CHAPTER – II

SELF AND SOCIETY IN THE LIGHT OF POST- MODERNISM

INTRODUCTION

Post modernism is a reaction against modernism. It gives voice to insecurities, disorientation and fragmentation. Post modern literature explores surly activism, turning from external reality to examine inner states of consciousness. Post modernism is an Anti-modernist tendency which has psychological and intellectual impact. This chapter analyses the aspects of postmodernism in Amitav Ghosh’s selected novels.

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 is expressed 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 western values and beliefs as only a small part of the human experience and rejects 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 present. There are number of books produced by literary stalwarts like Srinivasa Iyengar, C.D. Narasimmaiya, M.K. Naik etc. explaining the beginning and the progress up to 1980.
What is Postmodernism? is a universal question raised by all the academicians till now. Whatever it is, and this is a moot question, it is Eurocentric. Now, everyone knows this. There’s a lot of talk about highlighting difference, of valorizing the local over the universal, the minority over the (non-existent) majority and so on. But whatever the content of postmodernism, its form has remained elite, exclusive, and closed to outsiders. This is not a conspiracy as some disgruntled, plain-speaking, tough-guy type of Americans have made out. Rather, this arcane, esoteric, and cabbalistic discursivity is an outcome of the compulsions to novelty and product-refinement within the West. In an advanced capitalist, post-industrial society, intellectual discourse is as much a commodity as an automobile or electronic gadget is. Every season, some new verbal fashion is inaugurated and the entire language system itself is overhauled every ten years or so.

Like in the life-styles marketplace, however, the fifties or sixties can suddenly be back in fashion. Who knows, then, what will come after postmodernism? I would like to quote Makarand R. Paranjape, he says

There is already a talk of returning to a shared or understood multiperspectivity without the effacing of cultural and ethnic ego boundaries. In other words, after the degree of over refinement, the consensus of Habermas doesn’t end up sounding very different from the difference of Derrida.

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 charges that manifested
due to this in all walks of life across the world. The present study is of the post colonial features and its consequent outcome in man’s creations, foregrounding fragmentation and a sense of alienation is postmodernism. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (1990) explains the features of post modernism in literature as:

Post modernity is said to be a culture of fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia, disposable simulacra and promiscuous super facility. 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 determined quest for artistic coherence in a fragmented world 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 greed’s the absurd (or) meaningless confusion of contemporary existence with a certain numbered or flippant indifference, favouring self consciously depthless works of fabulation, pastiche, bricolage, or aleatgory disconnections described above (174-175).

Post modernism is a word used to define variations in ways people think, particularly the way they view truth and reality. Post modern in Indian English literature discovers fragmentariness in description and character structure in a different way from its British or American complement. In post modernism, there is an obsession with anxieties in the reality of humanity. The life portrayed by
them accommodates insignificance, purposelessness and meaninglessness of human survival through the usage of devices such as Inconsistency, permutation, Incoherence, Uncertainty, Excess, Short circuit and so on. Ghosh as post modernists he draws comprehensively upon the character, traditions and contradictions of his native land.

**POST MODERN ELEMENTS IN THE SHADOW LINES**

The Post Modern element in *The Shadow Lines* is interesting to read. As a post-modernist he speaks in favour of globalization. Ghosh’s novels centre on the multiracial and multiethnic issues. In *The Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh makes the east and west meets on a pedestal of friendship especially through the characters like Tridib, May, Nice Prince etc. The novel traces the interlocking relationships between two families one Indian, One British based on friendship love and trust.

In India past 1980 is described as the post modern period. After 1980s India realized itself as multicultural, multi ethnic, multi-lingual. Post colonial and post modern authors emerged namely 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* etc. The people are considered as the makers of new pattern in writing novel with post modern thoughts and emotions Amitav Ghosh is one among those writers.

In *The Shadow Lines* Ghosh enhances the postmodern spirit of truth which is portrayed through consumerism. Consumerism is a good slave but bad master. A trait of consumerism is self-centeredness which produces the highest standard of
living but it also degenerate the order of the society. Post modern consumerism 
spoils the culture as a market of money destroys values and finally the truth which 
leads oneself to Alienation. Self Alienation occurs due to the clash between one’s 
own self definition and the Identity imposed by the larger society.

Ghosh in his novels deals with the issues of alienation, idealism and the 
quest for truth. This chapter throws light on all the post modern aspects in the 
chosen novels. The forces of nationalism form a setback in Jhamma, while in the 
vasse of Illa it is internationalism but in the mindset of Tridib, its imagination 
through the idealist. Force of nationalism and Internationalism the narrator breaks 
the bound between them and emerges as a more mature person. Jhamma is caught 
between the forces of reality and illusion of nationalism. Her admiration of the 
revolutionaries like Khuderanand Basha Jatin denotes her dissatisfaction with the 
rule of British for her war is equipment which makes violence and unifies the 
country’s border to fight the common enemy and it shapes the identity of the 
nation. The middle class life which she lived had a unity nation hood, self respect 
and nation power which history denies her. She is well known to the movement in 
Bengal like Anushilam and Jungantar and a little about the arrest, She is sure that 
she would have killed the magistrate for the sake of the nation. “I would have 
been frightened …But I would have done anything to be free” (SL39).

Jhammas feeling of nationalism is only one of self -respect of the middle 
class attitude as she scolds Illa that she had no right to live in England as they 
have drawn their boundaries with blood and violence. She believes that; “It’s not 
freedom she wants……...she wants to be left alone to do what she 
pleases.........that is not what is means to be free” (SL 89).
The absence of boundaries confuses Jhamma. She could not understand that there are no boundaries. She cries, “Where is Dhaka? I can’t see Dhaka?” (194) the newspaper reports show that there were protests in Pakistan and there were attacks on Muslims too on January 4, 1964, the Mu-I-Mubarak is recovered by the members of the central Bureau of Intelligence. The protests that took place in Pakistan vanished But in Khulna, a very small town in the east of Pakistan, the demonstration turned violent as “some shops were burnt down and a few people killed (226). The headlines in newspapers of 7th January 1964 declare:” Fourteen die in Fringy off Khulna (228).

Fiction and reality are closely linked in the case of violence as rumors were main cause for communal strife of 1964. The role of violence is pictures only through the element of memory. In the same way, Ghosh clearly shows how Tridibs quest for Idealism is also in vain. Tridibs dream of a complete inner outer atmosphere is thus expressed.

One could never know anything except through desire, real desire……..a pure, painful and primitive desire, a bouging for everything that was not in one self, a torment of the flesh, that carried one beyond the limits of one’s mind to other place and even, if one was lucky to place where there was no border between oneself and ones image in the mirror (29).

Tridibs passion for an ideal world is antagonistic to his real self who is in a way detached to everything. He is happy in company of strangers. He is always lonely. He believes in creativity through imagination. He educates the narrator. He believes that there are no inventions without precise imagination, which should be undertaken with a greater sort of care. One should not bend to other
people’s innovation, rather one must try to sort out the real meaning of freedom and responsibility. The set trade of groups does not possess any conscious feeling. But a soul of the individual can conquer the consciousness of transcendental. Power structures are all set to rule but the individual is always in the grip of escaping its efforts. Tridibs molto of escaping from other people’s invention requires quest for the real eternally. The irony is that the real seem to escape from the activities of day to day life. The clarity is just an illusion of knowledge. Teridib could clearly comprehend the Ironic reality of death which is very difficult to accept.

The realities of the bombs and torpedoes and the dying was easy enough to imagine mere events, after all, recorded in thousands of films and photographs and comic books. The fact that they knew that their world, and in all probability they themselves, would not survive the war. What is the colour of that knowledge? Nobody knows, nobody can ever know, not even in memory, because there are moments in thyme that are not knowable (67-68).

The post modernism elements are abundantly present in Amitav Ghosh’s novels. As per post modernist, national boundaries restrict human communication and Nationalism leads towards so postmodernist speak in favour of Globalization. Amitav Ghosh’s novel focus on multiracial and multi ethnic issues as a wondering cosmopolitan he roves around and weaves them with his narrative beauty.

In The Shadow Lines, Amitav Ghosh makes the east, west meet on a pedestal of friendship, especially through the characters like Tridib, May, Nice Prince, etc. He stresses on globalization rather than nationalization. In this novel
the narrative is simple that flew smoothly, back and forth between times, places and characters. The novel is so evocative and realistic neither effortlessly and enigmatically with a blend of fiction and non-fiction.

For Ghosh, language in the process of the production of art attains the status of diasporic representation voicing him and thousands of other uprooted individuals. Language helps in creating family that has broken and dispersed in the mire of confused identity in *The Shadow Lines*.

You see, in our family we don’t know whether we are coming or going it’s my entire grandmother’s fault. But of course, the fault was not hers at all, it lay in the language. Every language assumes a centrality, a fixed and settle point to go away from and come back to and what my grandmother was looking or was a word for a journey which was not coming or a going at all, a journey that was a search for precisely that fixed point which permits the proper use of verbs of movement (153).

