

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Our intelligent recycling of whatever happens to the human race – either individually or collectively – can help us transcend even the most brutal and agonizing experiences and transform them into patterns ever more human and humane
(Komalesh 167)

Humanism is the sublime essence of humanity. In India humanism has been the fulcrum for its harmony amidst its pluralistic society. This humanism which existed and flourished among the people of different culture and language centuries before despite of the nation's constant invasion has now waned away with the tide of colonialism. Humanism is paid as a ransom for patriotism that resulted in partition of the nation. Patriotism – love for one's country – has slain Humanism – love for one another – in the nation. In the current scenario, where power becomes predominant and morals insignificant, humanism has also ceased its hold on humanity. The study persist the need for humanism and to establish the creed 'Unity in Diversity' at the global level. The issue of prevalent animosity in India despite of the freedom and Independence attained from the colonizers is addressed from the lens of Post-colonialism.

The aspect to revitalise humanism is to ponder whether patriotism has served its purpose of restoring harmony in the nation. The study focuses on major issues like religious animosity, partition, national identity and quest for survival. This serves a best platform to reason out that if the spirit of patriotism is stirred for a national cause of Independence and Freedom then why is religious difference magnified so that the nation India is separated into India and Pakistan? If partition is the result of patriotism

then did the spirit of patriotism has served its full measure in attaining the intended freedom and liberty? The existing religious animosity and communal clash insist the need for humanism overlooking the spirit of nationalism and religious difference.

The study insists to attain the freedom aspired by Rabindranath Tagore expressed in his poem *Where the Mind is Without Fear*.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high

Where knowledge is free

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments

By narrow domestic walls

Where words come out from the depth of truth

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way

Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit

Where the mind is led forward by thee

Into ever-widening thought and action

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake

It is important to reconsider whether the achieved Independence and Freedom has liberated the nation from the clutches of slavery or has it exchanged hands from the imperialist to our own rulers? Freedom that has been achieved from the imperialist at the cost of numerous lives – martyrdom – has been a mirage since Independence.

The above lines by Komalesh in *Issue of Identity in Indian English Fiction: A Close Reading of Canonical Indian English Novels* states that the human race is constantly under the stigma of domination throughout the ages. The human race in want of liberation has undergone inhuman treatment yet the rebellion still continues for a humanitarian outlook towards life. He is of the view that colonialism, partition,

riots and violence has made 'humanism' as an endangered quality with human beings. He also emphasises that understanding the past of a nation helps to renew the lost humanism. Despite of attaining freedom and independence, many nations remain in the subaltern level due to the lack of humanistic concern.

Humanism began as a movement in the early fourteenth century in Italy. It initially began as a European intellectual and cultural renaissance against scholasticism. The term 'humanism' was coined by German educator Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer in 1808, to describe a program of study distinct from science and engineering to study of philosophy and arts. The word 'Humanism' is derived from the Latin concept *Humanitas* meaning 'the development of human virtue'. In the twentieth century this term significantly lends itself to be anthropocentric. However Petrarch was called the father of humanism because he taught the people to be humane.

Literature has recorded its literary abundance on the fulcrum of human expression. It is an arena where great literary stalwarts exhibit the historical significance, traditional and cultural heritage, socio-economic developments, political improvements and literary achievements of their country. In India, literature in English was the outcome of British influence. India is known as a Pluralistic nation for its multilingual, multicultural and multi-religious coexistence that knit together with harmony. The tide of colonialism has subjected India to transition in all spheres shattering its unity and harmony.

Colonialism served as a platform for dispersion of the natives. It mobilized migration of people to different nations by stripping off national and self identity, patriotism and sense of belonging. During colonial rule Indians were forced to traverse the boundaries of their nation to serve the colonial masters. They were sent as

indentured labourers to develop plantation colonies; as works to construct railway networks and to work as soldiers in the imperial military establishments. This iron hand of imperialism has initially paved way for globalization. Carol Leon in *A Small Place: Re-Looking Universals and Distinctions* states,

...globalization had its early origins in imperialism and this is apparent in the way both phenomena structure power and social relations between places and cultures. Indeed, the way in which the local engages with the global parallels the way in which former colonized cultures have engaged the forces of imperialism. (15)

This subjugation and dependency had created the necessity for a new transformation, a new identity and liberation for the nation.

