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**A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE NOVELS OF
AMITAV GHOSH**

**A
DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO**

**SAURASHTRA UNIVERSITY, RAJKOT
FOR THE AWARD OF**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
ENGLISH**

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STATEMENT UNDER UNI. O. Ph.D. 7

I hereby declare that the work embodied in my thesis entitled as "A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE NOVELS OF AMITAV GHOSH", prepared for Ph.D. Degree has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University on any previous occasion. And to the best of my knowledge, no work has been reported on the above subject. And the work presented in this thesis is original and whenever references have been made to the work of others, they have been clearly indicated as such and the source of information is included in the bibliography.

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Acknowledgements

At the outset, I go back to my personal early life. My father's eldest brother Late Shri Vanmalidas Mehta had cherished an innermost desire for me to become an MBBS, a medical doctor. He encouraged in me to become a medical doctor and follow the principle, "Service to humanity is service to God". He wanted to serve the poor down trodden village people. To make his dream come true, I joined Science College. But Almighty had something different in mind. Because of my younger brother's sudden death in road accident and deteriorating financial condition of my family, I was compelled to leave the study and had to accept a job in Postal Department as a clerk.

I, despite adversity, wanted to study further. So I completed B.A. and M.A. with English as an external student. If not in Medical science, I now decided to get doctorate in literature to fulfill the dream of my father's elder brother, Late Shri Vanmalidas Mehta. I contacted Dr. P. P. Mehta, Head of the Department of English Gurukul Mahila College, Porbander for the purpose, but I had to wait for another 7 to 8 years to get proper guidance and guide as well. At last luck and stars favoured me and I got the golden chance to proceed and complete my research work under the able guideship of Dr. Jaydipsinh Dodiya, who came to my help and provided me all the necessary guidance and warmth for completing my long cherished research work on Amitav Ghosh - a well known novelist of Indo-Anglian literature of the 21st century.

At the age of 56 and amidst very hard postal services, I could complete my research work for which I bow down to Almighty God.

I registered myself as a Ph.D. student in January 2003. I had decided to get my research work completed at the earliest possible extent but not later than two and half years, as my idol Dr. Amitav Ghosh had completed his job in less than two and half years. But my domestic liabilities, very hard Postal Job, self serious ill health and major operation and unforeseen circumstances came in my way and delayed the research work. Today my dream becomes a reality, and so many people have rendered their selfless services, unstinted support, guidance and co-operation for which, I express my feelings of sincere gratitude towards them, very humbly.

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Rajkot

December 29, 2007.

Bharatkumar H. Mehta

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CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

My keen interest in English literature made me to search among modern Indian English writers and the novel, *The Shadow Lines* caught my attention about Amitav Ghosh emphasizing that boundary lines of nations are only shadow lines. Deep, hidden philosophical elements towards redefining the nation into broad perspective of human society, created and presented by Amitav Ghosh through the media of literary writings, prompted me to study Amitav Ghosh and his novels from research point of view.

Amitav Ghosh has incarnated in himself the greatness and a great writer among world literary writers as well as philosophers and anthropologists. Amitav Ghosh possesses a sharp eye and sense of perceiving the human being and their societies in right earnest.

Amid my inquisitive search about Amitav Ghosh's writings, it transpired that his first novel, *The Circle of Reason*, published in 1986, at Ghosh's very prime of an age of thirty and immediately stirred the new circles among - Indian critics of Literature - like A. N. Kaul, Rahul Sapra, R. K. Dhawan, Novy Kapadia, Indira Bhatt, Arvind Chowdhary, Brinda Bose, Meenakshi Mukherji and others and many western critics including Bruce King, Jam Lovis, John Clement Bill and Andrew Painter and ultimately the French edition of this novel earned most prestigious

literary awards of France. The other novels at Amitav Ghosh's credit are, *The Shadow Lines*, *In An Antique Land*, *The Calcutta Chromosome* and *The Glass Palace*, besides many literary essays, short stories, travelogues, articles and translations.

Amitav Ghosh, brought up under discipline of his father, Lt. Col, Shailendrachandra Ghosh has had ample experience to learn the Indian socio-political and cultural events. Having experienced the riots in India in 1984, he has emerged to interpret the relationship among nation and individual as well as cultural societies and individual, through the art of novel and literary writing.

His experience as an extensive traveller in many countries of the world and his research for doctoral degree at oxford are found to have projected in his works. As a novelist, he narrates the societies and human beings and their inter-relationship in his novels. Amitav Ghosh has his stories to tell in highly unconventional methods of narrating history, culture, politics, nations and anthropological aspect of mankind.

Amitav Ghosh's literary works have attracted critical attentions of various critics who have bought out writers monographs and anthologies which include Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanamdam's book, *The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh* [2001] and *Interpretation of Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* [2000], R. K. Dhawan's, *The Novel of Amitav Ghosh* [1999], Novy Kapadia's *Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines – Critical Perspectives* [2001], Brinda Bose's *Amitav Ghosh: Critical*

Perspectives, Arvind Chowdhary's *Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines: Critical Essays* [2002] and I. D. Sharma's *Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines*.

My endeavor aims to present a paper of studying various aspects of Amitav Ghosh as novelist and anthropologist. His novels have attracted critical attention of many critics, mentioned above, who have brought out many different articles on different themes subjects of his novels. Some of them are:

- ✍ A Memorable Epic Rev. of *The Glass Palace* by R. K. Kaul
- ✍ The Structure of Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* by Shyamala A. Narayam
- ✍ Of Love, War and Empire Rev. *The Glass Palace* by Meenakshi Mukherjee
- ✍ M. Adhikari's Female empowerment in Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome*
- ✍ Sharmila Guha Majumdar's, Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and *In An Antique Land*: Some Thematic Consideration
- ✍ Damodar K. Rao's, Magic and Irony as Principles of Structure: A Reading of Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason*
- ✍ Uma Ram's The Narrator's Development in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*
- ✍ Microstoria: Indian Nationalism's *Little Stories* in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* by Anjali Roy
- ✍ Malaria Mystery Rev. of *The Calcutta Chromosome* – A Novel of Fevers

- ✍ Delirium and Discovery by John Clement Ball
- ✍ Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land: A Traveler's Tale* by Pradeep Trikha
- ✍ Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land - An Excursion into Time Past and Time Present* by K. C. Belliappa
- ✍ T. Vijaya Kumari's *Tales of Defeat and Danger* Rev. of *The Calcutta Chromosome*.

And also, following deserve further mentioning Shadow - Lines: Cross-cultural Perspectives in The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh by Louis Jame, London - U. K., Amitav Ghosh, The fundamentalist challenge, Washington D. C. The Wilson quarterly, Spring, 1995, Significance of 'Ami' in *The Circle Of Reason* a lovely word in a given contact by Andrew Painter of France, *The Shadow Lines* and The Questioning of Rationalism by Rahul Sapra, A Voice Among Bullet Holes *The Circle of Reason* by Pradip Dutta of Delhi, The Image Of Woman *In An Antique Land* by E. Kanka Bhagya Veni of Hyderabad and Amitav Ghosh - A Most Distinctive Voice by Usha Hemmads.

My sincere efforts are directed at comprehensive critical study and research on the novels of Amitav Ghosh from the period of 1986 to 2000 marking period of publication of his five novels, namely *The Circle of Reason* [1986], *The Shadow Lines* [1988], *In An Antique Land* [1986] *The Shadow Lines* [1993], *The Calcutta Chromosome* [1996] and *The Glass Palace* [2000] After prefatory note, the first chapter entitled, An Introduction Of Modern Indian Novel In English deals with short introduction of five novels, Ghosh's biography, Ghosh's place in Indian English

literature, development of English and Indian English literature with its backdrop.

The first chapter - An Introduction also discusses various categories of novels and how the categorical elements are depicted in the novels by Amitav Ghosh. The second chapter entitled as, Ghosh's Major Thematic Preoccupations in His Novels discusses the critical apprehension of major thematic consideration in five novels of Amitav Ghosh from the first one *The Circle of Reason* [1986] to *The Glass Palace* [2000].

The third chapter The Plot Structure in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh projects the plot construction imbued in the novels of Amitav Ghosh and how the genres structured pattern is used in the novels with its relation to modern or traditional form of modern novels. The fourth chapter entitled as, Amitav Ghosh's Art of Characterization deals with the critical assessment of art of characterization applied in the novels by Amitav Ghosh. The fifth chapter entitled as Narrative Technique in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh deals with the art of narrative technique in the above mentioned five novels of Amitav Ghosh.

The critical appreciation of language and linguistic devices with its backdrop of historical period and the structural pattern in the novels of Amitav Ghosh are dealt with in the sixth chapter entitled as Use of Languages in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh. The sixth chapter is followed by the Conclusion, which endeavors to establish Amitav Ghosh as creator of great novels and indispensable quality of greatness

found in the distinctive personality of Amitav Ghosh aimed at articulation of novice conception of human relationship. While introducing research level study it is essential fact that the modern writers of novels have inherited the works of earlier writers, their form of writing and how they particularly Indian writers—overcome the language problems especially English being their language other than their mother tongues.

The writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and also Amitav Ghosh have been able successfully to complete their academic career in India and in western countries as well. These writers have extensive living experience with ideology of east and west besides various resultant national and international movements including world war and freedom movements of India.

Therefore, the efforts here [that follows] are made to outline development of English language and Indian literature in English as an introduction to the critical study of Amitav Ghosh's novels. However, Indian English fiction has a long history, its few hallmark are cited deviating detailed and elaborative matters.

Since the life and personality of writers and how they view the panoramic events of the world have the deep influential impact on their writing of novels. So research study [critical] of novels of Amitav Ghosh includes biographical standing of Amitav Ghosh as well as some preliminary facts of Ghosh's novels.

Amitav Ghosh: A Biographical Sketch

Early Life:

Amitav Ghosh was born in Post-independence Era on 11th July 1956 in Calcutta [now Kolkata] city of west-Bengal state. His childhood days were passed in Calcutta [now Kolkata] as well as in Northern India, Dhaka and Colombo. He has grown up erstwhile in East Pakistan [now Bangladesh], Srilanka, Iran and northern India. During his university education he lived at Delhi. His father belonged to small province of state of Bihar and he left Bihar in 1942 to become an officer in the British colonial army in India.

Ghosh Amitav's Parentage:

Amitav Ghosh's father, Lieutenant colonel Sailendra Chandra Ghosh was serving in then British-Indian Army as an officer of the 12th frontier force regiments. He participated in the Second World War. He was in general slim's fourteenth Army during the Burma campaign of 1945 and was twice mentioned in dispatches. 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. He died in 1998.¹

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, non-violence, civil disobedience, and the terrors that accompanied partition, in 1947. ²

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 tumolinous 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 become an officer in the British colonial army in India. ³

Academic Advancement:-

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 offered sociology in his post graduation in arts from University of Delhi and acquired Masters' 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 Lataifa in Egypt.

His Quest for Identity:-

After his academic study, Amitav Ghosh decided to remain amid educationalist 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.

His American Outlook:-

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 has making of a great classical civilization which symbolize 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:-

Amitav Ghosh is one of the great Indian novelists, who have written in English. However he is not 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. After award of Doctorate [Ph. D] from oxford university – London in 1982, Amitav Ghosh published his first novel, *The Circle of Reason* – in 1986, when he was a lecturer at the Delhi school of economics, university of Delhi.

This novel, showing 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 nations and the story emphasizes the need for co-existence and strong 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.

In 1993, Amitav published another novel - *In An Antique Land* attempt to explore at a deeper level some basic human character and human attitudes that persist through ages.

In 1996, Amitav's fourth novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome* was published and it is the novel of the 21st century narrating the story of a computer programmer in New York in a form of thriller dealing with the science-fiction.

His fifth novel, *The Glass Palace* was published in the year 2000 and this book has remained best-seller book in Germany. Not only this, Ghosh has short-stories, namely:

- i The Imam and Indian - 1986
- ii Tibetan Dinner - 1988
- iii An Egyptian in Bagdad - 1990
- iv Indian Story - 1995
- v Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi - 2002
- vi A reporter at large - 1997

He has translated following short stories:

- 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 fro social, religious, and cultural segments. He is a freelancer among the Bengali Writers.

Amitav Ghosh has written for the journals such as *Granta*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times* and *The Observer*. His fictional works and other forms of writing like essay, short stories translation etc. have been listed year wise in chronological order on page no. 23.

Fame and Recognition:-

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

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-etranger awards in France, in 1997.

Amitav's second novel *The Shadow Lines* published in 1988 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, Arther C. Clarke award for science fiction in 1997 and it has caught 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 for the 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.

Personality and Outlook:-

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, traveller 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 travelled 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 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.

Influences:-

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 Mukopadhyaya 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. ⁴

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 Decily, *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 the 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 Satyajee Ray and their ideology had a deep impact on Amitav Ghosh.

Literary Cosmopolitan:-

Amitav Ghosh is very fluent in English, Bengali, Hindi French and Arabic. 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 Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh acknowledges no separate national or cultural realities, because for him all such demarcations are shadow lines arbitrary and invaded divisions. Amitav believes that the men of power have created artificial lines between countries and people and have also dismantled them as per their contineence.

Few years back there was a partition line between east and West Germany, now it does not exist. Such views of human life hold by Amitav makes him global cosmopolitan personality various prestigious awards given to Amitav's fiction declining with philosophical elements of various cultures are proof that Amitav is a cosmopolitan writer.

From the socio-anthropological and philosophical fictions of Amitav's one can easily find that: Standing in his own permanence, professional, dedicated, Amitav Ghosh has sought to interpret in terms of art, the moves of his own people, above all, he has insisted on the need for values – civilizing values which help nourish all enlighten and

human society for freedom of man from political, Religious and cultural barriers.

His Family Life:-

Amitav Ghosh married Deborah Baker, an American from southern us who is also literary personality especially known as a Biographer. For her biographical works, her name was nominated for 1994's Pulitzer Prize in Biography. Amitav Ghosh's decision to marry an American Biographer confirms his conviction for America. Amitav Ghosh currently lives in Brooklyn, New York with his wife and two children, Lila and Nayan.

Amitav Ghosh's GURU - Doctoral Supervisor at Oxford ✍ Dr. Peter Leinhardt:-

Amitav Ghosh has completed his academic research at Oxford for his D. Phil in 1982 on the subject and title of, A History of wearing and the cloth trade between Britain and Indian in the nineteenth century. His guide - guru - at Oxford was Dr. Peter Leinhardt. He met Dr. Peter in a pub and finalized subject of his proposed research on asking about suggestions what to read or what inquiry to pursue. About his 'Guru', Dr. Peter Leinhardt, Ghosh notes that Dr. Peter was a reluctant anthropologist like his brother Godfrey. Dr. Peter had published very little through he was man of much experience and was having fluency in Arabic Persian and Swahili. He worked in Kuwait, Sharjah, Isfahan and Zanzibar.

As a person, an Englishman – Amitav Ghosh notes that Dr. Peter was generous, entertaining, convivial and loyal and he [Dr. Peter] provided encouragement, support and frequent restorative meals to Amitav Ghosh, Amitav Ghosh realized very later that it was largely because of Dr. Peter’s admirable supervisor methods that he [Amitav Ghosh] was able to complete his doctoral Thesis in the unusually very short time of only two years and four months.

Dr. Peter’s early education was in literature and he was a follower of the redoubtable leader F. R. Levis in his young age. Dr. Peter was a man of considerable linguistic gifts. He was an advisor to a Gulf Sheikh and had a hand in the Buraimi dispute. Dr. Peter’s views on the world at large was not different to the views of Amitav Ghosh, Dr. Peter possessed fair share of those gifts of friendship for which the English are justly praised. On hearing of Ghosh’s first novel, *The Circle of Reason* [1986], Dr. Peter has responded with utter delight, and it was a new fury in the life of Amitav Ghosh, which had fulfilled a dream of Dr. Peter’s own. Dr. Peter Leinhardt died of lung cancer in 1986. Amitav Ghosh gives his tribute to Dr. Peter Leinhardt – his guru – doctoral supervisor – kind of person as:

Chronology:

1956	Born in Calcutta (New Kolkata) on 11 th July 1956. His childhood spirit in Northern India, Dhaka and Colombo. He grew up in Bangladesh [then East Pakistan], Sri Lanka, Iran and Northern India. He took his education in
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	India and in Britain.
1978	He graduated himself from St. Stephen's college, University of Delhi and his special subject was History.
1979	He is an M.A. in sociology from the Delhi University.
1982	He was awarded the degree of D. Phil. [Ph.D.] in social Anthropology by Oxford university in 1982. His doctoral supervisor was Dr. Peter Leinhardt and he completed his doctoral thesis in the unusually short time of two years and four months.
1984	<i>The Relations of Envy in an Egyptian Village</i> was published in <i>Ethnology</i> [University of Pittsburgh Press], 1984 and is based on chapters of the thesis for which Amitav Ghosh was awarded a Ph.D. in social Anthropology.
1986	Published first novel, <i>The Circle of Reason</i> when he was teaching at the Delhi School of Economics, at the university of Delhi. This novel was translated into many European languages. The novel follows the form of the raga in Indian classical music.
1986	<i>The Imam and the Indian</i> - a short-story was first published in <i>Granta</i> , 20[Cambridge], 1986. It was reprinted in <i>The Best of Granta Travel</i> , Granta Books, - London, 1991 and in <i>Displacements: Cultural identities in question</i> , ed. Angelika Bammer, Indiana university press. A Bengali translation, by Parth Chatterjee, was published in <i>Baromash</i> in 1991.
1987	<i>Categories of Labour and the Orientation of the Fella Economy</i> , in the <i>Diversity of the Muslim Community</i> ,

	Anthropological Essays in memory of Peter Leinhardt, ed. Dr. Ahmed Alshashi, -- London, 1987 and is based on chapters of the thesis for which Amitav Ghosh was awarded a Ph.D. in social Anthropology.
1988	Published second novel, <i>The Shadow Lines</i> . This novel is a master-piece in contemporary Indo-English literature and considered by many critics as his best work of fiction till to-day. A novel on the theme of partition that has been translated into many languages of the world.
1988	<i>Tibetan Dinner</i> - A short story was published in <i>Granta</i> , 25, 1988 and was reprinted in the "Utne Reader", 3-1-1992.
1989	<i>Four Corners</i> was published in <i>Granta</i> , 26, 1989.
1990	<i>The Diaspora in Indian Culture</i> was first appeared in <i>Public Culture</i> , Philadelphia, 1990.
1990	<i>An Egyptian in Baghdad</i> - a short story was published in <i>Granta</i> , 34, 1990.
1990	<i>The Human Comedy in Cairo</i> - a review of the work of Naguib Mahfouz was published in <i>The New Republic</i> on 7 th May 1990.
1992	<i>Petrofiction - The Oil Encounter And The Novel</i> was published in <i>The New Republic</i> on 2 nd March 1992
1992	The Slave of MSH6 was published in <i>Subaltern Studies</i> Vol. VII, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1992.
1993	Published third novel, <i>In An Antique Land</i> . This is a non-fictional novel. The novel is a story about Egypt, told by a man who himself comes from another antique land i.e.

	India. There are three parallel stories in the novel. It is a historical novel. The Ghosh has puts his research data in the form of a tale. The field work done at Egyptian villages resulted in the novel, <i>In An Antique Land</i> .
1994	<i>The Global Reseroation</i> - Notes toward ethnography of international peace keeping was a plenary Address, at the Annual meeting of the society for cultural Anthropology, held in Washington on 16 th May 1993. It was published in <i>Cultural Anthropology</i> , Vol-9, No.-3 August 1994.
1995	<i>The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi</i> - a short story was first published in <i>The New Yorker</i> 17 th July 1995 and reproduced in <i>Bruised memories: communal</i>
1995	<i>The Fundamentalist Challenge</i> was first delivered at a seminar on writers and Religion, organized by William Gass in 1994. At an international writers, Washington university. St. Louis. It was published in the <i>Willson Quarterly</i> in 1995.
1995	<i>The Hunger of Stones</i> - a translation of Rabindranath Tagore's classic short story <i>Kshudhita Pasan</i> was first published in <i>Civil Lines</i> , New Delhi, 1995. Under the title, <i>Hungry Stone</i> it was also included in the Oxford University Press, New Delhi, edition of the works of Tagore, edited by Sukanta Chaudhari.
1996	Published fourth novel, <i>The Calcutta Chromosome</i> - a novel of Fevers, Delirium and Discover. A Gothic Science Fiction. This is a novel in which Amitav Ghosh takes on

	the author of science thriller-writer. It soon to be filmed by Gabricle Salvators, the Oscar winning Director of Media Terrance.
1997	<i>Empire and Soul</i> - a review of the <i>Baburnama</i> was published in The New Republic on 13 th January, 1997.
1998	Published travelogue, <i>Dancing in Cambodia, At large in Burma</i> . It is a travel book. The entire book is a master piece of travel and interpretative writing.
1998	An early version of The March of the Novel through History was delivered, as an idea Beam public lecture as a university of Iowa. On 27 th September 1996. Subsequently, presented a more complete version as the Arthur Ravenscroft memorial lecture at the university of leads, England on 5 th March 1997. It was published in the U.K. in <i>Kunapipi</i> - a journal of post-colonial writing, Vol- XIX and in the U.S. in the <i>The Kenyon Review</i> , Vol. XX, No. 2, in 1998. It is an essay.
1998	A Bengal rendering under the title, <i>Kathashiper nayay Gatha Ei Basundhara</i> was published in Desh in 1998.
1999	Published in Essay, <i>Countdown</i> - a booklet exposing the nuclear arms race in both Indian and Pakistan.
2000	Published fifth novel, <i>The Glass Palace</i> it is the best seller in Germany, Europe and in India ever since it was published.
2001	<i>The Greatest Sorrow: Times Of Joy Recalled In Wretchedness</i> was, in an earlier version, the Neelan Thiruchetvam memorial lecture for 2001.

2002	<i>The Ghat of the Only World</i> was published in The Nation of 11 th February 2002. It was written in memory of a close friend, the poet Agha Shahid Ali, who died on 8 th December, 2002.
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Roll of Honours and Awards:

Sr. No.	Year of Award (1)	Literary Work for which Award given. (2)	Honours Awarded to Amitav Ghosh. (3)
1	1987	The first novel <i>The Circle of Reason</i> published in 1986 in its French Edition.	Prix Medics - Estranger - a prestigious literary award in France in 1987.
2	1989	The second novel <i>The Shadow Lines</i> published in 1988	The Coveted Sahitya Akademi Award - a leading literary award in India in 1989
3	1997	The Fourth novel <i>The Calcutta Chromosome</i> published in 1996.	The Arthar C. Clarke Award for science fiction - a leading literary award in India. In 1997.
4	1999	The following two essays (i) The march of the novel through history.	A Pushcart Prize - a leading literary award. In 1999.

		(ii) The testimony of my grandfather's book case.	
5	2001	The Fifth novel <i>The Glass Palace</i> published in 2000	(i) Frankfurt Book Awards – 2001. (ii) Eurasian Regional Winner in the best book category 2001.
6	2007	-	Padma Shri Award on 26 th January, 2007 by the Government of India.
7	2007	-	Grinzane Cavour Prize on 30 th January, 2007.

Contemporary Novelists and Amitav Ghosh:

Indian English writers like Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai and Arundhati Roy are modern novelist with national and international fame. Salman Rushdie with publication of *Midnight's Children* created a new trend in Indian English novels. This new trend is supplemented by Amitav Ghosh with publication of his first novel, *The Circle of Reason* in 1986. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* made a dashing entry in world literary scene with totally new novel centering woman depicted by the novel made it a contemporary classic.

Modern Indian English novelist born in post independence period are Amitav Ghosh, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth, Amit Chaudhari, Shashi Tharoor with fluency n English language have

acquired their academic status from universities of western countries and they have attained acceptance in the west as well as in India. Amitav Ghosh among them took his D. Phil in Social-anthropology, won top literary award for his *The Circle of Reason* [1986] and Sahitya Akademi Award for his *The Shadow Lines* [1988]. Amitav Ghosh evoked the theme of national events and its implications on individual.

The partition of India on eve of independence in 1947, is major political situation which displaced thousands and thousands lives of Indian people. This theme of partition has been evaluated by Khushwant Singh in his novel, *Train to Pakistan* and by Sunil Gangopadhyay in his novel, *Purab – Paschim* and also by their contemporary writer – Amitav Ghosh in his novel, *The Shadow Lines*.

Amitav Ghosh's contemporary novelist – Vikram Sheth, from Calcutta managed to publish his novel, *A Suitable Boy* through British publisher abroad and it met with great commercial success in 1993 and trend to publish the novel through publishing houses in England and America began to catch the attention of contemporary Indian English novelists.

Amitav Ghosh having skillful affluent control over English language as well as other European languages acquired world recognition of his creative writing through his novels published by Indian as well as U.K. and other European publishers.

Amitav Ghosh's contemporary writers Rohinton Mistry from Bombay migrated to Canada. His first short story won The Heart House Prize for fiction in 1983. His first novel named, *Such A Long Journey* was short listed for the Booker Prize and has also won several Canadian prizes. *A Fine Balance* a novel based on the emergency is his recent novel.

Another contemporary writer is Allan Sealy from Allahabad also graduated from Delhi University like Ghosh. His first novel, *The Trotter Nama* has created a sensation. His next novel is *Hero* and he has also published a travel book *From Yukan to Yocatan*.

Upamanyu Chattarjee is also contemporary novelist of Amitav Ghosh born in the same year of 1956 and also graduated from St. Stephen's college of Delhi and joined as IAS officer in central Government. The story of his debut novel, *English August: An Indian* attracted instant notice of the film producer and has been made into an award winning film. His, another novel is *The Last Burden*.

Githa Hariharn from Bombay studied in the U.S. and worked with public television in U.S. She has also worked in Bombay, Madras, and New Delhi as an editor in a publishing house. Her first novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night* has won the commonwealth prize. Her other writings of collections of short stories were *The Ghosts of Vasu Master* and *The Art of Dying*.

Amit Chaudhari from Calcutta is also contemporary novelist of Amitav Ghosh. His first novel, *A Strange and Sublime Address* won the Betty Trask Award and the commonwealth award. His, another novel is, *Afternoon Raga*.

Shashi Tharoor is also from Calcutta, like Amitav and Amit and graduated from St. Stephen's college at Delhi. He joined the UN high commission for refugees in 1978. His first novel, *The Great Indian Novel* won the Commonwealth Award. He has since published *Show Business* and *The Five Dollar Smile*, a collection of short stories.

Thus, Amitav Ghosh's contemporary writers are Vikram Sheth, Rohinton Mistry, Allan Sealy, Upmanyu Chatterjee, Githa Hariharn, Amit Chaudhary, Shashi Tharoor, Mukul Keshavan, Kiran Nagakar, Ashok Baukar and Sunetra Gupta.

The root and cause of great success in world literary scenario by contemporary modern novelists of India including Amitav Ghosh are due to the fact that they mastered English language and acquired their doctoral degree from universities at the U.K., France and U.S.A., which prompted them to creative writing in English catching attention of the world literary circles.

Among contemporary Indian writers in English, Amitav Ghosh is emerged as a great Indian writer giving new meaning to history, politics and from the novel adopting creative writing leaving trifling

matters out of why. Thus, Amitav Ghosh is the most contemporary and convincing Indian voice in English literature.

Also, Amitav Ghosh has emerged as the most significant novelist on the contemporary literary scene. Perhaps, no other Indian writer has reached in so many parts of the world and won such enthusiastic response. It is also said that Amitav Ghosh is the most popular of the contemporary Indian novelists. He has won several literary awards, notably the prestigious Permet Medici awards of France and coveted Sahitya Akademi prize for literature.

Amitav Ghosh [Born 1956 – Calcutta], an Indian born novelist, settled in the USA is a powerful chronicler of contemporary social and political life and is one of the most distinguished contemporary Indian novelists. His popularity graph has been rising ever since he published his first novel, *The Circle of Reason*.

Amitav Ghosh not only corroborates his reputation as being among the best writers of his generation in India but also confirms his position as one of the finest literary writers on the contemporary international scene.

Amitav Ghosh's List of Contemporary Novelists:-

Sr. No.	Name of Novelist	Born in the Year
1.	Kiran Nagarkar	1949
2.	Allan Sealy	1951

3.	Vikram Sheth	1952
4.	Rohinton Mistry	1952
5.	Upmanyu Chatterjee	1956
6.	Shashi Tharoor	1956
7.	Mukul Kesaran	1957
8.	Amit Chaudhari	1962
9.	Ashok Banker	1964
10.	Sunetra Gupta	1965

Amitav Ghosh and His Affluent English Language:

Amitav Ghosh, born at Calcutta and his mother tongue - his first language can be called Bengali. But those who read his novels do not find that Amitav Ghosh's English is his *Second language*. The descriptions of places, cities, villages, societies, in this novel reveal his deep knowledge of English language. Whatever difficulties in power of expression experienced by forerunner of Amitav Ghosh as can be seen in his writing of fiction. The subversion of historical events in the novels, *The Circle of Reason*, *The Shadow Lines* and *The Calcutta Chromosome*, is skillfully depicted by Amitav Ghosh. In *In An Antique Land*, Amitav Ghosh gives panoramic view of Mangalore in following words:

Seen from the sea, on a clear day, Mangalore can take a newcomer's breath away. It sits upon the tip of a long finger of steeply rising land, a ridge of hills which

extends and of a towering knuckle of peaks in the far distance. Two rivers meet around the elliptical curve of the fingertip to form a great palm-fringed lagoon, using tranquil under quick sliver sky. ⁵

And also, action of writing away notes with thinking described by Amitav Ghosh as:

I scribbled desultorily for a while, and then, searching desperately for something else to talk about, I happened to ask him if his mother was away from the hamlet. ⁶

Ghosh's style in English language reflects his ability to write in English smoothly and confidently. The novels of Amitav Ghosh depict Ghosh as attentive and effortless writer in English.

About Ghosh's English language, Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam, editors, while introducing *The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh* express as:

He uses the English language skillfully and artistically. His style can be compared to a flowing river with all its moods. ⁷

The novels of Amitav Ghosh narrating story and evocation of historical events and political frenzy uphold that, for Amitav Ghosh, English language is no longer a barrier for expression of thought as well as for expression of social anthological events of history and politics.

International acclaim and recognition required by novels of Amitav Ghosh are statements of fame and owner of English language that need no more emphasis.

Smt. Uma Ram, Asst. Professor of English, Govt. College - Jugdalpur, in her article, *The Narrator's Development in Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* - express her comments on Amitav Ghosh's English language as:

The Shadow Lines is very much Indian in its form and contents and his treatment of the content in term of language is superb. It is Indian English at its best. ⁸

About English of Amitav Ghosh, Andrew Painter, English, University at Angers, France comments:

It is dear that writers such as Amitav Ghosh and Salman Rushdie, to name but two, are eminently capable of writing extremely well in English—it already rings of insult to want to have to confirm it. It is

even possible to go further and say that he is the best colonial writer who is the master of English.⁹

Landmarks in Indian Literature in English: From Era of Bankimchandra to Amitav Ghosh:

About a hundred and fifty years ago around in 1850, Indian people proclaimed their dislike for British rule in India. One hundred years before that event, the British established their authority in Bengal and the city of Calcutta [new Kolkata] built by them became capital of British authority and to certain extent a center for British culture – considering the importance of that rule and that culture, Raja Ram Mohan Roy gave to Bengal the inspiration to reconstruct a new society on the basis of bright elements of Indian culture and taking whatever is worth accepting from British. And Indian English culture then began to usher. Apart from Raja Ram Mohan Roy's efforts for social reform there appeared the certain resolute for reform came from may especially new educated class of the Indian people at the time Laxmi Holmstrom express thus:

The new education produced differing perception among its scholars and graduates. These were those who were interested in social and then in political reform.¹⁰

Thus, this newly acquired knowledge of social and western cultural education played vital role for reforms in the society as well as in creation of earlier English literature with backdrop of social and cultural conditions in India at that time.

The earlier writers include Bankimchandra Chatterjee, in prose and Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and Aurobindo Ghosh in poetry. Besides, various lectures of Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekanand, highlights the better sensitivity of writers as an orator. Indian literature has gained many conspicuous successes on the literary front in India and the world as well. It would be worth drawing to chart of these streamlined progressive developments.

Bankimchandra Chatterjee wrote many novels - all in Bengali language with only exception of his novel namely *Raj Mohan's wife* [1864], which is written in English. *Raj Mohan's wife* is described as a romantic tale of domestic life in east Bengal village of nineteenth century. The influence of English romantic scenes and historical elements are seen as a keen perception in the works of Bankimchandra, his well known novels are *The Poison Tree* and *Krishnakanthe's will*. His novels project values of discipline, virtue of self sacrifice besides taste of realistic depiction of social life.

In *Raj Mohan's Wife* [1864], Matangini *Raj Mohan's Wife*, courageously opposes her husband's evil design of murder of his opponent and refuses to idealize him. This depicts the inner depth of

thought of social reforms opposing rational woman's worship of her husband. Such new waves are described by K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar as:

To be Indian in thought and feeling and emotion and experience yet also to the graces and submit to the discipline of English for expression is a novel experiment in creative mutations. ¹¹

The greatest contribution of poet - Laureate Rabindranath Tagore [1861-1941] is not only to the Indian literature but also to the field of education, culture, thesis of universal truth. Although Tagore is known as a poet, his contribution to the other form of literary work like novel is also much more. His novels are *Gora*, *The Week* and *The Home and the World*. The Short-stories include *Kabuliwala*, *The Home Coming*. This novels and shortstories are translated in many languages including English.

In 1995, Ghosh has translated Rabindranath Tagore's classical short-story *Kshudhita Pashan* as the title *The Hunger of Stones* and was first published in Civil Lines New Delhi in 1995 and it was included in the oxford university press, New Delhi under the title Hunly Stone.

All these literary works have impressive impact on Indian literature in English. His achievement as a poet found international recognition by award of Nobel Prize in 1913 for his great work in *Gitanjali*. He brought glorious fame to Indian literature around the

world. Tagore is thus in the domain of literature of India's deepest Twentieth century aspiration.

Shri Aurbindo Ghosh has also written very effective poetry. Aurbindo differs from any other Indian writers because he wrote originally only in English. Like Tory Dutt, Aurbindo uses Hindu setting for his poems. His poetic work namely, *Savitri* is well known. Aurbindo's versification and tinge of spirituality in his poetry are worth mentioning.

Biography, the lectures and the letters of Swami Vivekanand form very important part of Indian literature in English. Though Swamiji specialized in ethics of morality and religious, he has contributed much in practice of his doctrine in English. His famous call viz. Stop not till goal is achieved can remain substantial truth in any test of any time at anywhere.

Swami Vivekanand along with Shri Aurobindo and others started noteworthy social religious reforms, which produced literary awakening that created many novels, and stories in the time that followed. P. P. Mehta, in this direction remarks:

The men started an era of social criticism and reform. They pleaded for the abolition of Sati, remarriage of the widows loosening of caste bonds and removal of untouchability. These social reforms

formed the basis of novels and stories like *The lake of Palms*, *Tales of Bengal* and many others.¹²

20th century shows remarkable foundation in Indian literature in English. Early 20th century witnessed the novels:

- ? *Love and Life behind Purdah* [1901] by Miss Sorabji
- ? *Thillai Govindan* [1903] and *Clarinda* [1915] by A. Madhviah
- ? *Tale of Bengal* [1910] by S.B. Benarjee
- ? *Unfinished Song* [1916] and *Fatal Garland* [1915] by Swarnakumari Ghosal
- ? *The Prince of Destiny* [1910] by K. Ghosh
- ? *Kamla* [1925] and *Kamini* [1931] by Sir Yogendrasingh

Swarnakumari Ghosal's *The Fatal Garland* [1910] narrates the story of two friends, Shakti Moti and Nirupama and their repercussion to the garland showered on them by the princes. The novel bears more of a romance than the historical elements.

All these writers through their novels brought romances, historical background, and rural environment. Form of novels varies in style and fashions from novel to novel. Even through, S. K. Ghosh's *Prince of Destiny* is romantic novel; its feature is presence of Englishmen as characters.

The Effect and glimpses of world war and freedom movement in India are found on the minds of writers. Mahatma Gandhi, during freedom struggle proclaimed of evils of racial indiscrimination. Mulk Raj Anand expressed very graphic narration of social scene in his novels *Untouchable* [1935] and *Coolie* [1936]. The story in these two novels describes social system of its time and how lowest class of people were deprived of human relationship.

His novel, *Untouchable* [1935] depicts the life of the Searenger Bakha and his strenuous efforts to raise the voice against man made traditional evils of untouchability. Anand through the novel creates the possibility of social reform and eradication of evils deeply rooted in social system.

R. K. Narayan emerged as successful writer. His chief novels: *Swami and Friends*, *The Financial Expert*, *The Guide* and *Man-eater of Malgudi* shows regional settings. These novels are catching attention and readability still at present.

R. K. Narayan in *Swami and Friends* [1935] expresses life of a school boy Swaminathan through the child view. His *Bachelor of Arts* [1936] shows the story of a college student - Chaudran who became victim of horoscope matching system of marriage and it leads him to arranged marriage.

During subsequent span of time which one may call a recent past various writers like Manohar Malgaonkar, Kamla Markandya, and

Khushwant Singh depicted in their novels new themes and sensibility. *Distant Drum* [1960] by Manohar Malgaoukar displayed theme of life in Indian Army. Khushwantsingh's *Train to Pakistan* has the partition of sub-continent into India and Pakistan as its theme.

Kamla Markandaya, in Post-Independence Era, contributed novels namely, *Nectar in a Sieve*, *A Silence of Desire* [1961], *Some Inner Fury* and *Possession*. The social environment, spiritual belief and poverty stricken people and virtue of selfless are sketched in the novels besides depiction of delightful combination of two different cultures that of East and West. Through her novels, she emphasizes for urgent attention to extirpate social evils and cultural fallacy.

Markanday's novel, *A Silence of Desire* [1961] – raises the way of life of Dandekar who submit to his wife's faith in spiritual healing for her ailments and how the character named Devnderkar becomes the victim of doubtful way of treatment by faith.

The literary works Raja Rao, Nirad C Chaudhary and Amitav Ghosh [All distinguished writers writing in English] created worldwide escalations among western writers and critics. Nirad C. Chaudhary produced novels, namely, *Passage to England* and *Circle of Circle* which emerged as sensational hits. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* [1932], *The Serpent and the Rope* [1960], *The Cat and Shakespeare* [1965], *Comrade Kirlow* [1976] and *The Chess Master and his Moves* [1988] won wide and exceptional international acclaim. Raja Rao's most of work is

essentially ideological and metaphysical novel rooted in Indian tradition.

Recent Anthropologist Amitav Ghosh has created and brought absolutely new kind of novels namely, *The Circle of Reason* [1986], *The Shadow Lines* [1988], *In An Antique Land* [1993], *The Calcutta Chromosome* [1996], *Dancing in Cambodia, at large in Burma* [1998] and *The Glass Palace* [2000] – which depicts various themes of cross-cultural perspectives, of violence, of contrasting streams of political nuances besides historical background of various cultures. His novels are translated in many European languages including French and German. His novels have attained world recognition and fame and his first novel. *The Circle of Reason* [1986] has earned the most prestigious awards of France.

Amitav Ghosh's *The Cricle of Reason* [1986] brings forth the Indian characters from Bengali village to Egyptian town. It is the story of Balram's vision of social progress through weaving which shows Gandhi's nationalist movement of self-sufficiency. The story is interconnected drawing many circles of story which a circle of story dealing religious tradition and science. It is a story of Balram's favourite book *The Life of Pasture* which travels from Bengal to Algeria creating one more circle.

Through the fiction, Amitav Ghosh, skillfully, highlights the riots arising out of clash between two cultures and man's struggle to fall ethnic problems. Amitav Ghosh raises he question of rectifying the definition of political freedom and nationals. Ghosh being

anthropologist cautions that for human survival new perception of human relationship must emerge. In his novels, Amitav Ghosh blends demarcation between national with his conviction that national boundaries are life Shadow Lines subject change in times to come.