Ghosh targets a memory of memories bound together in stacks and phases. Every incident is epilogue by an incident which serves as the root-cause for the narrators memories. For example, the narrator remembers a letter of Mayadebi proclaiming May’s visit to India and her reception. After a gap of many years, he tells. ‘The first time may and I talked about her visit to Calcutta was on the day after Illa’s wedding (154). The narrator recounts the wedding of Illa before he speaks of May’s visit to India, his very act of sexuality, his apology to May his help in making May collect money for the African famine, the narrators visit of May at Howrah station.
The event is seen as the spontaneous recollections of the past which occupy the narrator’s mind rendered through his telescopic eyes. The description of the riots of 1964 and Tridibs death is a case in point. The narrator comments “It actually took me fifteen years to discover that there was a connection between my might mare bus ride back from school and the events that befell Tridib and others in Dhaka” (218).

Ghosh uses the first person narrative to combine the family chronically, infused with the front-line autobiography for the emergence of a complexity in the act of narration. The narrator is able to form his own frame work of experience and matures accordingly. The adult narrator recalls the memories of the child narrator. Extended memory us also a strong recurrence. A shadow line exists between the past and present, much of the present is shaped by the past. Ghosh mixes the factor of time thus post modern builds a web of loneliness around himself.

The novel is based largely in Kolkata, Dhaka, and London. It seems to echo the sentiments of whole Southeast Asia with lucid overtones of Independence and the pangs of Partitions. It is true from the side of Thamma (i.e), the grandmother of the narrator and the old man, Jethamoshai, Jhamma’s uncle. It is the love towards their homeland or country that stopped them to move away from their lands at any moment.

Though Jhamma lost her husband, she did not move anywhere in search of her livelihood. She wanted to ace her last breath only on the land where she was scorn. That is why she criticizes Iola saying. Iola has no right to live there she doesn’t belong there. It took those people a long time to build that country.
Hundreds of years, years of war and bloodshed everyone who lives…

There has earned his or her right to be there with blood, with their brother’s blood and their father’s blood and their son’s blood. They know they are a nation because they have drawn their borders with blood. War is their (The British) religion. That’s what it takes to make a country. Once that happens people forget they were born this (or) that Muslim or Hindu, Bengali or Punjabi they become a family born of the same pool of blood (95).

Coming to the old man Jethamoshan, he is a stubborn man. He was lawyer by profession. Though he was weak physically, mentally he was too strong. He had a great sense of loyalty and devotion towards his motherland. It was very evident from his talks with Jhamma and May ahead when they visited Bangladesh to get him back to Kolkata where they were living. He protested straightly. In his own words, ‘I know everything, I understand everything. Once you start moving never stop’.

The spirit of nationalism is well portrayed by Ghosh through the quest for the freedom from the British through the characters of Jhamma and her classmate in school, the shy boy who had journey as a member of one of the secret terrorist societies. Since he was fourteen, he had given a mission to assassinate an English magistrate in Khulna district. When he has about to leave on his mission, he had been caught by the police. Then the whole class felt aghast. In fact he had taken this not for his personal profit. He committed to die for the freedom of India. At the very moment, even Jhamma was fascinated towards his deeds. She would have been content to rim errands for them to cook their food wash their clothes. It was for the Glory of the nation. She did not knew how to set in tough with them and
even if she had it would have been twice as hard for her to get in because she was a girl, a women. Jhamma even speaks about was declared with Pakistan in 1965. She is standing with her hair hanging in wet ropes over her face, eyes glazed, spectacles fallen off, smashing the glass front of the radio and going out with flesh and blood against it. “We are fighting them at last, with tanks and guns and bounds” (238).

It is a historical novel as it is closely associated to the historical events (i.e) to the modern history of India and also some of the incidents of the world history especially the portrayed of the World War II is very clear through the words of the narrator. He said to Illa. “When they come out of the tube station he stopped them and pointed down the road”. Since this is west lane, he said that must be Sumatra read over there. And that house, that one, just down the road, on there on the corner of Lymington road, it’s called Lymington mansion and an incendiary bomb fell on it, and burned down two floors. “that was on the 1st of October 1940, two days before his uncle died ” (85). The novel mentioned the world war II (1937-1945) and Indian –China war (1962) India –Pakistan war (1965) and Communal Riots (1964).

Immigration is another major theme so post modernism. Here the novel deals with the migration of the narrator’s family to different parts of the world. The opening line of the novel describes the migration of his family in 1939, thirteen years before I was born. My father’s aunt, May a debar went to England with her husband and her son, Tridib Her elder son, Jatin-Kakle who was 20 years older than Tridib, was an economist with the U.N He was always away too, somewhere in Africa or south east Asia with his wife and daughter, Illa. Tridib is the second one. The third brother, Robi who was much younger than the other two,
having been born after his mother had miscarriage, lived with his parents wherever they happened to be posted until he was sent to boarding school at the age of twelve. There was also a kind of criticism in the novel regarding the migration of Illa towards alien land. Narrator’s grandmother told narrator, “Shall I tell you what Illa is gone for?” (112).

She is gone there because she is greedy, she is gone there for money, he replied. She said, it’s not for money. It’s a thing; it’s all things money can buy, fringelike the one Mrs. Sen’s son-in-law brought back from America, with two door and a spout that drops ice cubes into your glass, colour TVs and cars, calculator and cameras all things you can’t get there.

The post modern trend in Art and literature is a reflection of the changing world scenario. The present generation lives in a global village where everything is available anywhere. The post modern world is characterized by capitalism. Money dominates man as he turns into a life of a consumerist and an alienated soul. Resources, commodities and mineral wealth of the world can be bought in any corner of the world. But no one can buy human relations, it love and affection.

Man of post modern century likes to be alone. The alienation is caused, not because of the stratagem of persons nearly but due to the back of contact with one another. One reaps in tough with the whole world but has no time to spare even for his family and friends. Man is too comfortable in his geographical space that he is not bothered about others. The construction of flats and towers has made social distance inevitable. Man is in solitude and the detachment is self imposed. The post-modern builds a web of loneliness around
him. More adverse effects are brought in by the establishment of new-capitalism and the era sure of the borders between the city and the village due to globalization. The quality of life style is degraded to a large extent namely adjustment problems, divorces, cold relationships, stress, diabetes and numerous health problems. Combined with the loss of ethics is a result of the so called information revolution.

Everything is now the building, the people and the technologies but the problems encountered are the same as in the past. The new technologies must have improved the life of the people but it administers more violence, more health problems and even dictatorship the rich has access to everything and the rest are lost in the intricacies of the post modern world. The urban is more privileged and hence the voice of the urban is the voice of the global world. So, every village is coloured in urban shadows.

In The Shadow Lines, Ghosh cleverly links the two aspects-the riots of Calcutta and the violence of mob in Dhaka. The violence starts on January 10, 1964. The school bus of the narrator is empty band the fear of his mother is brought out as she has heard that they had “poured poison into Tala Tank, that the whole of Calcutta’s water supply was poisoned” (199). No one asked questions. Each of the school children knew who did the mischief. “It was a reality that existed only in the saying, so when you heard it what you said it did not matter whether you believed it or not. It only mattered that it had been said at all” (200).
The narrator’s accusation of befriending Mentu, a Muslim is saved by speaking out that he had not meet Mentu for many months. The narrator feels inside his heart that he has betrayed his friend, but he behaves in Rome, as Romans do “I was glad he hadn’t come” (200). Religion divides the society. The narrator never feels outwardly that he has betrayed his friend. He has relief that he is among the majority of the community. Thus the narrator is forced to go against his ideals with this understanding in place. He knows why nick was being way from Illa. It was for the simple reason of his superior nationalistic identity.

Ghosh portrays the environment of violence created out of the fundamentals of religion in India, which destructs the value of nationalism. It leaves every one paralyzed, with fear. When the enemy is just inside one’s country, not an outsider, one can realize the terrible condition of India. Children face the chaos and violence of the innocent mob as a result of the religious riots in Calcutta everything is in ads. The children find it difficult to listen to the class as they could hear a series of different roars. “A shout followed by another and another, in a jaggedly random succession, and then suddenly silence, and just when they seemed to have died away, there they were, one voice, followed by a doyen and then again a moment of silence” (201). These circulate around the fear of the children. The children are able to hear. “The uniquely fright eking not elemental, not powerful rather a form, raged outside, a child asked wonder who’s beating, as India was playing the test match against England” (202).

To the child, the violence outside the classroom and the cricket match at madras belonged to the same world. The children are once again fused in the middle of a communal violence on the way from school to home. Ghosh does not
write about the scene outside the school as he wants to lay importance to the
insane behavior of mob forty. A mob on the park street runs after the bus. The
children inside the bus seat themselves uncomfortably as stones are pelted against
the windows. The bus gains speed and leaves behind the attackers. “When we got
up and looked back, some of them were laughing with their arms around each
other’s shoulders” (203).