In India Bengal has been the treasure trove for the growth of fiction. In Indian literature, literary genres like poetry, epics, drama, short stories and fables had their roots rooted firm in the Indian soil, but novel was the last to be imitated on the Indian English literary scene. M. K. Naik in his book *Dimensions of Indian English Literature* states, “One of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling; the novel as we know today was an importation from the West” (16). It became one of an effective medium and form of expression towards the attainment of freedom from the colonizers.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee heralds to be the pioneer to instil ‘Patriotism’ as a means to regain India’s lost harmony and unity through freedom. The Dictionary.com traces the origin of the word ‘Patriotism’ from Greek word “*Patriotes*” meaning ‘Loyal supporter of one’s country’. Chatterjee’s *Rajmohan’s Wife* (1864) is deemed as the first English novel. He was influenced by Tod’s *Annals of Rajasthan* and

Scott's historical romances. He imbibed his writings with Patriotism as a new religion. His Bengali novels *Anandamath* (1882) and *Devi Chaudhurani* (1884) instilled and triggered patriotic feeling towards independence.

Rabindranath Tagore unlike following the foray set by Bakim Chandra Chatterjee, focussed on federalism as his concept of national ideology. It was he who coined the creed 'Unity in Diversity' as he believed that the strength of India was in its unity in diversity. He proposed to establish social balance through 'humanism'. Tapati Dasgupta in her book *A Social Thought of Rabindranath Tagore: A Historical Analysis* writes, "If we follow the growth of Rabindranath's poetical thought, we simultaneously understand his philosophy of religion which in its final form gave birth to his humanism" (25). His poetic excellence is revealed in his *Gitanjali* (1910) that won him the Nobel Prize. His writing exhibited the problem of national belonging and identity. *Gora* (1910) is a venture towards this concept of national identity. In *Ghare Baire -The Home and the World* (1916) he had expressed his view on nationalism through his character Nikhil "I am willing to serve my country; but my worship I reserve for Right which is far greater than my country. To worship my country as a god is to bring a curse upon it"(116). His view on nationalism is depicted in his book '*Nationalism*'

Nationalism is a cruel epidemic of evil that is sweeping over the human world of the present age and eating into its moral vitality...Nationalism is a great menace: it is the particular thing which for years has been at the bottom of India's trouble. (58)

Tagore had the prophetic power to foresee the atrocities that this sense of nationalism and spirit of patriotism could create down the ages. His spite for patriotism is revealed in his words that he wrote to Abala Bose, the wife of a great Indian scientist, Jagadish

Chandra Bose in *Selected Letters of Rabindranath Tagore*: “Patriotism cannot be our final spiritual shelter; my refuge is humanity. I will not buy glass for the price of diamonds, and I will never allow patriotism to triumph over humanity as long as I live” (72). His works focussed on the restoration of liberation and national self-respect on the basis of humanism.

The early Indian novels had history as the major theme. The deeper understanding of history educates the present society of the nation’s glorious achievements and dreadful path it has trodden through in the name of patriotism, commitment towards the nation and a sense of belongingness. The early historic novels are T. Ramakrishna’s *Padmini* (1903), Romesh Chander Dutt’s *The Slave Girl of Agra*(1909) and Sri Jogendra Singh’s *NurJahan*(1909). These historic themes submerged with the political tides of the country, creating a revolutionary movement in the twentieth century.