Glory of Indian Literature in English:

Indian writing in English has brought much glory to India and has placed the Indian literature on world map of literary works. The parameters of Indian literature in pre and post independent era of India marks the upsurge of literary writing in creating new absolutes in philosophical and cultural way of life. Rabindranath Tagore received Nobel Prize for his English version of Gitanjali and proved that literary greatness does not belong to western countries alone. He also inspired many Indian writers to bring out their great minds to the focus of the world.

Raja Rao published many books namely Kanthapura, The Serpent and Rope, The cat and Shakespeare, and Chessmaster and his move showing the confrontation of east and west way of life. Raja Rao has been awarded the 1988 international prize for literature, which is given every two years to outstanding world writers. Also, Sulman Rushdie published his novel - *The Midnight's Children* and received its recognition, world wide, through booker award.

Arundhati Roy wrote and published a novel, namely, *The God of Small Things* about the woman from woman's point of view and it

received Booker award. It is so famous in the world that it is still talked in recent times.

Amitav Ghosh published his first novel, *The Circle of Reason* in 1986, and second novel, *The Shadow Lines* in 1988 and both novels have been translated in many European languages. The French edition of *The Circle of Reason* received the Prixmedici Estranger award – a prestigious literary award in France in 1987, while *The Shadow Lines* received The Coveted Sahitya Acadami Award – a leading literary award in India.

His fourth novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome* published in 1996, received the Arthur C. Clarke Award for science fiction in 1997. It is a leading literary award in India. The heroic qualities in personalities of these writers connote very vital role in contribution of glory of Indian literature.

All these writers of prominence in the world have made distinct foot print among world literary scene with their affluent English language. Also it is through such works of high creation that Indian themes and philosophy and its evocation are authenticated among western writers and critics.

Beginning of Novels and Earlier novels:-

Man has always a strong wish to read of one or another purpose for entertainment and to satisfy this carving some kind of prose-fiction was easy access always been there. The people of the middle ages

tended to read the long fairy tales, romances and adventure tales for their entertainment purpose.

In the middle of the 16th century, the long medieval romances were gradually in Italian prose tales or novella, which appeared as English translation in large numbers. This has considerable influence on the pamphlets. Besides, tale of romances, early work resembling novel is Sir Thomas Malory's *Merte D' Arthur* which influenced and fascinated many western-European writers.

During the time of Elizabeth - I [1558-1603] two separate sorts of prose fiction emerged in England. The romance was written in a highly artificial kind of prose, breaking away classical background. At the same time stories of different types became popular. They were stories of middle class traders, weavers, written in ordinary languages for ordinary readers. Novelists more interest in real people and events than romances became known then Oroonco or *The Royal Slae* by Mrs. *Afra Behn* is considered first prose story in English.

The novel emerged from the romance as the term roman, which is equivalent to novel. It was Thomas Nashe [1567-1601], who wrote a novel namely, *The Uunfortunate Traveler* or *The life of Jack Wilton*, which is fairly considered as first English novel. However, history of English novel may be said to commence in eighteenth century with publication of Pamela by Richardson.

The novel requires its modern form in eighteenth century and use of different methods by novelist emerged. The plain narrative or a story telling is the most usual methods employed by novelist who will not only describe the outward behaviour and actions of his characters but also their thought and feelings besides mentioning of novelist own philosophical ideas and opinions. Novelists were then begun to have interest in characters and motives through the narration of events. Glasworthy's *Man of Property* shows ideology of human greed for possession of material properties.

There is further refinement in the novel during 19th century. Jane Austen centralizes her novels on family and social evils. Walter Scott makes the novel as historical. Dicken uses the novel as a platform for social reform. And the trend to project the idea and philosophical elements through the novel began to develop.

By the end of 19th century the novels written by many writers including those of India began to show narration of story, development in plot and style and characters, including in ideological theories. In India, also era of writing novel in English vernacular languages began. Bankimchandra Chatterjee's novel, namely, Raj Mohan's *Wife* published around 1864 in English shows focus of reformed moral view held by woman besides other Indian settings. About earlier novelist, Usha Parmeshwaram comments as:

The early novelists give us conducted tours
of India, past present in language copied

form the works of the English Romantics and Victorians.¹³

L. B. Dey's *Govind Samant: Bengal Peasant Life* [1874] edges Rajmohan's *Wife* as a significant novel skipping the theme of romance to realism.

During the early 20th century the novels began to show the theme and plot constructions and also rejection of customary view of life. William Golding published *Lord of the Flies* in 1954 - is an allegorical novel developing the theme of evil and conflict between good and evil. In Indian English literature also, A Madhaviah published his novel *Clarinda* [1915] - depicting woman character as its heroine.

Thus, the novel progressed from earlier stages in simple story telling and began to show clarity in plot characterization and thematic perception and also skillful narration of the story and what the characters have to say M. K. Naik, a distinguished critic remarks about cause of novel as:

Fiction, of all literary forms, is most vitally concerned with social conditions and values, and at this time, Indian society galvanized into new social and political awareness, was bonded to seek creative expression for its new consciousness and

the novel has, in all ages, been a handy instruments for this purpose. ¹⁴

Since then, the novel began to flourish by many writers as an art in itself. Just as sculptor produces a work of sculpture as an art of expression, in the same way many creative writers produced the novel in form of art as an expression of greatness with definitive ideologies.

Modern Novel:

What we call novel in modern times have been, initially, in practice in literary works of 20th century which introduces novels with embedded clear, developed and methodical way of plot and characterization besides art of narration. Moreover, the novels of modern times began to show historical and cultural heritage and its background. This is due to fact that major events in the world have deeply influenced many writers.

When Aldans Huxley [1894-1963] wrote Brave new world – the Second World War was hovering on mankind. It depicts, as lighthouse tower, the fears of thoughtful people about further of mankind and manipulations of human beings and values.

H. G. Wells, Great writer of Science fiction published stories like, *The Time Machine*, *The Invisible Man* and *The First Man on the Moon*, all showing visionary prospects besides scientific hypothesis.

On Indian scene of literary field, Raja Rao Published *Kanthapura*, and *The Serpent and Rope*. All these works of Raja Rao have Indian scenes, cultural and differentials the philosophy of East and west. Raja Rao's *The Serpent and Rope* narrates the story of Brahmin and Brahminnal attitude toward life and using various facts of national and international, the conflicts of ways of life of the east and the west have been developed in wider sense of the term making the novel as that of interest Raja Rao has used technical resources [of modern novel] including monologue, symbolism and retrospective art of narration. Raja Rao's latest novel, *The Chess Master and His Moves* is rich in language and plot and projects larger cast of memorable character – Indian, European, African and Jewish moving the novel from France to London and Himalaya to Bengal and various continents.

Thus, new type of novels such as visionary, apocalyptic and allegorical began to usher in Indian and world literature.

In the post-independence era Indian English fiction not only reflects a rich diversity but also has won universal recognition. And also Indian English novel has undergone a significant development in keeping with recent trends in contemporary fiction showing remarkable growth especially in the area of fiction.

In the recent years noteworthy fiction written by writers of Indian origin has emerged on the world literary scene. Since 1981, Indian writers, such as Salman Rushdie, Amita Desai, Vikram Seth, Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy, have emerged as major literary figure on the

international scene. These writers, holding center stage in contemporary scenario, have given expression on their creative urge.

The modern novelist Salman Rushdie published *The Midnight's Children* – about relation between national issues and the individual. *The God of small things* by Arundhati Roy, *The Great Indian novel* by Shashi Tharoor and Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* and *The Shadow Lines* are modern Indian novels of prominence creating world wide attention.

During the last quarter of 20th century Indian English novels have displayed the awareness, among the creative writers, that the culture and social systems of Indian of present as well as of past have great potentialities for exploration through creating Indian fiction in English.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* – narrates the life of Ammu and her two children Rahel and Estha coming up from Syrian Christian family in Kerala. In different walks of life, Ammu sees suffering and notion of distrust in caste and religions. Her inter-caste marriage results into divorce and humiliation to her children. Arundhati Roy, in this novel, draws the scene of defiance that transcends local as well as national boundaries in post-colonial time.

In 1985, Anita Desai, winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award, Published a novel namely, *Bye Bye Black Bird* – which is a story of Dev and Adit being Indians in England are facing hard time in England. The immigrants from India and other countries have to struggle hard for

setting in England. Anita Desai has treated this novice theme in her novel.

Manohar Mulgaonkar's *A Bend on the Ganges* [1964]—depicts the violence arised from partition in India and also inquiries into the implication of Gandhian way of life in a nation and also in public and private life of people. Bhabani Bhattacharya in his novel, *Shadow from Ladhakh* [1966] express same ideology as that's of Manohar Mulgaonkar.

Amitav Ghosh created novels namely, *The Circle of Reason*. *The Shadow Lines* using historical facts and its innovations and ethnic problems of individuals. Ghosh, through these novels gives alarming meaning out of interaction of historical faith and riots of Delhi, Calcutta, and Dhaka which fill these novels.

Just as H. G. Wells in his novel, *The First Man on the Moon* projected hypothesis of science and what he foresaw as vision, is now happened, similarly Amitav Ghosh, researcher on anthropology, was projected in his above novels, the new hypothesis of political science by implied questioning of validity of nation based on fragmentary civilization. Amitav Ghosh in his novel namely, *The Shadow Lines* - draws thematically consideration of political freedom, communal conflicts and nationalism.

Such view projects the nation as fragile. However, Amitav Ghosh appears to be claiming that for human survival, a new perception of relationship between man and the man must emerge.

These are the trends of modern novel wherein earlier form and style are deviated also the cultural background and historical events incarnated in present Indian literature raising news meaning and interpretation.

Thus, India has contributed significantly to the world literature. This contribution of India has been chiefly through the Indian writing in English. The men and women novelists are in the forefront in this respect and have brought credit to the Indian english fiction as a distinctive force.

Novels: Categorical View:

Novels are written on various branches of knowledge using it towards life of man and various places, regions, continents. The classification of the novel is made by readers, writers and critics. Categorizing the novels is a tedious and strenuous task and also it is a mechanical procedure for drawing demarcation line between various kinds of novel as they are overlapping each other. Also, the novels are categorized both ways, historically and technically. It is also a very strenuous attempt to categorize them because concept of category of novel is argumentative. Many novels deal with multifarious subjects. And also, single novel, many times, suggests amalgamation of more than one category.

However, sincere endeavor is made here to define the novel from category point of view.

Generally, not strictly, taking into consideration of above views, the novels are categorized as under. The main categories of novels are as under:

1. Historical Novels.
2. Sociological novels.
3. Picaresque novels.
4. Psychological novels.
5. Political novels.
6. Thesis novels.

The above categories of novel are not exhaustive many writers and critics have termed the categories of the novel also as:

1. Visionary novel.
2. Saga novel.
3. Regional novel
4. Autobiographical novel
5. Gothic novel
6. Gandhian ideological novel

The above categories and some of the novels thereof are discussed as under, category wise.

Historical Novel:-

The historical novel is the most important genre in the fiction and many writers have published the novel with scenes, mode of living and man's life in past based on facts which historians recorded as history and such novels became popular as historical novel.

It is really very difficult to define a historical novel through it has displayed imaginary story about the past and also careful reconstruction of people and events based on serious research of historical facts. However, Encyclopedia Britannica expresses the historical novel as:

While before First World War the historical novel was popular because of its colour and its background after the war it was the pragmatically that was sought for in it. It was popular because it strengthened in the reader illusion of reality and imported to him a conviction of documentary evidence and reliability.¹⁵

However, to differentiate fiction from history, modern trend is cited as under:

A point driven in through a book advertisement in the November 1984

edition of the New York Times Book
review: non-fiction gives you the facts.
Fiction gives you the truth. ¹⁶

The novel is not a history, but representation of the life and manners, ways and means and feeling of the people of certain period of historical past. Historical novel is an attempt to present a vivid and clear environment of antiquated past, where people were alive leading their life according to conditions prevailing at their time. Those, who consider the history as dry, are satisfied by going through the pages of historical novel. Historical novelist by blending the characters with life of past, recreated the spirit of time to relive the past. Such are the methods and nature of historical novels of earlier times. It is said that the past has always attracted civilized man to know the past as the matter of interest.

Modern novels by western as well as Indian writers in English are exponent of historical novel to some extent. Recent trend to formulate historical events in the novel can be seen in modern fiction. The modern novels are not historical novels altogether but historical events or happenings are evoked in the novel making it historical novel partially. R. K. Dhawan points out historical novel as:

A historical novel is nothing but an
evaluation of a segment of historical reality
as projected by the novelist whose

techniques of writing fiction enable him to describe his vision of world-vision. ¹⁷

Such is the trend and core of historical novels of modern times. Historical novel has been widely known in England since the time of Sir Walter Scott [1771-1832] who is called the father of historical novel in England. Bulwar Lytton, William Golding, Robert Grave, Charles Reade, Scott and Charles Kingsley are great historical novelists.

In the west, historical novels have been written about two hundred years before whereas, in India and particularly in Indian English literature, historical novels appeared very late and till this day they are very few in numbers.

The first successful historical novel in Indian English literature was *The Baladitya: A Historical Romance of Ancient India* [1930] by A. S. P. Ayyar. A. S. P. Ayyar has been called as a father of the Indian English historical novel and most respected practitioner in India and his historical novels set the model for the Indian English historical novel.

During 19th century, the trend of writing historical novels began to notice and Indian writers in English did not lag behind. T. Ramkrishna Pillai – South Indian writer was among the earliest Indo-English writer, who was under impression of history and employed the history – element in his novels *Padmini: An Indian Romance* [1903] and *The Die for Death: An Indian Romance* [1912].

Padmini: An Indian Romance [1903] depicts romantic adventures and thrilling life of Padmini - a beautiful Indian maiden marries the tribal prince - Srirungarya. The historical romance and events are of the closing of 16th century. The story relates about one of the minister had seized the throne of Chandragiri, surprising escape of the prince - Srirongaraya and brave deed and strength of a village girl - Padmini. It is a well told and straight forward tale. Since it is romantic story, it affects readers to know the princes and their behaviour of romances.

The second novel, by Ramkrishan Pillai, *The Dive for Death: An Indian Romance* [1912] tells the story of romance of frivolous types, which depicts the change of situation of fortune in the life of Devmani, who finally marries Vijaya.

Sir Jogender Singh's novel, *Nurjehan: Romans of an Indian Queen* [1909] is the first successful historical novel in the true sense, in Indian English literature. He wrote this historical novel just as Sir Walter Scott blended the elements of history with romance. Sir Jogender Singh also depicts history and romance in the novel. The novel portrays the famous romance between Saleem a mogul prince and Mehar-un-Nisa - the beautiful daughter of Ghias Beg. They were in ardent love with each other.

Monarch Akbar, Saleem's father played skilful role in successful marriage of Mehar-un-Nisa with Ali Kuli Bag - the brave warrior in Akbar's army and she adopted the name of Nurjehan and became powerful person in the Akbar's region, her becoming widow and

ultimately marries Saleem – the prince and her first lover. Sir Joginder Singh's artistic and successful sketching of history and historical romance makes the novel of interest and readability. Jahangir's love for justice is described by the author as:

I loved him, he said, but justice binds monarchs. A king must do justice at all costs and evenly one must receive his due at the foot of the throne. ¹⁸

Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar gives views that:

Sir Jogender is a good story teller. His novels have a considerable admixture of philosophy and propaganda, but they do not smother the human elements in the stories. ¹⁹

Narsin [1915] is a second historical novel by Sir Jogender Singh.

The Fatal Garland [1910] by Swarnakumari Ghosal – is a story of two friends named Shakti Moti and Nirupama. It depicts common place plodding story like her another novel *An Unfinished Song*. It is set against rural Bengal of 15th century having my average standard story. The novel can be called amateurish efforts. The village life in Bengal, its quarrels, its caste system and its marriages are realistically described in

the novel. The plot of the novel bears rather more to romance than to history and expert use of English language in the novel is superb.

A. Madhaviah is a prolific and prominent south Indian writer. In addition to translation of the Ramayan, he wrote a historical novel *Clarinda* in 1915, which depicts the marriage of an Indian widow and daughter of Anndit Rao. The Seewan of Maraja of Tanjare with an English officer Lystleton, whom she finds a perfect and suitable person for her life partner. She possessed a strong will and took decision suitable to her.

A. S. P. Ayyar [1899-1963] who thought worked as District and Sessions Judge is remembered for his fourth historical novels, namely *Baladitya* [1930], *Three Man of Destiny* [1939], *Shivaji* [1944] and *Chankaya and Chandragupta* [1951]. But first two are main and important. *Baladitya: A Historical romance of Ancient India* [1930] has been called the first Indian English historical novel. In this novel, Ayyar depicts the lives of people and what conditions of social, religious and political prevailed in India of late 15th century as well as in early 16th century. Imagined characters – Baladitya, Bhumaka and Yashodharman are depicted in novel, with their interaction.

Three Man of Destiny [1939] is a second historical novel of Ayyar. It narrates the story of Alexander, Chandragupta Maurya and Chankaya of ancient time in India. Chankaya is portrayed for his brave deeds in establishing Maurya kingdom in India. Chanakya is remarkable for his strong willed adherence to the tenets of Dharma and

Duty. The brave deeds of Alexandra and Chanakya are vividly portrayed creating effects of historical events. The author has also records his impression of Brahmins – Saints and system of economy in early 15th century in India. Intermingled story with reference to social and cultural facts of history gives interesting look into the past.

Mr. Ayyar is called the narrator of historical stories Mr. P. P. Mehta, narrates Mr. Ayyar's style as:

Mr. Ayyar usually has a plot and a moral but his characters are wooden and his stories lack interest, is human is forced. Mr. Ayyar has mastery over English. He has diligence, but he will hold his place as a narrator of our ancient stories of India in modern English. His parables and allegories in English garb show a distinctively fertile mind. ²⁰

Thus, Mr. Ayyar has contributed to the Indian English literature especially in writing about Indian life with its historical back ground and he has brought the history in literature form in English.

Mrs. Vimla Raina's first historical novel, *Ambupali* [1962] depicts the story of the prostitute Ambapali – who was the woman loved by all in Magadh and in Vaishali. The author has produced the ground work of history and religion. The character of Ambupali portrayed as a

woman of warm-blooded and loving and even though so pure woman. So in the novel, Buddha is preaching his gospels and showing the path of the nirvana. The novel recreates the period of ancient India. The author has shown understanding for Buddhism and history in the novel.

Manohar Malgoukar's *Devils Wind* [1972] has significant elements. The characters are actual great men drawn from history around 1857. In the novel, heroes named Duddu Pant, and Nana Saheb, last of Peshwa, ex-princely ruler who played vital role in mutiny of 1857 against English rule in India. The novel is somewhat lengthy in three parts narrating the life of rise and fall of Nana Saheb and events at Kanpur. The novel has very sound historical effect and depicts great historical scene and tells the story of Nana Saheb Peshwa.

Chaman Nahal's novel, *Azadi* [1975] with the theme of India's freedom struggle and resultant partition of India. The novel focuses the events of the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre and refugees and murder of Gandhi. The realism of recent past is recreated in its exact nature of events. The violence that followed India's partitions is shown as bare realities. The plight of uprooted families is narrated creating diminishing importance of freedom in India. Novel of similar theme of violence has been published by Khushwant Singh with its *Train to Pakistan* in 1956.

The novel, *Train to Pakistan* is about partition of India. It is set in a symbolic imaginary village named Nano Majra located at the border line drawn between India and Pakistan. The story of Juggatsingh, a

dacoit and his love to Nooran is narrated creating supremacy (of love) over racial consideration. And symbol of train loaded with Nooran and her community is shown. Juggatsingh out of his love to Nooran saves the train and Nooran from massacre and sacrifices his life. The story upholds the belief that love knows no racial boundaries. The use of native linguistic style of located village and art of humour and love recreates the image of historical past.

Khushwant Singh's latest novel, *Delhi* [1984] is also a historical novel – depicts the story of Delhi from its beginnings to the present time and has epic dimension. In the novel, some historical events are narrated in a fictional manner.

The Sword of Tipu Sultan [1976] by B. S. Gidwani portrays the character of Tipu Sultan – a tiger of Mysore with great ideology. The novel has made memorable and great contribution to the writing of historical novel in the 20th century.

Historical Reading of Amitav Ghosh's Novels:-

Amitav Ghosh's novels pervade with both historical and political evaluation of past. Amitav Ghosh has written novels namely *The Circle of Reason* [1986] and *The Shadow Lines* [1988] both the novels reveal the historical events through the whole novel can not be identified exclusively as historical novel.

In *The Shadow Lines* Amitav Ghosh narrates the historical events in his skillful art of writing the novel. The events of past surely as war devastated England, civil disturbances in past partition of Bengal and riots of Calcutta are embedded in the novels and attempt is made to recreate the effect of the events of the past. The span of time i. e. historical of the novel is of about four decades from 1940 to 1980. In the novel, the events of history of recent past are mentioned as newspaper clipping. *The Shadow Lines* cannot be categorized exclusively as historical novel even though it depicts the incidents, mode of living of past.

Pallavi Gupta in her evaluation of *The Shadow Lines* from historical novel point of view opines as:

The only resources, the relies of the past, which narrator - historian possesses to graft his history are memories, photographs, and Tridib's stories which are difficult to dismiss because they are factually correct yet set in a medium of fiction. ²¹

Amitav Ghosh's another novel, *In An Antique Land* [1993] - aimed at combination of fiction and history. This novel narrates the life of Abraham Ben Yiju, his family and friend Khadut who travels to Mangalore on west coast India for trade purpose around mid twentieth century. The novel throws light on life in India of 12th century. Also, the

novel portrays the repercussion of villagers of Lataifa in the Iran-Iraq war. The novel portrays the world of trade and commerce in Indian Ocean the Arabian Sea, and Persian Gulf.

The historical time span, in the novel extends from 12th century to late 20th century moving through various place like Egypt, Aden, Mangalore, Tunisia in old times and India and U. S. A. in modern times The novice technique is used by Ghosh to interpret the history and its effect on individual. The novel portrays the world of trade and commerce in Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf. While commencing, *In An Antique Land* Bharati A. Parikh express the novel as:

To quote Milan Kundera, a modern novel should accomplish the supreme intellectual synthesis which *In An Antique Land* does attain. It satisfies our longing for the far off lands as well as India's prime achievement in the by gone era in the field of navigation.

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Amitav Ghosh's novels show the modern trend of historical novel. Modern novels can not be exclusively classified under the category of historical novels as they deal with the history as a base for framing new interpretation of various ideologies and philosophies with reference to individual rather than the whole of mankind.

Amitav Ghosh, as a historical novelist who brings creative imagination to bear upon the dry facts of historians and antiquarian and also out of mass of scattered historical materials greened from a variety of sources, evolves a picture having a fullness and unity of a work of art.

Amitav Ghosh's novel, *The Glass Palace* [2000] was the first historical novel. It describes real historical events and contains real historical characters. *The Glass Palace* is one particular chamber in the old royal Palace in Mandalay and was destroyed during the war 1945. It was a huge chamber covered with mirror and glass. It was a symbol of palace itself and of the royal family. The dynastic history of Burma is called *The Glass Palace* chronicles. The novel deals with the recent history of Burma.

There are numbers of five historical passages. The novel also follows the change in Burma. The novel begins in Burma, in its last days of independence. The story tells about a young orphaned Indian boy Rajkumar later on becomes a successful businessman with the help of Saya John. The role of Indians in the British armed forces remains a significant one throughout the novel. The novels' rushed and dealing with Burma's recent history. Ghosh's writing is remarkably uneven. The novel has won several awards and literary prizes. The novel, *The Glass Palace* is Ghosh's historical epic and is the mother of all historical epics.

The Glass Palace is a novel about historical representation. It brings together history, fiction, autobiographical records and memories. Historical characters like king Thebaw and his family and fictional characters like Rajkumar, Dolly, Saya John, and Uma reflect upon the historical events. Each of Amitav Ghosh's books, except *Countdown*, invariably focuses on themes in history. Ghosh focuses on the movement between India, Malaya and Burma. *The Glass Palace* has a terrific historical sweep, from the old Raj to the contemporary United States.

Sociological novel:-

Social novels give a fairly complete picture of the life of people including their manners, customs, way of life, as well as its natural background or environment [at certain places] which enter into composition of social novel. The plain meaning of social novel is that it deals problems of the upper classes the middle classes, lower classes, as well as of industrial life, commercial life and artistic life in different localities of different towns and cities.

The definition of sociological novel mentioned in Encyclopedia Britannica is expressed in the following words:

The modern sociological novel endeavors to comprehend in one glance, the whole class which it portrays. The sociological novels of the times take for their subject

mater not one arbitrary individual but the whole society of today. Their works teach their readers to understand and to sympathize with the life of citizens and disclose the outlook of the proletariat. This new sociological fiction has converted the novel from luxury of the idle rich into a necessity for busy workers. ²³

Some of the views that: man is social unit that man is colonial animal, and sociological novel being creative fiction of man, has rooted extensively into the social fabric. Novelist of sociological novels aims at the misery prevailing in the society and to give voice to the sufferings and sorrows of society with a view to create betterment of social conditions.

The English writers, like Jane Austen, Emily Bronte, Leo Tolstoy, Sinclair Lewis, throws light on sociological elements of society and also published the novels of noteworthiness and through their characters described social as well as romantic aspirations of people of their time and place.

Emily Bronte's, *Wuthering Heights* [1847] Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* [1813] and *Mansfield Park* [1814] are written with social purposes, social scenes and shows the social way of life through the characters.

In Indo-English fiction, many writers wrote the novels of sociological category. Indian writers in English like Shevantibai Nikambe, K. K. Sinha, A Madhaviah, Cornelia Sorabji, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Babhani Bhattacharya, Ruth Prawar, Jhabwala, Kamala Markandaya and Raja Rao, all have attempted to display the social problems and ideologies as well as social customs in their novels.

Many facts of society, in different places are attracted by above writers. The evils of marriage system in earlier India were deeply rooted in the social system. K.K. Sinha in his novel *The Star of Sikri* [1893] and A. Madhaviah in his novel *Lieutenant Colonel Panju: A Modern Indian* [1934] have projected the tradition of marriage in the society.

K.K. Sinha's *The Star of Sikri* [1893] is the story of a minor Girl of eleven years only named Rajni Kumari married to a person of her parents choice at her premature edge of marriage is depicts. Rajni Kumari on her marriage to the man refuses to accept the man as her husband. During her growing up period of life, he girl Rajni develops the true meaning of marriage and transcends social evil of ethical marriages. However, endeavor has been made towards a social evil and shows her why for social reform. The novel deals with the theme of evils of child marriage system, which is deeply rooted in social system in earlier India.

Whereas A. Madhaviah in his novel, *Lieutenant Colonel Panju: A Modern Indian* [1934] portrays the courageous woman character named komalam who faces the advice of his mother in law given to her

husband to remarry for sole intension to have male child. The novel also describes the love affair of Panju's sister Kunju whose self confidence is aimed to show what successful marriage is. The woman's lust for having grandson rooted in old families in the societies, are intermingled with woman's prejudices in the society.

The novel like *Ratubai* [1895] by an educated social worker Sherandibai Nikambe and *Shubla: A Child Mother* [1920] by a lawyer Condia Sorabji upholds the position of woman in the society of their time.

One of the earlier names, in Indo-English fiction is of Shevantibai Nikanibe. Who is suffering woman and the established a school for Hindu women. Her novel *Ratubai* [1895] depicts the story of marathi Brahmin woman married as a child, but she, in absence of her husband educated by her father, which shows fruitful result of woman education at the time when society rejected the systems of giving education to girls in the family. The themes of his novel are to propagate women education in the society for the betterment of the household.

The novel, *Shubla: A Child Mother* [1920] by Cornelia Sorabji describes the shameless and ill-treatment of child wife-Subla, who is deprived of medical treatment by Shubla's in-laws, believing in Indian religions superstition in that tie. The novelist Cornelia Sorabji who is well educated lawyer and keenly interested in woman's problem , has tried to diffuse the shameful evils in treating the woman in a man [not woman] dominated society and to awaken the Indian families believing

in strict retention of traditional observations. The very purpose of the novelist is to propagate for rethinking of social customs at that time in India. Cornelia Sorabji was taking very keen interest in her woman's problems. Sorabji's endeavors culminated in court of wards act 1897.

Mulk Raj Anand's novels viz, *Two Leaves and a Bind* [1937], *The Village* [1939], *The Big Heart* [1945] describe different life and different societies, from man's point of view. His novel, *Two Leaves and a Bind* [1937] describes miserable and abominable condition of workers in the tea-plantations in Assam. The main character, named Gangu, his wife Sajini and his daughter Leila, all work as labours in the plantation. Mr. Reggie Hunt, European white a owner of plantation allured by beauty of young girl - Leila whom he attempt to assault and her father tries to rescue her but white man shoots him dead. Through the tea planter brought to court, he being white man is acquitted by English judge. The novel develops social condition and her name is economic exploitation of labours by capitalist.

Mulk Raj Anand's another novel, *The Village* [1939] describes protagonist Lalusingh a Sikha villager and a famous living in Nandpur. Though Lalusingh meets failure after failure at the village, he fights and is attracted by temptation of city life and leaves her villages and traditional social behaviour of villages.

In *The Big Heart* [1945], Mulk Raj Anand draws a picture of traditional coppersmith and capitalist introducing medicines. The story

depicts the conflict between traditional and progressive medicines and how the people react to machine oriented industry.

Mulk Raj Anand's another novel, *Untouchable* [1935] narrates the story of Bakha – the sweeper and his struggle against Hindu of higher cast. He has thought that his system for his class was made by the people and not by the super power called destiny. The novel is based on the themes of isolation of untouchables from Hindu high caste society. The novel throws light on caste system prevailing at that time in India.

Coolie [1936] describes the story of a hill boy and his misfortune in different cities in India. The novel based on theme of exploitation.

Mulk Raj Anand through the above novels develop the theme of Socio-economic and progressive Anand uphold modernity in its confrontation with traditional way in the society and simultaneously social problem at the core and inhuman conditions of work in the society are depicted through the tactful handling of it in fiction of art. However, there are many opinions about him as committed novelist who fulfils his social obligations without detriment to art. The novels of Anand are having ideologies of Gandhiji, Lenin and Marx. Dr. Mulk Raj Anand is committed writer-writing with purposes as a novelist – Mr. P. P. Mehta opines on Dr. Anand as:

Anand is a crusader against injustice of every type. He set his face against the exploitation of the poor by any class. This

included the British masters, the village money lenders, the businessman, the native rulers, priests and tea planters so acute is his sympathy for the poor and the oppressed that in his novels. We some times find another cry with anguish against the injustice so common in those days. ²⁴

Dr. Anand and his novels became famous in west also. H. H. Williams comments, Anand as:

Anand Sticks to social realism, excluding religion and Indian philosophy as irrelevant to the struggle for economic and political power by the under privileged. ²⁵

Novelists of sociological novels, attempt to bring out social relationship among people with special reference to certain ideology with a view to create the social atmosphere for alarming against social evils side by side to create the better picture by removal or abandonment of social imperfections. Such trend is depicted by R. K. Narayan - one of the big three in his novels. His novel *Dark Room* [1938] brings out the plight of baffled the woman Savitri who on learning her husband's liaison with his assistant - Shantabai, tries seriously for suicide but immediately returns to her family and face the situation for improving and her husbands social behaviour. The novel shows that,

the family relations in domestic life are not concord. The important characters are very well portrayed in the novel.

Narayan's another novel; *The Sweet Vender* [1967] narrates the courageous widower. Jeggan and the biggest sweet seller of the town, who instead of living in seclusion adopts the profession of selling sweets for promoting growth of his only son Mali. Even though, the son is fail to fulfill the dream of Jeggan. The novel as regards thematically, it is related to *The Financial Expert*. The novel projects the father-son-relationship in preview of the changing social life. In her novel, the main character Jegan is portrayed very significantly and thematically.

R. K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends* [1935] has well described the life of swaminathan - a school boy. The characters drawn in the novel are convincing and realistic. The R. K. Narayan's name as social reformer is well known.

His next novel, *Bachelor of Arts* [1936] depicts the story of Chandran - a college youth. He has been shocked when he learns that the horoscope of his beloved does not match with his own horoscope. Ultimately, he accepts an arranged marriage. The writer has depicted memorable characters. In the novel, family created, is the centre of action.

The Financial Expert [1952] depicts the characters of Balu - an important character provides the plot of the novel. Narayan has made study in the field of behaviour and psyche of only son of middle class

family of India. The female characters Menakshi and Brinda represent the type of Indian housewife.

Waiting for the Mahatma [1955] is a very good attempt of love story. Gandhian ideology is reflected in the novel with the Gandhian theme. In the novel, Narayan's art lies in the delineation of life and its comic undertones.

Though setting of R. G. Narahan is regional and traditional, it definitely brings out the relationship between society and individual.

Music for Mohini [1952] by Babhani Bhattacharya can be catalogued as social novel. It is a story of Jaydev, Bengali, educated, and his wife Mohini –a radio artist. The story narrates interaction in the family. Jaydev's mother who is orthodox expects a male child from Jaydev but Jaydev's helplessness leads his mother to try religious superstitious and forces Mohini to give heart's blood as scarifies to goddess of virginity but Jaydev's timely arrival saves Mohini. Thus the social-religious evils are attacked and what kind of man and society at that time and place is exposed to enlighten the reform.

In his another novel, *He Who Rides a Tiger* [1954]-projects the life of Bengali-Kalo who is famine stricken poor blacksmith –Kalo. Due to hunger, Kalo seeks work in Calcutta but he is ridiculed by society of Calcutta. Though he earns money, his conscience is hurt by useless resistance. The novel depicts social and religions disparities among various places in the societies.

Further, in novel, *Goddess Named Gold* [1960] Bhattacharya alarms the evils of illegal economic battle and exposes unhealthy socio-economic activities that corrode the society.

Nargis Dabal's novel, *Inner Door* [1975] depicts how the system of religious worship and the sacrifice in name of God rooted in practice create the corrosion in the society.

Rutu Pawar Jhabwala, through her novels describes the plight of woman in compare to man in society. In her novel, *To Whom She Will* [1953] depicts the story of modern Bengali Girl, named Amrit is deprived of his choice in marriage and forced to marry a person other than whom she loved. Whereas, *In Esmond in India* [1958] freedom of woman are discussed in the man dominated society.

A Backward Place [1965] is known almost as a complement of her novel *Esmond in India*. It depicts the story of Judy—an English girl married an Indian Bal, who is an optimist. Her next novel, *Nature of Passion* is set on the upper class life in New Delhi. It depicts the story of Verma's family realistically. Nimmi - a beautiful college girl and daughter of Verma was in love with Feroze as she was fashionable and modern and was living free life.

In A New Dominion [1972] - story falls in three natural situations as Delhi, Benars and Mampur of Rajasthan. The novel projected western view of modern India. The story tells about Indian life, the hippie

students, Swamiji and foreign tourists. Her next novel, *Heat and Dust* [1975] tells the story of two Englishmen who live in India. Olivia - an English woman and the wife of Douglas run away with the Nawab of Khutm. It is a story of Olivia along with the story of the narrator and moves on past and the present and depicts Olivia's story and her step grand daughter's story. The novel has won most prestigious literary award, the Booker Prize. Mrs. Jhabwala displays nuances of social life through her novels.

Kamala Markandya - another woman novelist emerged with much significance in post-independence era. Her first novel *Nector in a Sieve* [1954] vividly describes the story of poverty stricken people, heart breaking farmers of Madras province and tells about Rukmani - her husband Nathem and about her six children. The true life of south Indian villages painted vividly and realistically.

Her next novel, *A Silence of Desire* [1961] tells the story of Dandekar and his wife Sarojini. It has narrated the ancient conflicts of Science against superstition, religion against materialism and easterly traditions against western progress. Sarojini has a deep faith in spiritual therapy of Swamiji for cure of her tumor in the uterus. Later on the Swamiji had left the town and Sarojini cured from her tumor through the operation in the hospital Markandaya's next novel, *Possession* [1963] deals with the problems of possession having more or less the same theme of *A Silence of Desire*. It tells his story of lady Carolina - the beautiful english woman - her possession with Valmiks - an illiterate peasant by and Swamiji of modern time.

The next novel, *A Handful of Rice* [1966] depicts the story of a poor villager - Ravi who seeking job in the Madras city, is the story of the decline and fall of Ravi's fortunes. The conditions of middle class and poor families described very realistically with background of poverty and numerous children. It tells that it is difficult to live an honest life in India through the life of Ravi.

In *The Coffey Dams* [1969], Markandaya projects the traditional conflict of Material and human values between the problems of tribesmen and industrialists. A British firm had taken up a project of construction of a Dam across a river in south India. The novel describes the superiority complete of foreigners who think that Indian people are not capable of building a dam.

Markandaya, in her next novel, *The Now Here Man* [1972] depicts the life of Srinivas - an Indian who settled in London. His two sons - Laxman was an engineer in the British Army and Seshu - was in the royal Air Force as a navigator. Laxman marries put - an English girl and cannot spare time to look after his parents. Seshu leaves Air Force Job and becomes a lorry driver and died in an accident. Vasantha - a wife of Srinivas died due to tuberculosis leaving Srinivas alone. It is perhaps first novel of the racial problem in England and shows pathetic condition of the people of England with the touching delineation of their problems through the characters.

The novels discussed above re projecting the social situation with reference to individual man and woman, their problem, and how they react in the societies. Above novels depict different situation in different societies of different paces with a view to enlighten man and woman towards evils of societies.

Sociological Reading of novels of Amitav Ghosh:-

The Shadow Lines [1988] by modern novelists - Amitav Ghosh - reflects, deeply the sociological problems of individuals and various religious groups indulged in clash and violence. The novel describes many societies and places of erstwhile India. The novel encompasses the greater life of Tridib as well as narrator's grandmother and his cousin Ila and English girl May Price. The life of mere characters are narrated in pre and post colonial period at her places and how they paid heavy price for freedom on the facet of riots. Amitav Ghosh through this novel describes the life of people of Indian subcontinent and how they face violence and how riots harm the society. Vivid description of riots of 1964 with equal similarity of any other riot of other time and place with its impact deadly impact on lives of people are made with author's outstanding narrative technique. The novel develops in artful narration of fiction, various themes theme of violence, freedom, partition of India, communal frenzy and national boundaries. It also reveals the society of middle class with its tragic social conditions followed by violence in riots.

R. K. Dhawan, while introducing the novel, *The Shadow Lines* shows that catastrophically of 1984 in India – such as separate violence in Punjab, murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, setting fire to Sikh houses in Delhi have greatly influenced Amitav Ghosh, who has written the novel *The Shadow Lines* after these events. R. K. Dhawan expresses the background and Ghosh's statement as:

Within a few month, Ghosh started his new novel which he eventually called '*The Shadow Lines*', a book that led him backward in time to earlier memories of riots, once witnessed in childhood. It became, says Ghosh, a book not about any one event, but about the meaning of such events and their effects on the individuals who live through them. ²⁶

Amitav Ghosh thus describes the sociological problems of not an individual but of many individuals who suffer the deadly effects of violence in modern world. Alarming situations, threatening the very existence of individual, rooted in the minds of social and political groups, are highlighted as a caution to the society of modern India. Amitav Ghosh is a sociological writer in the sense that he is very sharply aware of the implications of cruelties and injustice arising from violence in practice in the society of his time.

Thus, Amitav Ghosh projects socio-political problems of individuals in clash between communal groups and nationalism. Even though, the novel, *The Shadow Lines* transcends the restricted category of sociological novels.

The novels discussed above pose the sociological problems and state of societies at different time and different places. Nowever, the latest trend in this regard can be learned through the novels of Amitav Ghosh propelling ethnological plight of society.

Picaresque Novel:-

The word Picaresque probably, has been originated from Spanish word, *Picaro* which means a thief or a rogue. It was 'applied' to any story of considerable length in which many events separate events of humourous or violent nature are connected together only because they occurred to main character. In English, the main character in the story or play is traditional called Hero but in a picaresque story the word, Hero does not suit because the hero in picaresque novel is rogue. Such novels whose hero is *Picaro* of Spanish meaning is called Picaresque novel.