The children are horrified by fear of terror. Normal conditions are very rare
in this country and no matter, no one knows, when one will face danger and will be
left alone to be attacked by a mob. This detained portrayal of mob violence
triggered by religious fantasim enables Ghosh to deconstruct the concept of
nationalism – a country that is united in diversity. As Ghosh remarks about fear ‘It
is this that sets apart the thousand million people who inhabit the subcontinents
from the rest of the world -not language-not food, not music. “It is the special
quality of lineless that grows out of the fear of the war between oneself and ones
image in the mirror” (204).

It’s only when the narrator, as a research student, reads newspaper reports
in the Teen Murti house literary in Delhi, that the narrator fins out the root cause
for the events of 1964 which shook Calcutta: “In Calcutta rumors were in the
air…………the bar binger of every serious riot”that the trains from Pakistan were
arriving packed in with corpses……..with refugees still pouring in, rumors began
to flow like flood waters through the city and angry crowds began to gather at the
stations” (228). Ghosh questions the strength of the country which can be easily
shaken by rumors.
The reports of the newspaper clarify the there was not one single record or incident of animosity between Kashmiri Muslim, Hindus and Sikhs. Maulana Masoodi, Persuaded the firs, demonstrators to march with black flags instead of green and thereby drew the various communities of Kashmir together in a collective display of mourning (226). In the view of the riots the sincere effort of Maulana Masoodi are forgotten.

**POST MODERN ASPECTS IN THE CALCUTTA CHROMOSOME**

Ghosh’s fourth novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome* may be termed as science fiction. Though the genre is different, Ghosh’s pre-occupation remains the same. Here, too, the concepts like the revision of history, alienation and quest for truth are given prime importance. The history of the nineteenth century research in malaria done by Sir Ronald Ross, the scientist is delineated. Murugan endorses that there exists a secret history in this angle of the medical field. He finds out the hidden truth about the other mind which deals with a theory that some other person has interfered in resolving the mystery of the material parasite.

*The Calcutta chromosome* is structured around the quest of the findings of the truth and the idea of the early history and the career of Ross and the belief in the mind of Ross. The mystery magnifies its spell when Murugan says, “You know all about matter and anti-matter right? …..and Christ and anti-Christ and soon? Now, let us say there was something like science and counter-science?” Thinking of it in the abstract, wouldn’t you say that the first principle of a functioning counter-science would have to be secrecy (TCC 88).
Murugan believes that there would be a secret procedure. The main aim of the center science is to cut off communication, to keep everything in secrecy. Murugan explains the argument so that they could make autar understand its very essence “may be believed that to know something is to change it, therefore in knowing something, you’ve already chanted what you think you know so you don’t really know it all. You know its history” (88). Ghosh postulates that, at times science holds reality, about what is known as knowledge, but on the other hand, there’s also an articulated truth. Science is mixed up with philosophy, literary theory and fantasy.

Murugan is very much convinced that the extensive research of Ross is only a branch of study of Mangala Bibi. In 1897 Mangala’s research ran a dead end. After a series of attempts, Mangala wants Ross to figure out the correct break through as, She actually believed that the link between bug and the human mind was so close that, once it’s life cycle had been figured out, it would spontaneously mutate in directions that would take her work to the next step (208).

Murugan discovers that Mangala has hampered Ross’s research Mangala has been trying to find out a “technology for interpersonal transference”……(so that) information could be transmitted chromosomally from body to body” (90-91). In the view point of Murugan, the relationship of Mangala’s counter science and that of Ross is the one“Between matter and antimatter rooms and anti-rooms Christ and anti -Christ and so on” (88).
Ross becomes a tool in the hand of Mangala. Mangala is the resurrection of a female power and Laakham is her support. One would argue what Murugan suggests: “He was the point man for whoever was the real brain behind the scheme” (74). Manga. Bibi, as she is beyond time, is depicted through different ages in innumerable bodies. She is the supreme power in the affirmation of the authority to control the human body in all generation.

Mangala also finds a way of transmitting the chromosome to the piteous and secretly starts treating the patients of syphilis in Cunningham laboratory and her treatment often ends in personality disorder. She has successfully discovered that the disorder is just transposition: a cross-over of randomly assorted personality traits, from the malaria dour to the recipient (206) through pigeons. It is a sort of freak chromosome as it goes way away from the normal modes of detection. It is found only in the Refrain, the non-generating tissue that could be transmitted only through malaria. It is this DNA Carrier, which Murugan labels as: “the Calcutta Chromosome – a biological expression of human traits that is neither inherited from the immediate gene pool, nor transmitted into it” (207). The society of secrecy—Mangala and others are successful in the ultimate transcendence of nature in nutshell immortality, through a series of inter-personal transference of human traits. As Murugan explains to Antar: ‘Just think a fresh start; when your body fails you, you leave it, you migrate or at least are matching symptoms logy of yourself. “You begin all over again, another body, another beginning……….a technology that lets you improve on yourself in your next in connation” (91-92).
Mangala is an example of powerful presence. Farley observes that the woman mangala was seated at the far end of the room, on a low divan, enthroned...on the floor....clustered around the woman’s feet, were some half dozen people in various orders of supplication, some touching her feet, others baying prostate” (125). Mangalabibi is the destroyer. The ideology of motherhood is evident through the novel. Murugan celebrates the symbol of motherhood through Mangala.

An illiterate like Mangala questions the very notion of science and discovers divine notions. She has real talent, which makes her come up in life. She does not require a study in Zoology regarding the difference between culet and Anopheles. She has a real skill and: “she wasn’t carrying a shit-load theory in her head, she didn’t have to write papers or construct proofs” (203). She could even cure the last of dementia through malaria. She has come to know what scientists could defect only later. “every major VD hospitals had its little incubating room where it grew a flock of anopheles. Think about it: hospitals cultivating disease” (205). This is the only instance known to medicine of using one disease to fight another. The decision turns down the division between conscious and unconscious, the same and the insane modes of the human mind. Here, Ghosh tries to exemplify that science not only belongs to the educated, but, also to the uneducated, Ross could only discover the malaria parasite. But Mangala bibi finds out a method for the transmigration of souls.

Urmila is a typical middle class woman who sacrifices her life for the sake of her family. She struggles in her life and is considered a symbol of mother kali. Her re-incarnation is soon to take place. She never knows her new powers. Murugan too pleads with her to save him from the impending madness: “Don’t
forget me”, he begged her, “If you have it in your power to change the script, write me in. Please” (254). The mother figure who is further celebrated as women who is considered to be moved for man achieves a standard of self respect.

The real woman exists even in the story of Phulboni. Murugan’s fantasy comes to reality when he sees a series of images in Kalighat. A small girl informs them that, “Today is the last day of the Puja of Mangala bibi. Baba says that tonight Mangala-bibi is going to enter a new body” (194). Murugan’s theory is correct and he could definitely come across the end of the quest. But, this end is just another beginning. Thus, Murugan’s search for truth in finding out the real brain behind the discovery of malaria parasite is achieved. The Hindus (Murugan, Sonali, Urmila and Tara), Muslims (Aktar and Phulboni), the Christians (Mrs. Aratounian and Countess Pongrazy) accept the concept of the transmission of the souls. Aktar can view semblances between Tara and Urmila, Maria and Sonali. He could hear the voice telling “Keep watching; we are here, we are all with you …………we “I’ll help you across” (256) Mangala bibi displaces Ross as the discoverer of the malarial parasite. She helps others achieve immortality, and, thereby, becomes a symbol of motherhood.

Ghosh’s Calcutta Chromosome resembles Samuel Backett’s Waiting For Godot, an absurd drama. Like the latter, the farmer too attaches a tag of silence and sets about a quest for a new world. Both are circular in form where the past is co-existent with the present.

Sayid Murad Hussain- Phulboni is a famous writer and the National Award winner like Urmila, he too disappears after performing his role. He voices Ghosh’s inner voice; “Silence herself. I see the signs of her presence everywhere I go, in
images, words, glances, but only signs, nothing more………By every means I have sought her, the ever-elusive mistress of the unspoken, wooed her, begged to join the circle of her initiates” (189).