Indian fiction in English flourished with the advent of the triumvirate Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao. These writers focused on the humanistic aspect of life. Their writings dealt with the life of the suppressed community of the people, who were treated like slaves. Mulk Raj Anand’s *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) portrays the life of people working in Assamese tea-estate. It depicts the story of a middle-aged peasant, Ganger, from a village in Punjab. R.K.Narayan’s *Waiting for Mahatma* (1955) depicts Gandhi’s Quit India Movement and Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* (1938) evolves in a coffee – estate in South India. It presents the Gandhian ideology of non-violence and abolition of untouchability.

The Indian novel owes much to their efforts for gaining solid ground and achieving an identity of its own. John Hawley states in his book *Contemporary Indian Writers in English*:

...the triumvirate laid the foundation for the genuine Indo-Anglican novel, each imparting to the Indian experience a dimension of individuality based on their particular approach to content and form (98).

Their works claim to be the forerunner emphasising humanitarian concern by stirring nationalistic feeling against the inhuman imperialists. Some of the notable novels that portray the havoc of patriotism through the themes of partition are M.R. Anand's *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), K.S. Venkataramani's *Kandan the Patriot* (1932) and Manohar Malgonkar's *Combat of Shadow* (1962). *Combat of Shadow* also deals with Assamese tea-estate as its theme. Makarand R. Paranjape in *Indian Political Thinking in the Twentieth Century Nooroji to Nehru: An Introductory Survey* states:

The early novelists used their works to promote social reforms. They espoused several liberal causes, campaigning for the education of women, the upliftment of depressed classes, widow-remarriage, and against child marriage, dowry, superstition, sati, and untouchability, to list a few examples. (221)

The writing of these novelists moved the Indian English novel towards national liberation and social balance. These novelists focussed on social reformation and political renaissance. The political surge towards freedom and liberation in the name of patriotism has resulted in partition.

The postcolonial perspective has set a new epoch to critical and the creative aspects of Indian English fiction. The term 'Post Colonialism' depicts the aftermath of the imperial rule. The Post- independence epoch marked a shift from patriotism to the trauma of partition. Postcolonial writers like Khushwant Singh, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgaonkar have enriched Indian English fiction with variety

in themes. Apart from the partition writers there were also writers representing the pathos of the marginalized and displaced people who form the diasporic or transnational community. Diaspora writing depicts the loss of national identity, sense of rootlessness, colonial depression and cultural clash. There were also feminist writers who shifted their focus from retrospection of the nation to introspection of women, voicing against women subjugation. Writers like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Shashi Deshpande and Anita Desai dealt with issues of women pertaining to human relationships, marital bonding and social status from a feministic perspective.

Diaspora writing constitutes the works by Indian writers settled abroad. The dictionary.com defines 'Diaspora' -

'any group migration or flight from a country or region'.

Diasporic writers have divided their time between India and abroad in particular. These writers take broad ideas and patterns from history and blend them into their own narrative in such a way that they become a part of their fictional world. Krishna Sen in *The (Re)Turn of the Native: Diaspora, Transnationalism, and the Re-Inscription of 'Home'* states, "diasporic status is intricately linked today with issues of cultural privilege and economic power" (7). The writings of the diasporic writers have brought in greater and wider changes in the social, economic and political changes of their countries. The political surge towards freedom and liberation in the name of patriotism has resulted in partition.

Partition the result of patriotism led to migration that was either voluntary or involuntary. It paid adieu to harmony in the nation and stirred communal animosity among the people not only on the basis of religion but also on linguistic and cultural differences. The agony of these clashes is portrayed in the novels of Khushwant Singh

in *Train to Pakistan* (1956), Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* (1947), Manohar Malgaonkar *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964), Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* (1959), Kamala Markandaya's *Some Inner Fury* (1957), Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961) and Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* (1975). The post-partition novelists were gloomed with the tragedy of partition than enjoying the joy of freedom. The result of partition in India brought in radical changes like poverty, hunger, disease and death. Their novels portray the transformation of friends turned fiends in the nation that served as 'home'.

Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) is the foremost attempt in recording the evils of partition which is the result of patriotism. The novel depicts the trauma of the victims of partition. His later novels include *Delhi* (1990), and *The Company of Women* (1999) which exhibits his crude realism about partition. He being a Sikh could empathize with the victims of partition. He had expressed the restoration of communal harmony through his invented village Mano Majra – an imaginative peaceful abode of humanism. He neither blamed the Hindus nor the Muslims and even the evil British but emphasized that in this tragic incident not only a country was divided but even the heart and the soul of the people got alienated.

Bhabani Bhattacharya's novels are a vivid interpretation of life. His first novel *So Many Hungers* (1947), deals with the Quit India movement and the Bengal famine of the early nineteen forties as its background. It is a critical depiction of the Second World War and concentrates on the socio-economic life in Bengal. The novel brings in political consciousness through three generations. The story evolves through two parallel streams; the Quit India Movement and the Tragedy of Bengal Famine in 1943. The novel brings alive the trauma of people being uprooted, villages evacuated

in want of food and citizens turned to be the refugees in an alien land. Through this work the novelist has brought in the conscious erosion of human dignity.

Manohar Malgaonkar brings to limelight the conspiracy of the British in inciting the religious hostilities between Hindus and Muslims. *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) lays stress on the core policy of the English of Divide and Rule in fostering the colonial design and leading India to the bloodshed of partition. He goes on probing the political, diplomatic and circumstantial causes which made the partition a reality that ultimately proved to be a huge hurdle in the development of sovereign India. His *Distant Drum* (1960) depicts the army life of Indians fighting for the British.

B.Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* (1959) portrays the attitudinal and emotional environment for freedom. The novel is a suffused entity of both the personal and political happenings. The novel unites the two oppositions 'Creation and Destruction'. The author has smeared the story with red smudges of Hindu-Muslim riots during partition. The theme of martyrdom has been dealt through the protagonist Kamala who sacrifices her life in order to save a Muslim girl. Kamala becomes an epitome of Martyrdom or transhumanization.

Kamala Markandaya, is one among feminist diaspora writers. Her first novel *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954), is a woeful tale of the trials and tribulations of a peasant couple, Nathan and Rukmani, of a South Indian Village. Her second novel, *Some Inner Fury* (1957), is primarily a political novel dealing with the straining of human relationships in the wake of Quit India Movement.

Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* (1975) has been eulogized for its realistic as well as comprehensive portrayal of the tragedy of the partition. The novel illustrates the fact that those who opposed the idea of the partition were relegated to isolation and desolation. It presents the remarks of common people on the nature of the political

situation and the role of politics in their lives which coerced them to accept the inevitable. The novel also conveys the message of the urgency of reconciliation and the expectations with the younger generation to move ahead while erasing the disasters of the partition from their mind.

Attia Hussain's *The Sunlight on a Broken Column* (1961) covers a period of twenty years starting from the early thirties when both the Hindus and the Muslims took active part in the struggle for independence as great patriots. In the novel the turbulent drama of partition and its aftermath is observed by young Laila, who was nourished at a time when the Hindus and the Muslims lived in harmony and used to share each other's pain. It portrays the irrevocable pain of the Muslims being pushed into the annals of silence into a new nation.

The dilemma of 'Home' is the essence of diasporic fictional works. It lays emphasis on cross-cultural encounter, loss of identity, sense of belonging and adaptation of new culture. The writings of Bharati Mukherjee, Anita Desai, and Kiran Desai to name a few, provide an inside view of the problems faced by the displaced people in their adopted homes. They question the traditional understanding of the concepts like home, nation, native and alien. These writers focus on the detachment from home and the contrasting division between the east and the west. Whereas writers like Amitav Ghosh, Amit Chaudhuri, Salman Rushdie, depict cross-cultural encounter as a process of advancement. Natasha Garrett in *Transnationalism, Home And Identity: Personal Essays* states, "Starting with the early nineties, migration literature began including transnational migration and transnationalism as new ways of understanding contemporary migration practices" (7). They are at ease with traversing borders breaking the stereotypical forms of life and characters to mark the essential difference between the cultures.