The dictionary meaning of word, Picaresque, as per Oxford Dictionary is as,

Picaresque = [of a style of fiction] dealing
with adventures of rogues. ²⁷

The early famous novels of Picaresque type or narrative stories in Europe are *Till Eulenspiegel from Germany*, *Lazarillo – de – Tormes from Spain* and *Gil Blas* [1715] written by the French man Le Sage from France. These types of novels survival later in also, such as *Huckleberry Finn* by *Mark Twain* and *The Adventures of Angie Marely* by Saul Bellow. The novel as we know think or see is emerged in England in the early 18th century. In 1719, Daniel Defoe wrote, *Robinson Crusoe* and in 1722 *Moll Flanders*. Bom Huge novels are of picaresque in type.

Fielding and Smollett have attempted stories in the picaresque style. Fielding's *Tom Jones* and Smollett's *Roderick Random* are picaresque type anti-heroes. Thomas Nashe earns credit of first writer of a picaresque novel and his hero [rather an anti-hero] i.e. Jock Wilton.

The category of picaresque novel, though old and simple in form and style is not outdated. There has been many novels [some of them in film.] with their anti-heroes in various episodes, which descended from *Tom Jones* in nature and style. Picaresque novels have survived since long time in style and fashion. *David Copperfield*, *Oliver Twist* and *Great Expectations* all by Charles Dickens [1812-70] have tendency of strong element of the picaresque.

In indo-Anglian literature, the stories of picaresque style became famous on earlier films dealing characters of hero and anti-hero. Due to social reform and political awareness becoming popular science muting of 1857, against British rule in India, the earlier indo-Anglian novels

mostly depicted the political and social reforms and romance under influence of western ideology.

Modern Indian English writers of the novel do not depict the picaresque style of adventure stories of 'Hero' and 'Anti Hero'. However, picaresque elements are seen in the story of modern Indian English novel. Due to abundance of raw materials from history and politics available to the writers, the modern novel reflects the ideologies of political and historical events especially India being engulfed into political activities almost in all walks of life during pre and post independence period.

Picaresque Reading of Amitav Ghosh's novel - *The Circle of Reason*:-

Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason* creating many circles of Criticisms and comments on its publications, among Indian as well as world literary fields. The novel, *The Circle of Reason* depicts picaresque type elements in various within story. The picaresque novel describes adventure of hero in a story. In an identical picaresque style the protagonist, in, *The Circle of Reason*, travels from Lalpular in India - To Al Ghazira in Egypt on to El-Qued of Algerian Sahara.

The Story of Alu shows adventures form many towns, cities and villages. The character - Alu - is suspected as terrorist in Lalpukar and he goes to Kerala and then to Al-Ghazira. Alu's traveling from Lalukar to Calcutta, to Kerala and to Al-Ghazira and El-Qued with police

behind him are picaresque type adventures and it reminds the reader Fielding's character – Tom Jones.

The novel depicts the adventure of the hero in unheroic manner and creates the impression of the novel as picaresque type of novel. Reading of this novel, introduces Ghosh's intellect of using the accounts of languages befitting to various places of visit by Alu. S. Sengupta, in his article – An Allegorical Tom Jones: An analysis of Amitav Ghosh's, *The Circle of Reason* – elucidates as:

An unheroic hero, his adventures in different lands and his interaction with different people, wit, humour, satire – the novel has all the elements of the picaresque.²⁸

Apart from above, the novel depicts the role of reason in different social events and different social people. By using technique of novel writing, Amitav Ghosh expresses the study of man in social encounters at various places of different countries. Prasannarajan expresses his comments of novel as:

It was an exuberant lour-de-force with folk-tale charm of the Arabian–Nights, a Don Quixote of another era, while narrating the evolution of AM, the boy with extraordinary head-huge, several times too large

for an eight year old and curiously uneven, bulging all over with knots and bumps. Ghosh was at the same time engaged in mega celebration of ideas and concepts. ²⁹

The novel, apart from the picaresque elements, depicts the ethnic problem of modern man subjected to dislocation in life. Darshna Trivedi in her article *Here's God plenty consider the novel 'The Circle of Reason'* as:

The Circle of Reason (1986) the most significant novel by Amitav Ghosh deals with the modern man's problem of alienation, migration and the existential crisis in life. ³⁰

Thus, modern writers while writing novels formulates the technique using picaresque elements with other projection of history and ideological elements in collaboration.

Psychological novel:-

Dr. Sigmund Freud brought his illustrious and highly talented thesis on psycho-analysis which intensively moved the base of human thinking. Freud exposed that man has got suppressed thoughts and desires in his sub-conscious mind. And experiment in the light of

psycho-analysis began and it brought new horizons for the novelist. The oxford dictionary gives meaning of psychology as:

Science of nature, functions, and phenomena of human mind, treatise on or system of this. ³¹

And Encyclopedia Britannica, classifying the modern psychological novel as poetical novels express as:

Proceeding from the individual poetic vision which follows exclusively the author's need of self-expression not aiming at the exposition of a great continuity of ideas not at a fixed psychological goal. ³²

During late 19th century and early 20th century period, novelist deviating from age old methods of story-telling began to follow the principles of Freud and other psycho-analysts and invited the readers to enter into the minds of their characters. Among earlier writers, Dorothy Richardson, George Eliot, Henry, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, all these writers developed psychological trends and satirical exposure in the novels and they are considered psychological novelists. Out of them, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf are most significant and outstanding examples.

Modern psychological novels reflect deeper and more searching inwardness of human experience. Through the medium of psychological novels, the characters of self-experience and their feelings and grievances began to emerge. Dorothy Richardson gives to the reader the inner picture of mind of a woman.

Publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses* [1922] is considered a major and most important event in the history of the English novel. The *Ulysses* through very difficult to grasp, depicts the life of a single man, a poet and a teacher named Stephen Dedalus in one single day. Absolute and novice feature of the novel is that it projects multiple dimensions of thinking by man and flow of his inner consciousness of mind.

Virginia Woolf [1882-1941] is considered a follower of James Joyce, when she wrote *Mrs. Dalloway* - which portrays life of aristocratic lady in London in a single day and explored arena of subconscious with poetic sensibility.

In the history of Indian English literature the years 1874 to 1930 is witnessed for the emergence of psychological novels. Majority of them are written by women novelists, who have written very significant novels in quality. Following novels are mentioned here as examples to show how the psychological feature of novel progressed from earlier time to present novels of modern times and also as forerunners of psychological reading of novels of Amitav Ghosh.

Torru Dutt [1856-1877] is a poetess, even though, she wrote novel on *Romance Bianca* or *The Spanish Maiden* [1878]—which depicts the character - Binaca Garcia, who is daughter of Spanish gentleman settled in an English village. The major parts of the novel deal with romances. However, in the beginning Toru Dutt describes deep sorrow of Bianca and her father on the death of her sister and this emotional gust of feeling of sorrow perceiving psychological elements create better effects on readers.

Swarnakumari Ghosal Devi [1855-1932] wrote a novel *An Unfinished Song* [1913] portrays the character of Mrinalini, the narrator bears the impression of song in her memory a song she heard in her childhood days from her cousin, Chotu. The song remains on track of Mrinalini's mind even after she grew up. Other men fail to complete the song but when Chotu her cousin returns to Mrinalini, she hesitates about her love for him. The novel presents the moments of Mrinalini's consciousness of a song feeling from one shade of consciousness in childhood to another in adulthood without stoppage anywhere and conscious music of her song vibrated once again when Chotu returns to her. The imagine heart of woman is perplexingly portrayed through Mrinalini.

Another writer in the field of psychological novel is Krupabai Sathianathan [1862-94] published the novel, *Kamla: A Story of Hindu Wife* [1894], the novel narrates the story of woman's sorrow and agony on losing of her first child in infancy. The novel shows ethnographical description of men in Indian society.

Her second novel, *Saguna: A Story of Native Christian Wife* [1895]. The novel is full of attempt made by the author is worthy and landmark in her field of psychological novel. It is auto biographical in composition and describes Saghna's home in Bombay.

Thillai Govindan [1916] has written by A. Madhavia draws the picture of South Indian Brahmin family. The living Christian caste and way of their life attracted and influenced the Brahmin family purling emotion of Brahmin towards western and Hindu faith is described with reaffirming his faith in Gitiji. The humour and pathos are mingled and described tactfully. Though, the novel has autobiographical text, it deals psychological element of delirium mind as what to follow, west or east.

The modern novelist, Raja Rao, published a new kind of novel, *The Cat and Shakespeare* in 1965 which is produced shorter and symbolic, in which cat is drawn as a symbol of motherly protection and symbolic exploration of Indian consciousness. The novel is considered as most mature of Raja Rao's novels. Besides, it depicts vision of life. The story narrates about Ramkrishna Pai and his friend Govind Nair's philosophy about man and nature.

Thus, the psychological novels caught the attention of writers who, in India and west also created the characters in the novels with stream of sub-conscious mind. And the trend of showing – what the characters thought and felt, began to emerge in the novels.

The Psychological Elements in the novels of Amitav Ghosh:-

The novels by Amitav Ghosh can not be justified in any category including psychological novels. However, his novels, *The Circle of Reason* [1986] and *The Shadow Lines* [1988] show how violence create psychological impression on the minds of people who have passed life through such events of violence. The novel discussing meaning and effect of violence, simultaneously, shows mental delirium of section of society - called majority and minority fragment of communities indulging in violence. The narrative methods used by Ghosh in recollecting the past events connote the psychological track of mind.

In *The Shadow Lines*, the past events are recreated in effect by the Grandmother's response to the narrator about communal experience of Ila in London as:

Ila has no right to live there. She does not belong there. It took those people a long time to build that country years and years of war and blood shed. Everyone who lives there has earned his right to be there with blood..... it was their religion. That is what it takes to make a country. ³³

Thus, psychological memory technique is used by Ghosh in his novel, *The Shadow Lines*. About the technique narrative in *The Circle of Reason*, Novy Kapadia expresses her comments on the novel as:

Like in his previous novel, *The Circle of Reason* there is immense zest in story telling. The narrative technique of uncoiling memories and private turmoil mirrored by public turmoil creates curiosity and makes the style interesting.³⁴

The narrative style of such unveiling memories arouses the reader creating stirring feelings and places Amitav Ghosh as a master craftsman of story writing. Thus, modern novelists like Amitav Ghosh develop their novels, such as above, with psychological element as one of his narrative feature.

The novels by Amitav Ghosh deal with various themes of socio-political as well as socio-historical in multiplicity of time, place and events. So his novel resists categorizing. However, *The Shadow Lines* reveals psychological points of views. In this sense R. K. Dhawan expresses as:

The Shadow Lines takes in the war devastation London, civil strife in post partition east Bengal, and riot hit Calcutta and embodies a major critique of the

psychological make-up of the contemporary man that thrives on violence.

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Thus, the novels of Amitav Ghosh tend to depict the psychological feature in the novel. *The Shadow Lines* which can be considered as psychological novel to some extent.

Political novel:-

The political movements during the war and the struggle for independence in India created deep influences on writers also. The novels, by such writers, written during and after such noteworthy events in political development of the various countries, began to show the tinge of political effects in social standings. Such novels are called political novels. Iring Howe defines the political novel thus:

A political novel is one in which political ideas play a dominant role or in which the political motive is the dominant setting. ³⁶

The Oxford Dictionary gives the meaning of political as:

Political: (1) of or affecting the state or its Govt. of public affairs, of politics (2) (of person) engaged in civil administration. (3) having an organized form of society or

government (4) belonging to or taking a side in politics, relating to person's or organisation's status or influence [a political decision] (5) political asylum, economy political geography ↗ [dealing with boundaries ↗ and possessions of state] political prisoner ↗ persons imprisoned on political offence. ³⁷

The above meaning applied to the novel depicting the socio-political scenario, is at root of political novels. Many writers in west and also in India have attempted such political novels. In fact, the novels published after the First World War and the Second World War began to reflect the politicians and politically motivated societies and men and women.

In English literature two powerful novels about the Second World War, one Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and 2nd Herman Wank's *The Caine Mutiny* are better examples on war and politics and social suffering.

In England, also, Richard Aldington published his novel namely, *Death of a Hero* in 1920, which exposes the horrors of war as well as horrors of battlefield and moral degradations. Beside this, novel depicts the cult of military glory by old men, the shameless lies of politicians and propagandists, along with dreadful victimization of the young generation in the society.

In Indian-English literature, also, the political reflections are founding the novels written by Indian writers writing in English. During three decades prior to independence of India, the Indian English novels reflected the influence by political, socio and ideological ferment caused by freedom struggle Lannehed by Mahatma Gandhiji. In this regards Meenakshi Mukharjee notes:

Contemporary public issues, whether social or political began to interest the writers, and national movement for independence offered them ride and ready material. ³⁸

K. S. Venkataramani [1891-1951] published his second novel, *Kandan, the Patriot: A Novel of New India in the Making* [1932] – which shows stranger, impression of Gandhism. The novel is set against background of freedom struggle. The novel narrates the story of Kundan, Oxford educated Indian young man who resigns from British Govt.'s Indian civil services and joins the freedom movement and finally meets death by police firing. Kundan emerges as hero and delivers his prophetic and patriotic speech before he dies.

Mulk Raj Anand's third novel, *The Sword and The Sikkle* [1942] tells the story of Lalu's participation in Indian struggle for freedom. Lalu intends to play a part during war and faces many hardships for opposing British rule and, attempts to narrate manifold conflicts arising from Govt. against the people and between divisions of people on

political and ideological grounds. The novel also exposes the greedy merchant's exploiting the people.

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* [1938] narrates India's freedom struggle under influence of Gandhiji. *Kanthapura* is a small village in province of Madras. The novel gives graphic description of village life. Hero of the novel is a young man named Murthy who abandon his college education and plunges into freedom movement. Murthy establishes congress committee in *Kanthapura* of which he is elected as the President and he launches many campaign. The despotic and cruel exercises by police and army in power before independence are narrated along with rape of some women by police as evil side of political movement against British Rule.

Manohar Malgaukar's novel *A Bend in Ganges* [1964] narrates the story of freedom fighter and heroism in India. While projecting the novel with the story of struggle of Indian independence, the novelist has interconnected the history Indian partition period showing violent social changes involving heavy displacement. Mr. R. S. Singh considers his novel as:

A Bend in the Ganges was found to be one of the three best novels of 1964 by E. M. Foster and was compared with Tolstoy's *War and Peace* by Richard Chneh in his review of the novel in the *Book man*.³⁹

Nayantara Sahgal is considered as exponent of political novel. Her first novel - *A Time to be Happy* [1958], set in environment of last stages of freedom struggle in India. Its main theme is the awakening of young Sanad to the social and political realities of independent India.

Sahgal's another novel, entitled, *Storm in Chandigarh* [1969] reflects the political background is that of bifurcation of Punjab into two states viz. Punjab and Haryana. The story of novel develops, when the protagonist, Vishal Dubey, a civil servant who goes to Chandigadh to deal with explosive political situation finds enough time to further an affair with a woman - Saroj - whose husband Inder has been attracted by Maya. In the end, Vishal Dubey succeeds in restoring peaceful environment in Chandigarh and also find a better friend Saroj. The novel develops politically as well as socially side by side abuse of wrongly arranged marriage is reflected.

A Situation in New Delhi [1977], published by Nayantaa Sahgal, shows the political machinery rooted in Govt. of free India. The lapses of Govt. inclined toward political decision are narrated. The story revolves around central characters Devi, who feels humiliation on her brother shivaji's death. The story also reveals the courageous move to expel the culprits who are guilty of rape in campus of Delhi Universities and student's agitation the concept of political novel reflects in portraying modern famous politicians and their behaviour implying corrupt practices in their function in the Government.

The political activities and historical changes of India around 1947 and politics noticed in post independence period of India, in various walks of life in India stirred many writers as can be found from above discussion of novel in short. The Indian English literature of the period in second half of 20th century depicts the theme of political movements affecting the life of people of India.

Political reading of *The Shadow Lines* of Amitav Ghosh: -

Amitav Ghosh's second novel, *The Shadow Lines* [1988] draws the situations, plight of the individuals that arise out of political decision relating to national boundaries as well as impact of violence and causalities in riot-communal and political as well. Amitav Ghosh is a sociologist as well as an anthropologist. His novel, *The Shadow Lines* exposes the lives of individuals in the society where the political freedom and social standing of individual are threatened by division of nation.

The novel extensively narrates the riots in Post-Independence Period of India and Ghosh appears to stress them as similar riots in history in its meaning and effect. Historical events and how individual view them are evaluated with political allegory. In this relation, Novy Kapadia in her article titled - Contrasting Strands of Political Nuances in *The Shadow Lines* - express her critique as:

The universal urge for political freedom,
the response to violence and strident

nationalism are some important aspects of contemporary life in the subcontinent stressed in this novel.⁴⁰

There are, however, some controversial opinions about the meaning of political freedom imbued in *The Shadow Lines*, which deals the theme of political problem and communal riots affecting individuals. Mr. A. N. Kaul in his article A Reading of *The Shadow Lines* expresses:

The Shadow Lines is a metaphor for evading rather than exploring political realities, how can Ghosh be interested in the real possibilities and the real difficulties going on beyond nation divisions – that is, in the possibilities of a further historical formulations when for him scarcely exists?

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Against these opinions of Mr. A. N. Kaul, Rahul Sapra reacts and raises questions like:

What is the novels stance vis-à-vis the political problem in the sub continent? Is the sole purpose of the novel to suggest similitude across The Shadow Line borers? Or does the novel also suggest an

alternative to nationalism which has become a source of terrifying violence? ⁴²

The novel develops the theme of freedom by narrating the story of three generations moving between two different cultures in post independence and pre-independence period of India many tendencies of political ideology are reflected in the novel. Through the story of Ila's friend in U. K. running activities on political issues and of Wick Price believing early British colonial theory abandons his job as C. A. in Kuwait due to political indifferences. The novel reflects the conflicting trends of nationalism and political convictions. Ghosh shows that political freedom has different meaning for different people.

The above are some aspects of repercussions of Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* - depicting political perception of sociological problems and communal violence, which awaken the reader - individual into rethinking about political solutions of individuals problems. The novel thus creates lasting substantial impressions on the minds of individuals about political decisions for solution of civil disturbances arising from communal activities of fundamentalism.

Thesis novel:-

War and violence in the World War First from 1914 and second from 1939 have been tragically important in history of civilization of mankind and played vital role in creation of English literature in the west and in India as well. Political implications played greater role and

its effects began to usher in novels also. And era of thesis novel commenced since then. Encyclopedia Britannica classifies and categorizes them as Thesis novel and elucidates as:

The didactic political tendency became strongly accentuated. Originating in Russia there arose a mixture of fiction - writing and reporting a facts. ⁴³

Also Oxford Dictionary illustrates the word 'Thesis' as:

- (1) proposition to be maintained or proved; dissertation esp. by candidate for degree.
- (2) understand syllable in or part of metrical foot. ⁴⁴

In English literature, the most powerful novels probably emerged from Germany Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on Western Front* and from France [Heuri Barbusse's *Under Fire*] Henrich man in Germany emphasized democratic and humanistic elements in his novels. Bertha Van Suttner's *Down with Arms* Dor Passol's *Three Soldiers* and *The Sword of Honour* by Evelyn Wagh and *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway are some of the examples.

In Indo-English literature also the pre and post independence period witnessed many Indian novelists writing novels of socio-political conditions in the societies of India. Departure of British Rule in

India created great uproar. The trend of socio-economic mingled with politics reflected in the novels written by Indian writers in English. Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* [1947] and Manohar Malgaukar's *The Princes* [1963] and *Shadow from Ladakh* [1966] by Bhattacharya are some of the glorying examples of 20th century. And some recent trends of sociopolitical reflections are noticed in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* [1988], Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* [1989] and Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* [1988].

Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* [1947] published in the year of independence of India draws the picture of miserable condition and reflection during post war period emerging out of painful and labourious effort at the time when Bengal was entangled by man made famine. It is a story of village girl named Kajoli whose husband is shot dead by the police in the civil movement for freedom, is raped by the soldier. Another incident about arrest of Rahoul, a Cambridge educated professor in Calcutta Kajoli turns into prostitute to earn her living. Interaction of various incidents of heart breaking selfishness and exploitation of man by man depicting calamity are revealed as shameful behaviour by human society bent upon freedom movement. The style of narration by Bhattacharya showing impact of freedom struggle on masses is outstanding. The novel depicts fury of people longing for freedom. The book ranks higher standard in Indo-English fiction.

In Shadow from Ladakh [1966], Bhattacharya narrates the India of time during Chinese aggression. Two ideologies, out of Gandhian

philosophy and another of industrial progress are focused through characters – Satyajit as an industrialist and also portray them as symbol of Gandhiji and Nehru. Conflicting political ideologies of China and India are narrated in its absolutes. The novel is an indication of Gandhian ideology and principals. The novel has won the Indian National Academy of Letters Award in 1967.

Manohar Malgonkar's novel, *The Princess* [1963] exposes social-political scenes and deals political development in India and merger of native princely states into sovereign of India. The story tells about the prince Abhay of Begwad, his sufferer and neglected mother and to marry her lover Abelullah. It gives us remembrance of Anand's novel, *The Private Life of an Indian Prince*. It is a great novel of past age. The political glamour of maharaja and their royal customs are elaborative detailed.

Manohar Malgonkar's another novel; *A Bend in Ganges* [1964] is the best novel and narrates the bitterness and violence practiced by two parties. The story depicts freedom struggle and upholds of Indian partition. The novel starting with the movement of terrorist and ends in last with the communal riots. The story tells about three young persons (i) Gian Talwar – a peasant, (ii) Debi Dayal – businessman and (iii) Shafi usman – a leader of sikh group. It is a powerful novel having strong story – depicts about the lost generation of Indians. During the last quarter of twentieth century, the novel shows the changes in perception of socio-political scenes.

Arun Joshi's *The Apprentice* [1974], relates to modern life in Delhi through its character Ratan Rathor who is tempted by corruptive machinery in politics but returns to Gandhian way of life in the end. Whereas, Arun Joshi's *The Last Labyrinth* exposes the corrosion in the inner soul of man dominated by politics. The above novels, discussed the sociopolitical theme and effects [of politics] on the people.

The trend of such 'Thesis' novels in last two decades of 20th century shows considerable change in application of power by nations and reaction and counter reaction by communal groups the novels such as *The Circle of Reason* [1986] and *The Shadow Lines* [1988] both by Amitav Ghosh show the story of the nationalism v/s individual and theme of communal frenzy and partition. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* depicts the position of women in changed political scenario and the book acclaimed by print media world wide. It made the author famous. Kamla Markandaya in her novel, *Some Inner Fury* [1957], prompted by 'Quit India movement' depicts the life of young officer named Kit who is tragically killed, when he tried to save his wife Premila. *The Crown and the Lincrom* [1981] by Chaman Nahal deals with the theme of politics in Gandhian era.

Thesis reading in the novels of Ghosh:-

Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* [1988] reflects the Ghosh's political conviction and vision with fine destination of freedom of individual particularly political freedom from ethnic point of view. In the novel, Ghosh dares to show that politically motivated meaning of

concept of freedom are applied to divide the people and nations and that creates the distance among communities and people. Such concept leads to uproot of many families. Through, however, Ghosh tries successfully in bringing or coming into stressing for equal membership of society especially without regard to race or religion, with reference to his political vision imbued with the human story, while projecting human life of past and present with future vision on the face of situation in pre-independence.

India and Britain and present Ghosh tries to establish the futility of lines among people and countries. However, Mr. M. K. Bhatnagar writes about politics in the novel as:

Politics in the novel has to be integrated with patterns of life traced, and has to function as the germinal nucleus fermenting the human story. Politics, thus, is to be presented in art through the medium of living men and women and their actions. ⁴⁵

Amitav Ghosh's art of presentation of futility of national boundaries are very tactful as can be derived from dialogue of grandmother's request to old uncle to shift to India. He says:

Once you start moving you never stop that's what I told my sons when they took trains I said:

I don't believe in this India—Shindia. It's all very well, you're going away now, but suppose when you get these they decide to draw another line some where? What will you do then? Where will you move to? No one will ever have you anywhere. As for me, I was born here, and I will die here. ⁴⁶

The Shadow Lines does not deal exclusively above ideology of nationalism but it also deals with the theme of violence and the theme of partition. Ghosh through *The Shadow Lines* criticizes militancy is nationalism and considers it a feeling that it creates antagonists who lead the violence and Ghosh's such views resemble Bertrand Russel's view:

Nationalism is undoubtedly the most dangerous vice of our time for more dangerous than drunkenness, of drugs, of commercial dishonesty. ⁴⁷

The above are resulted long lasting effect of violence that creates venomous corrosion in the society instead of creating feeling of sensible peaceful co-existence tending to salutary progress. Thus, the novels,

discussed above, including that of Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* shows didactic political tendencies that of red right traffic signals. The writers, thus fulfil their obligation towards Societies which form nation.

Other Noteworthy Categories of Novel:-

Apart from the above prominent categories of novel, there are some novels known to be under purview of other categories, which are as under:-

1. Visionary Novel.
2. Saga Novel.
3. Regional Novel.
4. Gothic Novel.
5. Gandhian Ideology Novel.
6. Autobiographical Novel.

The above kinds of novel were in practice in earlier times. The art of novel writing is such that the novel of modern times shows multiplicity of categories and themes and there are many novels, which resist categorization.

Amitav Ghosh's Place in the Field of Indian English Fiction:

Amitav Ghosh's literary career makes swiftness and holds distinctive place in the history of Indian English novels, as he has

travelled extensively in many parts of the world and his perception of human life in past and recent past are expressed through the characters of his novels. Amitav Ghosh as a novelist always researches and amalgamates the social, political and communal events of the past and recent past and aims at projecting the meaning of such events in context of present and future. In the novel, *The Shadow Lines* – Amitav Ghosh emerges as novelist as well as historian telling the story. Amitav Ghosh's keen interest in anthropology and in places, people of today and yesterday are reflected through the novice art of novel. Urbashi Barat, in her article, *Time in The Shadow Lines* comments:

It is significant also that the narrator himself should be a historian, for a historian does not only study the past, he also narrates it. Indeed, the historian is as much of a story –teller as a factionalist, for both tell the stories shaping their narratives from the chaotic formlessness and flow episode, events and emotion, and by selecting, omitting heightening and expanding on their material they discover meaning.⁴⁸

Amitav Ghosh stresses the importance of freedom for the individual in post colonial period of India. As a novelist, he holds distinctively eminence in Indian English novels as evidenced by Sahitya

Akademi Award and also by world literary award through award of prestigious literary award of France for his novel, *The Circle of Reason*.

About Amitav Ghosh's art of novel writing introduced through *The Shadow Lines*, Novy Kapadia comments:

The absence of pessimism, despair, and ambiguity make. *The Shadow Lines* a very convincing and effective work of art. The author boldly tackles political themes both national and international. The meaning of political freedom in the modern world is shown as complex and without any easy solutions. ⁴⁹

In the same article, Novy Kapadia observes:

Amitav Ghosh shows how different cultures and communities are becoming antagonist to a point of no return. This is revealed as major issue in contemporary India. The author realizes that with the dominant tradition slowly regarding itself as only legitimate source of India's complex culture, communal antagonism will grow.

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These are themes in novels of Amitav Ghosh. In an interview with Amitav Ghosh by Biswarup Sen, Amitav Ghosh, about his novel, *The Glass Palace* elucidates:

Writing his novel, [i.e. *The Glass Palace*] brought out something which had been a strand in my mind and made it into a dominant theme. I have always been fascinated by how different people perceive the world and how this different perception most with my own understanding of it. I interviewed hundreds of people in preparation for writing *The Glass Palace*.⁵¹

The novel *The Glass Palace* [2000] has been successfully popular among readers every where. Amitav Ghosh admits that:

The Book [*The Glass Palace*] seems to have established a direct rapport with readers everywhere. People seem to have really gotten to it, gotten involved with the tale. It has been on the best seller list in India ever since it was published. It is also on best seller list in Europe. Most readers seem to have their own favourite bit they attach to.

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This establishes Amitav's degree of eminence as a novelist in Indian English novels. Amitav's novels can be viewed from many different aspects and his art, technique in using the historical events marks the new tradition. About the events of riots in *The Shadow Lines*, Amitav Ghosh describes the book as:

It became, says Ghosh, a book not about any one event, but about the meaning of such events and their effects on individuals who live through them.⁵³

Amitav Ghosh holds distinctive place as a novelist in Indian English literature as his novels depicts human relationship, national boundaries, and structuring his themes around families and their life modern life with sub version of historical events.

As a novelist - modern novelist - Amitav Ghosh creates the characters [in the novels] that are lively and appearing to be real people. The characters of time in earlier historical events are created in environments of real life in past so far as their speeches, way of life and customary association among people of that time is concerned. This creation of the character by as other shows a very conscious efforts with richness of language and historical insights. And this art of characterization by Amitav Ghosh makes the novel more lively and interesting as well. Jehanara Wasi, author of screen play for my lanndrette opines:

Ghosh's writing is certainly more lively that a good deal of contemporary fiction in Britain. ⁵⁴

Thus, Amitav Ghosh is a distinctive novelist creating the novels that are lively and interesting holding the reader absorbed in the life of characters of novel.

Amitav Ghosh: An Anthropologist and a distinguished modern Novelist:

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta in 1956, and grew up in erstwhile east Pakistan [Now Bangladesh], Shri Lanka, Iran and Indian especially in Calcutta and Delhi. By age of twenty four he had acquired his B. A. in History and M. A. in Sociology from Delhi University and D. Phil in Social Anthropology from Oxford London.

The writing and novels by writers reflect writer's conviction in various ideologies say political, religious, humanism. Amitav Ghosh resists religious identity as can be transpired from excerpts of his novel, *In An Antique Land* as:

I was born a Hindu? I said reluctantly, for if I had religious identity at all it was largely by default. ⁵⁵

The novels and other literary essays and articles introduce Ghosh as a historian, sociologists and anthropologist. Amitav Ghosh holds distinct and distinctive place among Indo-Anglian novelists. His academic career shows steep progress and by this time, he, by of 46 years old, has five novels at his credit. His first novel, *The Circle of Reason* acquired great fame and brought prestigious literary award of France. He is one of the India's most widely known writers and has attained the stature of distinguished man of letters with international acclaim and reputation. A brief account of his achievement as a novelist, historian and analyst is sufficient to establish him in Indian English writing as a versatile genius. Andrew Painter of France ranks Ghosh as Post-colonial writer:

A generation or so after the constitution [of India], we meet the being. We cannot agree to define. For sake of argument, I will call him the post-colonial writer. Others might call him the commonwealth writer. Yet others might even go so far as calling him the Indian writer. Some opinions seem to suggest that he should be called the world writer. ⁵⁶

Amarnath Prasad, in his article countdown: A portrayal of the dance of death calls Amitav Ghosh as:

A great champion of the cause of peace and prosperity, harmony and propriety, harmony and integration.⁵⁷

Amitav Ghosh is a deeply serious creative writer, sure of his human and historical insight and emerges as a confident writer – confident in his ability to communicate historical events with its anthropological relation with the modern people confronted with cultural and communal differences and clash of ideas.

The novels of Amitav Ghosh reveal the quality of creative writing. His set up in the novel is not traditional. He has set forth new technique of novel writing in style and fashion. Portrayal of characters and story telling are handled superbly by Amitav Ghosh the art of characterization by Amitav Ghosh is superb and unique.

The novels of Amitav Ghosh exhibit great creative ability, skilled language control, cultural heritage, historiography, as well as unique perception of Ghosh's ideas of political and communal forces and all these qualities in Ghosh are, some of the essential facts of Ghosh's personality not only as a modern novelist but also as great literary writer. At one stage Ghosh as a novelist shows the disruption of the settled social order and traumatic separation of friends and families due to partition. Besides this, Ghosh as a post colonial writer introduces weird and bizarre happenings in his novels. All these, his ability to express multiple layers of meaning, narrative technique, time and place shift, history and subversion of history, personal and public concerns

make the novels—earning high eminence for the author. It is this quality - creative quality that is depicted in novels of Ghosh. Amitav Ghosh is the most significant and contemporary Indian novelist and he has made unbelievable footprints on world literary scenario.

The fact, that novels of Amitav Ghosh are on list of best seller novels, is that his novels depict family stories of middle class sect of people in past and present as transpired through the novels described below: The Indian novelists in post independent era have lived through many social and civil disturbances arose out of political and communal events creating extreme uproot in contemporary India. Ghosh, being no exception, has himself lived through such extreme adversity which has been projected in his novels.

Those are many literary and critical writings including novels at credit of Amitav Ghosh. His five novels are introduced here as under shortly. It is interesting and intellectually viable to know as to what historical, anthropologist and novelists -Amitav Ghosh - have to say and how he says it.

The Circle of Reason - in short

Amitav Ghosh's first novel, *The Circle of Reason* [1986], translated in many European languages has won prestigious literary award of France for its French version. The novel is divided in three parts as Satva- Reason, Rajas-Passion and Tamas-Death. The novel, *The Circle of*

Reason offers the story of families, located in a refugee- village and location moves from Bangladesh, Calcutta to Kerala and Middle East.

The novel opens up with arrival of an orphan boy eight years old to stay with his uncle and aunt – Balaram and Tory Debi in Lalpukur - a small village in west Bengal. The whole story about the main characters of Alu, Balaram and Zindi are knitted with changing location. Balaram believing in western rationalism expresses futility of traditional religious superstitious and gives training of weaving to Alu. There is Jyotidas – a police officer who suspects Alu as an extremist and follows him. Alu moves to Kerala and Al-Ghazira. All this adventure of Alu reminds of picaresque type stories that create the thrilling effect. The woman character – Zindi is described as a woman with power of narration. The time and place in the novel are not stationary. The characters move from one place to another from one continent to another creates an effect of traveling.

Ghosh has used motif of traveling, Drama, Suspense and Mysteries in the novel. The first part unfolds the story of Balaram and his nephewe Alu in 9 actions with motives as satva-Reason. The second part moves forward by implying the meaning of Rajas- passion through Alu and revolves around Zindi, the practical zestful trader whose presence brings together a community of Indians in middle cast. Finally, third part creating Tamas-Death type effect, structures itself around Mrs. Verma who in defiance of all rational skepticism, creates in desert an oasis of Indian cultural life. By narrating the stories in such a

technique that it creates circle of stories within circles of life of human being.

The title of the novel is suggestive of barriers and partitions functioning as divisions among individuals and families and nations as well. The novel, *The Circle of Reason* is a skillfully constructed novel with fold tale charm and deviates from the traditional theme and form in Indian English novels.

The Shadow Lines - in Short

Amitav Ghosh's second novel, *The Shadow Lines* [1988] focuses on story of three generations of narrator's family spread over Dhaka, Calcutta and with their connection with English family in London. The fabric of the story of *The Shadow Lines* set in Calcutta of 1960 is life of narrator, narrator's grandmother and major woman character Ila and May and - hero - Tridib in the span of 1939 to 1979 with specific importance of events of 1964. The novel dealing with history, history-fiction interface is fascinating as well as culturally significant with connecting events of the past with present using memory lines.

The novel begins as "in 1939, thirty years before I was born, my father's aunt Mayadevi went to England with her husband and her son Tridib." The narrator's grand mother feels restless because of the partition of her ancestral home. She wants the breakdown of walls, which separate people and countries Ila has never experienced stability and runs away from the past and escaping from the present may bound

by her guild at the death of Tridib achieve her freedom when she faces the truth.

The events of the story – personal and political are set in many countries like, Indian, England and Bangladesh [Then East Pakistan]. The raw material of the novel are drawn from Second World War, Indian independence, partition followed by riots, and Chinese aggression and communal riots in Calcutta in 1964. While describing riots of past by technique of uncoiling memory with its relation to similar other riots. Novel has projected the implication and impression of such riots on minds of individuals who have experienced them. The novel has concept of national identity and pride and brings out the futility of lives and boundaries drawn across countries and countries from cultural or communal as well as political motives. Ghosh endeavors to focus mainly to Dhaka and Calcutta to find the meaning of political freedom especially when partition created the boundary line.

Indian nationalism was chief weapon of freedom fighters in their struggle against British Rulers. Result of acquiring freedom was communal violence and destructions which deprive many from fruits of freedom. The novel rejects the very conception of division of national s solution to curb the communal clashes and violence.

The novel *The Shadow Lines* concerned with the theme of crossing of frontiers – especially those of nationality culture and language. The theme is old one in contemporary Indian novelist. But Ghosh gives it a new twist in the novel raising the dire need for solution of the

problem – ethnic problem not of the people but of an individual. In one or another view the novel, *The Shadow Lines* is outcome of wide spread deadly riots and violence in India in 1984, only four years before the publication of novel, *The Shadow Lines* in 1988.

In An Antique Land - in short.

Amitav Ghosh's third novel, *In An Antique Land* [1993] is quite new kind of novel - fiction or non-fiction travelogue type - in Indian English novel. The novel is based on the historical finding by Ghosh when he as going through manuscript in oxford library and learned about Tunisian Jewish merchant Abraham Ben Yiju and his slave Bomma and trade link among India, Egypt in 1130 AD as well as on Ghosh's own experience in Egypt during his research work for D. Phil in Oxford.

The novel is divided in five parts - telling the story of life of Abu-Ali, Ustad Sabry, Shaikh Musa and Nabeel and novelist's own social encounters at Egypt, Cairo, Nashaway, Lataifa. The story in pursuit of Ben Yiju and trade between India and Egypt is projected in such a technique that novels depicts.

Comparative study of two eldest cultures and civilizations of the two most important continents - Asia and Africa, that of Indian and Egypt. ⁵⁸

The novel, *In An Antique Land* deals with three parallel stories. First, the story of a Jewish merchant Ben Yiju who came from Aden to Manglore for trade eight hundred years ago and his slave Bomma. He married slave girl named Ashu and stayed in manglore for couple of decades. Secondly, the story of modern Egypt that Amitav Ghosh relates, are impression of his first hand experiences during his research work at Egypt. Third, a story by Amitav Ghosh's search for Antique world of Ben Yiju and his slave Bomma. Three Stories interpenetrate and form an intricate texture.

The novel shows the social as well as personal life of people and focuses on inter relationship of the people rather than relation between two nations. There are very less woman characters who are largely dominated by man.

Nabeel, who has gone to Iraq to earn money for his family for comfort and pleasure pays heavy price of his life. The stories of Egypt and life of their people described from muddy roads to D.V. Sets, calculators and Radio Transistors shows rise and decline of civilization ended by Gulf war changing iraqis against egyptians.

The novel shows the theme of dream and aspirations of middle class families paying heavy price for effect of political and historical changes their lives.

Amitav Ghosh, historian and social anthropologist, expresses his views and study of the effect of socio political disturbances on ordinary

human beings and their struggle for existence. And above all novel dares to show how rulers of land ambitious of power without responsibility, are functioning as escalators moving human beings continuous up and down through the weapon of war for one or another reason. This can exactly be derived and evaluated from following excerpts of the novel as:

“Sadam Hussein! He rolled his eyes. You have to be careful when you breathe that name out there – there are spies everywhere, at every corner, listening. One word about sadam and you are gone, dead.”⁵⁹

And

“Soon the news started and we saw footage of the epic exodus: thousands and thousands of men, some in trousers, in some Jallabeyyas, some carrying their T.V. Sets on their backs, some crying out for a drink of water, stretching all the way from horizon to the Red Sea, standing on the beach waiting for the water to part ... : Nabeel had vanished into anonymity of History.”⁶⁰

The Calcutta Chromosome - in short.