The term ‘secrecy’ and ‘secrets’ dwell deep in the novel. Phulboni is the chief exponent of this trademark of silence. They begin with the idea that knowing something is changing it, in a nutshell “ordering mutation. Secrecy is the main motive and silence is their religion. However odd it may sound, these people have developed; “the most revolutionary medical technology of all time” (90). They were in fact very much ahead of Ross’ s contemporaries such as Julius Von Wager. Jauregg, who had won the Nobel Prize for the seed of an idea that artificially induced malaria, could cure syphilis, but, in a time, more remote, in 1890, the secret team, which comprised Mangala, had already been successful in this field of research. Mangala bibi had in fact been a victim of hereditary symphilis D.D. Cunningham had found her at the seldah station and had trained her as a lab assistant. She is so successful, that even Murugan believes that Mangala is a genius and she is ahead of Cunningham in resolving the puzzle and has a sort of initiative power regarding the solution for the problem of Malaria. She uses a different combination of the wagner-Jauregy process and finds out that Malaria has spread through a different channel- the brain, malaria is likely to cause “a kind of spirit possession” (205) through a different chromosome. It is more hallucinating and powerful than a stimulating drug. This is one of the major reasons why the primitive people have always thought of Malaria as the passion of the spirit. This knowledge is concealed by the secret society. Phulboni knows that Calcutta is the hub of many secret. The secret comprises the story of Ross.
Phulboni gives life to Laakhan through the depiction of Laakhan in his stories. Mrs. Aratounian has a firm opinion that these are nothing but messages to someone to remind them of something—a kind of shared secret. Laakhan, hence, portrayed as the rich guardian of secrets. But, Phulboni wants secrets. His stories provide the key materials and they were published in an obscure little magazine and were never published and everyone forgot about them. Mangala bibi is restorer of the branch of counter-science:

Wouldn’t you say that the first principle of a functioning counter-science would have to be secrecy? The way I see it, it wouldn’t just have to be secretive about what it did (it couldn’t hope to beat the scientists at that game any way); it would also have to be secretive in which it did. It would also have to be secretive in which it did. It would have to use secrecy as a technique or procedure (88).

Ghosh also depicts the teaching of valentines, the philosopher Alexandria who belongs to the early Christian era. In the cosmology of valentine, the ultimate concepts are abyss and silence, the one represents male and the other female one representing the mind and the other portraying the soul. Always and silence are not the same, yet both indulge in a Quest to reach the beyond. Ghosh seems to conclude that the knowledge which is unspoken or unwritten is concealed and hence a secret. The secret society conceals the idea of the technological transmigration of souls and it remains hidden forever.

Every character in The Calcutta Chromosome is alienated from the immediate surroundings. Aktar hails from Egypt and is a Coptic Christian who is an orphan and a widower, working alone from home in New York and Murugan.
is a Hindu and a South Indian, Who is brought up in Calcutta, calls himself
Morgan. He is divorcee and his life is very lonely as a researcher with life watch.
Urmila Roy and Sonali Das, the Bengali Hindus of Calcutta are as alone as
Murugan and Aktar. Urmila searches for the significance of Laakhan’s story and
Sonali searches its meaning. Sonali’s up-bringing and upper class life style
leaves her alone. Urmila is exploited at home. She is accepted as a family
member only due to her money. Phulboni too is immersed in the Mistress of
silence that he vows to forget family life.

The interrogation of the history of the discovery of the malaria parasite is
carried out. Murugan rewrites history by finding the other mind, behind the
discovery. The other post modern traits like metaphors, alienation shape. The
Calcutta chromosome Every man is found to be solitary in the game of life.

Amitav Ghosh in The Calcutta Chromosome has specified the Berggonian
theory of duration which states that one cannot know the history of the past or the
future due to the undivided present. There is no possibility of separating the past,
present or the future. The time frame sets in from the later part of the nineteenth
century to the unknown time of the future. The novel starts in present tense for
Aktar. However for the readers, the novel begins at a date in the future, and then
shifts to past and then moves forward and backward in time. In remembering the
past, the characters yearn for the ancient past and not the recent past. The
mosquito day, 20th August, is in future. Aktar now remembers his past when he
was a little boy in Egypt, towards a very different aspect of time and space. The
phrase, “159 years ago” sets the tone of the novel because memory plays a vital
role. The events are often remembered in minute details like the visit of the
Hungarian archeologist: “with the skin that was as brittle as a dried eucalyptus leaf” (5) or the “tactile nostalgia” (8) that he feels when: “tactile nostalgia” (8) that he feels when: “recalling the feel of those chains” (8).

The naturalist writers have distinguished between time and space. The Bloomsburg group of novelists especially Virginia wolf, has objected to this compartmentalization. Space is certainly another word portrayed to manifest time. For instance, Ghosh notes: “Aktar recalled a meeting, a conversation somewhere, years ago, sitting across a table but just a memory was beginning to take on an outline, it dissolved” (18). The unspecified image adds to the point of co-joining the three lineages of time. It leads to a combination of time and space where various. Disconnected events from one’s life are combined to give a whole picture. The plot shifts from Aktar to Murugan, Sonali, Urmila and finally to Romen Haldar, Memory mingles and merges. Murugan’s memories shift backward in duration to the late nineteenth century where Ross and Lutchman’s move towards Secunderabad, Calcutta and Austria.

The dangling historic shifts in time are in time with the post modern theory. The novel starts in future but soon the readers are taken to 21st August 1995, when Murugan landed in Calcutta on 20th August 1995. Thus, Ghosh move between the recent past and the antique past. From 1995, Ghosh moves to 1895”98. Aktar is a clerk in New York and Ava works in a firm called Zhasa, the international water councils continental command centre, for Asia. Aktar finds out from the grave records about Murugan’s disappearance from August 21 1995. He is last seen in Calcutta, India. Aktar gathers information about the life of Murugan in U.S and then traces him on the Computer. Here, Ghosh surfs time and channelize space.
Murugan is found missing in suspicious circumstances. He tries his hand in his life’s mission: “the early history of malaria research” (30). He goes on to find the mysteries of Ronald Ross in the late nineteenth century. Murugan is used by Ghosh as the connecting link between the open and the secret facts of the narrative. The change in the narration from 1989-1995 forms the main core of the novel. Murugan researches about the British poet, novelist and scientist Ronald Ross and fills the various gaps in the life of Ross. He knows about Ross’s birth in India in 1857 and in 1906 when he was awarded the Novel prize for his work on the life cycle of malarial parasite. His article titled “An alternative interpretation of late 19th Century Malaria Research. Is there a secret History?” (31). However, unfortunately, he is considered an egocentric. In 1989 he is in contact with the history of science society and his view on the other mind is rejected. The plot then shifts to 1995, where Murugan is busy interpreting Ross’s discoveries in Calcutta. He wants to reach Calcutta before August 20, which is named as world “Mosquito Day” (32) by Ross. August appears, disappears and reappears as it attaches its significance to the world mosquito day whether it is 1989 or 1995.

Similar events happen repeatedly in different time limits of space. The spirit of Lutchman is seen by Murugan who goes to P.G. Hospital and he is chased by a boy spirit of Lutchman. He is again spotted as he is seen with the toy of Mangala in hand. Therefore, Murugan concludes that Mangala is considered a Goddess who could cure syphilis. Murugan also meets Mrs. Arataounian and Roman Halder. He cleverly finds them to be Mangala and Lutchman and connects the link between them as the spirit of Lutchman. Murugan now combines the elements of the unknown when he sees the same person wearing a T-shirt and a missing tooth in the newly constructed hotel of Romen Halder. As the progression
of the narrative takes place, a glimpse of Sonali is given as she owns a flat with a servant boy to care for it. The servant of Sonali is none other than the boy who had chased Murugan.

The narrative, then, shifts to the past where the secret story of Phulboni is revealed by Sonali. Urmila, too, joins the hand of secret. Society through the incident of the fish seller as Roman Halder is the reincarnation of the Laakhan in the twentieth century. The chain of incidents dealing with the occult becomes credible because they take place in a century like India, which believes in the transmigration of souls. Murugan’s experience in the quest house is exactly a hallucination by which he sees the exact manner of the discovery of Ross. He cites the test – tube and could connect DD Cunningham, Mangala, Laakhan, Urmila, Mrs. A. Ratounian and Ronald Ross. The people of the erstwhile generation and today’s generation are connected. Thus, Ghosh uses Murugan as a device of time and space connecting people and events.

The newspaper has the title ‘The colonial service Gayatte’. The date is twelfth of January 1898, Calcutta and it has useful information: “Leave approved for surgeon colonel D.D Cunningham, presidency General hospital, Calcutta, January 10-15” (148). There is the logo: “south” “Western Railways”, January 10, 1898, passenger list, compartment -8 and the name is CC.Dunn Esq” (148). The newspaper” “The colonial service Gayatte, 30 January, 1898 has the information. The public is notified that surgeon colonel D.D Cunningham is currently on leaving pending his retirement. He will be replaced by “Surgeon” Major Ronald Ross “of the Indian Medical Service” (149). The dates January 10-15 offer a major insight into the life of D.D. Cunningham where the past and the present are co-mingled.
Murugan is of the opinion that the passage of information is a sort of trick to make him find out the truth. Urmila comprehends the mystery and Murugan believes that they are a part of the large scheme though their role may be small and:

“This guys aren’t going anywhere in a hurry. They have been planning carefully, selected clues for the last century or so, and every once in a while for reasons of their own, they choose to draw them to the attention of a couple of chosen people. Just because you and I happen to have been included doesn’t mean they’ve closed the list” (180). This type of narration is to inform the readers indirectly about the plot which offers the key to the mystery.

The experience of Sonali and the anti-climax are related. The lady Mrs. Aratounian is the prime force who leads the ritual: “the time is here, pray that all goes well for our Laakhan, once again” (140) when Sonali clearly sees. The body, her consciousness is cost as rituals are performed on the body of Roman Halder. The novel has an anti-climax. “Today is the last day of the puja of Mangala-bibi. Baba says tonight Mangala bibi is going to outer a new body” (194) which is preceded by a mystery. The ritual would be the same but this time it would be carried on the body of Mrs. Arotounian. This replay of transmigration is used as a technical device by Ghosh to connect the past and the present.

