own narrating style and has adopted different techniques to reflect his feelings they are cinematic techniques, Journalistic approach, portrayal of the incidents, the study of truth through historical study etc.

Ghosh is master in the implication of impressionistic technique in which he emphasis on showing rather telling. Ghosh like other Indian writer does not fully accept the conventional science as a post modern writer he breaks down myth’s by his interrogation of the status and worth of different branches of science in India. The way Ghosh narrates his novels are simple but it has a complex city of varied time and place.

Finally Fifth chapter of the thesis draws a conclusion through discussion of the novels of Amitav Ghosh and the awareness created through his writings which bring out the true history, voicing out for the voiceless and throwing light on the real status of the native. He establishes the identity of the colonized people by the colonizer. The conclusion also brings to light the future scope for other researchers.