Amitav Ghosh's fourth novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome* [1996] has two major strands of story line. The first narrates the life of Antar, an Egyptian computer clerk working on his super intelligent machine named Ava to locate the whereabouts of Indian born American scientist L-Murugan who had suddenly disappeared in Calcutta in August 1995. The second revolves around Ronald Ross's discovery of the Malaria parasite in 1902. The Calcutta chromosome deal the theme of quest into the background of malaria cure through the major character like Antar, Murugan, Urmila, Sonali, Raman Halder etc. L. Murugan undertakes the scientific quest about discovery of malaria parasites and comes to India to find and missing links, presumably conceded facts which creates element of suspense. Sir Ronald Ross who is awarded Nobel Prize in 1906 for his thesis on "Malaria Parasite". This history of science and inventions are used in the novel as raw material. The certain historical details about Ronald Ross are depicted through newspaper clipping utilized as wrapper which has similarity as in *The Shadow Lines* where the history is depicted as shown in newspapers. Amitav Ghosh throws light on Ronald Ross's life as talk between Antar and Murugan.

While expanding the science and what lies behind it, Ghosh has placed before the reader the Indian mythological method of treating the disease and belief of rebirth through the character Mangala who project Indian belief of supernatural powers of primitive belief prevailing still today. Ghosh combines science and non-science and interrelation. Ghosh being a social anthropologist skillfully blends

literature, science, philosophy, history, and Indian mythology. In this novel of novice theme, J.D. Soni evaluates the novel as:

“The very mystery in the novel is that it allows the reader to dig deep to have new and many more new layers of meaning. Undoubtedly, it is a good beginning of a new trend yet to be adopted by young fiction writers of today.”⁶¹

Whereas about ‘Science - Theory’, Babli Gupta evaluates as:

“This is a world of mysteries - rather than rationality, where Mangala’s real talents become those of magician than of an artisan. The counter-science may have extraordinary powers to overturn science but their motives like that of their counterparts are self seeking rather than humane.”⁶²

Amitav Ghosh, in *The Calcutta Chromosome* has used conventional methods of mystery, thriller and detective stories along with subject of scientific methods and Indian methods of treating the disease in human beings. The methods of thriller and detective stories are scattered all over the reader to ease the reader from heavy intellectual knowledge of science and faith.

Through *The Calcutta Chromosome* Ghosh projects his views on Indian philosophical aspects of mystical elements and its relation with modern intellectual knowledge of science. The novel can be described as its author's journey from past to present and vice-versa aiming to find out the meaning of life in perception of human beings from mythological point of view.

The Glass Palace - in Short

Amitav Ghosh's most recent novel, *The Glass Palace* [2000], published in India and England in 2000 and in the U.S.A. in 2001. The novel describes the family of three generations traveling and moving onward and backward in three countries namely Burma, India and Malaya during the 20th century.

The novel describes life of young orphaned boy Rajkumar, Dolly - a beautiful girl and Uma and Arjun. The life of middle class families, their dreams and aspirations are narrated in an attractive fashion.

During, 20th century, the world war second broke out and it affected heavily Burma and Indian. The novel shows the migration of Indian families from Burma. The role of Indian in British army remains significant one through the novel.

The Glass Palace gives colourful and real pictures of families in colonial period of India. Historical events affecting Indian families are recreated in family story giving clear picture of that period.

The novel, resembles are impressions on Ghosh mind, about his relative - old uncle and stories heard from his father Lt. Col. Shailendra Chandra Ghosh who fought in the second world war as an officer in the British Indian Army during Burma campaign in 1945.

The life of Arjun living in middle class family is described largely with his working in British-Indian Army. About the character Arjun expresses the back ground of his character during an interview, Ghosh gave to Biswarup Sen, marketing consultant in Virginia the U.S.A. and contributing writer for "*The Telegraph Calcutta*" Ghosh says:

"Arjun did become a pivotal character for me. He is so much like people, I went to school and college with, in some sense, I could both sympathize with him and he appalled by him. His character because a very interesting figure for me. And, I course, Arjun reflects the experiences of so many Indians, who served in the British Army." ⁶³

Thus, *The Glass Palace* is interesting novel set in Burma, East Indian and Burma around Second World War [1937 to 1945] with its

particular reference to effect of political changes on Indian families migrated from Burma to India.

Brief survey of the above novels, reflects that Amitav Ghosh's characters are from middle class families their dreams and aspirations and hold they are struggling for existence especially at the time of division of nations are political changes and communal and cultural clashes.

Amitav Ghosh, among contemporary novelists, powerful chronicler of social and political life has emerged as out of the creative novelists of the world.

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CHAPTER - 2

**THEMATIC CONCERNS IN THE NOVELS OF
AMITAV GHOSH**

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Amitav Ghosh has been brought up in highly unconventional cultural and social diversity as his father, being in British Army used to move from a place to place – in Burma and erstwhile India under British Rule especially in eastern territories of India. Impact of social events as well as military environment in his family has a deep imprint on the mind of Amitav Ghosh and that is well revealed in themes of his novels. Mostly the writers construct the fiction from what he has acquired from the social as well as political situation. Apart from this, extensive study of history, sociology and anthropology has enriched Ghosh's mind so far as intellectual and ideology are concerned.

The writer's analysis of the material which may be informative chaotic or social as well as political nuisance creates the novels keeping certain thematic occupation in the centre. The thematic consideration and analysis of problems of common man with ordinary prudence and their existence is the core of five novels under study. The themes in five novels under study vary in many folds. However certain thematic aspects of life are figuring in all the five novels of Amitav Ghosh.

Amitav Ghosh an anthropologists and contemporary Indian English writer, has endeavored to create new thematic elements in his

novels where the reader or critic is left to exercise his mind and intellect to find out what is the true meaning of nationalism, cultural and cross religious, clashes, different religious, faith and belief and migration of people taking place out of political ideologies and system of ruling changing from time to time.

Amitav Ghosh rightly stresses how the violence and clashes arising from political and communal differences, assumes an added significance for the middle class people of society. It embodies in the fiction of Ghosh and it is invariably and passionately concerned with very existence of man, their loss of identity, rootlessness and aloneness, which constitute the causes of agony and anguish for the man. Ghosh writes:

“You know, if you look at the pictures at home, all that pictures of dead people - in Assam, the north east, Punjab, Sri Lanka, Tripura - people shot by terrorists, and separatists and army and police, you will find somewhere believed it all, that single word: everyone is doing it to be free”¹

This is central idea of the novel *The Shadow Lines*. Communal violence inter-linked with political as well as religious freedom is the leading theme of *The Shadow Lines*. The novel has implied meaning of violence and political freedom for the common man of middle class families of the civilized society.

Amitav Ghosh's novels throws light on themes like nationalism, communal violence, and helplessness of middle class people for compulsory migration from home and helpless to take education and so on. Why Alu's School of Reason fails? Many were interested in weaving and sewing machine rather than in education in *The Circle of Reason*. Ghosh's preoccupation of problems of uprooted middle class families has been eminently shown in the art of novel. The analysis of five novels under study demonstrates how Ghosh advocates the cause of dispossessed and how the unnecessary misery, hardship and unhappiness are caused by communal frenzy and violence uncontrollable by political machinery in power. Ghosh goes on to show that in modern world how the Hippocratic religion and resultant exploitation and violence by organized militant fundamentalists play vital and fatal roles in the lives of men and women in the society. And political solution of these problems by re-demarcation of national boundaries based on political fallacy is neither a solution at grass root level nor it soothes the problems of dislocated families. Homelessness and mass dislocation as a result of war - Second World War - and agony of the people are another issue discussed and developed in form of novel - *The Glass Palace*. The novel exposes fatal condition of thousands of people - mostly Indian migrated from Burma to Calcutta on account of Japanese invasion on Burma in 1942. The invasion created Chaotic and critical condition of the people, on the face of Japanese fighting against British. The people of Burma were confronted in critical condition as to which side they should - British or Japanese. In either side people feared extermination from either British or Japanese. No

choice was left over but to flee from their-own homeland. Such precarious condition is exposed in the novel artfully by Ghosh. Pico Iyer rightly comments:

“In some ways the two themes that have animated Ghosh’s writing from beginning -his interest in the lives of middle class Indian families and his concern for the world’s afflicted - come together as the very people who once tried in Burma (including he suggests - his ancestors) suddenly turn into dispossessed. Refugees themselves, struggling across rivers and mountains, wheeling the elderly in carts and often dying along the way.”²

The theme of existential challenges, migration chaotic state of situation, involving loss of lives of human beings, especially middle class families mostly Indians and Asians spread out in many countries has remained in center in the five novels under study.

I

The theme in *The Circle of Reason* (1986) is quite novice and it deviates from the theme of traditional Indian writing on social customs and religious as well as political confrontation in particular family or section of the society. The novel exposes the meaning of unhappy

events in the society faced by the middle class families thriving to progress by economic uplift or even by migration. Ghosh writes through the character of Zindi:

“But let something happen outside, and that is the end, there is nothing I can do? Why because I can give them food, I can give them roof, but I can’t give them work..... the house is almost empty now and work is gone..... Where can I go?”³

Zindi is worried about the migrant. Ghosh has presented a powerful character like Zindi, who plans a shop for the migrant, but does not succeed. The cause and problems of migrated people mostly middle class families for the work, for the bright future and existence are narrated in the novel. The characters in the novel move from one place to another for better work and for better future. The character Rakesh with Alu migrates from India to Al-Ghazira for better prospects.

Bala Kothandaraman in his article Circular Reasoning: Amitav Ghosh’s Rhetoric comments:

“The different locals are small over-crowded places with refugee’s population adding socio-cultural dimension as well as economic and political problems.”⁴

The post colonial situation and modern man's problems of alienation, migration and existential crisis in life of ordinary unprivileged class of the society is explored through the fiction. The themes of rootlessness migration, feelings of displaced are extensively narrated in deep sense and corner of human heart. While exploring the themes migration of small group, the problem of individual is exposed rather than the problems of group as a whole.

Another significant theme in the novel is education. *The Circle of Reason* is novel of thought and reason inclusive three philosophical elements of Indian philosophy from where titles are derived and explored in the context of ordinary men and women's views of life. SATVA- reason Rajas - passion and Tamas - Death. Man's these stages of life is explained creating the characters like a doctor, a professor, a scientist, a businessmen, a weaver, a merchant, a lawyer and above all house wives, such housewives facing the existential challenges and problems to earn money to maintain life. Does Ghosh try to suggest a question? Does philosophical values end where power of money begin? is a question of argumentation. Ulka Joshi in her article comments:

“The concept of reason is very much western and it is associated with many traits like the power to think rationally, scientific way of discriminating between right and wrong, a state minus superstition. Progressive attitude and civilized way of life. The writer without making any loud

announcements brings together Indian and western elements.”⁵

Ghosh as a literary personality exemplifies the fact the literature – novel should be aimed at finding out solution for the common routine problems of people which includes middle class men and women in the society of different culture and faith and he projects the historical events in comparing with post colonial situation and put forth the life of men and women struggling for existence for work, for wages, for money, for home, ultimately for better life. The themes of *The Circle of Reason* are different in many ways from traditional themes of novels of earlier times. The novel apart from other theme comments on the theme of educational system constituted for training for getting jobs. Ghosh questions the system of education that makes a man a near machine for certain function. Through the character of Gopal and Balram, Ghosh says:

“Well, Gopal said, you must explain to Alu that if he does not go to school he will never be able to get a job.

What, Balram looked at him in stunned arrangement. How could I say that it would be wrong; it would be immoral children go to school for their first glimpse into the life of the mind. Not for jobs, if I thought my teaching is nothing but the

means of finding jobs, I would stop teaching tomorrow”⁶

Here Ghosh goes on to assert the rationality through the reason as a base for schooling and cautions the educationalists that through monotonous repetition for information in school, silence the student on their natural question to live, to face the challenges of life. Ghosh tries to stress the need for rational method for imparting education and profess, that the reason is basic tool for getting education, and that monotonous exchange of information should not hamper the impulsive curiosity of student (a man) about life and training. This is further substantiated in the novel as:

“After much careful thought Balram had decided to name one the Department of Pure Reason and the other the Department of Practical Reason: a meeting of the two great forms of human thought.”⁷

Balram’s school of Reason is not succeeded as the story goes on. Here Ghosh takes no sides but simply puts further the ideas before the reader or the society. In this context, Alok Kumar and Madhusudan Prasad comments:

*“The Circle of Reason is about the insufficiency of ‘Reason’ as the ordering principle of the human universe.”*⁸

Against his, Ghosh concludes through the character of Balram as:

“Be quite, Gopal. Don’t say any more, you don’t know what you are saying, science does not know what you are saying, and science does not belong to countries. Reason does not belong to any nation. They belong to history – to the world.”⁹

That is how the ideological theme on ‘reason’ / ‘rationality’ is evoked. In the form of novel by Ghosh in his artfulness to project the evaluation of meaning of many phenomena of life of Indian middle class families in compared to historical facts.

Traveling across many countries and culture is another major theme in *The Circle of Reason*, which describes the adventure of a boy from rural Bengal to Middle Eastern cities of Al-Ghazira and El Qued – a desert town in Algeria. The novel depicts the life of expatriate Indian in the Gulf Countries. First section of the Book, *The Circle of Reason* shows many observations on Indian emigrants. Ghosh writes:

“Or there was the day in early August when an American judge in San Francisco, arbitrating on the second ever application by Hindu for citizenship in the United States, look refugee in prehistory and

decided that high-caste Hindus were Aryans and therefore free and white.”¹⁰

The Al-Ghazira part of novel exhibits evidence of Ghosh’s consciousness and precarious lives of migrant workers. Alu’s journey through Indian ocean depicts the thousands of Indians who leave their native place for prosperous life style, along with these are illegal emigrants which include professor, traveling salesmen and men and women, who risk their life and resort to dangerous crossing in search of economic stability but when they – all these migrants reach Al-Ghazira they find problems of one or another kind irrespective of their income. Ghosh, in this regard writes:

“But still there was problems the mechanic complained no medical benefits, no accommodation, no security at all. It was all a big problem..... Things like that matter only at home, and foreign places are all alike in that they are not home. Nothing binds you there.”¹¹

Ghosh projects the ‘concern’ for all these workers and professionals in quests for better life. The theme may look interesting but R. K. Kaul in his article Another Triumphant Entry – Amitav Ghosh, *The Circle of Reason* comments:

“This is the first novel which depicts the life of expatriate Indians in the Gulf States. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh may be engaged in recriminations among themselves but emigrant from these countries are treated as one ethnic stock by Arabs. The Arab employers look upon their informal dress as less than decent and their cooking as unhygienic. Ghosh observes strict objectivity in his presentation. He tells us what the Arab think, without either refuting or confirming their opinions.”¹²

Thus one major theme of *The Circle of Reason* is continued domination and exploitation of men and women of middle class families threatened by political and anarchical system of ruling in the time of colonial and post colonial - India. Ghosh merely puts forth the historical events and its evaluation in the context of individual feeling of exploited.

II

In *The Shadow Lines*, there are some major themes like concept of freedom, violence, partition of a nation and all these interlinked with life of middle class families. Ghosh has a deep insight into the cause of violence and its meaning. *The Shadow Lines* focuses on the theme of freedom and man's longing for free and decent life of peaceful living.

The thematic occupation that Ghosh has taken up in this novel is that of crossing boundaries of nation having varieties of culture and nationality. The fields of action in the novel to develop these themes are India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and England while evaluating the theme, Ghosh links events of present and past.

The theme of violence in *The Shadow Lines* is expressed in higher degree when the death of Tridib takes place. The extreme effect of violence is not only on body but also on very soul and emotions of human being. The narrator loved and recognized Tridib as a heroic being. So the extremity of violence inflicted on the narrator is so intense that he is baffled and so agonized that he is dumbfounded with shock and grief and does not find the words to discuss Tridib's death and also fails to accept the tragic death of Tridib. Amitav Ghosh who is a sociologist proclaim through the medium of a novel the tragic effect of violence on the human being - casualties mostly unprivileged class of the society - i.e. Middle class families, as his social obligations, a warning to the society of the nation - any nation across the continents, to beware of such violence. Here Ghosh drives the reader to discard such fundamentalists, anti-social elements deeply rooted and concealed in the society under fallacy of communal, political motives.

The Shadow Lines by Amitav Ghosh, his second novel is also discussing the theme of partition of the nation through the artful development of its characters. The novel basically combines public events and personal lives of the people - mostly middle class families. Apart from the thematic occupation, Ghosh focuses on the theme of

partition of India and its consequent tragic effects on the minds and emotions of the people. Ghosh projects the futility of bifurcation of a nation to create two nations, one east and another west. The outcome of such moves to draw a line across the nation is not happy state of affairs for the people not coming under preview of privileged class of the society. Neither it solves the basic problems nor does it soothe the agony and anguish of displaced persons. On the contrary the partitioned people face existential problems. Tha'mma in *The Shadow Lines* inquires whether she would be able to see the boundary between India and East Pakistan. Gosh writes through this character:

“And if there is no difference both side will be the same, it will be just like it used to catch a train in Dhaka and get off in Calcutta next day without anybody stopping us. What was it all for them? Partition and all the killing and everything – if there is not something in between.”¹³

Common prudence of Tha'mma fails to understand the justification of creating two nations. D. K. Pabby, while presenting comparative study of themes in his article viz. theme of partition and freedom in Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* comments:

“In *The Shadow Lines*, the development and growth of Tha'mma character encapsulate

the futility and meaninglessness of political freedom which was otherwise supposed to usher in an era of peace and prosperity for all.”¹⁴

Here Ghosh has raised a question as to whether the partition is a solution to the problems of social unrest whether on religious grounds or political motivation. The partition creates the feeling of humiliation and agony for the dear and near ones who are compelled to migrate from their home or birth-place merely for the reasons based on whims of political solution of the problem faced by the nation. Shobha Tiwari in her book *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Study* comments:

“Ghosh questions the very basis of modern nation states. It does not matter how many states exist in a continent or sub continent. It does not change the well being of its people. Nationhood itself is a mirage because it is not based on any logic. When nature draws line in the form of mountains, oceans, rivers, it is real. But man made borders are shallow and unjustifiable.”¹⁵

Thus Ghosh explores the theme of partition of a modern nation and has asserted futile action of the political machinery in power. *The Shadow Lines* thus puts such ideological themes before the reader for evaluation of such political motives based on illogical axis.

Another theme of *The Shadow Lines* is concept of nationalism that is gaining ground in today's world. Ghosh exposes today's political scenario. "Devotion to one's own nation, patriotic feelings principles or efforts" is how modern dictionaries defines Ghosh's character Tha'mma coincides this meaning of nationalism.

The narrator in *The Shadow Lines*, professes understanding and necessities for the nationalism - a super understanding and confirmation for not commanding the breach of any political or religious status of the people of the said nation. Such notion of nationalism should commit to honour the right and title of its citizens – peoples and allow them to live with honour, self-respect and with propriety in all respects. Such views are imbrued in the novel. However Anjali Roy in her article *Microstoria: Indian Nationalism's Little Stories in Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* comments:

"Ghosh attempts to fill up the gaps in nationalists histories by telling alternate revisionist stories suppressed or elided by nationalism's dominant discourse, even as he interrogates the validity of the nation, nationalism and national identity in an era of global capitalism." ¹⁶

Through however Ghosh's novel *The Shadow Lines* does not offer the solution through the complex system of Globalization Ghosh merely

puts forth the histories and creation of the characters facing emotional and existential challenges and leave the interpretation to the reader. It appears that what Ghosh suggests is to think about those who are humiliated, uprooted, due to limited sense of nationalism. Rahul Sapra in his article *Nationalism Defamiliarised* comments:

“The novel attempts to demonstrate the mingling of people across international borders, the pairing of characters in the novel is such; Tridib and May, May and Narrator, and the families - Datta - Chaudharies of Bengal and the prices of London.”¹⁷

Thus the ideologies of nation, borders, nationalism are interlinked in the art of novel. Hind Wassef in his article *Beyond the Divide | History and National Boundaries in the Works of Amitav Ghosh* comments:

“The force of nationalism has become one of the most potent forces of our present times witness the increasing number of emergent states and of separatists all over the world.”¹⁸

As a writer of our time Ghosh has discussed, through the novel writing, such sensitive issues of nationalism swallowing the common man of middle class families even, Ghosh himself says in an interview:

“Today nationalism, once conceived of as a form of freedom is really destroying our world; it is destroying the forms of ordinary life that many people know. The nation-state prevents the development of free – exchange between people.”¹⁹

Thus the novel *The Shadow Lines* as well as Ghosh even, project the ideological turn, the nationalism has been taken as it is worthwhile to assert here that *The Shadow Lines* was in Ghosh’s mind when he faced the riots of 1984 in India as a Professor in Delhi University. Ghosh does not comment on the riots as well as does not criticize as to who is right and who is wrong so far as riots are concerned that he simply puts the outcome of such riots in form of novel which has revealed the evils of shallow nationalism based on groups of species of mankind – groups formed on some or other religion or cultural heritage.

Other leading themes in *The Shadow Lines* are the themes of violence, communal riots and concept of freedom. The novel provides the complexity of ideas of freedom – personal freedom, social and political freedom – on the clash arising out of communal violence.

Ghosh presents the situation of middle class families entangled in the circumstances facing violence and striving to ease the situation and how their lives are shattered to pieces and they have to migrate. The theme of migration out of violence based on political, cultural and

differences – rising so intense as to erupt the violence like volcano are explored by Ghosh. It seems Ghosh is so much ‘concerned’ over the issue that even through the art of novel he cautions not only the readers but also the society as a whole. Impact of the novel is such that the reader is driven to think about those innocent people, living moderate lives, are becoming victims of violence and who are forced to migrate from their home. Displacements of families as a result of violence and communal riots intensify the feeling of anger and violence increases. Ghosh does not describe violence and butchered human bodies but he merely depicts the violence as newspaper reports. The narrator while reading these newspaper reports at Teen Murti House Library, sixteen years later and he as a research student is shocked to find needless violence and motivation which caused the death of his cousin – Tridib. N. Eakambaram in his article, *The Theme of Violence in The Shadow Lines*, comments:

“Amitav Ghosh’s characters inhabit this realm of life. But when misfortune strikes their lives are in an unforeseen manner, they are left baffled. If it is, at least, death or disease, they may try to comprehend it. But when violence erupts like a volcano in the public sphere they are totally disoriented. Life seems to lose its significance.”²⁰

About the violence Ghosh provides the comparative occurrences of violence – present and past. Repetition of violence on the same

ground is shown in the novel as if Ghosh goes on to show whether man has learned from histories. The narrator alerts the world over about creation of misfortune and communal tension prevailing all over the globe. Murari Prasad in his article *The Shadow Lines – A Quest for Indivisible Sanity* rightly comments:

“The narrator with his expanded horizons and imaginative understanding of the world caught up on the vertex of violence and murderous rampage stresses on the urgency of preserving the memories of saner and human transactions for cultural self-determination and inter-personal communication.”²¹

The theme of freedom and its various applications in the present time of post colonial as a whole is the prime theme of *The Shadow Lines*. Ghosh exemplify the ideas of freedoms – political, social and religious through various characters in various facets of life of human being. Political freedom is developed through Tha'mma – narrator's grandmother. The most significant freedom is political freedom. It is compounded in various walks of life of an individual pertaining to economic morel and religious. Longing and search for freedom involves violence and clash among different communal and cultural groups. The characters of the novel are mostly middle class families of the society. So their ideas of freedom are not philosophical but personal for living decent life. Grandmother Tha'mma advocates political freedom and for

achieving it, she is once convinced to run an errand for struggle in freedom movement. She is further shown as committed even to kill English magistrate if needed. Ghosh writes:

“I would have been frightened, she said, but I would have prayed for strength and God willing. Yes, I would have killed him, it was for our freedom. I would have done anything to be freed.”²²

The concept of freedom for the middle class families is not intricate but easy notion that political freedom once acquired their (middle class families) plights for economic and social freedom would automatically follow. The concept of freedom sought for by Tha'mma – a woman of ordinary prudence is individual. Ghosh also further develop the concept of individual freedom through the character – Ila who does not wish to remain under compulsions of cultural and traditional barriers and wish to adopt freedom of individual action as prevailing in the western countries. Ila's attitude for freedom is thus limited. Anjali Karpe, in her article *The Concept of Freedom in The Shadow Lines – A Novel by Amitav Ghosh*, comments:

“For every character in *The Shadow Lines*, the concept of freedom varies at different level of experience. The extent of freedom which an individual desires is related to the

constraints experienced by him and accepted as desirable or inevitable.”²³

The character Tha'mma wants the freedom from constraints of economic ups and down to maintain her family and she believes once political freedom is acquired her plight would automatically improved. She is a school teacher and lives within purview of her income honestly. Ghosh writes:

“All she wanted was a middle class life in which, like middle class the world over, she would thrive believing in the unit of nationhood and territory, of self respect and national power: That was she wanted – a middle class life, a small thing that history had denied her in its fullness and for which she could never forgive it.”²⁴

Here Ghosh projects the simple and inner longing and desire to be free for living normal decent life of man of ordinary prudent.

Thus Ghosh has evolved many conceptions of freedom in his novel *The Shadow Lines*. But freedom and its concept are interlinked with violence and political power over the individual.

Thus the novel *The Shadow Lines* discuss as through the characters of the themes of freedom for individual Diaspora and national and

international boundaries and violence arises out of cultural and communal tensions and clashes for freedom between communal and caste group of deferent religions and faith with violence by terrorists.

III

Thematic occupation *In An Antique Land* is multiplex which includes history, Amitav Ghosh's own experience as a researcher and it encompass thematic fields of knowledge relating to subversion of history, anthropology and philosophical elements of sociology and religion concerning to the mankind thriving for peace and peaceful coexistence of man. Ghosh explores the values of history and human behaviors keeping ordinary people in centre.

As a researcher Ghosh has visited Egypt, village Lataifa and encountered the social and religious deliberation of the people and he has constructed the accounts of his experiences and put forth in a form of novel however *In An Antique Land* is not merely a novel but also a presentation of history flourishing trade between India and Egypt in 12th century. And as a researcher, Ghosh came across Tunision Jewish merchant Abraham Ben Yiju, who comes to India via Egypt and marries Indian girl, Ashu and remains in India away from his home and family in Egypt. Ghosh writes:

“Despite its brevity and suddenness of its termination, there is one fact the passage serve to establish beyond any doubt. It

proves that Ben Yiju's departure for India was not entirely voluntary - that something had happened in Aden that made it difficult for him to remain there or to return." ²⁵

The theme of migration and alienation has been discussed in the novel. Ben Yiju's problems and his accepting India as his home, must have been the cause of his agony and anguish as to remain as fugitive in India. To remain away from one's home or family for whatever reasons creates the sense and feeling alienation. That is what Ghosh explores to assert in the novel. The elements of story of Ben Yiju's life are dated before more than 7/8 centuries. It is evolved subversion of history. Against such drawbacks of migration Ghosh puts forth the life of Nabeel in modern time, which is based on Ghosh's own experience in Egypt during his stay for research work. Nabeel and Ismail are fascinated over the prospects of lucrative jobs in Iraq and goes there for better prospects for better standard of life, and to earn more money. But he is in Iraq - accepts job on way of life as that of labour of slaves. Nabeel is longing for his family in his lovely hours of life in Iraq. Ghosh writes:

"I wanted him to take about Iraq, but of course he would not have been able to say much within earshot of his boss." ²⁶

In this regard, Nutan Damor in her article *Roots of Alienation* comments:

“His employer intercepts his conversation and orders him to get back to work, that Nabeel has lost his freedom and dissolved his identity completely to sustain his family back home.”²⁷

Nabeel’s lust for more money to complete the family house in his native stops him to leave the city and he suffers not only agonized feelings but also fatal challenges of life in the end.

Here Ghosh asserts the historical events of 12th century and events of the latest Post Colonial situation. Both have similarity in purpose, cause and longing for family in view of position taken by man. First in the 12th century and second is in the 20th century both explained the term and its exploration in respect of migration and agonized life that it creates. Here the reader faces a quest. Does the system of slavery is squashed now? Or it still exists in new form and new name? That is how the theme of migration is explained in form of subversions of history and novel by Amitav Ghosh by presenting novice fiction as *In An Antique Land*. Thus, Ghosh has put here evaluation of two historical events, one Ancient and the other recent history, in form of historical cum fictional work before the world. It is said history – historical events guide future action of man. K. C. Bolliappa comments:

“Indeed our world is full of Ismails and Nabeels. One can learn lesson from history if only one is willing. As Oscar Wilde has put it, ‘Man learns from experience that he never learns from experience’. And so history continues to be continuers, flowing process where the same things occur again and again. Individuals like Ismail survive because their desire for possessing consumer good is not inexorable but men like Nabeel have no hope as they want to stay on in a city ‘headed for destruction’.”²⁸

But it does not seem Ghosh’s concern whether one learns lesson from history or fiction. It is for third world workers to awaken their life from such presentation.

The theme of trade between India and Gulf countries, Egypt as well as human relation of different culture have been discussed while presenting Ben Yiju’s business across many countries – especially Egypt and India. Ben Yiju settled as a trader in Malabar before 1132AD having amassed wealth in India returned to Egypt, Ghosh as intensively researched about Ben Yiju. Ghosh himself was in Egypt in 1980 for his research work. Ghosh writes:

“Long active in the Indian Ocean Trade, Gujarati merchants had plied the trade routs for centuries, all the way from Aden to Malacca, and they exerted a powerful influence on the flow of certain goods and commodities. They evidently played a significant role in the economy of Malabar in Ben Yiju’s time and work probably instrumental in the management of its international trade.”²⁹

Here Ghosh explores the business and trade activities in midlevel lives and human relationship of different culture and social backgrounds in those historical times. Ghosh asserts that in spite of different cultural and religious backgrounds there existed the joint undertaking, Ghosh writes:

“In matter of business, Ben Yiju’s networks appear to have been wholly indifferent to many of those boundaries that are today thought to mark social, religious and geographical divisions.”³⁰

Ghosh, thus draws the evaluated picture of trade without violence, without social as well as religious diversities coming in between trading – a fruitful human relationship for mutual prosperity

of that time of history in Ben Yiju's time in medieval ages. That is how Ghosh's subversion of history can be valued and appreciated.

The theme of two civilizations and culture – one ancient medieval time and other modern have been in fiber of novel as a comparative situation and study thereof. Above all, Ghosh efforts in presentation of these civilizations are impartial and not favoring either. But Ghosh presents his own experience.

IV

The Calcutta Chromosome (1996) by Amitav Ghosh gives stirring picture of scientific invention, quest and glaringly about reason verses superstition and Indian philosophical blind notion of man's rebirth. *The Calcutta Chromosome* is a novel of modern times and it presents the amalgamation of many themes such as science, religious faith, logical solutions and function of reason in association with prevailing belief of Indian superstition conflict of ideological differences and various assertion interlinked in the story of quest and mystery.

The interaction of the characters with the time past – present and future creates the mysterious and thrilling narration of a story, about Antar who is working on super computer named Ava, about Murugan, who investigates the background of Ronald Ross's research and award of noble prize. There are other characters such as Pulbony, Urmila, and Mrs. Aratovian – a principal and Sonali—an actress and Mangla. Through all these characters of theme of quest and education, scientific

research, immortality and Indian ideology about reincarnation and man's rebirth are explored and developed.

L. Murugan is an employee of life watch associated with water council. While teaching in college, he was found interesting in malaria research. He comes to India and wants to investigate about what was the background behind award of noble prize to Ronald Ross in 1906 for the malaria research. Murugan works on the theory of counter-science and is tempted to believe that just as the information can be transferred one to another, in the same process; the transcendence of some personality from one body to another can not be ruled out. However such forms of transcend philosophy does not seem to have substantial by connection of logic and reason. Many Indian writers have centered their story on this theme and Ghosh does not seem to be an exception. However Ghosh's novel under study and discussion is not exclusively on this theme. Murugan's crusade to find out truth on malaria chromosome is linked in the story of other middle class family. The theme of quest and supernatural belief in some form of transcendental philosophy is evoked in the disturbed flow of a story moving from one event to another mixed with historical details. Mr. K. K. Parekh, in his article '*The Theme of Quest in the Calcutta Chromosome*', comments:

"The idea of this search becomes the haunting object for Murugan. He is obsessed by the desire to unravel the mystery of Luchman and his followers. The conversation now goes on to internet

between Antar and Murugan. It seems that a mutual sharing. Both are trying to perform a quest in the field of science and counter-science. It seems that there some occult power in whose hand, Murugan is an instrument.”³¹

The theme of intellect and intellectual fallacy seems to have taken place in the novel while creating the characters like writers, researcher, and newspaperman - all dealing and expressing on hypothesis of science and related philosophical elements. Consider the utterances of Pulbony a writer such as:

“Mistaken are those who imagine that silence is without life that it is inanimate, without either spirit or voice. It is not; instead the word is to this silence what the shadow is to the foreshadowed, what the veil is to the eye, what the mind is to truth, What language is to life.”³²

Ghosh, who is modern writer and has studied history and anthropology, has ventured into the field of intellect, science and reason and he seems to have substantial talent and knowledge in Indian philosophy and modern science. Through the character of Murugan, Ghosh develops the ideas on knowledge and science in relation to science and hypothesis of science Murugan explains it as:

“Not making sense is what it’s about conventional sense that is. May be this other team started with the idea that knowledge is self contradictory, may be they believed that to know something is to change it, therefore in knowing something you have already changed what you think you know so you don’t really know it at all. You only know its history.”³³

Thus Ghosh has dealt the complex theme of science and belief in the novel. While interpreting the scientific theory of intellectual complexity of knowledge, Ghosh combines the western theories of rationality with Indian belief of association of supernatural elements with man and typical belief of reincarnation. Ghosh does not refute either. The impact of myth as contrast to developing mind present world entering into altogether novice field of computer as a substitute for mind seems to have explored in the novel. Mr. J. D. Soni in his article *The Calcutta Chromosome – A Miracle of Pare Device* comments:

“The novelist is neither minimizing the impact of myth nor is trying to brush them aside as non-sense.”³⁴

Thus, Ghosh endeavoured to present Indian philosophy before the westerners through the novel writing. Apart from above

deliberation in the novel, multiplicity of themes relating to psychology, science, literature, man's belief and man's questioning the existences of divine power are dealt in the fantastic novel - *The Calcutta Chromosome* - which also provide other various thematic, and innovative experimental devices in the art of literary creation on the theme of science and other related hypothetical elements and considerations.

Ghosh has raised the question of fever, delirium and discovery and migration of soul through the character of Mangla, through Ghosh has succeeded in synthesis of main theme with many other rational or irrational matters and intricacies but the solution to identify the truth is left to the reader or man of science as to how to comprehend and how to justify the science or divinity. John Clement Bally in his article viz. *Malaria Mystery*, comments:

“Knowledge of disease is reclaimed and redefined on distinctly Indian terms, in Ghosh's version, it has implication not just science and bodily health but also for spiritual health and worship, fate, and predestination - reincarnation, time cycle and other notions more dear (by and large) to Indian than westerns.”³⁵

Thus Ghosh has awakened the westerners to look at and reconsider Indian philosophy in terms of science and reason. Ghosh evokes the

possibility and validity of Indian philosophy of faith and reincarnation in context with modern science and scientific methods.

V

The Glass Palace (2000) Ghosh's 5th novel projects the theme of fall of empire of Burma during the period of pre-impedance India and how the change of rule of empire affects the royal princely families. The theme of mass-migration of people from Burma to Calcutta during Second World War between British and Japanese is also developed in the novel.

Rajkumar becomes orphan and seeks his livelihood through the teak forest of Burma. The novel is interacted into more than a generation in old glory of empire and new ambitions of not only Royal families but also the subject of empire consisting men and women, merchants, rich and poor. Their aspirations are further shattered on invasion of Japanese on Burma in Second World War. The theme of homelessness and identity of South Asian families in pre and post colonial time is explored in the novel. The abuses and devastation of war, arising out of two foreign countries - British and Japanese in war against each other - for territorial ambition to win Burma are projected in the novel. The Japanese took hold of Burma in 1942 and thousands of people mostly Indians and refugees, feeling war and devastation, traveled thousand of miles from Burma to Calcutta, in their struggle for existence.

About large scale migration of people from Burma, Ghosh describes them as:

“They began to notice other people – a few scattered Handfuls at first, then more and more and still more, until the road become so thickly thronged that they could barely move. Everyone was heading in same direction: towards the northern landward passage to India – a distance of more than thousand miles. They had their possessions bundled on their head; they were carrying children on their backs, wheeling elderly people in carts and barrows.”³⁶

This is the outcome of war. Ghosh narrates the position of large scale mass people, marooned between two countries – Burma and India. They are facing the feeling of “outsider” in their own country. Santosh Gupta in his article – looking into History: Amitav Ghosh’s *The Glass Palace* – comments:

“The ‘long march’ back to India once again raises important questions about the nature of national identity, the reality of border lines between countries and justification of mass migration. Exiles and migrants who moved from one country to another are

displaced and became outcastes within their own country and in the new land.”³⁷

It is scholarly of Ghosh that he has presented the historical details, and position of men and women, outcome of war, in novel form so that it invariably catches sight of many readers who consider history as dry subject.

When the Japanese drives away the British from Burma, some members in Indian Army are split and it has greater effect on common people especially middle class families who faced a serious question in anguish as to whom to support – British or Japanese. Pico Iyer in his article – *The Road to Mandalaya* puts up this way:

“These characters torn between two kinds of operation – traitors if they support British, traitors if they support Japanese – take Ghosh back to what has always seemed to be his central concern, the consequences of displacements.”³⁸

Thus, once again Ghosh creates the thinking for the migrated people or people at the fringe of migration. Ghosh here project the worst situation of war-affected people. They are forced to such position that they face challenges for their very existence apart from the fact of homelessness situation.

The focal theme of the novel is inevitable recognition of the human being especially at the time of large scale dislocation of the people, individuals outraged by war.

Through the character of Arjun in *The Glass Palace*, Ghosh projects the faithfulness of people in foreign rulers on their own land - country. Ghosh brings further the dilemma of self realization in Arjun's life view. Arjun feels that he was 'used' instead of 'employed' in the British army. Arjun has served British Army for major parts of his life feels deceived by British Army. Helen Hayward comments on Arjun's feelings as:

"He (Arjun) undergoes a journey of self-realization, which ends with his recognizing the falsity of values by which he has lived his life. He feels that he has been mere a mercenary and tool in the hands of British, self divided and lacking in even an elementary self awareness." ³⁹

Here Ghosh thematic preoccupation is middle class families in colonial time of pre-independence and how they were treated by British rulers. By creating self realization in Arjun, Ghosh professes the theme of the development of an individual rather than society.

Apart from other aspects and ideological issues and Ghosh's concern for middle class families for their homelessness and migration,

the theme of *The Glass Palace* is of romantic and relationship amid different countries and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles. The historical background of *The Glass Palace* traces *The Glass Palace* in Mandalaya before British invaded Burma in 1885. Ghosh here brings light to what *The Glass Palace* meant and what was its beauty. Ghosh writes that it (*The Glass Palace*) shimmered with golden light when the lamp was lit. The transparency of the said palace of glass and lamps made it more beautiful – Ghosh furthers the story and writes Rajkumar glimpses of glass palace. The character – Rajkumar, an orphan teenager from India happens to spot a royal maid in *The Glass Palace* in Mandalaya. He sees her as “beautiful beyond belief, beyond comprehension” and he is out to search her and assert his claim on Dolly. Ultimately he proposes Dolly to marry him and she reluctantly marries him. This point of view and quest for love and marriage in the novel are more appealing theme for the readers.

Though *The Glass Palace* – a novel, refers to war, invasion, freedom, army, dislocation and homelessness, the characters in the novel are simultaneously engaged in love and ‘females beauties’, which are prime forces for human beings for moving to action in life. Despite political and cultural diversity the men and women in their quest follow their hearts rather than other considerations. Such thematic preoccupation of Ghosh in this novel makes the novel more interesting and the reader is more absorbed in search of outcome of love affairs. Michael Wood in his article *Freedom to Tango* rightly comments as:

“It is deeply romantic work. I say more in admiration complaint, but nevertheless with some surprise. The characters have their differences but they are courteous, understanding people even the ruthless ones. They fall in love, they follow their hearts and female beauty, sometimes seems to be more of an engine for action than politics or empire.”⁴⁰

That is how the theme of love figures in the novel. Romantic excursion of the characters is depicted in the novel amid other unhappy events in the lines middle class families. Inclusion of such interesting theme in the novel adds a feather of beauty on the novel.