Yet Mangala bibi has a bigger gust in her mind, which is: “The Calcutta chromosome” (203) that justify the title of the novel. No one can easily find out the special chromosome as:
One of the reasons why Calcutta chromosome’ can’t be found by normal methods is because……this is a chromosome that is not transmitted from generation to generation by sexual reproduction. It develops out of a process of recombination and is particular to every individual. That’s why it’s only found in certain kinds of cells it simply isn’t present in regenerative tissue. It only exists in non generative tissue in other words, the brain (206-7).

The time shifts to future in conjunction to dates and places, where Aktar and Murugan discuss Ross’ s life. Ross is motivated by his father to become a doctor. He settles down in India with his wife and kids. Ross is motivated by his father to become a doctor. He settles down in India with his wife and kids. Ross is bitten by the: Scientific bug” (33) and his mind awakes to the research of the malarial parasite. He is far ahead of the Italian scientists Laveran, Koch and Grassi. Ross achieves success by moving in the forefront of US, Germany, France and Russia. This is the official story behind Ross’ s discovery. Murugan argues that the idea of artificially induced Malaria curing syphilis has already been discovered by Mangala bibi. Murugan speaks of Ross’ s meeting with Patrick Manson in 1895 from whom Ross gets the project of finding the cure for malaria. In 1840, Mekel finds out the characteristics of Malaria. In 1880 Laveran, in 1886 Camil Galdi had all met with failure. Ross’ s research takes him to Madras, secunderabad and then to Begumpette. On May, 1895 Ross examines Abdul Khadir who is diagnosed with Malaria. This help Ross in his discovery, But the truth is different. On May 25, 1895 Lutchman is diagnosed as the second case. He is a government servant. Murugan believes that Lutchman has interfered purposefully to fulfill the intentions
of Ross. It is Lutchman who guides Ross for his first break through on August 1897. Murugan replies to Aktar:

‘I’ve got some leads and too many may be as I see it, he was all over the map changing names, switching identities.” (74) Here, the years may be different but the action carried out is the same research on malaria.

Grigson points out the exact region from where Lutchman hails which ends up as a danger to his life. Murugan’s mind is fully concentrated on the Calcutta chromosome and on the experiment in the lab by Farley and Mangala bibi. Murugan too switches the experiments conducted by Farley in the laboratory of D.D. Cunningham. Farley daubs Lutchman and Mangala (the washerman). He sees the activity of Mangala treating the patient of syphilitic dementia with a breed of pigeons containing the laterality when, farely wants to know the secret of Lanvern’s rods, he is tempted by Lutchman to visit Renupur which takes away his life Thus, Ghosh has recreated the nineteenth and twentieth century narratives and accentuates a similarity in the events. K.K. Parek points out: He presents a picture of how the 19the century characters are implanted in the 20the century by the spirit, as Ghosh calls it, the Calcutta chromosome (Std. In Bhah, Fiction 213), the science of Ross and the center science of the secret society are juxtaposed by Murugan to find out which one is the supreme. The above incident is clearly connected to 1995 where Murugan leaves his baggage at the Robinson street guest house. Murugan sees the memorial of the British scientist in which he reads the inscription that Ronal Ross had discovered the cause for Malaria in 1989.

The Calcutta chromosome has in it several cuts – diagonal and spherical. This flash back constructs the whole narrative. Murugan while dictating Ross’s
story to Aktar says, “I will turn a few page for you; but remember it was you who asked. It’s your funeral” (58).

The physical and the psychological time is brought into focus Murugan has an instance of nothing faces around the bed, behind the mosquito net. At the same time, Sonali sees the magical attempts of Mangala bibi’s illusion and imagination.

Save the complexity the images of Phulboni’s description of Lakhan and Aktar’s visualization help to comprehend the plot. The exact space where the characters are located such as Aktar’s in New York, Calcutta’s robin street and lower circular road help the reader in fixing the scene. The whole novel is structured around the theme of immortality and a technology for transmigration of souls. The reference to Mangala Bibi and the secret cult is often repeated in the novel.

The shifts of time from 1995 to 1895-98, then to 1989-1995 reconstruct the mystery of the Calcutta chromosome. Every part of the narration brings the reader a step closer in resolving the puzzle. Ghosh employs the biophysical, metaphysical, geo-physical and transtemporal images to create the authenticity of the logic, illogic matter and anti-matter.

POST-MODERN ELEMENTS IN THE HUNGRY TIDE

The next novel taken for analysis is The Hungry Tide which brings out the failure of the idealistic concepts of Nirmal, Nilima, Kusum and Kanai. Nirmal’s totalitarian values of communism leave him a loser in every state of life. He runs away from communism all his life, but it never leaves him. The event of partition
separate Nirmal from his family and he decides to settle down in Calcutta as a left side intellectual and a writer of Promise. Nirmal lands in Jail as he is suspected of his relationship with the communist in urgency in Burma, as he had played a small part in the conference as a guide for Burmese delegation. Nirmal fails in his struggle to uphold the community principles as his detention in ail leaves a profound effect on his mind Nirmal could neither rise out of bled nor go to college. Unlike those revolutionaries who possess a strong mind, Nirmal’ s will is weakened after undergoing the punishment.

Nirmal conceders Kusum as the muse of revolutionary ideals, such Unhistorical individual apparently have a capacity to change the lives of those who meet them, since they view the world through quite different eyes. Nirmal is in dilemma as he feels. ‘I felt myself from between my wife and the woman who had become the muse I’ d never had between the quite persistence of everyday change and the heady excitement of revolution between prose and poetry” (216).

Although the squatters of Maorichjhapi did not envision themselves as revolutionaries, the poet Nirmal finds them to be extra ordinary filling the draws of Daniel Hamilton. Nirmal is considered as a person who is filled with the haye of poetry and fuzzy ideas about the country with the fats that he had gathered over the years. But, Nirmal simply sees signs of death everywhere as he thinks that it would be easy to submerge the tide country with a mini-scale change in the level of the sea. Nirmal considers Morichjhapi a vale of tears and fails to write anything to equal the power of their longing and dreams. He believes that the badh is not just the quadrate of human life but also of abacus, archive and library of stories Nirmal cautions Fokir, ‘My friend not only could it happen again it will happen
again. A storm will come, the water will rise and the badh will succumb, in part or in whole, “It is only a matter of time” (205). Nirmal could not succeed in his dream of becoming a writer as he was waiting for the ideal time, which never came to him except for his memories in the diary.

Advanced as Nirmal is in years, he can still empathize and imagine the world through a pair of eyes very different from his own. Nirmal finds himself identifying with the refugees, who refuse to budge and who shout in unison to the oppressive police force, “who are we? We are the dispossessed” (254). Nirmal first responds by acknowledging the universal yearning of the wretched of earth, the milieus without a home as: “who indeed, are we? Where do we belong? ” (254). But Nirmal the longer he listens, the more he hears the question as one arising not only from the poor, but from all humanity and, indeed from himself as Nirmal puts forth: “It was as if I were hearing the deepest uncertainties of heart being spoken to the rivers and tides. Who was I? Where did I belong? In Kolkata or in the tide country? In India or across the border? In prose or in poetry?” (254).

Nirmal recognizes how alienated he has been through most of his life, and how appropriate he feels how to see the world through the eyes of these desperately poor refuges and the uneducated Kusum. Nirmal’s only successful contribution in his life is the building of the cyclone – prone shelter at the top of the hospital, which saves the lives of thousand after his death.

Nirmal leaves a diary addressed to Kanai for he feels that his generation will be richer in ideals, less cynical and selfish than his generation. Nirmal loses his balance of mind in the struggle of Morichjhapi and dies a pathetic death. His life is a life that is lived through poetry. Nirmal has a strange combination of Marxism
and poetry. He is a historic materialist who finds everything interconnected – the sky, the trees, weather, people, poetry, science and nature. Nirmal’s capability to hunt down the facts is like a magic that collects shiny objects and brings them together. Nirmal’s struggle leads him to death and it happens before he has realized and proved his capability to uphold his once enshrined communist principles.