The path of restoration of 'Home' shifted its focus on a wider scale replacing a 'nation' to the 'world' with the tool of humanism. The era of Salman Rushdie has set an epochal change in the attitude of people's view on nation. The new status accredited to the Indian English novels by Rushdie has attuned the attention of the world writers towards India. This has paved a new platform to reinvent history, analysing the struggles of the orientals in the name of Transnationalism. With Rushdie's, *The Midnight Children* contemporary novelists Amit Chaudhuri, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy and Rohinton Mistry were inspired to take up the relationship between national issues and the individual. Anshuman Mondal in his book *Amitav Ghosh* states,

. . . it was unanimously decided that the big shift in Indian writing in English, post-independence era, came with Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1983) because he established what had remained since then "the most distinctive pattern for the Indian novel, the family chronicle, that is also a history of the nation, a distorted autobiography that embodies in an equally distorted form, the political life of India (39).

The novels of these writers view history of the nation on macrocosms that has triggered off a chain reaction of rigid mental fixations and attitudes.

The current diaspora writing concentrates on bridging the gap between the East and the West. The contemporary bent of mind has undergone a total transformation by shifting its focus from 'bisects of nations' to the 'union of nations'. Amit Chaudhuri's *Afternoon Raag* (1993), *A Strange and Sublime Address* (1991), *Freedom Song* (1998), *A New World* (2000) and *The Immortals* (2009) deals with the binary aspect of East versus West. Anita Desai's views voices against women subjugation in confluence with postcolonialism, to name a few: *Cry the Peacock*

(1963), *Voices in the City* (1965), *Where Shall We Go This Summer?* (1975), *Clear Light of the Day* (1980), *In Custody* (1984), *Fasting Feasting* (1999) and *Bye Bye Black Bird* (1985). *Bye Bye Black Bird* (1985) 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 settling in England. Anita Desai has treated this novice theme in her novel.

Amit Chaudhuri's novels represent different aspects of home and domestic life.

His novels depict the fictional representation of home and share a common focus on domestic themes and issues. His novels provide new perspectives on the East - West binary. In his *Afternoon Raag*, the narrator, like that of Amitav Ghosh's protagonist 'the narrator' in *The Shadow Lines* employs the use of imagination and shuttles between his place of resident – Oxford – and to his family home in Bombay and, later, to Calcutta. He straddles the two worlds literally—on his trips back and forth—and more importantly, imaginatively.

Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998) and *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006) deals with the issue of minorities through the character Gyan, a Nepali whose family had migrated to India in the 1800s. The novel deals with the accepted notions of citizenship, identity and culture and how after independence the ruling classes occupy the position of the colonisers thereby reducing the marginalized minority to be in the shoes of the colonised.

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) narrates the life of Ammu and her two children Rahel and Estha coming up from Syrian Christian family in Kerala. Roy, in this novel, draws the scene of defiance that transcends local as well as national boundaries in post-colonial time.

Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), *Shame* (1983), *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995), *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999), *Fury* (2001), *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) and *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008). *Midnight's Children* (1981) narrates the story of Saleem Sinai, a boy who was born at the midnight on the day of Independence. It deals with Indian history during the time of India's transition from British colonialism to independence as well as the partition of India. Shashi Tharoor's *The Riot: A Novel* (2001) narrates the plight of the individual caught in the Babri Masjid riot that historically resulted in the death of many people.

Rohinton Mistry's is the author of three novels: *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1996), and *Family Matters* (2002). In *The Family Matters* (2002) he studies the ethno-religious politics that makes the minority communities in India, like the Parsis, wary of the majority community. Rohinton Mistry himself being a Parsi gives expression to the fears and anxieties of his community. Thus the post-colonial period finds a fertile field for interpretation of the social, economic and political issues and the dominant social values in India. All the novels reflect a far more realistic picture of the period, events and people of the contemporary India.