The theme of racial and other religious and communal clashes among Indian and Burmese and section of other faith in public, is almost not figuring in the novel. Indian and Burmese and royal families and common people of middle class mix among themselves. Families of Rajkumar, Uma and Soya John move in Burma, India and Malaysia as circumstances demand. Ghosh projects the development of Soya and Rajkumar keeping aside the racial, linguistic and religious differences. Thus the theme of creating new societies based on simple reason of human relation is imbued in the novel. Jayita Sengupta, in her article – *Ghosh's The Glass Palace through Post Colonial Lenses*, rightly comments as:

“The customs are invented and absorbed to create new cultures, cultural hierarchies too overlap and there is entwining of high and low classes to create new societies.”⁴¹

That is how Ghosh creates better standards of human relationship based on mutual trust and cooperative apprehensive and appreciation.

The novel, a story of three generation, deals many thematic consideration – post and pre-colonial situations in various location of South East Asian territories. The theme of title of novel *The Glass Palace* is dual. It relates to beauties of empire as well as to freedom. Ghosh’s *The Glass Palace* is suggestive as that of Dinu’s studio named Glass Palace in the story, where Dinu – a character of novel – running the centre presents the theme of education and freedom among strict political compulsions. Here theme of freedom, wins over joy and beauty in the ending portion of the novel.

Overall thematic consideration by ordinary people, during the time of threat for existence of life has been reflected in the novel along with their personal and inner conflicts and quests.

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CHAPTER - 3

**PLOT STRUCTURE IN THE NOVELS OF AMITAV
GHOSH**

CHAPTER - 3

PLOT STRUCTURE IN THE NOVELS OF AMITAV GHOSH

Indian literature in English has attained eminent stature and reputation not only in India but also in overseas countries. By winning awards, prizes the post modernist writers including Amitav Ghosh have brought Indian literature in English to the status of prominent position in world literature and their novels have earned the best sellers position in literary publications. Amitav Ghosh is grown up in environment of many facets of life in many countries which include eastern India (Calcutta), Bangladesh, Iran and India. He received his doctoral degree from Oxford. His father was in British Army and it has influenced Ghosh in moving to many places. And evidently, Ghosh has drawn the raw material for plot structure of his novels from his experience and way of life at various places and from the incidents occurred in present time as well as in historical time.

Amitav Ghosh has published his first novel *The Circle of Reason* in 1986 and this second novel *The Shadow Lines* in 1988. Both these novels develop the theme of violence, freedom, national boundaries and suffering of 'an individual' instead of 'group' or 'society' as a whole. Ghosh, as a creative writer, draws his subjects from widely different aspect of life and clashes of incident. While going through the novels of Ghosh, we feel that each transition, we are passing, not only from one

kind of plot – interest to another, but from one kind of world to another kind of a world in the minds and memory of an individual.

Ghosh's themes, woven in the plot structure which may be loose plot or organic plot, possess a substantial value and genuine human meaning as they are not concerned with trivialities but with passions, conflicts, and problems – whatever their forms, which belong to essential texture of life of human being of middle class families world over. The novels of Ghosh with its conventional or unconventional plot structure, lays its foundation broad and deep in perspective of things which most constantly and seriously appeal to us in the struggle and fortunes of common humanity.

Efforts here are projected at analysis of Ghosh's novels from plot and structural point of view. Ghosh weaves the violence, communal riots and such incidents in the plot structure comparing it with similar incidents in recent history past in the novel with view to prevent possible misapprehension of such incidents.

Amitav Ghosh's first novel – *The Circle of Reason* has made the deviation from the traditional form and structure of the novel. *The Circle of Reason* with wide and panoramic view. It structured with events and lives of its characters spread over Lalpukar in India to Al-Ghazira in Egypt and then over to small township in Algerian Sahara. There are many stories within the stories told by the characters in main plot and sub plot structure. The stories that various characters say are very cleverly interwoven. The compound plot strategy appears in the novel.

However, Ghosh has maintained matter of balance among different part of plot. K. Damodar Rao in his review article on *The Circle of Reason* comments as:

“The all embracing structural principles of magic and irony eloquently ‘weave’ the total pattern of the novel and ideas, characters and metaphors are explicated through attendant motifs.”¹

Amitav Ghosh does not follow a rigid mechanical system of organizing the structure of plot in his novels and he values the meaningful synthesis of stories in main plots and subplots to achieve desired objectives of story telling as well as stressing the impact of violence and other disruptive elements of political and communal malignity on minds of individuals.

At some time Ghosh develops the plot where time and space are larger in scope for many characters, who requires introspection. The plot and structure are deferring from novel to novel in respect of the novels of Amitav Ghosh under study.

For example, the structural design of *In An Antique Land* is quite novice. The novel has genre of autobiographical novel as well as historical novel. Ghosh himself has expressed that *In An Antique Land* is quite new venture in form and style. Bharti A Parikh in her review article *Merging the Past and Present* opines as:

“The texture of the weave of the novel is chequered with multiple hues and patterns.”²

Thus, Ghosh deviates the traditional use of structure and designing of the novels found in the novels of early colonials and post colonial times in Indian literature in English. Though, however, while designing plot structure, Ghosh appears to have taken care of uniting the plot and characterization establishing due relationship. Through the relationship of characterization and structure of plot, Ghosh have projected the thematic considerations relating to violence, communal riots, national boundaries, rootlessness and national identity as well as fallacious freedom movement by fundamentalists of religion and faith. These themes are woven in synthesis of plots and sub plots structure in all the novels with possible exception of *The Calcutta Chromosome*. Amitav Ghosh, in his novel *The Calcutta Chromosome*- has dealt the history of European research into malaria and what lies behind the award of Noble Prize to Sir Ronald Ross on malaria John Clement Bally in his review article comments as.

“He (Ghosh) takes as his starting point the unlikeliness of Ross’s halting achievements and unravels over the course of an ingeniously plotted narrative, a set of mind-boggling alternative possibilities for

where Ross's knowledge really come from
and what it might - very radically entail" ³

The structure and plot of *The Calcutta Chromosome* relates to the stories coming and in fragments through the super computer Ava, which are loosely connected in the overall plot structure of the novel.

I

The Circle of Reason (1986) is first novel written by Amitav Ghosh and it has been immediately success with earning prestigious literary award of France to Amitav Ghosh. The novel is skillfully constructed novel. It is a nice piece of literary art in form of a novel, which is quite novice in style an theme and which is deviating the traditional form of plot structure of the novels published so far in colonial time in Indian English literature. The outline of the plot of *The Circle of Reason* - encompass many international borders and countries as a locale of the novel. The principles of structure of the novel as straight line story telling is replaced by the system of various characters telling about their lives in the main and sub plot structure which are interconnected the synthesis of subplots linking it to overall plot structure of the novel has been made with conforming it to the characterization and thematic occupation, creating due relationship. The novel is skillfully constructed with all the charm of the tale creating picaresque effects. R. K. Dhawan, comments on the plot of the novel as:

“Stretching from remote village in Bengal to the shores of the Mediterranean, this is a neatly sculpted work of a master craftsman. It marks a break from the traditional themes of Indian English novel and the form and structure of the well made novel.”⁴

The novel *The Circle of Reason* is divided in three parts each elaborating ideological terms of Indian cultural philosophy relating to SATVA (*Reason*) and RAJAS (*Passion*) and TAMAS(*Death*) - the term derived from the Bhagavad-Gita the pious book of Hindu religion and these three elements dominates the life of animate and inanimate bodies spread over on earth as well as on planets according to BHAGVAT GITA (Called GITA) teachings. The novel is dominated by these qualities in life. Though, however, Ghosh interprets SATVA as reason.

The first section depicts the interpretation and implications of Reason in the society through the character of Balaram who belongs to reason. He champions himself as a man of reason and starts a school of reason to educate village youth. Balram is embodiment of reason but his idea of reason is superfluous. Though, however, Ghosh emphasis the need for manual skill for one’s means of survival and Balram makes the department of practical reason in the school which enables the student for their training in weaving or tailoring.

But in practice, Balaram loses the logical connection of Reason and his school of reason fails in practical execution. Another story is about superfluous action by Balram who plans the attack on Bhudeb Roy with the help of Rakhal and creates the fire and his interest in the book – Life of Pasteur – does not help him. Here Ghosh creates the story of middle class families with insufficiency of reason. Balaram’s sense of cleanliness with the use of carbolic acid. And Torudebi is interested in sewing machine and her sill of tailoring and Alu is taken up with weaving and new patterns. These stories are forming subplot structure in the novel. Ghosh links and weaves the different and varied stories linking them through Alu’s passion. Thus various characters tell their stories. As a novelist, Ghosh select the ideas and events and develops the stories as sub plots through the characters of Alu, Balram, Zindi and Jyoti Das. K. Damodar Rao in his review article comments as:

“In *The Circle of Reason* -- the attempts of the novelist are obviously oriented to floating of events and characters through a medley of metaphors and select ideas. The all embracing structural principles of magic and irony eloquently ‘weave’ the total pattern of the novel and ideas, characters and metaphors are explicated through attendants’ motifs.”⁵

In the first section, there is a character Jyoti Das a police officer who suspects Alu for intrigue activities and follows to Alu from

Calcutta at Al-Ghazira. In fact, Jyoti Das is fond of bird watching and moves to satisfy his quest for bird watching. This story develops in sub plot similarly for Balaram the book of Life of Pasteur is his reason and he tries to solve all the problems with buckets of carbolic acid and he believes that superstition and ignorance can be done away with Pasteur's development of disinfection.

Similarly, Torudebi is closely attached to the sewing machine which she has acquired as dowry. When she fails to stitch on the sewing machine, which breaks down and she asks Alu to throw it away and he goes out to throw it away and he is saved by the disaster of fire engulfing house.

The sewing machine once more saves Alu's life when he is working in Al-Ghazira. Due to Torudebi's infatuation, Alu loves sewing machines. He is working with other labourers painting the basement of the multi story building 'The Star'. Which collapse and Alu is trapped in the rubble and the slab of the collapsed building is held up by two sewing machines of dd kind of solid steel and Alu is found alive and saved by the very sewing machines. Thus two sub plots are interconnected. All the three parts of the novels the leading characters, Alu, Balaram, Zindi Jyoti Das, Kulfi etc. tell them stories. The stories are interlinking in various subplots. At Al-Ghazira the scenario of these Al-Ghazira the scenario of these people lodged illegally at Al-Ghazira are described by Ghosh narrating futile action by various characters in search for seeking livelihood in foreign land in rootless positions. They move from place to place and their stories, aspirations and daily

functions to live from many sub plots in the novel Indira Bhatt in her review article - Outside the circle: A study of *The Circle of Reason*, comments as:

“Moving from place to place, continents to continent, Ghosh’s characters keep floating in the novel, they even do not form any relationship worth the name. They keep telling their stories trying to link up the plot of the novel but to little avail”⁶

The third section of the novel under study, relate the stories of Zindi, Uma Verma who is Indian doctor, Jyoti Das, Kulfi, Alu. The novel ends up in Algerian desert. Zindi is highly embarrassed when Boss falls ill. Boss is adopted by Zindi. Here Ghosh evokes touching scene of childless woman’s love. Uma Verma, an Indian doctor is pleased to see Zindi, Alu as she is planning to stage a play of CHITRANGADA by Tagore for the function of celebrating anniversary of Indian medical delegation’s arrival in Algeria. Kulfi plays the role of CHITRANGADA and Jyoti Das plays role of Arjun. Kulfi having a heard ailment suffers fatal stroke during the rehearsal and compassionate. Mrs. Verma faces adverse circumstances to arrange the funeral for Kulfi in the middle of Sahara and the book - *The Life of Pasteur* is thrown into the funeral pyre. This fragment of the story forming sub-plot does not link with the total pattern of the novel’s plot structure. However from thematic point of view of title of first and last

section viz. SATVA (*Reason*) and TAMAS (*Death*) the story is woven into the part of whole plot structure.

Similarly, the story of Nury - egg seller's story - is linked to the thematic consideration projecting passion and preaching as to how business and life have to be maintained. Here Ghosh says that one should learn from experience the lesson viz. (1) All trade is founded on reputation (2) blindness comes first to the clear sighted and (3) an eye in court yard is worth a hundred guns. The egg seller's--Nury's stories linked to the stories of Jeevanbhai Patel. Here Ghosh writes:

“What Patel wanted was his (Nury's) knowledge; for he saw power in knowledge and for him power meant money”⁷

Thus Nury's story is linked to theme in Part-Two which forms sub plot of the total plot structure and Nury's story is not directly connected to the part three of the novel.

The plot structure of the novel have loose sorts of many stories. However efforts to maintain the 'wholeness' of plot-structure are made through the media of various metaphors. The most of the characters in their various attempts to live to earn create float stories in a sphere of metaphors for example, the carbolic acid run throughout the a novel in one way or another connecting three parts of the novels sub plots. Similarly, the sewing machines, Jyoti Das's bird watching and stories of

germs and the book –The Life of Pasteur appears in various parts of the novel suggesting interlink connection to maintain the total plot structure of the novel. Indira Bhatt, in her article of review, *Outside the circle: A study of The Circle of Reason*, rightly comments as:

“It is quite obvious that character’s tales are, in fact, told by the novelist himself. Ghosh rise to weave together the different stories through references to sewing machines, carbolic acid, life of Pasteur, money and dirt, purity and cleanliness, rationalization and science.”⁸

However the plot structure of the novel have loose sorts of many sub plots which are loosely connected to the overall whole plot structure of the novel. Most of the events and character stories are inclined to its thematic consideration rather than forming unified part of the plot structure of the novel. These are some independent elements enter into the plot. Various stories need to be amalgamated. The directions of the unity demands that in a compound of complex plot structure, the parts of sub plots needs to be wrought together into a single wholeness of the plot or some balance on unification of complex material needs to be maintained. Shyamala A. Narayan rightly comments as:

“The structure too is much looser, just story following fantastic story. Yet circle of

reason has a structure of sorts; ⁹ as the TIMES LITERARY supplement reviewer Neville Shack points out 'Just when you suspect that randomness is all, an old thread reappears to weave a motif out of contingency.'" ¹⁰

It appears that Ghosh has stressed more emphasis on the thematic consideration (to the title of three parts of the novel) than on the wholeness of plot structure of the novel. Ghosh creates the implications of three qualities viz. SATVA (*Reason*), RAJAS (*Passion*) and TAMAS (*Death*) in the lives of the characters of the novel in their plight of rootlessness and journey. All these three qualities in core of the stories do not form exclusive single plot structure. Shyamala A Narayan comments, in this regards, as:

"The GUNAS do not provide any structural unity to the novel. It is held together tenuously by the concept of reason for which there are some repeats symbols - the loom, the sewing machines, and a book, Pasteur's life." ¹¹

Overall analysis of the novel from structural point of view reveal Ghosh as a master craftsman in the art of fiction in spite of the fact that *The Circle of Reason* is Ghosh's first novel and hailed as a break away from the traditional forms of fiction writing in Indian English literature.

II

The Shadow Lines (1988) by Amitav Ghosh projects the themes of violence, riots, nationalism, national boundaries and communal tension through the events of three generations of the characters spread over India's Calcutta, East Pakistan's (New Bangladesh) Dhaka and England.

The novel is published in 1988 after few years from the year 1984 when Indian Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi - was assassinated and wide spread violence breakout when Ghosh was teaching at Delhi University. The riots and general massacre of Delhi and other cities in India provides the backdrop of the novel.

Ghosh Projects the meaning of individual freedom in case of division of nation and what 'home' means to the individual when demarcation of boundary line is drawn and when the individual is facing existential challenges and that is why, perhaps, the sub-title of he novel is marked *Going Away & Coming Home*. The present novel is very fine amalgamation of modern techniques of narration and time and space which creates over all structure of the novel. The events and lives of the characters are projected in structural synthesis showing the thematic occupation of the novelist.

The novel is divided in two parts namely *Going Away & Coming Home* which consist the stories brought forwarded by the unnamed narrator whose mentor is Tridib - narrators Uncle. The story of the

novel with an aim to project particular theme is moving around various characters like Tridib & Tha'mma, Ila and May Price, Robi and Unnamed narrator and Nick Price. The structure of the novel does not follow a linear developmental projecting the events in sequence of time. Important point is that novel develops freely either forward or backward, narrating the lives of grandmother, grandmother's sister Mayadevi her husband and their children particularly Tridib. There is another English family - the Price family which is extensively associated with for three generation with narrator's family. Ghosh interconnects and interweaves the lives and experience of this families and that forms the total plot structure of the novel. The novels have multi-layered stories woven together with certain thematic considerations like riots, violence, freedom - political as well as individual. About the plot structure of the novel Arvind Choudhary rightly comments as:

"Its focus is a fact of history, the post partition scenario of violence, but its overall form is subtle interweaving of fact, fiction and reminiscence. Its multi layered complex structure makes it difficult text, which demands perceptive reading for a richer experience. It is principally, organized through the weaving together of personal lives and public events." ¹²

About the freedom and other related issues, the narrator learns from Tridib about topical matter as well as Indian history on social political and moral levels. Tridib presents broader view of freedom. His freedom was more about to do with what one desired. Tridib explains to the narrator as:

“One could never know anything except through desire, a real desire which was not the same thing as greed or lust, a pure, painful and primitive desire a longing for everything that was not in oneself a torment of the flesh that carried one beyond the limits of one’s mind to other times and other places and even if one was lucky to a place where there was no border between one self and one’s image in mirror.”¹³

The novelist projects his voice through Tridib and narrator. The structure of the novel is made with the events which are learned by the narrator, and which are told by Tridib. Amid many events, the narrator learns about Tridib’s death in riots. The narrator learns it actually from May while he was in London and May is attracted by the narrator. This forms sub plot stories linked with the wholeness of the plot. Besides through the novel Ghosh does not show as to what happened to Tridib but the meaning of what had happened that is meaning of violence and what lies behind it. And that is the central idea of the novel.

The novel presents many sub plot stories (events) projecting many themes. Through the character - Ila, Ghosh evokes superfluous idea of freedom. Ila breaks away from the family for a cosmopolitan way of life in London for personal freedom. In fact, Ila does not want to live under constraints of middle class families. The narrator is in love with Ila but Ila wants to live in London freely. She represents typical western style woman as post colonial female perspective. Vinita Chandra writes about Ila as:

“Ila occupies a central position in the novel in a relation to the narrator’s exploration of self identity. The narrator’s unreturned desire for her is located in her exotic, western clothes, appearance and behaviour. Through the fantasies of being accepted and popular in the western milieu that Ila construct for the narrator as a child and an adult, the novel focuses on her anxieties about being rejected by the western culture that she strives to embrace while at the same time consciously repudiating the Indian background.”¹⁴

Ghosh thus focus on western culture and how Indians in postcolonial times are lured by western culture. Such sub plot stories are linked and interwoven in the wholeness of the plot.

Thus novel moves back and forth and events are not narrated in sequence. The narrator is a man of penetrating insight and figuring in past and future of the characters. The plot of the novel does not suffer through such devices of back and forth as it is blended in synthesis of overall organic structure of the novel.

Apart from the above many parts of the story and events of the novel are projected as flashback, all the same in past memories and events and these are many interruptions in time. The members of three families frequently travels to and from in between London and Calcutta. The individual stories of Sahib, Ila, Mayadevi keep the reader moving from place to place. The time jumps and distance etc. these stories forms sub plot structure linked with main plot of the novel.

On the structural novel the narratives do not follow chronologically. Ghosh depicts the fractured chronology. The narrative technique in the novel anecdotal with unconventional plot structure compared to the traditional structure of earlier novels in post colonial times of Indian English literature depicting streamlined lives of the characters. About the plot and stories, Robert Dixon writes as:

“The plot of Ghosh’s second novel *The Shadow Lines*, also takes as its originally moment the diaspora of East Pakistan, The Narrator’s family are Hindu who fled from their home in Dhaka to Calcutta after

formation of East Pakistan. There during the Second World War, when Europe itself lies in ruins they befriend an English family, the Prices, and two families are woven together by complex stories of cultural crossing.”¹⁵

Thus, the novel depicts the structural unity of plot and sub plot stories. The novel is divided in two parts with many episodes encompassing the lives of the characters on many folds and at different locations. The characters and plot structure are thematic oriented. Though, however, the novel presents new concepts of modern themes of violence, riots and freedom – Individual as well as political. In this regards, Arvind Choudhary rightly comments as:

“The Shadow Lines is neither a novel of character nor a novel of plot but a novel of ideas. And the characters sub verse the chosen purpose of projecting some vital ideas in the text.”¹⁶

Arvind Choudhary further comments as:

“The arranging of episodes and of digressions, the art of foiling, the use of symbols, metaphors, and tropes as structural elements – all this indicates the

concerns purpose that yields an extraordinary symmetry of form.”¹⁷

III

In An Antique Land (1992) by Amitav Ghosh is story of two Indians in Egypt. One is Arabian Ben Yiju, a Jewish merchant originally from Tunisha, who came to India about 1130 A.D. and who lived in India for seventeen years married a Nair woman and acquired an Indian slave Bhoma who went to Egypt with his master. The other Indian in Egypt is Amitav Ghosh himself who visited Egypt in 1980 as a student for his doctoral degree from oxford and who went to Egypt to trace the root and cause of the slave MS-H6. The novel depicts two sets of the stories, one is that of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma engaged in trade between Mangalore, Aden and Egypt in the time around 1130AD along with Ben Yiju's personal life and his relationship with Indians of deferent culture and faith in carrying on the trade. The other set of the stories relates to Ghosh experiences during his stay in Egypt. These two sets of the stories are forming two main plots structure of the novel and these two main plots are linked and interconnected from thematic point of view as evaluation of the cultural and religious consideration derived from the historical facts of Ghosh search of slave MS-H6 in the year around 1130AD with that of the environments of the places which Ghosh visits for his doctoral research.

In the prologue, novel opens with introduction of 'The Slave of MS-H6' in modern history and Abraham Ben Yiju whose name

appeared in several medieval documents as a student of anthropology, novelist search for the life of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma who is Indian from Tulunad west coast of India, whose origin traces to the 12th century and who were engaged in trade between India and Egypt and Aden. In his subversion of history of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma. Ghosh has supported his narration with historical documents. In this matter, Ghosh writes:

“The letter which now bears the catalogue number MS-H6, of the National and University Library in Jerusalem, was written by a merchant called Khalaf Ibn Ishaq and it was intended for a friend of his who bore the name Abraham Ben Yiju.”¹⁸

That is how the novel begins with prologue where in Ghosh writes:

“At about the same time the next year, 1980, I was in Egypt installed in village called Lataifa, a couple of hour’s journey to the south east of Alexandria.”¹⁹

The plot structure of the novel is divided into six sections beginning with prologue and closing with the epilogs. The remaining sections consist of Lataifa, Nashawy, Mangalore and Going back. The section viz. Lataifa and Nashawy deal with social and cultural history of Egypt and the sections viz. Mangalore deals with Ben Yiju’s stay in

Mangalore of south west coast of India. In the section 'Going Back' Ghosh is concluding his research for Ben Yiju's life as well as cultural and political changes in south west coast of India.

The narrative of the novel in all the four parts shifts from personal to historical and vice-versa. All the parts provides the reader with the glimpse of India's sea faring merchants, their adventure and encounter with several countries through the stories of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma in 12th century written as sub version of history by story teller's way - a way of the creator like Ghosh as well as cultural and socio-economic condition of Egypt. Ghosh research and stories of his stay in Egypt all run parallel making the whole structure of the novel. The theme of alienation is elaborated in the characters of Ben Yiju and Nabeel. About plot-structure of the novel K.C. Belliappa Comments as:

"These details form the prologues of the novel while the next three sections are set in Lataifa, Nashawy and Mangalore. But it is a fluid division since the novel has a kind of picaresque form with a loose episodic structure having the novelist himself as the protagonist." ²⁰

The episodic plot structure of the novel *In An Antique Land* is united by thematic consideration. At one time, Ghosh evokes, through the subversion of sea fare trade between Aden, Egypt and west coast of Indian in 12th century, in the peaceful relationship despite cultural and

religious diversities and simultaneously brings forth the postcolonial situation of human relationship in Asian countries including Egypt and Gulf countries. Ghosh has this magnificently illustrates, through his fictional and subversive historical discourse, the need for human understanding and the religious tolerance.

In the sub plot of novel in section viz. Lataifa, Amitav Ghosh narrate the episode of his stay at Ali's house where he (Ghosh) has been brought by Doctor Aly Issa, Prof. in the University of Alexandria and one of the most eminent anthropologist in the Middle East. Ghosh writes about Abu Ali that he (Ali) is such an unlovable person that none in the neighborhood as well as in his family like him. Through the Abu Ali's house novelist comes in contact with Saikh Musa who is kind and helps novelist in many ways. His two sons Ahmed and Hasan exhibit the changed way of life due to education. Ghosh in his section, focus on Arab laws of religion and celebration of random festivals. Ghosh writes about cultural strangle-hold of Ramdan on people as well as on whole of village - and thereby exposes social and cultural history of Egypt. Simultaneously with his, the episodes of Historical research regarding Geniza – (Historical stores houses) documents and historical details of Ben Yiju and his slave MS-H6 are described giving minute details. These episodic stories of fiction as well as research investigation made by Ghosh have linkage to the plot of the novel up to the end.

The section titled as Nashawy describes Ghosh's visit to Lataifa after 8 years and narrates the story of social and cultural changes of Egypt and introducing two characters - Nabeel and Ismail, both

students of agricultural training college in Damanhour. Both are very find young men full of aspiration with open mindedness to modern ideas. Both hail Ustaz Sabry their teacher on his art of arguments. Through the Nabeel and Ismail, Ghosh evokes Nabeel's father was working as labourer on other people's land and hence poor. Ghosh, as a protagonist of the novel describes riots of his childhood and partition forming East Pakistan, there Ghosh writes:

I was to recognize those stories years later, when reading through a collection of old newspaper I discovered that on the very night when I had seen those flames dancing around the walls of our house, there had been riots in Calcutta too, similar in every respect except that those it was Muslim who had been attacked by Hindus." ²¹

Nabeel was also a victim of Gulf war, but Ghosh writes that he was never able to explain very much of that to Nabeel or anyone in Nashawy. Through the Narration, Ghosh depicts the attack (on civilization of Egypt and India) - attack by riots. The plot is divided or two main plots are running parallel - one about novelist search for Ben Yiju and Bhoma's lives and the other about cultural and social conditions of Egypt and India.

Ghosh projects the subversions of Ben Yiju's life and this probable marriage with Nair Girl - Ashu soon after moving to Mangalore and Ghosh writes that Ben Yiju's manumitted Ashu who was of different faith in compare to Ben Yiju. Through all these, Ghosh evokes peaceful relationship among different faith, culture and different civilization that prevailed at west coast Indian Ocean in the Middle Ages.

The section also describes the novelist's - Ghosh's personal encounters with Imam about hot discussion over development of Egypt and India about customs about, "Prior claim to the technology of Modern science." ²² In this matter Gosh writes:

"I was crushed as I walked away it seemed to me that the Imam and I had participated in our own final defeat." ²³

Here Ghosh tries to unite two plots one of Ben Yiju's story and other of his visits to Egypt. Comparing the cultural and religious differences arrived at using gun as at present with the relationship of Ben Yijus' time. About this Ghosh writes:

"We had acknowledged that it was no longer possible to speak as Ben Yiju or his slave or any one of the thousands of travelers who had crossed the Indian Ocean in middle ages might have done: of

things that were right a good or willed by gods." ²⁴

The section - Mangalore - gives elaborated details of life of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma as well as flourishing trade through Egyptians and Arabic traders with Indian Merchants mostly Gujarat merchants Ghosh writes:

"They (Gujarati - Vania) eventually played a significant role in the economy of Malabar in Ben Yiju's time and were probably instrumental in the management of international trade: Madmun, for one, was on cordial terms with several members of the Gujarati trading community of Mangalore, Whom he kept informed trends in markets of the Middle East." ²⁵

Ghosh this evokes the relationship of two deferent faith and culture that prevailed in middle ages S. Sengupta in this regards comments:

"Amitav Ghosh looks at history from the point of view of a post colonialist and gives his own reading into the characters of the two periods i.e. those of 12th century the countries of the world were separated from

each other by barriers of immense stretches of water and insurmountable mountains and yet brought together by a common humanity and the modern world, which has been reduced to a global village has been ironically broken by narrow domestic walls: erected by imperialist.”²⁶

The section Mangalore, Ghosh also focuses reader’s attention on relationship between Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma, for which Ghosh appears to have concluded that the slave Bhoma was very close to Ben Yiju and was more of a friend and partner to him than slave. Ghosh further tries to make out the exact language that prevailed in the time of Ben Yiju but to little avail.

Story of Ben Yiju and middle age relationship between Egypt and India including trade relationship come to end, when the Portuguese invaded Indian ports including Div of Gujarat and Mangalore and Calicut of south west coast of India in 1509 AD. Ghosh concludes this as:

“Soon, the remains of the civilization that had brought Ben Yiju to Mangalore were devoured by Unquenchable demonic thirst that has raged ever since, for almost five hundred years over the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf.”²⁷

Thus novel sternly criticizes the colonizer and his lust for power in the sub continent of Asia. The last part of the novel going back and epilogue ends with Ben Yiju's documents in Philadelphia and Nabeel being trapped in thousand of exodus of Egyptians and the Iraqi's cruelty to Egyptian and Gulf war.

Thus the novel is concluded by syntheses of two plots one India – Egypt relationship in 12th century and another in modern times. About the plot structure of the novels, Sengupta, in his review article viz. *In An Antique Land* and historical and fiction - a post colonial Attribute, rightly comments as:

“It in the main plot of Abraham Ben Yiju and his slave, the journey is towards the humaner aspect of civilization, the journey in sub plot seems to be in the opposite direction towards guns and bombs and tanks of western imperialist powers which spell ruin for all the world especially for so many Egyptians stranded in Iraq during the operation desert storm..”²⁸

Thus the novel is a beautiful study of the effect of social and political changes on ordinary people of middle class families as well as interesting chapters of Ben Yiju's relation with Ashu - Nair Gils in 12th century.

IV

The Calcutta Chromosome (1998) by Amitav Ghosh projects the historical backdrop of Ronald Ross's Nobel Prize for malaria research. The story is mixed with extensive dialogues and descriptions of Indian mythological cult of fate and predestination, spiritual health, and reincarnation, making the story as thriller as to convey the root and cause of malaria fever as well as scientific facts about malaria disease. The novel is astonishing stories of historical details and scientific invention and discoveries and what lies behind such invention and discoveries. The setting of Murugan's investigation about unlikeliness of Ross's achievement of Noble Prize and his hypothesis about alternate probabilities and possibilities about Ross's research forms one part of plot and on other hand, the sub plot stories about the connection of malaria with mosquito and Indian belief about transformation of soul and reincarnation have seen woven with the Murugan's investigations. The novel develops in a straight line stories. Since the novel is such in late 20th century and early 21st century, Ghosh has projected the formations of certain sub lot stories through the super sensitive computer which is named as Ava and handled by Antar. The elements of mystery and thrilling have been interconnected in the stories in various chapters of subplot formation.

The story begins with an Egyptian Clerk named Antar working in New York in early 21st century on a highly skilled super sensitive computer with empowerment of vision and performing the speech of

any dialect. Antar tries to trace the whereabouts of his colleague – L. Murugan of an Indian origin, who has left New York for Calcutta in 1995. Murugan is shown as a stern critic of Ronald Ross who has been awarded Nobel Prize for his research on Malaria parasites. Murugan's investigation in Calcutta exposes his multiple experiences.

Murugan narrates the result of his investigations to Antar and reveals that Ross's predecessor D. D. Cunningham set the laboratory and conducted the experiments. Murugan gives the details further that Elizabeth Farley was predecessor of Ronald Ross and worked in the laboratory set by D. D. Cunningham. Farley had known about the fact that a group comprising of Lutchman and Mangala knew about counter science.

Once Farley found that a group of people in laboratory for treatment of syphilitic dementia were there before Mangala. Farley knows that the washer woman Mangala tries to keep it a secret activity. Mangala provides the slide which is handed over to Farley by Lutchman. Farley notices Laveran's rods and desires to know more. Lutchman says him to visit Renupur where Farley goes but he is found dead on his way to Renupur. Thus Ghosh creates mystery and simultaneously Ghosh projects the theory of counter science through Mangala. This episode forms sub plots stories.

There are other such stories of various characters each forming sub plots. Urmila's sexual relationship with Murugan is shown such as a part of 'experiment' Urmila is from middle class family and works for

daily newspaper Calcutta. There is another character named Phulbony who is a writer and speaks about philosophy of concepts of knowledge. Phulbony was one at station Renupur. The stationmaster who meets Phulbony is the ghost about the synthesis of various sub plot stories in the novel. John Clement Bally comments as:

“The novel is written for the most part in straight forward, transparent prose heavy on dialogue and description. Ghosh builds suspense expertly but conventionally through the use of short chapters, tantalizing last paragraph revelations, digressions and alternating story lines that increasingly mesh together towards a density of interconnection.”²⁹

The plot of the novel is located in time of late 19th century and the present days of 1995 and early 21st century. The stories of stationmaster murdered by Lakhan and moonless night at Renupur and in the year 1900, Phulbony, writer is saved himself from the train accident in 1933 and the character Grigson saved himself from the same circumstance as faced by Phulbony and interconnected story of moving station lantern forms various sub plot stories of mystery. About such mystery stories in the plot Ramesh Kumar Gupta comments as:

“The novelist presents a mystical aspect of the plot which becomes wonderful to every one.”³⁰

The novel projects many episodes of event through the characters, which are highly controlled and have little to say than enacting stories. Various episodes are loosely connected and create organic unity to some extent. Some of the stories are abruptly comes to an end leaving the reading in mystery and suspense. Ghosh uses the screen of computer - Ava to depict the stories in various episodes and sometimes Ghosh writes:

“Abruptly Ava began to beep: rest indecipherable unable to continue.”³¹

The total plot structure is divided in forty five chapters each chapter very short and creates disturbance in time or space. Besides chapter ends abruptly just to move on other episodes. Ghosh however tries to synthesis various stories in the end. The novel moves around thematic occupation of science and Indian belief of reincarnation, transmovement of soul etc. belief which Ghosh calls as counter science. And all the stories in episodes move to that direction of theme. About plot Madhu Malti Adhikari rightly comments as:

“Disruption of time and space enable us to visualize and seek the complexities of plot

structure and admire a conglomeration of ideas.”³²

V

Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000) is epic narrative of love, war and empire and tells the stories of a cast of characters—royal, working class, and bourgeois Indian, Bengalis and Burmese. The plot of stories is spread over the time of twentieth century and actions at Burma - Mandalay and India. The story includes the rise and fall of peaceful, educated royal empire of Burma and British invasion on Burma as well as war or Second World War history sounds more than a whisper in the backdrop of *The Glass Palace*.

The plot- structure of the novel is very expansive and traditional, telling stories of three generations of cast of characters. The lineal development of the characters is the structure of the novel telling the lines of the royal as well as middle class families- spread over of the time of three generation on twentieth century.

The novel is divided into seven parts each forming sub plots episodic stories with certain thematic considerations leading to the overall structure.

The epic story begins in Mandalay about British invasion on Burma – on king Thebau - evacuating Royal Glass Palace shimmering

with sparks of golden light and princess's maid Dolly - a beautiful teenage girl.

Of "a liveliness beyond imagining"³³ and ends with Glass Palace studio of Dinu—Dolly's son.

The plot structure of the novel is woven by lives of many characters viz. Rajkumar, Dolly, Saya John, Uma Dey who survives throughout the novel's end. The central character is Rajkumar who is Indian orphan stranded Rajkumar as man of determination and disciplined way of caring his business. Ghosh writes:

"Saya, Rajkumar shrugged offhandedly, they are just tools, without minds of their own. They count for nothing. Saya John glanced at him, startled. There was something unusual about the boy - a kind of watchful determination."³⁴

With this introduction, Ghosh projects the British invasion on Burma, on king Thebau of Glass Place, which is forced to be evacuated by Indian soldiers fighting for British to win Burma. And mob enters into the palace of the king for 'loot'. Rajkumar also joins the mob into palace and he sees Dolly- queen's maid who is most beautiful and he comes out of palace without loot but with Dolly in his mind and heart. He offers sweets to Dolly on way with the king and queen. Rajkumar adopting 'practical' attitude earns with Saya John's business and starts

his own timber yard and being a successful businessman, he undertakes journey to India and see Uma Collector's wife, the Collector being in charge of royal family of king Thebau and her princess in exile in Ratnagiri part of Indian Territory under British rule. Rajkumar who has gone to collector with a hope to find Dolly, did find her and marries her with help of Uma Dey - collector's wife and recoups his early life and he with Dolly is happy and have two sons Neel and Dinu. Uma Dey collector's wife leaves her husband who commits suicide as he fails to control Royal family because one of the princesses is pregnant. Uma Dey leaves his husband and go to America to pursue her career. The main characters - Saya John, Rajkumar (Raha)–Dolly, Uma Dey are pillars of the story lineage of the novel forming the main plot structure. Rakhi Moral rightly comments as:

“Amitav Ghosh weaves into the life of his central protagonist, Rajkumar, the bewildering and often poignant accounts of a family scattered through post imperialist dislocation in various parts of the Asian continent as he charts the complex, sociological and political repercussions of such disbanding through experiment of loss, exile and search for homeland.”³⁵

These are connected episodic stories linked with characters. The trans-formulation of Burmese Royal family into the culture of Hindustani, princess's pregnancy with the relation with Sawant taken

by queen very lightly forms sub plot stories which are linked and connected with leading characters. Thus, Ghosh tries to project inter-mingle of stories to give way to formation of new stories - again forming sub plots - with inter-activation of religion, culture and class of the societies of various families of middle class suffering migrations from place to place.

These are other sub plot stories the members of three families viz. Rajkumar, Uma and Saya John frequently move from Burma, to India & Malaysia by their volition. Various family stories are woven into main plot structure of the novel by making relationship more strengthened by love and marriage, for example, Soya's grand daughter falls in love with Dinu - Rajkumar's son and Rajkumar's elder son Neel marries Uma's niece - Manju in Calcutta. Helen Hayward comments as:

“By the careful accumulation of a throng of interconnected stories, Ghosh succeeds in elaborating a complex canvas which evocative of the diversity of individual experience depicts the matrix of political and economical pressures in which it is caught.”³⁶

Apart from that there are sub plot stories of history of colonizers way of treatment of colonized. The critical issues of Indian soldiers in British armies are discussed forming sub plot stories. Here Ghosh

comments on inscription at the military Academy in Dehradun. Ghosh writes through the dialogs between Arjun and Hardy as:

“There was an inscription which said ‘THE SAFETY HONOUR AND WELFARE OF YOUR COUNTRY COME FIRST, ALWAYS AND EVERY TIME. THE HONOUR WELFARE AND COMFORT OF THE MEN YOU COMMAND COME NEXT..... AND YOUR OWN EASE COMFORT AND SAFTY COME LAST ALWAYS AND EVERY TIME.’”³⁷

Through this Ghosh evokes the feelings of moral questioning of the Indian officers in British army fighting for British of British King Emperor in their own country. Ghosh thus criticize British rule in the Indian country through inter weaving the themes of Indian independence struggle. Ghosh writes:

“Arjun saw that it was a pamphlet written in Hindustani and printed in both Devnagri and Arabic script. It was an appeal to Indian soldiers signed by one Amreek Singh of Indian independence league. The text began: Brothers, ask yourselves what you are fight for and why you are here: do you really wish to sacrifice

your lives for an empire that has kept your country in slavery for two hundred years.”