Like Nirmal, Nilima could not bear to see the pathetic situation of Lusibari people. Her heart aches to see the sufferings to widows, their abuse and exploitation. She decides to act the tiny seeding of an idea to buy household provisions by crossing the river and to sell those items in Lusibari forms the foundation of the women’s union and ultimately the Badabon Trust. Nilima succeeds in her struggle to find a resource for windows and eventually to the people of Lusibari as the union grows in medical and agricultural lines and the Badabon Development trust is formed. In the late 1970’s, its hospitals, workshop, and office are built bringing a ray of hope in the life of the tide country people. Nilima dedicates her life to the betterment of the lives of the people and has sacrificed her creature comforts to remove the dire poverty of the people of Lusibari. Nilima’s service wins her the highest honour from the president but Nilima refuses to help Kusum for the sake of protecting the hospital. Nilima lets out her feelings to Nirmal thus; “……this hospital and if you ask me what I will do to protect it, let me tell you, I will fight for it like a mother fights to protect her children. The hospital’s future, its welfare “they mean everything to me, and I will not endanger them” (214). Nilima’s recognition is not accepted by Nirmal as she refuses to help Kusum.
Nirmal and Nilima live side by side for years but are unknowns to each other, divided by different dreams of their lives, and by a lack of respect for the other’s way of embracing life. Nirmal, Nilima succeeds in her social cause, but she pays the price by sacrificing her personal life. Nilima echoes her feelings.

It was for your sake that we first came to Lusibari….There was nothing for me here, no family, friends or a job. But over the years. I’ve built something…..All these years, you have sat back and judged me……for the challenge of making a few little things a little better in one small place is enough. That place for me is Lusibari. I’ve given it everything ….it’s helped people; it’s made a few people’s lives a little better (387).

Kusum with her humble background tries to achieve what people in higher Social Street cannot dream to achieve. Kusum struggles to cope with the hardships of the police and gangsters. She keeps hope and courage and says, It’s just a question of keeping faith” (277). In her resolve, Kusum is affected physically. Her bones protrude from her skin and she is too weak to rise from her mat. Kusum starves herself to feed Fokir. She eats Jadu Paleng, an unpalatable food and suffers from severe dysentery. In spite of Kusum’s physical weakness, she takes the essential provisions for rationing to the ward leader. Kusum could bear the physical torture but not the emotional one. Kusum depicts her feelings thus

The worst part was not the hunger or the thirst. It was to sit here, helpless, and listen to the police men making their announcements .....our lives, our existence was worth less than dirt or dust. This island…..is a part of a reserve forest…this whole world has become a place of animals, and our fault, our crime was that we were just human being, trying to live as human beings always have, from the water and the soil. (261-62)
Kusum dies in her struggle but she embraces it cheerfully. She is remarked as a jhor-full of spirit, by the people with her great spirit, courage and determination, Kusum serves as a muse to Nirmal, the reminder of his old ideologies.

Ghosh uses the knowledge of Fokir and his native wisdom to mock at the knowledge acquired through books and degrees, Piya admires Fokir’s felicity that he is so close to nature and sees his mother’s face everywhere in the river. Fokir’s respect and love for his mother even in a dream captivates Piya and Kanai. Fokir recollects. “How can I forget her? Her face is everywhere” (319). Kanai now realizes why Moyna feels so deeply tied to her husband: “There was something about him that was utterly unformed, and it was this very quality that drew her to him” (319). Piya starts to love Fokir without language. Piya feels that the time she has spent with Fokir is the most exciting part of her life. But she is soon disillusioned after coming to terms with reality that Fokir is different from what she thinks. He is more compassionate about human beings than to animals and to nature. Fokir’s bond with nature is due to his mother Kusum. Piya feels that he is the son of nature, but he turns out to be a normal human being who so more concerned about the human beings than the river and the animal. Fokir struggles pathetically with cyclone in order to save Piya and dies in his attempt like Tridib in *The Shadow Lines* that dies in order to uphold the feeling of pity.

Moyna is both ambitious and bright. She dares to fulfiller dreams of becoming a nurse even after her marriage. Nilima praises Moyna thus: ‘But the remarkable thing is that Moyna hasn’t abandoned her dreams, she’s so determined to qualify as a nurse that she made Fokir move to Lusibari while she
was in trainin” (129). Moyna also wants to educate her son Tutual and loves her husband Fokir deeply. Moyna struggles to get educated and to help her husband. Had she remained at home, without education, she would have understood the love of her husband. But, the ambitious Moyna leads Fokir to his death by ordering her husband to go on an expedition accompanying Piya.

Moyna loses her husband in the storm but hopes that she can struggle with the help of her education and survive. Fokir’s loss is indeed, irreplaceable for Moyna as Ghosh describes: “Moyna’s grief was all too plainly visible in the readiness of her eyes” (394). Moyna embodies practicality, a trait with which she will live on and see her son Tutual through.

Kanai and Piya enter into an experience that might be read as a quest for their souls—a journey in which their minds, finely tuned, are no longer adequate in the face of sun darbans. Kanai is forty-two and single, a resident of New Delhi who is a translator and interpreter by profession. In fact he makes one person understood by another, and yet he does not understand himself.

In his youth, Kanai had given up the dream of becoming a poet for the sake of money and comfort. The youth of today often for sake their dream for the sake of material comforts. Kanai is one of those men who like to think of being irresistible to the other sex. Piya thinks that Kanai’s values are at bottom egalitarian, liberal and meretricious. Kanai understands Piya but he is not able to understand his life, as monetary benefits are very difficult to avoid he is so impressed by the ideals of Piya as:
“Her ambition was so plainly written on her face that Kanai was assailed by the kind of tenderness we sometimes feel when we come across……the desires people spend lifetimes in learning to dissimulate” (135).

Kanai’s practicality of the consumerist mind makes him preach Piya that there is nothing common between her and Fokir. Kanai advises Piya: “He’s a fisherman and you’re a scientist. What you see as fond he sees as food……yours from different worlds, different planets” (268). Kanai succeeds in making Piya understand the difference between Piya and Fokir during the incident of the mob burning the tiger. Kanai is a typical Indian who cannot feel the pain of animals but only of human beings. It is surprising that a soul like Kanai could feel the pain and offering of an animal but not of human beings. He pities the poorest of poor who are brutally killed by tigers but these killings are never reported officially.

Kanai succeeds in his struggle to become a chastened man because of an incident in the forest, which is accentuated by Fokir, which leaves him a moment near death thereby making them realize his self. The pull of sundarbans makes him return to Kolkata. Kanai is a remarkably altered man. Kanai reveals how he has successfully learnt about himself and to care for others as Ghosh says.

What does it mean when a man wants to give a woman something that is beyond price – a gift that she, and perhaps only she, will ever truly value?

… … at Garjontola. I learnt how little I know of myself and of the world…. I have never before known what it was to ensure someone’s happiness, even if it comes at the cost of my own (353).
Piya the cytologist comes to Sundarbans with the specific purpose of studying the dolphins. Owing to the foreign looks of Piya, she is cheated of money and is humiliated and finally thrown overboard. Piya no longer speaks Bangla, though she did as a child, her hair is cropped short and she carries a backpack with equipment such as a handhold monitor, global positioning system, binoculars, data sheets, display cards of Gangetic Dolphin and Irrawady dolphin. Piya is known as the little East Indian girl, a kind of departmental mascot at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Gurnah opines: “Piya's simultaneous foreignness and Indianans makes it harder for people to read her, but also make it easier for them to exploit her through reference to and comparison with Piya, choices available to Indian women are debated” (21). In India, Piya is considered a foreigner and abroad she is considered an Indian. She is neither an Indian nor a foreigner but just remains a cytologist.

Piya was shrouded in loneliness in her childhood and does so in the present too but bravely copes with it. Her parents live a life without live and her mother dies of cervical cancer. Her present situation where she has been drawn to field biology as much for the life it offers for intellectual contentment, she prefers to avoid human relationship because the work of a cytologist allows her to be on her own to have no fixed address, to be far from the familiar community. Her love experience and the subsequent betrayal disillusions Piya. But, she struggles continuously to be a professional cytologist. Kanai is inspired by Piya as he feels: ‘desire was incarnated in the woman who was standing before him n how, a language made flesh” (269).
Piya feeling for Fokir remains as an undercurrent to her passion for research. The intensity of Piya’s quest about dolphin’s habitat is such that she finds herself at the brink of major breakthrough hypotheses of stunning elegance and economy. Piya knows that the research would be an arduous process but even if she completes a part of it, she will make strides in research work. It is not sure whether she will complete her work but she is so confident that it is fine piece of descriptive science as any. It would be enough, as an abibi for a life, it would do, she would not need to apologies for how she had spent her time on this earth (127).

Piya is obvious of danger in which she puts everyone by romantically standing before a force of nature. Piya remarks: It was like something from some other time before recorded history. I feel I’ll never be able to get my mind around the horror (300). It is an orony that Piya is afraid and shuts her eyes as she prays: “Whatever happens, let it be on land Not the water, please Not the water” (372). Piya struggle in the storm and it is Fokir who forgoes his life and saves her. Piya is unable to do anything for Fokir except hold up a bottle of water to his lips.

Piya recovers from the state of shock and struggles hopefully to reconstruct her life. She collects money enough for Moyna and Trutul, for Tutul’s college education and a house by sending a chain better about Fokir. Piya thinks of a project under the sponsorship of the Badabon trust in consultation with the fisherman, as she is liable to stay in India indefinitely and for a permit to do research. She has also other ideas such as……opening a databank as a small office on the upper floor Guest house with Moyna working in it learning Bengali from Moyna in return of Piya teaching her English. Piya hams the project after
Fokir, as it is his data in the GPS monitor which would be crucial for the project. Piya struggles, succeeds and learns her lessons. She denies the possibility of finding a partner, or settling down in life as she says, “for me, home is where the orcaella are: so there’s no reason why this couldn’t be it” (400).