38

Thus Arjun, Indian soldiers in British Army talks with Dinu Arjun feels that he has been a mere tool in the British army. Arjun is in love with Alison and is a rival of Dinu, Rajkumar's son. Thus the stories of sub plots are interconnected and drawn away to main plot of the novel. The author of the novel has dealt with plot and characterization with its inter-relationship besides thematic preoccupation of the novelist. Normally the novels which hold higher place in literature are nearly, in most of the case, the novels of characters and not novels of plots. But in present case, Ghosh's novel is a novel of characters and themes of migration of families. Overall the novel *The Glass Palace* has been woven into the plot structure with lineal development of story telling, about plot structure of the novel Helen Hayward opine as:

“*The Glass Palace* is structured by such pairing of characters and the mirroring of episodes and also by recurring images: a nautilus shell, windows (Suggestive to self-consciousness) disembodied voices of *The Glass Palace* itself the original home of the Burmese Royal Family.”³⁹

Whereas Rukmini Bhaya Nair comments as:

"The Glass Palace is not just a thoroughly researched novel it is a carefully plotted one. This means that Ghosh goes out of his way to tie up loose ends. Stylistically he is always measured, correct, objective—in the manner of the historian but managerial he is not altogether able to resist the temptation to play GOD - in the mode of the novelist." ⁴⁰

Thus the analysis of the novel *The Glass Palace*, from plot structure point of view reveals that the novel is a beautifully plotted one with glamour of the characters and hazards of war.

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CHAPTER - 4

**ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVELS OF
AMITAV GHOSH**

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Amitav Ghosh, through the characters of five novels under study reflects characteristics spirit of community, people and system of exercising political and communal powers. Post colonial writers of our time have presented many typical Indian characters but Ghosh's characters though middle class of people reveal their problems of alienation. Ghosh correlates such problems of alienation with those of similar type of problem in historical facts. Ghosh's characters represent mostly middle class people. They have various visions for better prospect of life and they move beyond national boundaries in search for better work and better life. For instance, Nabeel, in *In An Antique Land*, goes out of his home country for better earning to complete his house in better position. Ila in *The Shadow Lines* desires to live free of middle class constraints. N. Eakambaram in his article *The Theme of violence in The Shadow Lines* comments:

“Ghosh's characters go as far as Delhi or London on work or travel, and come home to Calcutta or Dhaka only to learn that peace is as elusive as ever.”¹

The characters in Amitav Ghosh's novel strive to substantiate their identity in face of constant challenges and existential problems. The characters in among five novels under study have certain similarity in creation. They are all middle class family members and all are facing the similar problems of rootlessness as well as existential challenges as a result of political or communal frenzy.

It is most cleverly of Ghosh that the life and meaning of life and experiences of human beings, drawn from his actual experiences as well as from his study of sociology and history, and such life experiences are projected by creating the characters in the novels. In details and reasoning they (Characters) are so complete and appear so real at their appropriate stages of life that better art of characterization are exhibited by Ghosh. Brinda Veerappa K. rightly comments as:

“Through the characterization of the narrator's grandmother, Amitav Ghosh makes a touching comments on the lives of many people of old generation of the subcontinent: of people who have lost their spaces - literal, emotional and spiritual - because of partition.”²

The analytical process of study of five novel reveals that the characters, mostly middle class families are drawn an artful way to suit the theme of freedom and its ideas as to what is the meaning of freedom for common man facing the threat to their individual freedom for better

prospect and better way for earning decent living to exist. The characterization in *The Shadow Lines* is better example of his kind of art of characterization R. K. Dhawan, in his regards notes down as:

“Seema Bhaduri’s Article *Of Shadows Lines and Freedom: A Historical Reading of The Shadow Lines* focuses on Ghosh’s treatment of the changing middle class ethos in India during the pre and post Independent era. The lines of the characters in this novel are determined largely by their idea of freedom and this idea, in its turn, is shaped by the history of the times.”³

Amitav Ghosh is a man of ideas which are innovative. Through the experiments of characterization, Ghosh portrays the men and women of ordinary prudent drawn from the society entangled by political, irrational religion and clashes arising from the blind belief, prejudices and extensive dominance of violence to assert the creed of particular culture of community. To frame the characters with their specific deliberation in the form of novel is demanding higher creative skills of writing and that is what Ghosh has displayed in his novels, which projects various characters of different talent and caliber. For example in *The Glass Palace* the character of Rajkumar narrated as:

“It was Rajkumar’s practice never to collect more than a part of his salary, banking the rest with Saya John.”⁴

Rajkumar headed over to run his own business empire by purchase of timber yard and flourish. Whereas portraying the character of Jyoti Das as police officer in *The Circle of Reason* Ghosh narrate him as:

“He is clean shaven and pride himself on it for it distinguishes him from his colleagues and who tend generally to be aggressively mustached. He is pleasant if not good looking and he looks younger than his twenty years he is often mistaken for college students”⁵

Through such artful way the impressive character of police officer is drawn by Ghosh through his innovative and creative skills. Moreover portrayal of educated Dr. Uma Verma in *The Circle of Reason* is quite de-fitting to her education when she is professing science over orthodox ideas and even she is microbiologist, she profess to be a human being first rather than buried in science alone in her social encounters.

The characters are crated by Ghosh in his fifth novels under study to suit the thematic deliberation even though one may surely feel they are real in the society for example in *The Shadow Lines* the character of Tha’mma is such that once she was prepared to run an errand for

freedom of her country and ultimately learns from her experience and she questions the adequacy of borders between newly created nation by political fallacies. Ghosh gives the touching sensitive portrayal of feelings and sentiments of displaced and debarred people of ordinary prudent in case of bifurcations of the nations. Very insights into the thinking of the affected people are characterized in the novels Shobha Tiwari rightly comments as:

“The Shadow Lines does not have matured characters. Nor that are characters are saints. No, not that but their flaws are human, explicable and again rooted to their past for me, it is a master stroke of Ghosh at the art of characterization” ⁶

The characters in the Ghosh novels strive for to establish their identity and existence even in the uncontrolled social and political disorders. The characters possess different facets of entities such as professionals, friends, family members, spouses and lovers.

I

The Circle of Reason is quite differentiated novel from conventional form. The lives of characters are not traditional type of ordinary human being. The life of characters of *The Circle of Reason* shows man's problems of alienation and existential challenges. The instance of Alu— Nicknamed from Nachiketa Bose—moves from Calcutta to Al-Ghazira

for better living. Alu is hard to describe. He is neither tall or short nor dark or fair. His uncle Balram educates him in art of weaving instead of schooling. Balram is another important character in the novel. The character of Balram signifies the title of the novel. He is rationalist and the better art is exposed through Balram. Ghosh describes Balram as:

“He had a thin, ascetic face, with clean lines, a sharp ridge of a nose and wide, dreamy eyes. His high broad forehead rose to a majestic dome crowned with a thick, unruly pile of silver hair. It was an astonishing forehead: it shone, it glowed, it was like a lamp shade for his bulging Higher Faculties - language, form, Number, the lot, it was striking face even in repose.”⁷

Balram's character personifies a man of reason. Balram's idea of running a school of Reason is novice. Here Ghosh advocates such an education as may bestow the man with skilled education which may enable him to earn his living. Weaving is the central aspect of the novel. Alu wants to become a weaver and Balram's Study of Phrenology convinces him that is the proper career for Alu. Ghosh emphasizes the concept of loom in relation to man and national boundaries. He writes:

“Man at the loom is the finest example of mechanical man, a creature who makes his

own world as no other can, with his mind. The machine is man's curse and his salvation, and no machine has created man as much as loom. It has created not separate words but one, for it has never permitted the division of the world." ⁸

The central character Alu becomes an expert weaver under the direction of Shombha Devnath. Maya is Shombha's daughter and Alu's first sexual encounter is with her. Alu is suspected of his intrigue activities and he moves away from Calcutta to Kerala and Al-Ghazira. As in other novels, the character of Alu-nachiketa deals the problems arising from migration and alienation. About the character of Alu, R. K. Kaul comments as:

"One of the characters who reappear from time to time is Jyoti Das a Police Officer by profession, whose real vocation is bird watching. His pursuit of Alu provides a loose connecting thread to the later portion of novel" ⁹

Jyoti Das is an Asst. Supdt. Of Police, is described by Ghosh as an impressive man. He distinguishes from his colleagues. Jyoti Das follows Alu, as he suspects him to be involved in anti-social activities. The peculiar things that envisage about Jyoti Das are his personality.

Ghosh's art of characterization is revealed through this Jyoti Das. Ghosh describes him as:

"He is pleasant if not good looking and he looks younger than his twenty five years; he is often mistaken for a college student."

10

Ghosh through the character of Alu and Jyoti Das creates the picaresque effects in the novel and holds the reader absorbed in the novel.

The character of Rakesh appears in the novel as he migrates with Alu from India to Al-Ghazira for better job. Rakesh is unable to find better job despite his bachelor's degree in commerce.

What migration for better earning brings is projected through the Jeevanbhai Patel a businessman from Gujarat. He is portrayed as practical man who is always behind the money. He moves from place to place and struggles in life, fails and wins and ultimately he commits suicide lonely without friends and relatives. Zindi - a woman character wants to purchase the Durban tailoring house from Jeevanbhai but she did not succeed due to death of Jeevanbhai.

There is another character - Nury, who is an egg-seller. About Nury, Ghosh writes:

“In his own small way Nury was a great man. He had the wisdom to see the world cleverly. And like a logicians he drew clear conclusions from what he saw.”¹¹

Nury portrayed to be philosopher is count up in circles with other character. Ulka Joshi in the article *The Circle of Reason* caught up in circles comments are:

“The characters are trapped in such a non-productive circle that their struggles lead them to nothingness”¹²

It transpires that the ‘reason’ is under practice by ordinary class of middle class family’s members without success as it appears in the novel. Though however the tools of Balram for self reliance and work with reason on machines like weaving and sewing. The novel is highly unconventional. The characters that in a novel depicts are on the state of abnormality practiced for seeking better living conditions.

II

The Shadow Lines was published in 1988 that is exactly after the assassination of Prime Minister of India – Indira Gandhi, and which created heavy uproar and wide spread violence and heavy civil disturbances and dislocation in India. During that time, Ghosh was teaching in Delhi University Campus and the characters of *The Shadow*

Lines are creation of Ghosh under the imprint of communal violence and national boundaries drawn and re-drawn. The riots and general mass slaughter provides a backdrop to the creation of characters in *The Shadow Lines*. Ghosh masterfully creates the characters and projects that the demarcation of lines – boundaries of nation and bifurcation of nation made by political credo divides the people but these lines cannot divide a memory as Tha'mma and her old uncle believe. The character of narrator, though unnamed, plays vital role in the novel. The writer leads the reader to believe that narrator is Tha'mma's grandson and is far more influenced by his uncle Tridib.

The novel projects the character of Tha'mma who is born in Dhaka and she is a teacher by profession and she did not like Ila the granddaughter of her sister Mayadevi. Ila has been brought up in the atmosphere of many places in world on account of transfer of her father from one country to another. The important characters of the novel include Tridib, Tha'mma, Ila, May Price, Robi, unnamed narrator and Nick Price. The novel is spread of Bangladesh (Early East Pakistan), Calcutta and London, deliberating the story of three generations. Neelam Shrivastav comments about characters as:

“In the text we get to know various characters who let themselves be trapped in stories which are not of their own fashioning, as well the narrator, who is simultaneously the most ‘gullible’ and the most ‘doubtful’ listener of all.”¹³

Through all the main characters, Ghosh has projected the issue and resultant life of people affected by violence, riots and re-demarcation of national boundaries.

Apart from their natural human deliberation, the characters in *The Shadow Lines* are created to explore the concept of ascertaining the identity in the foreign land for the novel develops in many countries in Asia as well as in Europe. The characters in *The Shadow Lines* reflects ethos of the people trapped in rootlessness and existential challenges arising out of communal violence, civil disturbances, riots and divisions of national boundaries.

The characters belong to middle class society - earning their living in aspiration of better livings and they have their own world of their family and for them any disturbing of existential nature is alarming.

Through the character of Tha'mma novelist brings the reader to the fatal outcome of people arising out of partition of India and Pakistan as well as creation of Bangladesh. The protagonist Tha'mma has been criticized as fossilized specimen of nationalism. Ghosh projects that though the demarcating boundary lines are drawn by the political machineries in power, they cannot divide the memory and experiences as Tha'mma believes. The novelist questions the effectiveness of borders that divide people into two different groups but they can not delete the experiences and memories of Tha'mma and uncle Roby and Ghosh, it

depicts that such lines of division are illusory and they are lines of the Shadows. In such an atmosphere, Tha'mma is projected as enthusiast of the concepts of the nation and nationalism. Tha'mma was born in Dhaka in a joint family, when national movement was going on a militant stride against British. She was strong willed and stubborn. Ghosh shows the peculiarities and suffering braving middle class through the character of Tha'mma - Tha'mma on becoming widow joined the School to maintain her family. She is proud middle class woman devoted teacher. She rejects the favour and help from her own sister Mayadevi and she is proud and determined enough to maintain her family by her own self. Ghosh writes about this:

“When she had had to take her school teaching job in order to educate my father: I could guess at a little of what it had cost her then to refuse her rich sister’s help and the wealth of pride it had earned her ...”¹⁴

On the way of living of Tha'mma such as above, Shobha Tiwari comments:

“Tha'mma’s character is a tribute to so many unrecognized women in this country who is holding the world of their children and near and dear ones together by their toil and labour.”¹⁵

Through the character of Tha'mma - having experience of an environmental of police raids in the colleges and universities in Dhaka, during the tie of British rule, Ghosh shows that Tha'mma's motivation was always her desire to be free with self respect and national power. Pathos of middle class families is very well revealed through Tha'mma. Ghosh writes:

"All she wanted was a middle class life in which the middle classes the world over, she would thrive believing in the unity of nationhood and territory, of self respect and national power: that was all she wanted - a middle class life, a small thing that history had denied her in its fullness and for which she could never forgive it." ¹⁶

Thus Tha'mma's concept of nationhood is different but her own. It appears that Ghosh has extensively evoked the feeling and the meaning of nationalism, national boundaries through Tha'mma.

Another leading character of *The Shadow Lines* is Tridib, who is son of Sahib a high rank diplomat living in foreign office abroad. He is elder brother of Roby. He bears an attractive personality and his number of admirers and local boys meet him at Gola Bazar, where Tridib pays frequent visits. He bears the imposing personality and has a high influence on the lines around him. The narrator consider Tridib as his hero and dominating guide who apprise the narrator about political,

social and religious events with his powerful imaginations. He was studying for PhD in Ancient Indian History of Bengal. Because of his charming personality and wide knowledge and reading, people stick to him. Ghosh introduces Tridib's personality and way of life as:

“He (Tridib) said to me once that one could never know anything except through desire, real desire. Which was not the same thing as greed or lust, a pure painful and primitive desire a longing for everything that was not in oneself, a torment of the flesh that carried one beyond the limits of one's mind to other times and other places.....”¹⁷

Tridib's presence in the novel accelerates momentum to the story and the impetus to the narrator. Tridib loves May Price and sends her chatty letters even pornographic ones. It is this love affairs that creates Tridib's death in riots where he tries to save May Price who unlocks the door of the car and runs to save an old man, and Tridib is slaved by the riots mob. The death of Tridib is the most dramatic and penetrating stage in the novel and it reminds how Ghosh, while teaching in Delhi, had experienced the wide spread riots and slaughters in India in 1984 after Indira Gandhi's treacherous murder. Gita Choudhary comments on the events of death of Tridib as:

“Each character would have to live with this memory and get affected by it. With his death he brings home to the narrator the meaninglessness of artificial boundaries, the falsehood of forcing one individual’s idea over another and the disaster of misplaced ideals.”¹⁸

Whether one would agree to the above comments or not, is a question. Though however Ghosh, in his master’s art of characterization, reveal the repercussion of momentous historical events, as:

“Every word I write about those events of 1984 is the product of a struggle with silence. It is a struggle I am destined to lose – have already lost for even after all these years. I do not know whether within me, in which corner of my world, this silence lies. All I know of it is what it is not; it is not for example the silence of imperfect memory. Not it is a silence enforced by ruthless state of nothing like that, no barbed wire no check points to tell me where its boundaries lie. I know nothing of this silence except that it lies outside reach of my intelligence, beyond words.”¹⁹

It appears that opposition and anger against riots and violence affecting death of innocent people – like Tridib’s death – has been expressed as only possible mode of silence as if there is no hope. But it is not so, there is always way out to do away with the violence.

Ila is a major woman character in the novel. She wants to get rid of cultural and family constraints and leads free life. Ila represents new face of modern woman who wants to live freely. She finds London is proper city for her cosmopolitan way of life. Narrator is in love with Ila as he is dazzled and attracted by western cloths worn by Ila. Although Ila marries English Youngman Nick, she finds her marriage not up to her expectations. She represents post colonial female perspective. Anu Chopra comments on Ila’s character as:

“Even when she starts working for a child organization, she is emotionally so dishonest because she hates children. It is difficult to understand why Amitav Ghosh has portrayed Ila as such a superficial person.”²⁰

Whereas May’s character is different from Ila. May is portrayed humane and sensible woman. Tridib falls in love with May but her relationship with Tridib is untimely comes to halt due to Tridib’s death in riots. May feels guilty for the death of Tridib. About May’s confession, Ghosh writes:

“For years I was arrogant enough to think that I owed him his life but I now I did not kill him. I could not have, if I’d wanted. He gave himself up, it was sacrifice, I know. I can’t understand it, I know. I must not try for any real sacrifice is a mystery”.²¹

Thus Ghosh brings out effects of western culture on Indian through the character of Ila, and brings forth before the reader about unrestricted vagabond type of superfluous culture of western way of freedom in compare to India’s cultural effects.

The characters in *The Shadow Lines* are from middle class families and they cannot afford vagabond type free movement without responsibility on the other hand, there is dutiful Tha’mma. Ghosh puts up two types of woman for the reader to see the truth – truth about the way of life. Gopal Gandhi comments about the character in *The Shadow Lines* as:

“Each character in it leads his or her life at planes that move in their own assigned orbits. They have each of them, a past, present and future but not in that sequence of dead progression. They live in all those dimensions parallelly.”²²

Whether one would agree with comments of Gopal Gandhi as above, it is certain that there is commonness of issues like uprootedness, national boundaries and riots on communal differences and clashes that affected the lives of all these characters of middle class families deeply rooted in three generations of the characters.

III

In An Antique Land Ghosh has projected two groups of characters – one of historical and others one of present time. The novel is quite novice in fashion and methods of a tale. The unification of these two sets characters by comparing the odes of life in pre-colonial and colonial period with life of characters in post colonial period is skillfully drafted in a form of a story.

The main characters in the pre-colonial time are Abraham Ben Yiju a Tunisian Jew merchant who carries his business in India, Egypt and Aden and his slave Bhoma of ancient India. Through these characters Ghosh portrays the life of human being in those days of pre-colonial time when people lived in harmony with fellow man in spite of different cultures and races caste and creed. Ghosh's subversion of history shows that Ben Yiju born in Tunisia settled in India and even married to a girl of different community and that too is welcomed by his own family / caste in Egypt where he goes after twenty years. Ben Yiju's companion is a fisher man Bonmma who is South Indian. Ben Yiju came to India via Egypt in 1130AD. The character of Ben Yiju is historical one discovered by Ghosh and he has renarrated the life of Ben

Yiju on the strength of letters between him and three others who were associated in business of mutual interest. They were Madmun Ibnal Hassen Ibn Badar, Yusuf Ibn Abraham and Khalaf Ibn Ishak. Ban Yiju come to Mangalore in 1132AD and married slave girl Ashu who is south Indian of Nair caste family. Ghosh research work on slave MSH-6 shows many surprising aspects of human relationship. Though Bomma was a slave he was trusted with goods of value and also he is sent as his representative to many overseas places like Egypt and Adan and Bomma is developed with his role as business agent of Yiju. Ghosh unearths the relationship prevailing in land of India and Egypt in ancient time. Ghosh writes:

“Bomma probably had to undergo while in Ben Yiju’s service, that eventually became a small patch of level ground between them: the matrilineally descended Tulu and the patriarchal Jew who would otherwise seem to stand on different sides of an unbridgeable chasm.”²³

Through the Ben Jiju’s character, Ghosh writes subversion of history on his discovery of tradition, culture, and harmonious association of men of multi-cultural and multi-religious beliefs about the Ben Yiju’s time. Ghosh writes that invasion of Portuguese and Dutch on business over Indian ocean and Arabian Sea has ended development of harmonious association between different culture and religion. Ghosh criticizes colonization as:

“Soon I the remains of the civilization that had brought Ben Yiju to Mangalore were devoured by that unquenchable, demonic thirst, that has raised ever since for almost five hundred years, over the Indian ocean the Arabian sea and Persian gulf.”²⁴

Other set of the characters that appear in *In An Antique Land* are fictional based on Ghosh’s visit to Egypt and Lalaifa, Nasahawy as a research, student of Oxford. The novel consist three visits of Ghosh to Egypt. Comprising his findings he develops the character of Nabeel. Through the character of Nabeel, Ghosh evokes the feelings of those who are away from their homes. Through the Nabeel, Ghosh Writes:

“It must make you think of all the people you left at home, he said to me, when you put that kettle on the stove with just enough water for yourself.”²⁵

Nabeel goes to Iraq to earn more for his family and he (Nabeel) himself is thrown out of the family and becomes ‘outsider’ by going to work outside. Whatever better prospects and position one finds in Nabeel’s earning abroad but Nutan Damodar comments:

“Nabeel loses his standing within the family as a living emotional being and becomes a money producing machine.”²⁶

Nabeel’s position in Iraq is not better than that of a slave in olden ancient times. Ghosh asserts that Nabeel’s position at his work place is that of bounded laborer as the Nabeel is silenced by his boss as can be learned in conversation between narrator and Nabeel. Nabeel, who is burdened by family needs and sense of alienation, is trapped in foreign land. Ghosh appears to stress some similarities on Ben Yiju and Nabeel who are forced to leave their homeland for one or another reason and move to foreign lands with hope to better economic avenues. Ghosh’s art of characterization of Ben Yiju and Nabeel is such that history is repeated after many centuries.

IV

The Calcutta Chromosome is Amitav Ghosh’s 4th novel of substance with regards to science and typical Indian belief of reincarnation of soul, the characters of the novel – Murugan. Sir Ronald Ross, the noble prize winner on malaria problems, Urmila Roy and Mangala Bibi and other such as Lutchman / Lakhman – bring the reader to the insight of computer technology, archeology and tropical medicines and knowledge of science v/s mythology. Sir Ronald Ross, the noble prize winner solved the malaria puzzle, while he was in Calcutta. Murugan’s search for the background of Ross behind the Ross’s claim for the prize

is appealing to one's intellect due to genius creativity of Ghosh put into the prose.

Murugan seems to be the most interested arousing character of the novel - The Calcutta Chromosome. He is described as having discoloured hair. He is thin and his nose reminds one of boxer. Murugan is combative and a man of intensive searching ability. He wants to uncover the medical history on malaria parasite especially the back drop of Ronald Ross's Account of his research work that won him Noble prize. Murugan believes Ronald Ross could not have completed his research in a very short time and he pursues his investigations in Calcutta about what was happened in fact behind the case of Ronald Ross. Through Murugan, Ghosh suggest that knowledge is history. Through the characters of Murugan, Mangla, Phulbony, Ghosh projects the theory of hypothesis of Indian mysticism and supernatural powers against the truth of science he calls it counter science. Ghosh writes:

“It would also have to use secrecy as a technique or procedure. It would in principle have to refuse all direct communication, straight off the bat, because to communicate, so put ideas into language would be establish a claim to know which is the first thing a counter science would dispute.”²⁷

The character –Murugan is man of science who challenges the issue of Ross’s finding out the truth. Murugan speaking the hypothesis and his supposition, his ideas and inferences is shown as one of the leading characters of novel.

Against the backdrop of Ronald Ross’s discovery of malaria fever and parasites, Ghosh has created masterfully the character of Mangla who is an assistant to D. D. Cunningham. She is portrayed as a goddess like figure, she is the symbol to Indian mythological knowledge about transcending of soul from one body to another and she had found so called cure for syphilis but has also knowledge about life beyond life. Farley refutes the hypothesis of Mangla’s rituals. Mangala is portrayed as a Woman of her own person and power her personality does not remain in sphere of only motherhood or wifhood as prevailed in tradition. Mangala’s position is highlighted by Ghosh as representing the archetypal *MATRU SHAKTI*, Ghosh writes:

“The woman Mangala was seated at the far end of the room, on a low divan but alone and in an attitude of command as though enthroned.”²⁸

And these before her where some half a dozen people touching Mangala’s feet and others lying prostrate, who had come for treatment of Malaria. Ghosh, however, beware the people to such kind of treatment. Through the character of Farley, Ghosh writes:

“It was his duty, he knew, to tell them that mankind knew no cure for their condition that his false prophetess was cheating them of money they can ill afford.”²⁹

Even though, Ghosh is projecting Mangala for her potentiality for freedom of thoughts and action. This is a move on the part of Ghosh to liberate the woman from her traditional of a weaker woman in the family. Apart from this, Ghosh shows Farley to be in clutch hold of Mangala. Thus the Indian mythology is put forth before science as counter science. Pramod Nayar, in this regards comments as:

“Mangala’s efforts cannot be (a) expressed to other, (b) admitted by themselves or (c) validated by fellow scientist, since their work and its transmission requires secrecy and because silence is essential for the success and mainly because their voices cannot articulate of counter science that conflicts with established ‘truths’.”³⁰

While projecting the theories of counter science Ghosh gives twist to the characters. Murugam may be Lakhan and Lakhan is shown as Lutchman, Mangla may be Tara, Mrs. Aratourian and Urmila. Configuration of characters creates as if the theory of transmigration of soul competes the science through the modes of silence and ambiguities and diversions. A. G. Khan comments in this matter as:

“Ghosh uses the technique of the puppet master. His characters are made to appear and disappear, rise / fall as the part of narrative technique.”³¹

The character of the Station Master in *The Calcutta Chromosome* – Buddhu Dubey is masterfully created as it succeeds its ways to ease and provide comic to the reader.

V

The vast panorama of *The Glass Palace* express the life span of three generation of middle class families during the time around second world war the Japanese invaded Burma and conflicts among the people had begun to support British or Japanese, in either side common man – mostly working class and Indian suffered a lot on account of larger scale of migration from Burma to Calcutta. Amitav Ghosh, literary intellectual, has explored the people’s sentiments and social dislocation from individual’s point of view in his novel. *The Glass Place*, which depicts the panoramic view of pre and post colonial South Asian identity with specific perception on the mind of individual suffering from misfortune of migration.

The leading characters are Rajkumar, Dolly, Uma Dey, Arjun amid many others who comments the life in the story of many families in three generation of life span. There are so many characters that the

reader is at many points confused to see the connections among one another in the long life stories. Apart from this, Ghosh through many characters has drawn disturbing situation of colonization particularly aggression, capture of land of beauty and abundant resources of richness in Burma by British. Shobha Tiwari comments:

“Apart from human scenes of colonization, Ghosh also deals with larger question of Europe’s greed. Everything becomes a resource to be exploited – woods, water, mines, people just everyone and everything.”³²

As in other novels Ghosh’s focus is reiterated on rootlessness and desertation of land—country of work of middle class. The characters are artfully portrayed deeply in the family connections amid displacements. The novel is a life long story of many families, their battle for existence and their interdependent relations with one another. Ghosh has portrayed the character of self made man – Rajkumar – Rajkumar initially is an Indian orphan boy pushed away by the circumstance to Burma. It is interesting to see how this character is developed by Ghosh in most artful way. The boy moves in the city preferably for settlements at his own way. In Mandalaya, he comes across a woman name Ma Cho who is running tea stall and breakfast and to whom he asks for job, and gets it. While developing this character Ghosh goes on to show that lesson should be learned from experiences. Rajkumar develops his way of life very fast. He sees, how to flourish through the abundance of

wood, Rajkumar learns that British wish total control over Burma for its rich natural resources especially wood and amid such ensuring way he is saved by Soya John, who learns unusualness and determination peeping out of Rajkumar's mind. And Soya John offers him a job and Rajkumar earns much and learns much through Soya John's Company. Apart from this, Rajkumar goes to Theban's Palace with mob for motive of loot but Rajkumar is paralyzed when he sees Dolly taking care of princesses. Rajkumar is attacked by natural encounters of beauties possessed by Dolly. About Dolly's beauty, Ghosh writes:

"She was by far the most beautiful creature he had ever upheld, of loveliness beyond imagining." ³³

Rajkumar follows Dolly, offers her food on replacement of royal family of king Thebau of Burma by British Army, as he was amazed by the beauty of Dolly. He forgets the loot from the palace of the king.

Rajkumar concentrate his freedom from family tie into developing his own business and he by taking loan from Soya John starts his own timber yard. Rajkumar says:

"If I am even going to make this business grow I will have to take few risks" ³⁴

Rajkumar develops his business by his determination, hard work and forgetting the barriers of nationhood. On his success in business,

Rajkumar search for Dolly who is gone with royal family in charge of collector. Rajkumar uses his good offices in tracing and meeting collector for Dolly only. Collector's wife Uma Dey is arranging meeting of Rajkumar with Dolly. Rajkumar as successful business individual marries Dolly after her primary reluctance and they starts family life. Rajkumar celebrates for all the happiness which he missed for developing his business, and they have two sons Neel and Dinu. Thus, the character of Rajkumar is symbol of successful business venture and beautiful wife such as Dolly who used to live in *The Glass Palace* of king of Burma.

Ghosh has extensively described life of many people attacked by misfortune of war and British Rule. Ghosh has portrayed two sets of characters – one displaced Royal king and has staff and common people – mostly working class. The character of Dolly represents Royal class beauty. To describe Dolly, one has to describe her qualities – inner sense of beauty. She is a maid in Royal Family of king of Burma for helping the princesses. Even though, she is portrayed as a young girl of meaning her own business.

This is seen when she replies to Rajkumar as if to confirm her intention to marry Rajkumar, she says,

“Yes, but there is sometimes a difference between what one says and what one means ...”³⁵

This is turning point in life of Dolly – a beautiful girl described by Ghosh as:

“She was asleep lying on the same narrow cot that she had used for the last twenty years. Her hair had come loose during the night and lay fanned across her pillow. In repose her skin looked almost translucent and her face had the serene beauty of a temple carving.”³⁶

With help of collector’s wife Uma, Dolly marries Rajkumar and leaves her home. Again Ghosh here characterizes the ties between two human beings one man and another woman without any barriers of religion or political or any cultural restraints for marriages. About Dolly’s character, Shobha Tiwari comments:

“Dolly is the personification of the spirit of endurance and acceptance.”³⁷

Dolly in her spouse relationship with Rajkumar, gets two sons Neel and Dinu. During the time Rajkumar falls in mating of another woman and has illegitimate son. Dolly due to her association with Uma Day, Collector’s wife, developed her personality and whereas Rajkumar through successful in business remain uneducated. Dolly goes to Royal family and Dinu also leaves Rajkumar. Dolly is created as most beautiful woman and the reader is driven by the Dolly’s character and

novel becomes more interesting. And these lies better art of characterization on the part of author, Ghosh who masterfully and scholarly holds the reader enraptured in the life of characters of the novel.

Another character of Uma Dey wife of collector is imposing her personality on the reader, who becomes involved in life of Uma Dey. Even the Queen Supayalat is influenced by her. The character of Uma Dey is shown as a Woman of inner beauty and attraction. Her husband is a Collector so he is driven as hosts Uma in social relationship. Collector's Cambridge education and way of his mental expectation does not co-ordinate with Uma's personality. Uma leaves her husband and goes away. The Indian way of life preferably 'east' contradicts 'west' as can be seen in relation to these characters. Uma's thinking fancies her 'would be marriage' with the Rajkumar thought it is not shown materialized and Uma moves across many countries and educates herself more and more and ultimately joins in campaign for India's independence.

Another character of Arjun is worthy of note especially it shows the impact and outcome of British authoritative power of molding Indian soldiers to fight against their own brother Indian. Arjun's primary experiences could not sense British act of power and serves British army in Indian but he realizes his own illusion of life and his failure to act of his own volition and joins Indian's struggles to drive British out. Ghosh, through the character of Arjun comments on irrevocable characteristic of British culture on India. Ghosh writes:

“We rebelled against our empire that has shaped everything in our lives, coloured everything in the world as we know it. It is a huge indelible stain which was tainted all of us. We can not destroy it without destroying ourselves.”³⁸

Thus Ghosh rewrites the meaning historical events of cruel colonization and its impact on the lives of human being.

Arjun’s character is dynamic character that serves the British army with all his zest and royalty to British. Ghosh develops this character in better understanding of life. Arjun realizes his exercise in futility in British army and finds that he is a mere tool in the army devoid of any human consideration, through the self realization of Arjun, Ghosh shows the impacts of British Army in India in colonial times.

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CHAPTER - 5

**NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE NOVELS OF
AMITAV GHOSH**

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NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES IN THE NOVELS OF AMITAV GHOSH

Amitav Ghosh is a post modern writer in English literature in Indian English writing. His first novel, *The Circle of Reason*, published in 1986 has attained the international status and earned the International Award of France. His second novel – *The Shadow Lines* – published in 1988 has earned Sahitya Academy Award in India. The fictional world of Ghosh deals man's most cherished dream of 'home' and freedom from economic constraints as well as man's problem of existential challenges arising from demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundaries by the political ideology of fallacy in solving the problems of communal tensions. For projecting all these ideologies as well as human problem in the fiction Ghosh applies different narrative technique and devices in his five novels under study. Ghosh's art of narration is not confined to just one narrative technique. His novels reveal different and various narrative techniques. He does not seem to be satisfied with traditional ways of narration and narrative art. As a creative writer of our time, Ghosh's fictional novels reveal new creations in the art of narration also. G. J. V. Prasad in his review article viz. *Nebulous Boundaries* comments:

“To my mind every book that Ghosh has written (and hopefully will write) is of importance because of what he is trying to say and how he says it. If human being survives that long, well yes, they will be reading his books a century hence.”¹

Amitav Ghosh employs various different narrative techniques in all his novels. In his first novel *The Circle of Reason*, third person narration is employed and novel projects nothing that can be called ‘home’ besides it presents and deals with man’s problem of alienation, migration and existential crises in life. The novel is loosely constructed novel in narrative, various stories and episodes are blended in wholeness of novel by generating metaphors. The narration of events is not in a linear system but memories bring the reader in back and forward in time, whereas in *The Shadow Lines*, the first person narration is used through the unnamed narrator. The novice technique of narration of history through reading of newspaper clippings is employed. The novel, *In An Antique Land*, also shows first person narration of Ghosh’s experience and research work for his D. Phil. in Oxford. The autobiographical narration is tactfully handled and taken care of by Ghosh as can be revealed through reading of the novel.

Moreover in the novel - *The Calcutta Chromosome* - Ghosh has emphasized on the narration through the extensive dialogues and events and development of the novel besides the art of narration through the computer screen display is employed by Ghosh. The

Cinematic devices of narration is used by Ghosh, perhaps with a view to use elasticity in time element of the novel which encompasses the events of couple of century blending history and fictional stories.

Through the novels, Ghosh reveals himself as talented, innovative and experimentalist. He tactfully makes experiment with the form and narrative art in his novels. For example, Ghosh employs flash back of memory to narrate the events of the past. The novel - *The Shadow Lines*—exhibit multi-layered events. About the narrative technique in *The Shadow Lines*, Novy Kapadia Comments as:

“There is extraordinary density in the narrative texture of *The Shadow Lines*. The overall story emerges in layers and each layer is a fusion of private lives and public events all linked into a thematic unity. Ghosh uses first person narrative from dual view point, that of a child and the adult ‘I’. This gives a sense of inhabiting both past and present simultaneously.”²

Ghosh’s writing exhibits extraordinary narrative techniques. Ghosh’s technique of narrating the story is undoubtedly gripping and makes the reader absorbed in the events of the story.

Ghosh’s art of narration and narrative technique are supplemented by his rich knowledge of English language which is

fluently and effectively used to depict the events or story or the objects etc. Ghosh's narration of cloth mill machinery in *The Circle of Reason* is better example of narrating inanimate bodies. Ghosh narrates the details of hall in the forth of Burma for Royal Family in - *The Glass Palace* – novel as:

“Beyond lie the apartment of the royal family and their servants - hundred and hundreds of rooms with gilded pillars and polished floors. And right at the center there is a vast hall that is like a great shaft of light, with shining crystal walls and mirrored ceilings. People call it The Glass Palace.”³

Apart from the above, Ghosh's narration of the Plane's take off at Dum Dum Airport is far more than the taste of excellent. Ghosh write as:

“Its nose lifted, very gently, and then suddenly unbelievable, the whole of its huge metal body was riding in the sky.”⁴

Ghosh's art of narration in detailing Plane's take off creates visual picture coming out of narrated writings. Shobha Tiwari comments as:

“Ghosh is a master at point out small details that actually make the characters and the narrative real.”⁵

Amitav Ghosh thus uses various narrative techniques and makes his fiction at real experience to go through the novel in such a way that the reader is absorbed in the lives and events narrated in the novel in spite of the fact that Ghosh applies non-linear narrative mode as well as chronological shifts and leaps in the text of his novels. Ghosh has studied history, sociology and social anthropology for his D. Phil. in Oxford and for that reasons, his fiction depicts amalgamation of historical events and stories of life of middle class families by following his own particular narrative strategy.

I

The Circle of Reason (1986) is Amitav Ghosh's first novel about man's struggle for existence especially during the time when the middle class families who form 'workers groups' are forced to migrate either for economic constraints or for better economic prospects even at the risk of illegal migration, crossing national boundaries or on account of force of nationalism. *The Circle of Reason* projects the narratives of the characters who travel half way across the world. The central character – Nachiketa Bose – Nick named Alu moves from Lalpukur in East Bengal to Malabar then on to the East African Port Al-Ghazira and finally to El-Qued on the north eastern edge of the African Sahara. Ghosh is a master craftsman for his narrative in *The Circle of Reason*.

Ghosh uses various narrative techniques in the novel *The Circle of Reason*, wherein third person narration is applied. In his novel Ghosh focuses on insufficiency of reason and crossing boundaries the narrative of the novel provide many stories and many characters. However, three characters - Balram - A Nationalist, Bhudeb of congressman and woman characters Zindi and Jyoti Das who emerges with Alu throughout the novel. Major characters tell their stories. Ghosh uses metaphors of sewing machine, the book of Life of Pasteur, carbolic acid and Bird watching by Jyoti Das and through these metaphors overall narrative structure of the novel is linked and woven into wholeness of narratives. Vinay Kirpal in his review article *The unfolding of RAGA: Narrative structure in The Circle of Reason* - comments as:

“The major characters, in their various attempts of ‘reading reality’ create and float in sea of metaphors. Carbolic acid runs through the book connecting three parts. So do birds, sewing machines, germs and the Life of Pasture. The other attempts at understanding and giving and retaining control include singing, weaving, politics, theories of straight roads, and queues among others and each character plays his fiction as metaphors and reality merge in the reading.”⁶

In *The Circle of Reason* ideas on sciences and change appear in part one of the novel whereas Damnhori section of the novel introduces a comprehension of ideas and its application. While narrating the theories of education through the character of Balram, Ghosh emphasis the need for manual skill as well as skill of applying one's mind. Ghosh has marked the part one of the novel as Satva: Reason and the narrative of the story of Balram projects the Ghosh views on education. Ghosh names the school as The School of Reason (Chapter 5). Ghosh writes:

“The school would have two main departments. After much careful thought Balram had decided to name one the department of Pure reason and the other department of practical reason: abstract reason and concrete reason, a meeting of the two great forms of human thoughts every student would have to attend classes in both the departments. In the department of pure reason that would be taught elements reading writing and arithmetic and they would be given lectures in the history of science and technology..... In the department of practical reason, the student would be taught weaving and tailoring.”⁷

The narrative of Balam's story and his ideas on school is not materialized. Ghosh uses irony to depict the character of Balram. Though, however the story of Balram's school of Reason shows Ghosh's concern for middle class families whose members cannot get education due to the problem of earning for day to day necessities of food and shelter. Not only in *The Circle of Reason* but also in Ghosh's other novels, the characters are by and large derived from middle class families whose struggles are figuring in the Ghosh's narratives. Balram is depicted as devoid of common sense.

Ghosh's art of narration is expressed in the Balram's story about fire breaking out at Balram's house. Balram had planned for an attack on Bhudeb Roy with the help of Rakhai. But out come of the plan is fatal. Ghosh has narrated the picture of Balram's ecstasy showing how ironical the situation is instead of Budeb's humiliation, Balram finds the engulfing fire that breaks out Balram and everything and everybody around him is engulfed by the fire. Through the ironical situation, Ghosh projects the Balram's limited knowledge and folly.

Ghosh narrates the characters in the novel in an artistic way. Ghosh narrates the Jyoti Das an Assistant Superintendent of Police as:

“He is clean shaven and prides himself on it, for it distinguishes him from his colleagues who tend generally to be aggressively mustached. He is pleasant if not good looking and he looks younger

than his twenty five years. He is often mistaken for a college student.”⁸

And Ghosh narrates, Shombhu Dobnath a skilful weaver and Alu’s teacher a strong man with respects, as:

“He was tall, spectrally dark and skeletally thin. He was usually nearly naked, with only a thin gamcha wound around his waist, displaying proudly the corded muscles he bore all over him as a legacy of his years of weaving and wandering.”⁹

Ghosh narrates the character - Zindi – who is expert in telling the things or narrating the events of a story. Ghosh narrates the character of Zindi as:

“That was Zindi’s power. She could bring together empty air and give it a body just by talking of it. They could never tire of listening to her speak in her welter of languages, through they know every word just as well as they know the lines of songs.”¹⁰

About Zindi’s art of narration, Ghosh writes about the reaction of the audience to her art of narrating the story. Ghosh writes:

“They crouched on mats around Zindi, listening to every word. They had lived through everything Zindi spoke of and had heard her talk of it time and again yet it was only in her telling that it took shape, changed from mere incidents to a palpable thing, a block of time which was not hours or minutes or days but something corporeal with its malevolent willfulness.”

11

Ghosh’s own art of narration is better expressed through the writing about Zindi’s art of narrating story. About Ghosh’s art of narration, G. J. V. Prasad, in his review article – *Rewriting the World: The Circle of Reason* as the beginning of the Quest comments as:

“With an anthropologist’s sense of detail and a historian’s grasp of facts and chronology and with a creative writer’s curiosity about causation and effects and great narrative skill and imagination, Ghosh weaves together a plurastic and self reflective view of the world – one that challenges the smugness of accepted narratives and point of view and certainties

of post colonial borders as well as generic boundaries.”¹²

Thus Ghosh applies different narrative techniques. Sometimes Ghosh uses symbols, images, and metaphors in his novel to articulate intense and otherwise in explicable feelings, thoughts, and ideas as well. Even Ghosh’s narrating of the characters and an event creates visual effects wherein the reader is trapped and absorbed involuntarily.

II

The Shadow Lines (1988) by Amitav Ghosh is as perfectly written with remarkable control in absolutely different manner and projects the story that may be simple but reader may feel it excellent not only in taste, plot and style but also in its ideological presentation of multi-fascinated themes – say nationalism, violence and riots, racial discrimination besides, fundamentalisation of religion, and above all, about peaceful human relationship despite cultural and religious diversity and concept of freedom and national boundaries in particular.

Ghosh projects his thematic occupation in the novel by employing blending of all modern techniques of narration and time and space that create the structure. The whole story of the novel is presented to the reader through the narration and imagination made by Tridib yet the narrator remains unnamed. Those high and fluent commands of English language make the narrative style effective. Shashi Tharoor comments about this novel as:

“Ghosh writes with remarkable control: not a word is ill-chosen, not an idea unrealized, not a simile out of place, every nonce is carefully explored by the writer who not only has something to say but has mastered the craft of saying it better than most.”¹³

Ghosh in his novel *The Shadow Lines* employs different narrative techniques and methods to describe the stories or events. The novel is written in first person narrative technique through unnamed narrator. The novelist uses traditional narrative technique as in other novels but the narrative does not develop in chronological time factor. The novel begins as:

“In 1939, thirteen years before I was born, my father’s aunt Mayadevi went to England with her husband and her son Tridib.”¹⁴

The events and stories are narrated through the memory technique as above by the unnamed narrator. Amitav Ghosh innovates new ground in his narrative technique without negation of convention narrations. Through the innovative narrative technique, characters are brought alive with psychological depths and locals and environments are evoked with ease and accuracy. Ghosh also employs symbols, images and metaphors in his novel to articulate intense and otherwise

inexplicable feelings and thoughts metaphors of the Tridib's letter of proposed meeting is evidenced the events of relationship between May and Tridib. Ghosh projects the letter from Tridib to May as:

“But he did know that that was how he wanted to meet her as the completest of strangers – strangers across the seas all the more strangers because they knew each other already. He wanted them to meet far from their friends and relatives – in a place without a past, without history, free really free, two people coming together with utter freedom of strangers.”¹⁵

Ghosh here uses metaphor of ‘ruins’ & ‘meeting as strangers’ to mean unconditional meeting of Ghosh with May. Novy Kapadia in her review article – The metaphor of *The Shadow Lines* in Amitav Ghosh's novel – comments as:

“It implies that he wants to meet May, without the burden of history. Without any expectations or pre-condition or any divisive shadow lines. May initially thinks that such as a letter is intrusion of her privacy but then succumbs to curiosity and decide to visit India and meet Tridib.”¹⁶

That is how Ghosh employs the metaphor in his narrative. Ghosh through the narrator in *The Shadow Lines* relates different kinds of events and experience in different ways, for example, two political events one war of 1962 and other riots of 1964 – are differentiated through the newspaper clippings. Riots of 1964 in Calcutta are narrated as, Ghosh writes:

“I turned the pages to the edition of Saturday, 11, January 1964 and sure enough there it was: a huge banner headline which said: CURFEW IN CALCUTTA, POLICE OPEN FIRE, 10 DEAD, 15 WOUNDED.”¹⁷

Thus Ghosh uses the metaphor of newspaper clipping to narrate the incident of past which is linked with the time of present through newspaper clipping.

Apart from above, Ghosh applies the narrative technique of trope, images, and maps etc. as symbols to bridge the gap of time and of place. Because *The Shadow Lines* does not adhere to a linear development of the story or events but the novel bears multiple layers and themes which makes a complex narrative structure. Ghosh projects multiple stories of three generation of two families: Mayadebi and Price. There are many facets of the story as of lives of past and present, private life and public life, childhood and adulthood, love and violence, India, Bangladesh, Britain, partition of India and Pakistan. Meenaxi

Mukharjee comments that apparently simple narrative of *The Shadow Lines* is in fact a complex Jigsaw puzzle of varied item and place segments including some magic piece that mirrors others. Where as Novy Kapadia comments as:

“There is an extra ordinary density in the narrative texture of *The Shadow Lines*. The overall stories emerges in layers and each layer is a fusion of private lives and public events all inked into thematic unity. Ghosh uses first person narrative from a dual viewpoint, that of a child and the adult.
‘I.’”¹⁸

The narrative of the novel develops among continuously shifting temporal and spatial planes. Also the narrative time co-insides with the consciousness of the narrator. The narrator is either listening to some of the other character’s stories or he is recollecting his own memories and there is no fixed temporal mode. Ulka Joshi in her review article – Narrative Technique in *The Shadow Lines* – comments as:

“In this ‘memory novel’ memory plays a crucial role. Weaving together, past and present, childhood and adulthood, India, Bangladesh and Britain, Hindu and Muslim, story and happening, memory generate action of the novel and determines

the form of the novel – its partial answers, its digressions, its resolutions its looping, nonlinear and wide ranging narrative techniques.”¹⁹

The novel present many episodes which in fact do not happen at the present time but they are narrated. Numbers of stories are told to the narrator like grandma’s story about home in Dhaka or a story of Roby’s and May’s accounts of Tridib’s death. Many stories are narrated by the narrator as ‘I remember’ style. The memory, its sources and resource which shape the novel are sometime narrator’s own, and sometimes, many of his memories come from the stories of the memories that Tridib and his grand mother had told him. Ghosh has successfully employed this story telling technique. Ghosh fuses all these stories / episodes in the family chronicle with the main plot structure of the novel. Thus Ghosh uses multiple narrative, the story telling method and back and forth journey in time.

About the time of events, novelist projects certain time in ever of the episodic stories. There are constant time shifts and creates the problem of chronology for the reader. Mita Bose in her article – the problem of chronology and the narrative principle in *The Shadow Lines* – discusses at length about Ghosh’s projection of definite time period in the novel by creating a protagonist narrator describing remembered incidents with specific time markers. Mita Bose has enlisted five incidents in 1939-40 and thirteen incidents in each of 1960 periods and 1978-79 periods and she comments as:

“Amitav Ghosh’s narrative strategy lies in juggling around these limited number of events. He juxtaposes pairs of events from different time period and makes the memory narrative alternate between them in a rhythmic manner.”²⁰

Apart from the above, Ghosh’s novel depicts frequent time-shift as it may look curious, but the narrator undertake a back and forth journey in time and reaches other time span of the novel, Ghosh takes frequently recourse to time shift arbitrary. Arvind Choudhary in his *INTRODUCTION* rightly comments as:

“As it happens to be a memory novel, the narrative is wrought in nonlinear mode. It moves back and forth in utter disregard of our conventional notions of time and pace. This technique enables Ghosh to make the narrator subsume and appropriate the memories of other characters and make them a part of his own memory and consciousness.”²¹

Whereas Ulka Joshi in her article—Narrative technique in *The Shadow Lines* comments about Ghosh’s treatment of time factor in the novel as:

“Backward and forward Journey in time is a recurrent device used by the writer in the novel. This structural device is in harmony with the novel being an extended memory. Besides that it also presents a central theme that the line dividing past and present is only shadow that the past lives in the present and present is shaped by the past.”

22

Thus Ghosh employs different narrative techniques apart from use of symbols, images and metaphors. Though, Ghosh uses first person narration, whereas first person narration used by the writer enhances the credibility and authenticity of different narratives in the novel. The innovative use of flash back and memory technique reveals the inner aspects of the personality of his protagonist in various parts of the novels. Besides it also focuses novelist's views and apprehension of life in the context of freedom of the individuals and the meaning of violence & riots experienced by the individuals. The historical fact of large scale riots and violence of 1984 after Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination in India has remained in backdrop of the novel as the novelist - Amitav Ghosh - was witnessing the riots of 1984 when he was teaching at Delhi University and shortly after that the novel is published in 1988. The year 1984 appears a turning point in the writing career of Amitav Ghosh as in an article that appeared in the Guardian in 1995, Ghosh admits:

“Nowhere else in the world did the year 1984 fulfill its apocalyptic portents as it did in India, separatists violence in Punjab, the military attack on the great Shikh temple of Amritsar the assassination of the Prime Minister, the gas disaster in Bhopal – the events followed relentlessly on each other. There were days in 1984 when it took courage to open the Delhi paper in the evening.” – Of the year’s many catastrophes the secretarial violence following Mrs. Gandhi’s death had a greatest effect on Ghosh’s life.”²³

Soon after the above events, Ghosh began to write *The Shadow Lines* which was published in 1988. The repercussions of effects of aforesaid violence on Ghosh’s mind are echoed through the narrative art of writing about such violence through his following words:

“Every word I write about those events of 1984 is the product of a struggle with silence. It is a struggle I am destined to lose – have already lost – for even after all these years. I do not know where within me, in which corner of my world this

silence lies. All I know of it is what it is not,
for the silence of an imperfect memory.”²⁴

Thus overall analysis of the novel - *The Shadow Lines* - reveals that Ghosh's innovative narrative technique, though novel having written in first person narrative, has excelled the novel. Chote Lal Khatri in his review article - The Narrative technique in The Shadow Line rightly comments as:

“In narrative technique it is an achievement of Amitav Ghosh that he succeeds in giving a panoramic view of the world and in dramatizing the violence by the use of first person narrator. Normally, a third person omniscient narrator is preferred to give a panoramic view. On the whole it is memory novel, a seamless collection of reminiscences of childhood which gets transformed into an organic structure of the novel.”²⁵

III

In An Antique Land Amitav Ghosh presents two parallel stories of two different civilizations of India and Egypt - one of 12th century based on historical research and another of 20th century based on his experience during visit of Egypt for his doctoral thesis.

In the novel, Ghosh employs first person narrative technique and project the subversion of history of Ben Yiju's life and trade link between India and Egypt in 12th century as well as cultural relation between Egypt and India in modern times. Ghosh's prime concern and focus are on human relationship of two different culture and civilization. On one hand, Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma MS-H6 of 12th century carry on business network between Aden, Egypt and India. Ghosh writes:

“In matters of business, Ben Yiju's network appears to have been wholly indifferent to many of those boundaries that are today thought to mark social, religious and geographical division.”²⁶

While narrating the life of Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma (MS-H6) in the section - Mangalore - Ghosh's narratives simultaneously also project his meeting with Prof. B. A. Vivek Rai who “was one of the world's foremost expert on Tulu folklore and philosophy”²⁷ in the summer of 1990. Ghosh also narrates his visit to Bhuta Shrine. Thus, Ghosh uses narrative technique to run his own experience and life of Ben Yiju in two fold system of narration.

Ghosh has reconstructed the details of Ben Yiju's life in Mangalore with the help of letter of his business associates viz.

Madmun ibn al-Hasan ibn Bandar, Yusuf ibn Abraham and Khalaf ibn ishak.

Ghosh's narrative also focus on the relationship between Ben Yiju and his slave Bhoma and narrates that Bhoma, though slave, was given meagre salary of two Dinars per month and he was entrusted with goods worth hundreds of Dinars and sent to Aden and Egypt by his master Ben Yiju. This leads us to believe that their relationship was on the level of patron and client. Against such slavery system of 12th century, Ghosh projects Nabeel's employment in Iraq and his telephonic talk with Nabeel for which, Ghosh writes:

“I wanted him to talk about Iraq, but of course he would not have been able to say much within earshot of his boss then I heard a noise down the line, it sounded as though some one was calling to him from across the room ... I heard his boss's voice again shouting in the background.”²⁷

Thus, Ghosh puts forth two forms of slavery one of Bhoma's in 12th century and another of Nabeel's in modern fair name of giving 'job/employment' in present time. Thus, Ghosh's narrative moves back and forth in time with thematic comparative study of history, past and present. K. C. Belliappa in review article - '*Amitav Ghosh's In An Antique Land: An excursion into time past and time present*' rightly opine as:

"In An Antique Land demonstrate most powerfully how an excursion into the past is no escape from the present but a coming to grips with the present realities of living. By juxtaposing the medieval and modern worlds to the 12th and 20th century in the two different civilizations of India and Egypt with their diverse culture of Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. Ghosh magnificently illustrates through his fictional discourse the need for human understanding and religious tolerance. A need which has now become a dire necessity in a world which is torn apart by religious obscurantism and fanaticism." ²⁸

That is how the narrative technique of Ghosh brings the reader to the point of halt and think. Ghosh employs the narrative technique of dialogues and develops the fictional stories. For example, Ghosh had a dialogue / talk with Sheikh Musa about Lataifa and Nashawy's during Ghosh's visit in 1988 & 1990, when both of them talked about betterment of living conditions and other allied matter concerning the people of Lataifa & Nashawy at large. The conversation of 1980 are picked up - extended again in 1990. Thus Ghosh bridges the gap of time factor of in the fictional part of the novel. About narrative technique

employed by Ghosh, Shirley Chew in her review article –Texts and world *In An Antique Land* comments as:

“ Beating back and forward in time, the narrative crisscrosses personal recollections, gossip, the latest news, the stories of Ben Yiju and Bhoma, and transcribed from Ghosh’s Doctoral thesis, descriptive accounts of, say, rural markets, MOWLIDS, Kinship system, Myth of origin.”²⁹

Ghosh describes violence and riots in the novel. Ghosh employs the narrative technique of memory and newspaper clippings to narrate his childhood experiences about riots and violence by Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta and Dhaka at the time of Partition forming East Pakistan. About those riots, Ghosh narrates positive aspect of the riots as:

“But equally in both cities – and this must be said, it must always be said, for it is the incantation that redeems our sanity – in both Dhaka and Calcutta, there were exactly mirrored stories of Hindus and Muslims coming to each other’s rescue, so that many more people were saved than killed.”³⁰

Apart from that the novel *In An Antique Land*, the first person narrative technique is employed by Ghosh who narrates his fieldwork as well as historical research. While narrating the history, Ghosh simultaneously writes about his field work also. The time element in both the cases is important factor of narrations. Roma Chatterjee in her review article - between myth and Ethnography: An Anthropological reading of *In An Antique Land*, comments about Ghosh's view, as:

"Ghosh moves back and forth between historical time and the time of his fieldwork in Egypt, the movement marked metaphorically by parallelism between names and places." ³¹

Ghosh is gifted with extraordinary narrative technique. His art of narration is not just confined to one narrative technique. Ghosh employs the narrative technique of describing events etc. through the memory remembrance and newspaper clippings as well. Ghosh's art of narrating the city or house etc. inanimate bodies, he narrates with minute details. Ghosh narrates the village house as:

"His house was in the most crowded part of the village, near the square, where the dwellings were packed so close together that the ricks of straw piled on their roofs almost came together above the narrow,

twisting lanes. It was a very small house, a couple of mud walled rooms with a low, tunnel like door.”³²

Whereas Ghosh narrates the countryside and field in his effective narrative art. For instance, Ghosh creates visualized picture of the field and country side while narrating as:

“I took advantage of a sudden clearing of the skies and set out for the field with a book. It took a while to get through the muddy lanes, but once the village walls were behind me it seemed well worth it. The country side was extraordinarily beautiful at this time of the year, whenever there was a clear day the wheat, clover, and maize stood brilliantly green against deep blue skies, while Nashawy itself with its huddle of earth houses seemed like a low range of hills brooding in the distance.”³³

About the narrative of *In An Antique Land*, Shyamala S. Agarwal in her review article – Nouns and Conjunctions *In An Antique Land* quotes Mr. Swapan Chakroborty saying as:

“Like many of its precursors, the novel moves in and out of two narratives and

time scales: One for the teller and other for his tale. Both stories involve travel across cultures and continents, the concurrent journeys enabling the author to reconcile the contrary demands of dead and living, of time and space, of involvement and distance.”³⁴

Thus, Ghosh has projected various techniques to focus the historical events in compare to present day situations of 20th century. R. K. Dhawan, in his review article - *The Novels of Amitav Ghosh: An Introduction, while introducing - In An Antique Land'* - writes:

“In an interview, Ghosh talks about the book’s theme and form: No this time I am not writing a novel. Not even sociology, history or best sellers based an historical research. My new book cannot be described as any one of these. It is strange sort of work. Within the parameters of history, I have tried to capture a story, a narrative, without attempting to write a historical novel. You may say as a writer, I have ventured on technical innovations.” The anthropologist Ghosh is at his best in weaving a complex pattern of fact and fiction.”³⁵

IV

The Calcutta Chromosome is Amitav Ghosh's fourth novel and it can be called a novel of twenty first century as it moves the reader through the multi-wired world of computer technology, archeology and tropical medicine and simultaneously making the reader traveling not only through the unusual environment of New York, Egypt and Calcutta but also to the real places of city of Calcutta. Ghosh with his art of narration, enriched by his high command of English language, project the theory of science and counter science with relation to Sir Ronald Ross's world of research in Calcutta on 'Malaria Puzzle' that brought him Noble Prize in 1898.

Ghosh's novel *The Calcutta Chromosome*, projects medical thriller, ghost stories and mystery of accidents and supposedly murders along with philosophical knowledge, science and Indian mythological belief, which Ghosh calls 'counter science'. For all these aspects Ghosh employs third person narrative art to describes the events of ghost stories. The stories of the station master and his encounter with writer Phulboni narrates the mystery of ghost's moving the station lantern in dark night. Phulboni's senses are blurred at the incidence of human voice in the stormy night. Ghosh writes:

"At that very moment he heard a scream, a raging inhuman howl that tore through the stormy night. It hurled a single word into

the wind -Lakhan - and then it was silenced by thunder of the speeding train.”

36

Before this encounter of Phulbony, ground for such possible mishap has been created by Ghosh’s art of narrating through the dialogue between Phulboni and the Stationmaster. Such story is brought into the narratives as past memory told by one of the characters. Ghosh employs flash back technique of narration as can be evidenced. Ghosh writes:

“Last night I went home with Sonalindi and she told me something: a story she heard from her mother, about something that happened to Phulbony many years ago.”³⁷

About the narrating of ghost stories, Bishnu Priya Ghosh, in her review article – spectral ethics in *The Calcutta Chromosome* – comments:

“The familiar other beckons the detective, the journalist, the writer and the missionary to a larger ethical quest. Each character is not just haunted by a ghost but by SOMEONE ELSE who is besieged by ghosts: Antar is fascinated by Murugan’s fascination with Ronald Ross; Urmila by

Sonalindi's pursuit of Phulbony, Murugan
by D.D. Cunningham Crigson and Farley
and others." ³⁸

Ghosh uses his artistic narratives technique to show the inner thinking of human mind through the character of Murugan who express his knowledge on science and counter science through the narrative art of dialogue. Murugan is intensely activated and his narrative talk with Antar shows what Murugan is actually thinking. Through the character of Murugan, Ghosh projects the philosophical aspect of science and counter science. Ghosh's philosophical knowledge on science and scientific methods is revealed through the narrative dialogue between Murugan and Antar. Ghosh writes:

"You know all about matter and anti-matter, right? And rooms and anti-rooms and cherish and anti-cherish and so on? Now let's say there was something like science and counter science? Thinking of it in the abstract would not your say that the first principle of a functioning counter science would have to be secrecy? The way I see it, it would not just have to be secretive about what it did (it could not hope to beat the scientists at that game anyway); it would also have to be secretive in what it did it would have to use secrecy

as a technical procedure, it would in principle have to refuse all direct communications straight off the bat, because to communicate, to put ideas into language would be established a claim to know - which is the first thing that a counter science would dispute.”³⁹

Ghosh further writes:

“Mistaken are those who imagine that silence is without life. That it is inanimate, without either spirit or voice. It is not: indeed the word is to this silence what the shadow is shadowed, what the veil is to the eyes, what the mind is to truth, what language is to life.”⁴⁰

Thus, Ghosh projects the concepts and theories of knowledge through the creator’s art of narration as well as Ghosh’s command over the language to explore philosophical aspect of science and counter science. In fact, Ghosh challenges the western superiority on science and knowledge simultaneously makes the western thinkers of science to halt before outright rejection of Indian mythological aspect of life and reincarnation.

The novel abounds in hundred years of time and the reader is moved into cultural verity linking the distances between America, England, Egypt and India. To bridge the time element as well as distance in various stories, Ghosh uses narrative technique of symbol or images or motifs. Ghosh adopts cinematic techniques and devices of narration. To narrate the effects of ghost in the story, Ghosh utilizes symbol of station lantern - obviously Lutchman's lantern appears in Crigson's episodes and Phulbony's episodes of his encounter with station master for his way to reach Renupur, all those create cinematic art of narration. The whole novel is of controlled or controlling episodic stories of the novel creating mystery after mystery and chapters by chapters the reader is held absorbed in the story and Ghosh makes reader feel like witnessing the events narrated. For all this the narrating technique of presenting images or episodic stories of different characters or through the depiction of stories through computer screen have been employed by Ghosh. Farley's story line episode begins in chapter twenty one through computer's - Ava's beginning to depict and ends as "Abruptly Ava began to beep: rest, indecipherable unable to continue." ⁴¹ Thus, Ghosh uses narrative technique of 'cuts'. Madhu Malti in her review article - The Cinematic narrative technique in *The Calcutta Chromosome* - comments as:

"The visual cuts the non-linear progression presented through a meandering story-line narrated by four different speakers - Murugan, Antar, Urmila and Sonali - from multifarious angles thrusts the reader into

a compelling confusion wherein he remains
unaware to the author's guidance." 42

Apart from that Ghosh uses metaphors of 'stormy night and train coming in speed, while narrating Phulboni's experience at the Railway Station en-route his journey to Renupur and creates the effects of mystery, fear and possible death as Phulboni is sure of not coming any train at the time and Phulboni's fear calling for Masterji - Station Master and reaching for his gun creates the mystery. Simultaneously the stories narrated by Urmila and Sonalindi as well as stories projected by Antar's computer create visual effects and deepening of mystery. A. G. Khan, in his review article - *The Calcutta Chromosome*, a (Counter) Science rightly comments as:

"Ghosh uses the technique of puppet master. His characters are made to appear/disappear, rise/fall as a part of narrative technique. There is never a dull moment. The suspense of the quest is never diluted."

43

Thus, Ghosh uses time and place shift to provide new dimension to the novel which develops beyond the stream of consciousness of technique and takes the reader in the lives of many characters. In *The Calcutta Chromosome* - Ghosh presents spectral journey of mystery by projecting events & episodes in shift of time and place various chapters' ends abruptly cutting or halting the story creating mystery as in

detective or mystery film story. Madhu Malti Adhikari while concluding her review article - *Telling and Showing; the Cinematic Narrative Technique in The Calcutta Chromosome* - comments, about Ghosh's narrative technique, as:

"But Amitav Ghosh accomplishes the near impossible by the artistry of audio-visual technique. The most significant reason for employing this method is to give credibility to our world that contains the voices of logic and illogic, matter and anti-matter, science and anti-science. Ghosh is determined to establish that truth is stranger than fiction. It is not difficult to assert confidently that not a lure of an affection but a genuine artistic need had motivated Ghosh to opt for the cinematic narrative technique in *The Calcutta Chromosome*." ⁴⁴

V

The Glass Palace (2000) by Amitav Ghosh present history - reconstructed history of Burma, British of colonial times and invasion of British on peacefully living of Burma and hazards of Second World War, all these issues mingled with epic story of love and struggle for

existence of middle class families of hybrid culture spread over Burma, east India and Malaysia. The novel covers the period of 1885 to 1995. The novel depicts the impact of the colonial encounter on the lives of people who suffered a lot even struggled to live as in earlier novels Ghosh project and explore validities of boundaries weaving history into fiction.

The novel is written in third person narrative technique (except last chapter forty eight, where in first person narration is used) covering life span of family of three generation. The fictional characters like Rajkumar, Dolly, Saya John, Uma Dey reflect their lives in the historical events and impact of colonial rule of British. Santosh Gupta in his review article - looking into history: Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* opines about the novel as:

“The novel builds up many little narrative to present the many voices inside the countries, Burma and India during the one hundred years of political struggle in the subcontinent. It goes into the complex relationship of interactions and conflicts between Indians and Burmese, presenting along with it the emergence of a more concrete self consciousness among different sections of people.”⁴⁵

In *The Glass Palace*, Ghosh's art of narration is not resorted to just one narrative technique. The reading of *The Glass Palace* reveals different narrative techniques adopted by the author of the novel. The novelist - Ghosh—uses third person narration in the glass palace. Ghosh uses the flashback technique to reveal the inner aspect of personality of the characters Rajkumar at *The Glass Palace* is highly attracted by the Dolly and speaks repeatedly the name 'Dolly' which is suggestive of Rajkumar's love at first sight to Dolly. Ghosh writes:

“‘Dolly’ repeated Rajkumar, Dolly he could think nothing else to say, or as much worth saying. So he said the name again louder and louder, until he was shouting ‘Dolly Dolly’.”⁴⁶

Thus, Ghosh narrates the love (at first sight) between Rajkumar & Dolly. Rajkumar's utterance “I will see you again.”⁴⁷ show Rajkumar determination to seek Dolly. And he did seek Dolly.

Sometimes Ghosh uses the dialogue and metaphor to narrate the incident. For instance, Ghosh narrates the dialogue of Dolly and Rajkumar at the seashore about Rajkumar's proposal to marry Dolly. Here Ghosh writes:

“Suddenly the glowing tip disintegrated and shower of sparks came floating down.

It was as through fireworks were raining
down from the heaven.”⁴⁸

Here metaphor viz. “fireworks ... from heaven.” is suggestive of Dolly’s consent to marry Rajkumar.

The Glass Palace is comparatively lengthy book because the narrative is projecting three generation and many stories have been woven together. The scope of the novel abounds in many geographical places with space and distance and time of about one hundred years. Ghosh’s narrative technique points out minor details that introduce the character and narrative is made realistic effect. For example, Ghosh narrates the outcry of Macho as under:

“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 is to tell me you won’t do the same? And so on. Rajkumar understood that this outburst was not aimed directly at him, that it had none to do with the dust, the splattering oil and the price of the vegetable than with his own presence or with anything he had said.”⁴⁹

Such type of narratives supplemented by the use of language shows the inner qualities of Macho who soon gives the job to Rajkumar

- an orphan boy of eleven years. Stranded in Mandalaya from where novel begins.

There are many stories within the stories. The narrative depicts the lives of Rajkumar, Uma Dey, Saya John and Dolly. All characters are interconnected. Simultaneously the novelist project the British invasion an Burma to annex Burma to British empire and second world war. The king and queen and the Royal Family and exiled to Ratnagiri in Maharashtra where Bengali collector and his wife Uma Dey are expected to take care of them. Ghosh uses the narrative technique of 'Shifts - shift from one story to another and so on. Jayita Sengupta in her review article - Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* through post colonial lens - opine, about narrative technique adopted by Ghosh as Jayita Sengupta comments:

"The writer's device which is central to the artistic deployment of his material in the novel is the metaphor of the camera. Leitmotifs of mirrors, lenses, and binoculars are scattered through out the text. The artist's eye reflects, bears, witness to the historical events as a kind of photo montage, a series of snapshots over time whose details are filled in." ⁵⁰

One would not hesitate to agree with opinion of Jayita Sengupta as the story line is extended three generation over the time of hundred

years. The narrative in the novel brings epic effects especially love and marriage of the characters. Ghosh projects the travel motifs in the novel. Ghosh's characters moves and crosses boundaries either on account of taking survival chances due to Second World War or for seeking better economic prospects as Ghosh projects the devastating effects of Second World War - Japanese invaded on British occupies Burma. Ghosh's art of narration to depict the exodus of the people leaving Rangoon is better piece of his art of narration. Ghosh narrates the incidents as:

“Since the start of Indian exodus, the territory had been mapped by a network of official recognized evacuation trails: there were ‘white’ routes and ‘black’ routes, the former being shorter and less heavily used, several hundred thousand people had already tramped through this wilderness. Great numbers of refugees were still arriving every day. To the south the Japanese army was still advancing and there was no turning back.”⁵¹

Thus, Ghosh narrates the events and trapped conditions of Indian exodus with clarity in the narratives. Thus Ghosh blends history and fiction in his narratives about narrative technique Meenakshi Mukherjee comments as:

“Each of Amitav Ghosh’s Books, except ‘countdown’, invariably focuses on themes in history and connection across geography that have seldom been explored before and does so with imagination supported by archival research, his narrative inventiveness matched by his luminous prose.”⁵²

Thus, Ghosh present history and fiction in the novel *The Glass Palace* through his creative skill and researched materials embodied in the novel. The narrative does not expose bare outlines of history but simultaneously makes the history blended with the epic story in such a fashion and narrative technique that reader is absorbed in the novel. Jayita Sengupta comments, in this regards as:

“Ghosh’s artistic device as mentioned earlier is the photo montage technique of narration. He shifts the readers’ attention from one personal subject to another. The writer’s intention in this novel is to enable his readers to visualize many histories which entwine with the main strand of the story line covering the broad sweep of historical change over three countries from the end of the 19th century to the present.”

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CHAPTER 6

**USE OF LANGUAGE IN THE NOVELS OF AMITAV
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Indian novelist, writing in English confronts the problem of expression in exacting meaning and sense for the proper type of English in fiction. Author's native language begins to intrude the flow and meaning of English expression. For creative work of literature such as that of Amitav Ghosh, challenge of foreign language comes in the way of writing, but for Amitav Ghosh, while studying his novels, one does not even sense that English language is second language for Ghosh who has successfully mastered his form of expression in English and he must have been, undoubtedly associated with English writing preferably sociology and history in English and that has resulted into the refinement of his English. Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam have rightly commented as:

“Amitav Ghosh brings to the English language an ease of felicity of expression which endows all his fiction with a quality of its own”¹

The reading of the novels of Ghosh, experiences of historical characters, situation of events, incidents narrated, the characters created etc. enrich reader's interest to English and such a creative writing of Indian English literature such as that of Ghosh makes the literary work a source of meaning and significance of language of English in use.

The projection of racial sub-consciousness and violence in colonial and post colonial times in India, Burma, Dhaka, Egypt comparing events of violence in two sets of historical times, through the subtle use of language in English is notable characteristic of Ghosh's fictional art. The language used brings effective impressions of writing. As a writer, Ghosh is well conversant with the life of various social levels and well acquainted with richness of English language. Besides he portrays the middle class families of society of his time as well as in time of history, comparing the fictional characters and events with that of historical time provide a remarkable aesthetic effect in language so fluent but palatable.

It will be unquestionable conclusion that Ghosh has surmounted the conflicts in writing in English. Andrew Painter, University-d-angers France comments as:

"It is clear that writers such as Amitav Ghosh and Salman Rushdie to name but two are eminently capable of writing extremely well in English." ²

Ghosh has chosen language of English for presenting the novels and creative writings which attracted global attention and critical comments and he has received awards not only from India but also from the world over. About novels by Amitav Ghosh and others Indian English writers, Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam comments:

“Another feature of these novels is the writer’s confidence in the use of English language. He no longer has to defend the choice of English as his language for creative writing.”³

I

Ghosh’s use of language is quite befitting to the character’s education. The conversation between the characters is in simple language as and when necessary. Sometimes the use of character’s mother tongue is made in their original words, which are transcribed. The use of transcription of words does not disturb the flow and lucidity in expression. In his move *The Circle of Reason* (1986), Ghosh writes as:

“ARRE HAN SAHB” he said ⁴

And further in the same novel as:

“What good will it do any if people of Hindustani begin to chant ‘HE BOSON’ instead of ‘HE RAM’.”⁵

Transcribed words are put in italics type of print to differentiate the language in use. Thus the use of English language by the characters is according to environment of the characters to the society he/ she belongs. Though Ghosh has a fluent command of English, but his characters are sometimes such that the native English language as second language is mixed with the mother tongue of the characters. And so the language of the characters is shown in novels. About Ghosh’s style of such transcription, R. K. Kaul in his article of review comment about use of language by Ghosh as:

“Ghosh has adopted the current practice of transcribing Hindi words without providing a glossary or even italicizing them. For example, ‘DAL MOT’ and ‘KHICHRI’ appear without any warning to the reader about their exotic characters. Indian readers may not find any difficulty with such words but Arabic words such as ‘TARHA’ and ‘JALLABEYYAS’ were unintelligible to the reviewer.”⁶

The same R. K. Kaul comments further about use of language by Ghosh as:

“There is a comic inventiveness in Amitav Ghosh use of language, bordering on coarseness. When the Malik fires bazookas in pursuit of the slippery Jeevanbhai the “early morning crowd half dressed and unwashed, underwared and unshat formed as one man and fled down the road with Nury in the lead” 7

Reactive criticism of R. K. Kaul about the use of language relates to the fashion and style of English handled by Amitav Ghosh who has a deep insight about proper meaningful language.

The use of language to show the Nury’s business of eggs-selling and Nury’s observation is not only to the point but also to the completion in itself. To show business in lyrical way is excellent taste of language, which Ghosh has commanded masterfully. For example we can quote Ghosh’s writing:

“Nury, the Damanhuri, was an artist. For him every egg was an epic, a thousand page song of love, death and betrayal. By looking at an egg, Nury could tell what the chicken had been fed, from that he knew whether the house he had brought it from

was close to starvation or had finally found a pot of gold.”⁸

While describing the collapse of giant building – “The Star” in *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh’s art of communication in English shows effectiveness. Ghosh writes:

“The people said later that the fall shook the whole of Al-Ghazira, like emptying wave shakes the boat. A tornado of dust swirled out of debris while the rubble was still shuddering and heaving like a labouring beast, and for a few moments whole city was wrapped in darkness, despite the full mid-afternoon brilliance of the desert sun.”⁹

The descriptive language of star’s falling. One would find Ghosh as having English language as his first language.

Apart from the above Ghosh’s language in describing the introducing the man and woman in *The Circle of Reason* is that of a type of first language. Ghosh describes Balram as:

“He has an ascetic face, with the clean lines, a short ridge of nose and wide dreamy eyes. His high broad forehead rose to a

majestic dome crowned with a thick, unruly pile of silver hair. It was an astonishing forehead. It glowed it was like lampshade for his bulging higher faculties - language, form, number, the lot. It was a striking face even in repose some times when he was animated it was lit with such a bright pointed intensity that imprinted itself on the mind of every one who show him in those moments." ¹⁰

Ghosh through the character of Balram projects the man of Reason - a man of mind as above with exactness and clarity of thought as well as describing a human being of exception in language befitting to the point required in the novel. From this aspect, one would feel that Hind Wassef has rightly explained the high command of English language by post colonial writers like Ghosh as:

"If he is a new comer to diapora he and most other post colonial writers have the roots of it perhaps since early education when they become versed in the language of colonizer and speak and write about their 'homeland' in that of "foreign language." ¹¹

The opinion of Hind Wassef co-relates the consideration of the environment of English language in Calcutta, East Pakistan, Burma and Delhi where Ghosh's own life passed in his early days of academic careers.

For Ghosh, the description for anything is not at all problematic of language of English. The description of a cloth mill in the *The Circle of Reason* is better example. Ghosh writes:

“One day he smuggled Alu into the mill he worked in: A huge bustling vault, the machines new, awesome, in their potency and their size, the man minuscule, compressed, struggling under the weight of giants. It was a miracle which had no end—web of yard shooting into the maws of the automatic looms from whirling bobbins, cloth pouring out in waterfalls folding itself into ordered bales.”¹²

From the above it transpires that Amitav Ghosh is quite at ease in his use of English language in this novel. Though he is an Indian novelist, writing in English, language of English does not seem to be foreign language Ghosh stayed at various places and his doctoral research work must have enriched his English considerably as he exerts superb language control.

II

Amitav Ghosh, writer of late 20th century is naturally a creative writer in the Indian fiction in English illuminating the Indian English literature before the world over in general and European countries in particular. In his novels including *The Shadow Lines* (1988), Ghosh projects precisely those problems of individual freedom on the face of man made disaster such as riots and violence as a result of bifurcation of nation or re-demarcation of national boundaries or communal violence from fundamentalising religion. For all projection of all such thematic pre-occupation in the form of novel Ghosh has chosen the use of English, even though he is raised with Bengali language. While going through *The Shadow Lines* by Ghosh and also his other novels one does not find that English is second language for him. The novel *The Shadow Lines* brought national acclaim to Ghosh for his contribution to Indian English literature, besides merits of the novel. One definitely sees the true merits of this Indian novel in English. Arjya Sirkar in his article – *The Shadow Lines: The Promise of Another Down* – rightly comments about use of English language as:

“And by a strange stroke the English language is a part of the intellectual equipment, his English, therefore, is unobtrusive, unselfconscious and by and large not unnatural.”¹³

In *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh describes the narrator's experience of escalators in London. Ghosh's choice of words and style of narration in use of language is like a flow of water in a stream – flowing unceasingly. The description of the escalator and its surroundings are not only point to point but also true as one would have naturally experienced it. Ghosh writes:

“It would irritate her to see how excited I got when we stepped on to the escalators, she would watch me as I turned to look at the advertisements flashing past us on the walls, gulped in the netherworld smell of electricity and dampness and stale deodorant, stopped to listen to the music of the buskers booming errily through the permanent night of the passageways....”¹⁴

Apart from the above description, Ghosh discusses the riots and its bonafides and excesses by terrorist as well as by police and army people. The presentation is made through the pictures of the newspapers. The discussion among Robi, Ila and the protagonist narrator moves to the facts that the effect of riots and violence can not be wiped out of one's memory. Ghosh writes:

“You know, if you look at the pictures on the front pages of the newspaper at home now, all those pictures of dead people – in

Assam, the north-east, Punjab, Shri Lanka ,
Tripura - people shot by terrorists and
separatists and the army and police, you
will find somewhere behind it all, that
single word: every one doing it to be free.”