Tide portrays the struggle of the characters, which reverses their Idealistic values. Ghosh portrays sundarban which is the location of tides and not that of Bangladesh. Human life is a changeable as the flow of water. The sundarban does not refers to a tree, but a tide bhata the inhabitants of the island call it as Bhathirdesh, Ghosh further deconstructs the concept of space as he describes the frame of the sundarbans. The immense archipelago of island is about three hundred kilometer from the Hooghly river in West Bengal to the sheer of Meghna in Bangladesh. The islands are in thousands but are being washed away or recorded in history or exist as immense land or sandbars. The river channels create a terrain where the boundaries between land and water are always mutating and unpredictable, when there channels meet, Ghosh depicts the Mohana the water stretches to the far edges of the landscape and the forest dwindles into a distant rumor off land, echoing back from the horizon. The concept of space gets deconstructed by nature itself in sundarbans and Ghosh explains this feature in the novel to assert the impermanence of the world.

Lusibari is the most southerly of the inhabited islands of the tide country which is about two kilometers and is shaped like a conch shell. Kanai describe the Mohana thus:

“Once the tide turned everything would disappear the rising water of the Mohana would swallow up the Jungle as well as the rivers and their openings. It was not
for the tips of a few kewra trees you would think you were burying at a body of water that reached beyond the horizon” (36”37).

“The unpredictability of lives in Sundarban is brought out in *The Hungry Tide*. The chief protagonist, the oceanic tide, in all its hunger, furiously consumes all patterns of life with a gigantic leap in the form of cyclones and scrums. The lives of the tide country people of sundarbans exist beyond the received notions of language stereotypical notion of spoken romance and the data on dolphins, but the jowar, or the flood also exists side by side consuming several life form in its fury. Sagarika Ghosh opines. “The tide is the tide of history, a tide of emotion, a tide of rediscovery and an ancient tide of love that overwhelsms the convention of the human world” (5).

The Bay of Bengal is one of the most active cyclonic regions in the world” two of the most devastating hurricanes in human history visited upon the coast of Bengal in 1737 and in 1970. Each of these cyclones claimed over 300,000 lives, till which was higher than Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined. The toll might have been higher in the case of Sundarbans if not for the mangroves. Nirmal equips Kanai and indirectly, the reader twitches the knowledge of the tide country. In 1970s as the cyclone ravaged the tide country Sundarbans only a few people could save themselves and their kin by clinging onto the tree. When the cyclone silenced itself, the problem of hunger, disease, corpses, dead fish, livestock, loss of lives and livelihood crept up and the fitful memory of the cyclone would last through a second lifetime. The floods in Mumbai, Tsunami in the coastal areas of Tamilnadu, Andaman and Nicobar Islands echo the suffering of the people especially in the coastal line such as Nagapattinam, Kanyakumari, and Cuddalore. When nature plays spoilsport, it is the people close to nature who suffer a lot and even lose their lives in their struggle to cope with natural calamities.
The tide country people’s life is shadowed with such calamities and their living is attuned to such forces. Fokir’s grandfather saves himself luckily but the same fate doesn’t await Fokir as he loses his life at the end of the novel. More than half of the population on the island of Sundarbans earns a living by fishing. The tide country girls are brought up by Illa that they would be widowed in their twenties, if lucky at thirties and when their husbands have gone fishing, they would remove all symbols of marriage removing the symbols of marriage result in the mental trauma of the people who have inhabited the island of Sundarbans. The tide country people have to live in the fear and shadow of death as Ghosh pictures: “When the men folk went fishing it was the custom for their wives to change into garments of widowhood…..it was as though they were trying to hold misfortune at bay by living through it over and ever again” (80). The supremacy of life is brought out clearly by their rich present is lived in anticipation of future contingencies.

Space in Sundarbans is replete with danger as Nilima explains the dangers of Sundarbans. The Sundarbans has the largest mangrove forest in the world, the habitat of man eating Royal Bengal Tigers, huge salt water crocodiles, species of snake, crabs, Irrawaddy and Genetic dolphins which are rare. Its forest has a reputation for permanent human settlement. Cyclones and tidal waves periodically rise out of Bay of Bengal and ravage the island of Sundarbans. Ghosh concludes: “There is no prettiness here to invite the stranger in” (8), and every year dozens of people are killed by tigers, snakes, crocodiles and tidal waves.

The man-animal conflict is clearly brought out by Ghosh. Both the sides of the issue are presented and he doesn’t give any solution. The attacks by the tigers are detailed. About 4,218 people were killed in 1860-1866 as per the data compiled by J. Fayers, the English naturalist, who coined the phrase: “Royal Bengal Tiger” (240). The tide country’s tiger attacked human beings under
peculiar condition of tidal ecology; in which large part of forests were subjected to daily submersions. The submersions raised the animals threshold of aggression by whishing away their scent markings and confusing their territorial instincts. Nothing could stop the attack, even the theories such as fresh water, electric shock and pavlor’ s conditioning went in vain. Many of the islands of Sundarbans were depopulated in order to make room for preserving the tigers. It’ s a place where tigers killed hundreds of people a year, but since they’ re a protected species, killing a tiger that was preying on village brings I the government authorities to met out punishment. Ghosh narrates man’ s callus nature in another incident, as the tiger is burnt alive when it seeks to enter human habitation. Here, man reigns supreme. In the cruel act of Morichijhari, when people are killed brutally in order to save the tiger habitation, animal reigns as the supreme force. Kanai shows pity for human beings while Piya is more passionate and concerned about animals. She is even ready to go to person for the sake of Orcailla.

Further, the island of Lusibari supported a population of several thousand despite its small size. Some of the first settlers had arrived on the island in the 1920’ s and others in successive waves, some after the partition of 1947 and others after the Bangladesh war of 1971 May, settlers when the other nearby islands of Lusibari was forcibly depopulated in order to make room for wildlife conservation. The green fields that quilt the islands were dotted with clusters of mud huts which in turn were crossed by many well-trodden pathways. The broadest of these paths were even paved with bricks wand were shaded with rows of Casuarinas trees. Ghosh describes “Life in Lusibari was lived at the sufferance of a single feature of its topography. This was its bead., the tall embankment that encircled its perimeter holding back the twice daily flood” (59)
The island of Morichjhapi was divided into wards and the people who are in charge of these wards had to take decision regarding their needs. The people of Morichjhapi set up their own government, took census and created organization and institution. About thirsty thousand people occupied the island and there was space for many more. The island was divided into faze zones – five acres of land to each zones. People of the neighboring island also helped them. They reserved one quarter of the island for people coming from other parts of the tide country” sundarbans and hundreds came flocking in The people of Morichjhapi: “Cleared the land for agriculture, and began to fish and farm” (6). Juba wells were set up; water was dammed for the roaring of fish. People also indulged in making boats, fashioning nets and crab lines and all kinds of goods were sold in market. A bakery was also built. All took place within a space of few months. It was an astonishing spectacle that an entire civilization sprouted so suddenly in the mud. However, the presence of the people of Morichjhapi alarmed the left front ministry, who saw it as the first of a possibly endless series of encroachment on protected forest land, and the settlers were evicted in a brutal display of state power in May 1979 Like this space in an element of Post modernism if plays a vital role in the novel.

In *The Sea of Poppies* the reader is carried back in the south Indian opium trade period. Where after advancing on the social scale, all characters collide and start to see each other as comrades, forming an unlikely alliance that goes beyond conventional bonds of family and nation the triple intertextual narrative begins with the story of Deeti a young widow of an opium dealer from a village from northern Bighar, who is saved from her husband’ s funeral pyre by Kalua, an over signed
low caste who falls in love with her. The second tale is that of Paulette, an orphaned daughter of a French botanist, who arrives on board the ship in order to delete her controversial past and meets Jodu, the son of her nurse, the only like to her past. The other story is that of a bankrupt Raja, who is chased from his estates and he fall into hands of a gluttonous opium dealer. His fiction highlights colonial and postcolonial issues of identity, rootlessness and multiculturality. The gbis trilogy is an intertextual saga where different characters of ethnic origin end up in a medley setting and as a motley crew on a slave ship.

Destiny brings these characters and many others together on gbis, which sails across the Indian Ocean, towards the Mauritius (“Mareech”) islands. This vessel is portrayed by Ghosh as a metaphor for a hug womb where the characters are socially reborn. While on land these characters behaved in a different manner, each of them belonging to a certain community, religion or caste and were bound to strict conventions. Most of these boards are going to the island of Mauritius as indentured labourers, the difference between them as regards caste or culture being dissolved by their predicament. Their only way out of it is to cross their own ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic borders and communicate to their own good. Deeti, the protagonist seals their fate from the very outset of the journey when she dooms.