15

The cause of riots for freedom is ruled out in the novel. The futility of drawing more and more national boundaries is projected and indelible impact of violence on the minds of the individual is portrayed. Ghosh calls it mirage and raises the questions as to how any one can divide a memory. Ghosh writes:

“And then I think to myself why don't they
draw thousands of little lies through the
whole subcontinent and give every little
place a new name? What would it change?
It is a mirage, the whole thing is a mirage.
How can any one divide a memory?”¹⁶

Ghosh thus takes no side either with “separatists” or “police”. He merely leaves the reader to think about futility of drawing demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundaries especially makes the reader to profess that the demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundaries are not the solution of problems of violence at grass-root-level.

The intellectual discussion of cause and remedy of violence as above as well as the description of the narrator's experience of escalators as above shows the tactful use of English words and formations. One would surely call these creative achievements of use of English language, ingeniously minute use of English has been made in above two sets of example. Creative command over the English language is exhibited in its natural course of deliberation. Arjya Sirkar comment on the use of language of English in *The Shadow Lines* as:

“What heightens the achievement of the novel is its fluent use of English language. There is nothing self conscious, there are no forced “Indianisms”. He knows how to vary his style from the mildly comic (for instance the reference to Tridib's gastic [4-5]), the highly dramatic (the description of Tridib's end[246]), the intensely speculative (21), to the sensuously lyrical(61). The choice of words is amazingly immaculate.”

17

It is interesting to see that *The Shadow Lines* has been conceived brilliant in its execution with high command of English language. Amitav Ghosh has given us a command performance of language as well as structure. The character's way of thinking is shown in a beautiful language with absolute clarity in thought, description and modes of writing in English. Whether it is an escalators or a experience

or a discussion on ideological theme Ghosh does not lag behind. Ghosh's use and selection of English words brings the perfection of better taste and high profile of expression. The protagonist of *The Shadow Lines* says that his grandmother was giggling like a school girl and that she could not believe she was really going to fly off into the sky. The narrator of the novel pays 'send off' to his grand mother at Dum Dum Airport. The narrator describes the actual 'take off' of the aircraft from the Dum Dum Airport. Here Ghosh describe the 'take off' of the plane as:

"The door was slammed shut, the stairs were wheeled away, and the plane began to move. It turned slowly and trundled down the runway with an ungainly, waddling motion. I stopped waving: it was hard to believe that this graceless, plodding thing would actually have the temerity to thrust itself into the sky. It came to a wide apron, turned again, and pointed its nose down the runway. It was stationary for a long moment, its energy seem to slip away. A hush fell over the airport and the propellers started up again, in an instant they were spinning so fast they melted into the shimmer of the heat on the tarmac. I was still watching my grandfather's window - it was the third from the door at

the back. I was sure I could see her smiling waving into the glass. Then the whole plane shook as a shudder ran down the fuselage. It began to roll down the runway, engines screaming, its silver body flashing back the glare of the midday sun its gracelessness was gone; the power of engines had given the long fuselage the lean muscular tautness of the neck of a heron in full flight. It was shooting down the runway now; my grand father's window lengthened into a long white blur. Its nose lifted very gently, and then suddenly, unbelievably, the whole of its huge metal body was riding the sky." ¹⁸

The above description is a masterful art on the part of Ghosh who has not only handled the language with proper words but also has projected the whole description giving it a actual visual scenery of the plane about to take off from the landing, from the airport into the sky. The visual fluency of the plane moving from airport into the sky has been displayed by Ghosh in his skill at word craft and any professor of linguistic usage and terminology of words, would have called excellent expression of the highly talented writer.

Considering and taking analytical review of the foregoing expression of Ghosh, one would immediately conclude that *The Shadow*

Lines - book - is the product of intense craftsmanship along with superbly expressed lines. Moreover in *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh presents the theme of borders between nations which happened to be once an erstwhile nation, and whose people are intermingled. Ghosh explores the theme of moving of individuals across national borders. Narrator's grandmother - Tha'mma - fails to understand the meaning of national boundaries. The protagonist - narrator - says that in their family, they come home and going back frequently. Here Ghosh writes:

“You see, in our family we don't know whether we are coming or going—it is all my grandmother's fault, but of course, the fault was not her at all; it lay in language. Every language assumes a centrality, a fixed and settled point to go away from and come back to, and what my grandmother was looking for was a word for a journey which was not a coming or a going at all.”¹⁹

Here Ghosh, as a creative writer, creates an illusion and emphasis that the national borders of a bifurcated nation are not real in the minds of people displaced and that such border lines remaining on maps, are shadow lines only. Though however, for a displaced person, these boundaries does not mean anything in their state of mind and Tha'mma's efforts to find a word in such a novice state of life is not

unwarranted. About fixity of a place the short comings of language in such novice state of position are exposed by Ghosh's creativity.

Ghosh's language to show the impact of aroused human feeling is far better way of expression and to the point. Describing sentiments and emotional stresses in a language requires masterful craftsmanship. In *The Shadow Lines*, intimate association of narrator with May is shown by Ghosh as:

“With a tremendous efforts teeth clenched, she squirmed out of my grasp, threw herself backwards and fell on the mattresses. There was a ripping sound as her dress tore open and I was left clutching the air when I looked down at her she was crouching on the mattresses, and her breast was hanging down, art of the rent in her dress flapping against her ribs.”²⁰

Ghosh's language in above episode is giving more than picturesque effect of the incident besides human being's struggle of freeing from unwanted union of bodies. Ghosh here express the outcome of emotional stress aroused by human bodies of male and female with skillful use of language besides describing the event colourfully and beautifully. The narrator feels sorry for his above act of aggression and apologies to May subsequently next morning. About

execution of language and style, Gopal Gandhi, in his article "A Rubik cube of emotions: *The Shadow Lines*", express his opinion as:

"The Shadow Lines is in a word, brilliant. Brilliant in how it has been conceived, brilliant in its execution. Amitav Ghosh has given us in this slim novel a command performance in which language, structure and spirit have coalesced to produce a work of lyrical beauty."²¹

The opinion of Gopal Gandhi is befitting to the use of language in *The Shadow Lines* and one would not at all hesitate to agree with him.

Ghosh's handling of words and English language in *The Shadow Lines* makes the reader forget that he is reading a novel of a writer, whose English is his second language. The novel *The Shadow Lines* has been acclaimed by the people and it has earned Ghosh The Sahitya Academy Award and that is the proof of master craftsmanship of Ghosh in carving the novel adding one more feather to Indian English novel among national and overseas scenario of writing and writers.

III

In An Antique Land (1992) by Amitav Ghosh is obviously a travelogue Autobiographical feature of the novel suggest Ghosh's own

experience as a researcher for his doctoral degree in social anthropology. The novel exhibits the outcome of Ghosh's interaction with multi cultural people and places. Ghosh writes in prologue of the novel as:

"I had never heard of Cairo Geneze before that day but within few months I was in Tunisia, learning Arabic. At about the same time the next year 1980, I was in Egypt, installed in a village called Lataifa a couple of journey to the south east of Alexandria."

22

About the use of language in *In An Antique Land* it can be stated that though the novel shows use of English, it has also mentioned the translation of historical documents of 12th century from Hebrew script and cursive Arabic. Ghosh writes:

"It was the deciphering of the documents rather than the language itself that was the hard part: language would not present a particular problem to someone who knew colloquial Arabic." 23

Ghosh's use of English inevitably does not fall short of writing subversion of history of 12th century as can be found from going through the novel. R. K. Dhawan comments in this regards as:

“It bears testimony to Ghosh’s interaction with at least four languages and cultures spread over three continents and across several countries.”²⁴

Naturally novel bears the use of English language representing the historical as well as other cultural stories and version of the languages other than English. The novel whether it is fictional or non-fictional or autobiographical is a question of debate but it has evidenced the fact that Ghosh has surmounted the conflict of English usage while dealing the historical details and stories in the other languages which include Hebrew, Arabic and language of 12th century used in south coastal places in India.

The novel *In An Antique Land* present the problems arising out of migration. The story involves two sections - one about research conducted by Ghosh as a doctoral research, student and other fictional characters based on Ghosh’s visit to Egypt, Nashawy and Lataifa. Ghosh describes Nashawy as:

“As a result I was soon lost, for Nashawy was much larger than Lataifa, with its houses squeezed close together around a labyrinth of tunnel like lanes, some of which come to unexpected dead ends while the others circled back upon themselves.”²⁵

The above description of bye-lanes and houses of Nashawy depicts the command over use of English language by Amitav Ghosh who successfully creates the picturesque effect of places described.

Ghosh stresses the need of effective language for communication. Ghosh elaborately project the Ben Yaju's business association with his fellow businessman, Ghosh writes about some of Ben Yiju's business connection. While narrating about this Ghosh uses native words (as it is called) like 'VANIA' - which is a Gujarati word of the Gujarati people engaged in trade and also "Baniya from Manglore", Ghosh's use of transcribed words for Gujarati and Hindi words for Gujarati merchants shows his method of use of writing in English with tinge of mixed three languages - English, Gujarati and Hindi. Ghosh writes as:

"Some of Ben Yiju's closest business connection, for instance lay with a group of merchants whom he and his friends in Aden referred to as the "Baniyan of Mangalore" Hindu Gujarati of the 'Vania' or trading caste. Long active in the Indian Ocean trade, Gujarati merchants had plied the trade routs for centuries, all the way from Aden to Malacca and they exerted a powerful influence on the flow of certain goods and commodities." ²⁶

While elaborating the business communication and language in Ben Yiju's time, Ghosh brings the harmonious association of human beings of different caste religion and geographical backgrounds. Ghosh projects the comparative study of such harmony. Ghosh writes:

"In matter of business, Ben Yiju's networks appear to have been wholly indifferent to many of those boundaries that are today thought to mark social, religious and geographical divisions" ²⁷

Ghosh however gives his unbiased and natural reports on his study of Ben Yiju's papers. Ghosh writes:

"But here lies a mystery into which Ben Yiju's paper offers no insight at all: the question of what language the merchants used in their dealings with each other." ²⁸

Ghosh further write (about the said language of Ben Yiju's time) as:

"The Arab geographer Masudi refers, in fact, to a language called "Lariyya" which he describes as being spoken along much of the length of the Malabar Coast." ²⁹

Thus one can see that Ghosh is very keen in his emphasis as the historical evidence of the language of Ben Yiju's time. Though however Shyamala Agarwal in his article - *In An Antique Land: A critical Study* - comments as:

"The linguistic diversity and similarity of Ben Yiju's time angel to be explored. It is likely that Ben Yiju corresponded with his friends in Aden in Arabic. But the question still nags us: how did Ben Yiju communicate with Ashu and Bhoma or with his business associates, haling from various regions in India." ³⁰

Thus, Ghosh as a creative writer, writing *In An Antique Land*, has emerged as emphatic writer about use of language. Ghosh has interestingly dealt the case of language while discussing linguistic diversity in his antique land Hind Wassef in his article - *Beyond The Divide: History And National Boundaries in The Works of Amitav Ghosh* - rightly comments as:

"Ghosh's research sheds more light on the world of Ben Yiju. For example, he learns that the hybrid language, Judeo - Arabic, was in fact very close to Arabic." ³¹

About the use of language, Ghosh unearths historical position about in 12th century and brings forth before the reader about human relationship of different languages and culture. Whether this is red light signal for the present day situation or not is a question of argumentation. However, K. C. Belliappa in his article Amitav Ghosh's *In An Antique Land: An Excursion Into The Time Past And Time Present*, rightly comments as:

“Ben Yiju and his associates used a language of northern derivation and did not seem to possess any fluency in Tulu. Amitav Ghosh speculates that they perhaps used a specialized trade language with their fellow merchants. At this stage, one might well ask what do all these signify for us, who are now on the threshold of the – twenty first – century? It is stunning reminder that two individuals of different races from far off countries with diverse tradition, backgrounds and religious could indeed have had such a meaningful relationship.”³²

Thus we can see that Ghosh has emerged as very keen and creative writers about the use of language in his novels. Moreover novel depicts the description of countryside of Nashawy in a language that gives exact picture of the place. Ghosh writes:

“The countryside was extraordinary beautiful at this time of the year, whenever there was a clear day the wheat, clover, and maize stood brilliantly green against deep blue skies, while Nashawy itself, with its huddle of earth houses seemed like a low range of hills brooding in the distance.”³³

Ghosh control over the English language is far better exposed in style and fashion that may be termed as an excellent taste of English language.

IV

While introducing the man of science in *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1998) discussing the knowledge, Ghosh has masterful control over his English in fluent discourse by the character, who is man of mind, saying as:

“Mistaken are those who imagine that silence is without life, that it is inanimate, without either spirit or voice. It is not, indeed the word is to this silence what the shadow is to foreshadowed, what veil is to the eyes, what the mind is to truth, what language is to life.”³⁴

These are philosophical views in the words of language used in deliberation of intellectual of life and spirit of human being with relation to science and scientific methods of reason. Ghosh has thus shown his creativity in form of novel written in English language of philosophical terms.

This is how language is used to its fullest success of expression in the way as it should be, so far writing in English language is concerned. Whether it is socio-political events or post colonial riots in Indian or languages used by India during British rule, Ghosh knows his way, confidently and in commanding way as to how language of English should be used to the absolute perfection. Indian writers, writing in English novels have established their undisputable position in English literature and Ghosh's novels are not solitary examples.

The Calcutta Chromosome the novel by Ghosh, relate to the advanced science and intellectual projection of Indian myth compared to science in relation of transfusion of malaria parasite. The language of novel is such that it infects the reader with imagination, emotion, and thrilling experience. Ghosh's intellectual insight and creativity are revealed and it has attained global critical attention and praise from literary circles. In handling certain issues of science and fiction - *The Calcutta Chromosome* has come out as substantial prose in Indian English literature. About the construction and style of a language, Sandeep Sen of Aark Arts of Books London, opines as:

“By training Ghosh is a social anthropologist and therefore it is not surprising that he brings to his art of writing exactitude of construction and clarity of language.”³⁵

Apart from the above, while describing Phulboni’s visit to Renupur and resultant events of thriller, language used to show the details of station and surrounding places, cabin, lamp and dialogue with station master is exceedingly to the point and the language of the station master is such as the type of language, the station master used to practice. Here Ghosh projects stationmaster saying as:

“The station is a terrible place. No one in any of the villages around here comes within a mile of this station after dark. You could not make them come if you gave them all the gold that is hoarded in the heavens. I tried to tell you but you would not listen.”³⁶

The language of the station master resorts to the Indian way of using English language. The station master being Indian native uses synonym for his wife in Indian way of English. Ghosh twists the language and writes as:

“It won’t take a moment to get there”, said the station master, “We will have your bags in the signal room and then we will start walking, you will see, by the time we get there, the-one-who-is-at-home will have something special ready for you.”³⁷

“The-one-who’s-at-home” for house wife is far better presentation of a word used as native English language.

Ghosh sometimes uses the same words of Indian food transcribed in English and it creates better effects with half English and half native language. In this regards Ghosh writes:

“Carrying the food and water to the door he sat cross legged on the ground and opened the cloth bundle. He found a state of PARATHAS, a generous helping of mango ACHAR and a heap of golden yellow potatoes thickly entrusted in MASALA.”³⁸

The use of “MANGO ACHAR” and “PARATHA” and “MASALA” are the words of native language used as it is, shows better effect of impression, besides “a generous help of mango Achar” is suggestive of the mango Achar (Pickle) in good quantity. Ghosh’s such

use of amalgamation of native as well as English language shows how the language is used in playful way.

Ghosh shows Murugan's views of laboratory on The Calcutta Chromosome. Ghosh's use of language in expressing how military lab worked gives clear picture of lab. Ghosh writes:

"It is so hot, the floors are shimmering, no fans, no electricity, a room full of jars, all neatly stacked up on shelves, a desk with a straight backed chair, a single microscope with slides scattered about, one guy, in uniform, hunched over microscope and a swarm of orderlies buzzing around him." ³⁹

Fluency and clarity of language are evidenced in this paragraph (above) by Ghosh who gives the exact picture of lab in so easy and masterful way. In so shortest way complete and exact picture of lab has been shown by Ghosh in controlled way of English writing.

Though Ghosh has no problem at all to express in English, just anything, as if it is his first language. Ghosh creates more effective expression by using Indian words as it is and that brands accent of language as 'Indian English' on its move to prove better art of usage. Here novelist expresses his personality as modern English writers of late 20th century. About such modern novelist, who includes Ghosh, Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanandam have rightly commented as:

“The post modern novelists consider language a play thing, to be twisted, turned and molded as required for the purpose, they are no longer worried about correctness of English language and are playfully free of the rules and regulations of English language writing.”⁴⁰

V

The Glass Palace (2000) by Amitav Ghosh expresses the life span of three generations of men and women spread over on locale of Burma, Calcutta and India during the time when British took over Burma from ex-princely state (country). The novel develops from one generation to another at the places Burma, Mandalay, India, West Coast Ratnagiri whose language differs from place to place involving the deliberations of the characters using Burmese, Hindustani and English language. Historical details of peaceful and beautiful Burma during the rule of king Thebaw and Queen Supayalet including Glass palace of have remained in back drop of the story. Characters mostly Indian and Burmese as well as Christians - a mixed culture - are intermingled using the language of Hindustani, Burmese and English. The language used by Ghosh in the novel is fluent English with tinge of Burmese and Hindustani. Ghosh frequently uses transcribed words of Burmese like MIN and MEBYA - meaning the King and Queens and Hindustani words like – KAISA HAI SAB, KUCH THIK THAK - meaning “How is

it?" "Everything OK." The frequent use of Burmese words like its transcription by Ghosh, some times disturbs the flow of the story as the glossary of such words are not provided for by Ghosh. Hence it creates confusion for some of the readers who are finding difficult to comprehend the story completely. Prof. R. K. Kaul in his review article - A Memorable Epic Amitav Ghosh: The glass palace - rightly comments as:

"Amitav Ghosh has mastered his material so completely that he uses Burmese words and expression freely without glossing them. He refers to Buddhist festivals with familiarity. The word "Longyi" perhaps needs explanation but these are passages were a whole cluster of Burmese words makes the meaning obscure. For example "Wungyis:, Windiest: Myow UNS", "HTI", and "TSALOE" all occur in the same page (P. 41). A glossary would have been helpful." ⁴¹

Apart from above Ghosh has far more succeeded in displaying the love, in the fairy tale way between Rajkumar and beautiful Dolly of Queen's maid in royal family in colourful and effective use of English language describing Dolly's beauty. Ghosh writes:

“Rajkumar’s eye fell on a girl – one of the Queen’s maids. She was slender and long-limbed, of a complexion that was exactly the tint of the fine THANAKA powder, she was wearing on her face. She had huge dark eyes and her face was long and perfect in its symmetry. She was by far the most beautiful creature he had ever beheld, of loveliness beyond imagining.”⁴²

Ghosh’s language as here in mentioned above, to present the ‘loveliness’ in form of words project the picture in such a manner that the reader is absorbed in thought of love and beauty forgetting the prospective development of the love affairs. If Ghosh’s purpose is to halt the reader, he has succeeded.

Whether it is a case of describing love and beauty or food stall of MACHO of The Glass Palace of Queen, Ghosh’s English moves as peacefully as a stream or as effectively as flooded river. Ghosh described the chamber in the palace as:

“The chamber was very large and its walls and columns were tiled with thousands of shards of glass. Oil lamp flared in scones, and the whole room seemed to be a flame, every surface shimmering with sparks of golden light. The hall was filled with a

busy noise, a workman like hum of cutting and chopping of breaking wood and shattering glass. Everywhere people were intently at work, men and women, armed with axes and das, they were hacking at gen studded Oak offering boxes, digging patterned gen stones from the marble floor using fish hooks to pry the ivory inlays from lacquered sadaik chests.”⁴³

Ghosh’s high command over English language is transpired while describing Queen’s hall. The beauty of hall with its activities is narrated giving exact picture of hall in such a way that reader may feel it as if he (reader) is in the hall itself.

Ghosh uses Hindustani words without its translation. His character – Soya John – was asked how he has learnt to speak Indian language. Through the character of Soya John, Ghosh Writes:

“The soldiers there were mainly Indian and they asked me this very question: how is it that you, who look Chinese and carry a Christian name, can speak our language? When I told them how this had come about, they would laugh and say, you are a DHOBI KA KUTTA – a washer man’s dog – NA GHAR KA NA GHAT KA – you

don't belong to anywhere, either by the water or on land, and I would say, yes, that is exactly what I am." 44

The above are not solitary examples of Hindustani words. About king's exhale in Ratnagiri, Indian and his necessities Ghosh writes:

"But there was no water for the king and the toilets were very nearly unusable. Dolly appealed to Sawant, 'Do something Mohanbhai, KUCCH TO KARO.'" 45

Dolly brought up in Burma under Burmese language, installed with exiled king in Ratnagiri, has been tempted to speak the language of native Mohanbhai with a hope to be better understood.

Also Dolly while departing from Ratnagiri with Rajkumar, feels sobbing on waving by the princess. Ghosh writes as:

"She fell to her knees, sobbing Rajkumar rushed to lift her off the ground. Holding her up with one arm he picked up her bundled clothes with his free hand. Come, Dolly let's go, there is nothing to be done'. He had to lift her bodily off the ground to get her inside Gaari, "CHALLO, CHALLO, JALDI CHALO." 46

The departure of Dolly along with Rajkumar has been shown in Hindustani language. It seems the accelerated language of Ghosh does not stop for use of translation of Hindustani into English and the character's natural way of handling the situation has been shown by using instinctive use of Hindustani language. The behaviour of the character has been shown far more natural by using transcribed words put up in italics.

On the event of initial refusal by Dolly to marry Rajkumar, Rajkumar (Raha) prepares to leave even in the adverse weather of the sea, Dolly persuaded by Sawant comes to seashore and asks Raja not to go. Here Ghosh writes:

“She could feel herself flashing, the blood rising to her face. “Mr Raha, she said, picking her words with care. ‘The currents are dangerous at this time of the year and the Dak Bungalow has been booked for a week. There is no reason to leave in such a hurry’, ‘But it was you who said..... ‘yes, but there is sometimes a difference between what one says and what one means.....” 47

Here through Dolly's expression Ghosh twist the language and express tactful language about what the words of voice say and what

the tone of the voice say and suggests the modest way of Dolly's consent to marry Rajkumar. The impact of Dolly's words on Rajkumar is clearly seen as he happily laughs. Ghosh describes Rajkumar's reaction in a colourful language given visual effects for which Ghosh writes:

“Rajkumar took the cheroot from his mouth with a hand that was moving very slowly, as though in stunned disbelief. Then he uttered a shout of laughter and threw his cheroot high into the air. They stood looking at it, side by side, laughing, watching as it rose circling above them. Suddenly the glowing tip disintegrated and showers of sparkles come floating down. It was as though fireworks were raining down from the heaven.”⁴⁸

Thus, Ghosh depicted in colourful language, the 'would be couple' in joyous mood on the seashore, with sea bent upon pounding of water through furious sea-waves.

The language used in the passages evoking the panicked exodus of thousands and thousands of people. Almost, mostly Indian marching towards Calcutta, as the Japanese invaded Burma in 1942, is most effective. Ghosh's concern for the middle class family is emerged through the plight of individuals in particular and groups in general.

The most pitiable plight of the people through the character Dolly & Rajkumar with Manju and her baby, reaches tiny town of Mawlik on the Chindwin river. Here Ghosh writes:

“There they were confronted by a stupefying spectacle: some thirty thousand refugees were squatting along the river bank waiting to move on towards the densely forested mountain ranges that lay ahead. Ahead there were no roads, only tracks, rivers of mud flowing through green tunnels of jungle.”⁴⁹

Apart from depicting the plight of Indians turned dispossessed refugees. The struggle of the individuals like Dolly, Manju and her baby with Rajkumar have been exhibited in the language giving the profound effects of havoc of war – Second World War. Dolly, Rajkumar and Manju with her baby are moving carrying the baby in shawl and bundle of their clothes & firewood. Ghosh uses of language to reflect the glimpses of man’s thinking mind, is most powerful. The effect of agony and anguish in the minds of individuals trapped in the time of war and migration of people in precarious condition is best expressed when Manju thinks about Dolly’s plight, about total failure of human beings as parents. Ghosh writes:

“There were times when she could see pity in Dolly’s eyes, a sort of compassion – as

thought, she, Manju were somehow a sadder creature than she herself, as though it was she who had lost her hold in her mind and reason. That look made see the she wanted to hit Dolly, slap her, shout in her face: This is reality, this is the world, look at it, look at the evil that surrounds us, to pretend that it is an illusion will not make it go away. It was she, who was sane, not they, what could be better proof of their insanity than that they should refuse to acknowledge the magnitude of their defeat: the absoluteness of their failure, as parents as human being?"⁵⁰

Here Ghosh evokes the havoc of war as a defeat of mankind in a language depicting the flow of reasoning mind of the individual rational thinking about the futility of war has been evoked.

Not only this, through the struggle of Dolly, Manju and Rajkumar, with his grand child - Manju's baby - repercussion of war, on the child's outburst and cry, has been depicted in a language of child who longs for feeding to live alive. The silent language of a child through the natural repulsive has been embodied in the form of language with masterful command and insight of language by Ghosh. For example, Ghosh writes:

“There was nothing in her body – Manju was certain of this – but somehow the baby would find a way of squeezing a few drops from her sore, chafing breast. Then when the trickle ran dry she would begin to cry again – in angry, vengeful way, as though she wanted nothing more than see her mother dead.”⁵¹

Whether the expression need in projecting the ideas, stories, state of mental condition or a description of an object of a projection of ideological philosophy, Ghosh has shown the richness of language while presenting *The Glass Palace* – a novel. About the language used by Amitav Ghosh, Tabis Khair in his article of comparative studies *The Glass Palace* by Ghosh and *A New world* by Amit Chowdhary, Comments as:

“Language is an area in which these novels by Ghosh and Chaudhary offer two versions of the same lesson. Both of them are very careful in their use of English and vernacular transcriptions. Chaudhary is the greater stylist. However, Ghosh develops a conscious and rich tradition in Indian English fiction – a tradition that includes R. K. Narayan and Shashi Deshpande.”⁵²

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CHAPTER -7

CONCLUSION

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An attempt has been made in this thesis to study the novels of Amitav Ghosh from literary points of view on the art of characterization, narrative and plot structure by Ghosh along with the Ghosh's art of developing, defining and illustrating various themes in the novel. Ghosh's life and experience are such that he is extensively moving during his early life and during his academic career from Bangladesh, (Dhaka), Burma, India, U.K., Egypt and so evidently Ghosh's characters are traveling from place to place across national boundaries besides Ghosh has been raised from middle class family or rather upper middle class and has studied history, sociology and anthropology. So, his five novels offer us a vivid and comprehensive picture of human life at many places, at many times. Ghosh's preoccupation is with the middleclass section of the society a relatively small part of the civilization and perhaps the most conscious and indispensable part of the population. His thematic preoccupation is with excessive of religion of fundamentalism, concept of freedom, riots and violence, nationalism and meaning of the national boundaries from individual's point of view as well as national identity of human being uprooted and debarred from his own homeland.

Amitav Ghosh holds eminent place in Indian English fiction as well as in world English literature scenario. His first novel – *The Circle of Reason* (1986) – has been awarded literary award of France. His second novel – *The Shadow Lines* (1988) – has won national award – Sahitya Akademy Award. Ghosh's these novels places him as a talented craftsman in the art of fiction, for novels is not following the traditional forms of fiction writing in English but may be commencing new tradition of fictional art. As a writer Amitav Ghosh has been immensely moved by uncontrolled riots and violence witnessed by the people of India during partition, forming Bangladesh; and assassination of Smt. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, followed by large scale riots and violence across the country. Ghosh's own repercussion towards such riots & violence are reflected through the fictional work published by Ghosh. R. K. Dhawan writes in – *The Novels of Amitav Ghosh* (ed) – that Ghosh tells us how as he went to Delhi University campus to take his class, he witnessed violence and riots. Throughout the city Sikh houses were being looted and then set on fire often with their occupants inside. Such horrible events had a stifling effect on Ghosh's creative mind. Ghosh's out-burst for the evils of violence in the society is reflected and spread over the pages of his novels. Ghosh's concern is for the individuals who have suffered during such violence as he (Ghosh) has suffered, as he recollects his own home under attack in his novel – *In An Antique Land*.

For Ghosh, the family is of much importance, as no sooner we emphasize concern on family, then the question of 'home' arises. Ghosh's novels evoke the problems of home and family and stress the

need of the freedom of an individual. *The Circle of Reason* shows as characters and their way of life in constant moving and traveling in search of stable life and home but the novel – *The Circle of Reason* – does not develop into rational and lineal progress of its characters towards sound reasoning to seek the home. Ghosh show the futility of traveling across the continents in search of livelihood and home but does not profess that the man should not struggle as the novelist. In the end, he says ‘hope is the beginning’. While projecting such quest for home and settlement Ghosh projects, excellently, the scientific, anthropological and philosophical aspect of the human life in *The Circle of Reason*. In other novels viz., *The Shadow Lines*, *In An Antique Land* & *The Glass Palace*, Ghosh projects the lives of human beings of the middle class families with specific stage of life where and when the home of the individual is shattered into pieces by riots and violence set out for one or another reason of communal frenzy or set out by whimsical political machinery in power inclined on demarcating and re-demarcating the national boundaries. The study of the novels has revealed that once in South Asian continents and territories, the human life flourished in harmony, despite cultural and religious differences among the people. Ghosh does not theorize and project alternate ideal system. Ghosh’s novels merely depicts the lives of middle class families—their struggle for existence and their efforts to achieve economic freedom. Simultaneously, Ghosh projects the similar type of historical events where the similar type of families struggle for existence. By focusing two elements of two parallel stories of human lives, Ghosh’s novels diverts and directs the reader’s as well as critic’s attention and focus, is shifted to contemporary socio-political concern and also to social

economical concern not for the privileged class of the society but for the families who shoulder the responsibility of spade work in the society. Thus the family and home have been elaborative projected in the novels by Ghosh. And perhaps ... for these reasons Ghosh chooses 'his family photographs' published in the Times of India dated 12th February, 2007 with interview conducted by Sangeeta Advani.

Ghosh's writing reflects the recent concern of anthropologist with relation to the cultural and political boundaries which, though divide the men and women but can not divide the memories of displaced and uprooted human beings. Ghosh's characters of the novels do not cling to the specific cultural position but move across the national boundaries around modern countries. In *In An Antique Land* Ben Yiju travels across the boundaries and spent 20 years in Mangalore (India) and his slave Bhoma traveled for, and on behalf of Ben Yiju for business purpose. Through which Ghosh cites the example of history of human relationship in the 12th century when the trades and business flourished across the India, Egypt and Aden without national or religious boundaries. In *The Circle of Reason* the characters travel across the boundaries even taking risk of illegal migration. In - *The Shadow Lines* the characters lives are largely projected with reference to and in perception to the national boundaries and freedom. Mrs. Price's father, Lionel Tresawson, lived in India before independence and he is a kind of traveling Englishman and travels widely the Malaysia, Fiji, London, Calcutta. The narrator's own uncle Tridib went to London and remained there during world war. The narrators own life is of such a kind as to living while traveling. Thus Ghosh's characters are moving

across the national boundaries. Ghosh's novels projects the motifs of traveling as a means to focus the issues relating to demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundaries in the context of human being's freedom of choice and upholds the man's right to live at his homeland. The study of the novels reveals that Ghosh's characters are created with specific perception to suit the specific thematic occupation. The characters development is subordinated to the thematic superiority. By creating such characters, Ghosh goes on to stress that the national boundaries are like *The Shadow Lines*.

Apart from this, Ghosh has projected his concern on the force of the nationalism, which is one of the inevitable forces of modern world – post modern world. The novel *The Shadow Lines* specifically develop the real meaning of the national borders as well as riots and violence in the context of freedom of an individual. *The Shadow Line* is a novel of history says a memorized history in form of fiction. Ghosh cautions that issue like partitioning of the national and resultant violence create the insider-outsider configuration. In support of his claim through the medium of novels for peaceful co-existence among politicians, religious and cultural group, Ghosh quotes the references of Ben Yiju and his international road networks in *In An Antique Land* where in citing the historical position about the places and time where and when people lived in harmony. That during those days of past, national boundaries did not exist in a sense as it is today. Thus by interweaving the theme of the national boundaries of various countries, Ghosh has internationalized his novels. This concept of nationalism used as means and tools by the fundamentalists of religious and cultural groups within

and beyond the nation is modern evil set loose across the national boundaries of the modern nations – small and big as well.

Thus Ghosh through the media of novel projects ‘concern’ over the sensitive issues of modern times. Ghosh’s priorities for peaceful relationship among human being can well be understood in the context of modern violence inflicted by the fundamentalists of faith and culture.

Ghosh’s preoccupations of amalgamating the historical events with the fiction in the novel are evidenced. In *In An Antique Land*, Ghosh projects historical positions of human relationship in 12th century along with similar modern relationship of modern world. In *The Shadow Lines* the riots and violence in two set of historical time are incorporated in the novel along with the war-torn condition of London in the fictional stories of three families of three generation of time. In the novel – *The Calcutta Chromosome* – the historical background of Sir Ronald Ross research on malaria parasite and his Noble Prize winning is explored as ‘possibilities’ in his science fictional novel. The novel ‘The Glass Palace – project the glory and rise & fall of Burma’s king Thebau as well as colonial and second world war effects on south east Asian territories. The novels are depicting the subversion of history with the story telling of the characters. Thus Ghosh shows the comparative study of human lives of modern times & of time past & recent past. Novels thus deviates the traditional form of Indian English novels of past and present. For best example, we can cite the novel – *In An Antique Land* – wherein story’s main lines, histories and Ghosh’s own experiences as a research student for his D. Phil are quite differentiated and can be

seen/read as parallel stories spread over of multiple time and places. Thus the study and analysis of the five novels in question reveal Ghosh as a creative writer of renovation and innovation in Indian English literature heading for world literature in English.

Apart from philosophical aspects of the novels by Ghosh under study, the one of the varied function of the novel entertains and interest of the readers. The analysis of the novel reveals that Ghosh's novels appeal to both ordinary reader seeking entertainment and intellectual reader seeking intellectual interpretations imbued in the novels. Mostly Ghosh narrates the families of middle class of societies, which project the interaction of the characters from 'romance' and 'love' points of view. In *The Shadow Lines* the life of the narrator doing his research work is given with his love for Ila who is in love of cosmopolitan life and marries Nick Price. Narrator's romantic scenes with May Price in the end of novel makes the novel 'interesting' for most of the readers. Also Ben Yiju's married life with Asha of Different language in Mangalore in *In An Antique Land* - is catching the interest of the reader. Murugan's sexual relationship with news reporter Urmila as 'an experiment' in *The Calcutta Chromosome* as well as romances between Macho and Saya John, Dolly & Rajkumar and stories of indenture in *The Glass Palace* are other examples to create novel effects for the reader. Thus Ghosh's novels under study depict varied interests of the novel reading. Simultaneously with such stories of romance and love, Ghosh projects the ill-effects of British rule through the character of Arjun and hazards of second world war in the novel *The Glass Palace* also the projection of the Ghosh encounter with Imam on differences of culture

and faith in the novel – *In An Antique Land*, as well as use the projection of Indian mythology of reincarnation of soul as counter science in *The Calcutta Chromosome* appeal to the intellectual standard of the readers. Though, however, in *The Calcutta Chromosome* the projection of mystery elements with ghost stories hold the attention of the reader. And also free talks in Dinu's studio named Glass Palace in the novel – *The Glass Palace* – appeals to the intellects of the reader.

Ghosh's art of narration of characters plotting the novels are befitting to the story of the novel. The novel – *The Circle of Reason* – does not depict conventional plot structure but project ideas of thought. There are many characters in *The Circle of Reason*. They, by profession or works, are scientists, professors, weavers, merchants' and house wives. Ghosh's power of creation is reflected through these characters that are symbols of pain and suffering. Ghosh's fluent command of language of English are aptly expressed through the human description of the characters. Similarly in the novel *The Shadow Lines & In An Antique Land*, the description of the physiques of its characters are aptly formulated giving visual effects while reading the novels. The characters of *The Calcutta Chromosome* are shown very active and moving as the novel being a science fiction, the modern men and women characters are projected with the commands of the computers. The character Murugan, who is challenging the authenticity of the invention's proprietorship, is teeming with the scientific knowledge as well as philosophical thinking behind his investigation. In the novel – *The Glass Palace* – the rise in business enterprise by the young character – Rajkumar (Raha) is projected, qualifying Rajkumar from orphan boy

into respected gentleman (Babu). Other characters especially - Dolly – is shown as the most beautiful girl with beauty 'beyond imagination'.

The women characters in the five novels under study are shown indispensable in development of the novel from thematic points of view. The women characters which are created in the novels depict the better qualities of human being. For example, Tha'mma in the novel *The Shadow Lines* does not take help of her sister and works proudly as teacher to rear her children and to earn her living. She is resolute as well as attentive ever in her old age. Similarly, the character of Mangla in the novel *The Calcutta Chromosome* is out of the traditional role of woman and she carries supernatural power and activities.

Also in *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh projects the woman character - Zindi, who is introduced as a young and beauty with powers to talk freely. About this character novelist says that, that was Zindi's power, she could bring together empty air and give it a body just by talking of it. Dr. Uma Verma is microbiologist and worries about humanity in *The Circle of Reason* where Uma Dey the wife of collector in the Glass Palace does not fit in the hold of marriage traditionally. The character - Ila in *The Shadow Lines* - is painted and described as western young girl who does not wish to remain under control of family restraints and moves in the east and west.

The novel *In An Antique Land* does not project the women characters of worthy of note as the women in the Arab culture are shown as 'within the house serving the family' way of woman's

position. Thus, Ghosh's women characters struggling for better life, are delineated in the Ghosh's novels for upholding the thematic concern of the novel. There are however other characters in the novels under study who are described as historical characters through the memory of the individuals making the historical implication in the novel as subversions of the remembered history, which according to novelist's projection has something to say as meaningful.

The overall analytical study of the novels reveals that the novels are created in very talented manner and projects the thematic concern about modern way of roots and causes for the violence and riots as well as middle class family's problems for their livelihood as well as for their 'home' in the context of partition, demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundary lines causing fatal consequences. Ghosh goes further as an anthropologist and emphasis on consideration of the history while solving the problems of communal tension, riots & violence resulting into demarcation and re-demarcation of national boundaries to suit the fundamentalists of religious claiming freedom in form of nationalism.

As earlier stated in this chapter the novels have nurtured the readers' interest and there by making the novel reading indispensable.

Thus by innovation in forms style and narrative technique in the novels under study, Ghosh has endeavored to make his novel worthy of catching the interest of the readers on national and international lands. Large and wide, varied articles of critical appraisals of the novels by national and international critics in literary circle of global English

literature are the substantiating reasons of Ghosh's novel attaining international levels beside making Ghosh as literary statesman and the award of 'PADMA SHRI' on Ghosh by the Government of India recently in 2006-2007 is the proof of Ghosh as a great creative writer of our time. Besides Ghosh's novel – The Shadow Line – has been included in the syllabus of study in included in the syllabus of study in English literature by Delhi University.

Thus Ghosh has emerged as a great creative writer of our time and has brought Indian literature in English in focuses of various comments and literary circle spread over -- all over the world as the novels have definitely exhibited international level of novel's focus and standard. And there by Amitav Ghosh has in post modern times, emerged as 'world-writer' of creativity. Thus, this thesis by rigorous insightful and comprehensive as well as strenuous scrutiny of the novels reads like unique work on Ghosh's creativity and thematic concern through the medium of novels. Here in this dissertation an attempt has been made to explore Ghosh's creativity through the novels from plot structure, narration and richness of English language points of view.

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