By mixing so many language and dialects, Ghosh is able to paint the full range of diversity on board with differences in clash, caste, nationality or religion indicated by the words, dialect (or) language used to communicate. Ghosh creates a unique lexicon of the early 19th century cultural references where its multicultural dimension is in the blimelight. This hybrid mix Ghosh builds in this
The novel has both an illuminating and a dizzying effect on the readers which turns them into intertextual and intertextual researches.

The novel is a commentary on socio-cultural evolution of Indian diaspora as sagas of struggle by the destitude and wretches of colonial Indian and the it becomes the backdrop of the novel and draws attention to the historical consequences of imperialism leading to migration and displacement of people to escape their names, caste, bodies, and places of origin while reconstructing identity to form a new identity and adopt the gibs as new cultural community. While travelling in the Ibis, the characters try to reconstruct their identities, influenced by power hierarchies and the world that surrounds them as well as their own feelings, beliefs, memories or imagination. A person’s identity is recreated through a combined effect of names, familial ties, social class, racial, affiliation, role image, the imagination memories, relationship, environmental forces, and historical background. All of these elements act upon continuously to shape identity of an individual. The identity transformation of the main characters in the novel takes place on the ship Ibis. Deeti becomes Aditi, Kalua becomes maddow colver to hide their real identity or perhaps they want to live a new life with true and respectful identity and the colonial set up acts as a catalyst for their transformation.

Identity construction is a prominent element in this novel which seems to be influenced by the ethico-political and socio-characters. A superficial reading of the novel gives the impression that it is a historical novel set in the colonial period as it records the dramatic turn of events and destinies befalling the main protagonist and her interaction with other characters with whom she moves from
land to river and climatically travel through sea. Deeti stress at one level the struggle between capitalism and socialism, Deeti transform herself into a new identity allowing for metafictional reflection and an acceptance of destinies as medicated in her decision to marry Kalua who rescued her from sati

Even then she did not feel herself to be living in the same sense as before: a curious feeling of Joy mixed with resignation, crept into her heart, for it was as if she really had died and been delivered betimes in rebirth, to her next life: she had shed the body of the old Deeti, with the burden of its Karma; she had paid the price her stars had demanded of her, and was free now to create a new destiny as she willed, with whom she chose (178).

Ghosh’s narrative is a two dimensional process while constructing Deeti identity on the one hand, he combines and imaginatively interprets and interweaves the characters Deeti the meaning of her new name „Aditi’ suggests to a mythical goddess who releases from sin and to a personal independence. The leadership traits that Deeti possess can be associated to Bass transformational leader who creates significant change in the life of people soon Deeti comes to be known as bhauji and for many she is a friend, protector and trustworthy leader. It happens naturally and she takes responsibility of guarding the women throughout their Journey to Mauritius.

Identity is about constructing an image by choice, it follows that identity is not fixed Paulette lambert an orphaned French girl hides and runs away from her benefactor, Mr.Burnham who takes her into his household and then exploits to fulfil his sexual desires.
Aspiring to lead a new life, Paulette joins the Ibis under the strong influence of an Indian ayah who becomes her Tantinia ‘aunt mother’; she feels more at home with Indian clothes, food, language, and people than her ancestral European culture.

The dilemma of Paulette comes almost to an end after a shocking turn of events in the story. When her father dies, she resorts to her own resource to pick up the thread that has been repeatedly broken between herself and her desire. She develops her mind sufficiently to fulfill her desire but unlike her grand aunt she passes for typical Indian women with ghungta as a means of concealment.

She had also disguised her appearance a number of other ways: her feet were lacquered with bright vermilion alta; her hands and arms were covered with intricate, henna designs that left very little of skin visible; and under the cover of her veil, the line of her jaw was obscured by large, tasseled earnings (359).

Paulette represents the women of today who do not believe that women are inferior beings and must remain passive and submissive instead she gives a tough fight against the established order and comes up with new concepts of gender identity. She invests with her the conventionally considered unfeminine qualities like courage, independence, intellectual energy, is an autonomous and self determining women who struggles to obtain selfhood by overcoming hardship, inculcating the strength to survive with dignity and analysing her problems rationally. She refuses to surrender before anxieties, indoctrination, social conditioning and resultant oppression. Amitav Ghosh through the character of Paulette presents the picture of an extremely courageous woman who faces the
problem of her life broadly and also manages to come out of them. Her courage and confidence is evident in a conversation with Zachary whom she requests to allow herself to join the crew.

Paulette repeated, that is my request to you to be allowed to join your crew,
I will be one of them my hair will be confined, my clothing will be as theirs
I am strong “I can work” (307)

Even though the characters are placed in new environment which is difficult for adjustment, they settle down in the alien culture and attempt to adopt new surrounding in an effect to settle in the unfamiliar environment. The alien integrate with natives as a result of which existing difference are reduced benefits for both. In this novel, Zachary’s character is redesigned to sait to the new conditions in association with new relationship.

The ibis, an old slaving ship which sails across the Indian Ocean, towards the Mauritius. This vessel is portrayed by Ghosh as a metaphor for a huge womb where the characters are socially reborn. While on land, these characters behave in a different manner. Each of them belonging to a certain community, religion or caste and were bound to strict convention.

At the end of The Sea of Poppies the clouds of war were seen looming, as British opium interests in India pressed for the use of force to compel the Chinese mandarins to keep open their ports, in the name of free trade symbolically, the novel thus ends amidst a raging strom, rocking the triple-misted schooner, the Ibis.

In the novel it seen as a means of exploitation of the poor and powerless by the rich and powerful the people are being marginalized and finally their
culture, language and ways of life are eliminated effectively through substitution by their counterparts in the dominant force. Ghosh gives a dual advantage of a local- postcolonial and at the same time, a global perspective here history seeps into the stories of the characters in so many ways they become histories of colonial exploitation.

Once the slave trade was made illegal merchants like Mr. Burnham quickly shifted to other lucrative areas. Only one similarity remained generated out shameless and in human exploitation of the colonies. The Indians were transported as indentured immigrations to generate capital to be used for supplying opium and finally subjugate the Chinese physical, physiological, mental, socio-political and economic subjugation of the native population was the sole aim of the strongest class in the whole empire: the merchant class. They had made it appear very natural that the Chinese consumed opium, so much so, that need was astonished to here that the kind of history he knew was totally untrue. The narrators revisiting history enhance of the past in his novel.

The idealistic Mr. Burnham, the devotee of free trade, surprisingly happens to be a very forceful supporter of the English merchant’s right to supply opium to China, even if Chinese are against it. He sees the Chinese “march of human freedom” Sea of Poppies, can be seen as an attempt to narrate a specific history from a particular perspective. See of Poppies says that “there are only two things that to be exported thugs and drugs (or) power and coolies as some wood have it” (113) “Trafficking in opium tilted the balance of global trade to benefit the west” (Brook 3) opium remind lives it ruined the life of the poor Indian farmers the novel very clearly and poignantly brings fourth one of the main and recurring
motifs of the commonwealth fiction; the mechanism of exploitation. It shows how
the farmer was exploited and how the agricultural timetable of its people was
altered and effect on the economy. Deeti remembers the good old days when the
fields ‘would be heavy with wheat in the winter…. Now, with the sahibs forcing
everyone to grow poppies, no one had thatch to spare… poppy had been luxury
them, grown in small clusters between the fields that bore the main winter crop’’
(SOP 42) the grain crops and vegetables were not grown. There was only a sea of
poppies in all the fields. To feed their family they took defter and they became
economically poor. Opium broke the very fabric of the society, as was the case
when Deeti and Kalua came across the impoverished transplants in chhapra, ‘driven
from their village by the flood of flowers that had washed over the countryside’’
(298). He looks at history not from the centre but from the periphery. He voiced the
helpless.

A postmodern strand of creativity seems to appear in Ghosh’s manner of
narrating the plot with colonial background as he blends history with fantasy.
Juxtaposes a high caste with a low caste, he mingles language to create a vivid
picture that included a motley mix of characters. More over individual identities are
portrayed as being shaped by the great historical events. At the point in time when
the industrial revolution and abolition of slavery were being celebrated, another
system of servitude was underway: indenture ship. Indenture labour resulted in the
migration of millions of people from place to place and country especially – into
British and French colonies. A great majority of them, either helpless or compelled
by the situations, stayed back in the countries and participated in the creation of
new, Creole cultures.
The black sea is very symbolic as expressed in following lines: To Deeti “all the old ties were immaterial now that sea had washed away their past” (431) as the relationships among the boarders on the ship are getting revived and aligned, they are allowed to restart their lives with a fresh breathe and new identities, this is how old alliances become frail and past ties are broken to construct their fragmented identities into new. Sea of poppies is surely a gripping and engaging, novel if assessed from post modernist’s point of view. The way the identities of the characters constructed and reconstructed identity becomes a moveable feast, formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in postmodern societies. All the novels discussed above obviously prove Amitav Ghosh a versatile Indian writer writing in English with a variety of new aspects namely Postmodern, Postcolonial, Nationalistic, Historiography, and many more.