The tide of Post-colonialism has receded with the advent of trans-nationalism. Post-colonialism concentrated on the aftermath of colonization. It challenged the western ideologies and affectations, culture and traditional deterioration, home and nation. Whereas, trans-nationalism is a burgeoning term that erases the effects of post-colonialism and unifies the nation as a whole. It transforms the nation into a unified world by deconstructing the shroud created by the criss-cross lines of borders and boundaries. Nelson Shake's in *Narrating Literary Transnationalism* records the differences between post-colonialism and trans-nationalism thus,

Post-colonialism is largely concerned with contact zones between the Empire and the other and the identitarian struggle that ensues. While Transnationalism focuses on issues of identity and belonging, too, it emphasizes complexities of identity that the Imperial dyadic structure cannot explore sufficiently. Indeed, Transnationalism examines identity on a much larger scale by discussing the changes that are happening to the structure of the nation and how that affects people—a discussion that post-colonialism does not and cannot account for. (10)

The advent of trans-nationalism wanes the wound of post-colonialism in an attempt to unify the world into one nation of humanity at large.

Transnationalism refers to the migration of people either forced or volunteer. The term “transnationalism” was popularized in the early twentieth century by Randolph Bourne in his 1916 article “*Transnational America*” to describe “a new way of thinking about relationships between cultures”. It is an ongoing movement between two or more social spaces or locations. It is used to be a direct movement from a point of departure to a point of arrival, either by choice or forced. The development in globalization has increased the migrants to developed strong transnational ties to more than one home country, thereby blurring the social indifference and national boundaries between two nations.

New avenues of opportunities have been opened up with the emergence of globalization. The terms ‘migration’ ‘diaspora’ and ‘transnationalism’ are the results of continuous transformations of social ethics, cultural collaborations, interchanges of macro-societal contexts, international exchange of labour and cross-border social formations. In the view of Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla in *Migrant Voices in Literatures in English* defines “Migration is not only a physical condition but also a

state of mind. It does not matter where your feet are, in your own land or in an alien land” (7). “Diaspora, as a general signification to mean all people who have crossed the borders of the homelands, imaginary or real, by a willing choice or under wilful compulsion”(2). Transnationalism, is emphasised as “the translated men and women both lose and gain in being borne across. They keep their roots in the homeland in tact but flourish in the foreign land in spite of accompanying stress and distress” (3). Such transnational bonds along with adaptation of language, culture and beliefs has set the nation towards the growth of transnational unification, breaking the shackles of ‘borders’ and ‘boundaries’ on the basis of humanism.

The terms ‘Migration’, ‘Diaspora’ and ‘Transnationalism’ are interlinked and interconnected that denotes the scope for life outside the political demarcations called ‘borders’ and ‘boundaries’. These cartographic separations alienates and separates nation against nation as a magnet that is attracted to the opposite poles and has shroud humanism from the face of humanity with its numerous criss-crossing lines. These lines instil the sense of patriotism that limits and arrests the humanistic concern towards one another. They restrict free interaction of humanity and exchange of commodities outside the borders. They also sow, feed and nurture animosity under the dignified term ‘nation’, ‘nationality’ and ‘patriotism’.

The transnational migrants are those who flee from their home to an alien land in want of life. These involuntary movements are almost perpetually driven and accompanied by extraordinary events such as wars, partition, riots, communal clash, ethnic or religious strife on the whole due to lack of humanism in the nation to be home. These often involve the transferring of a large number of people in a very short span of time. In India, the migration of people happened during the communal clash between the partition of Punjab, Bengal, and the major partition of India and Pakistan

in August 1947. These events carve the minds of the migrant refugees with the indelible scar of memories.

The concept of Transnationalism focuses upon the emotional imbalance of the people who were termed as migrants, exiled or transnationalist. The theme of Transnationalism is portrayed in Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* (2000), Karen Tei Yamashita's *Tropic of Orange* (1997), Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath her Feet* (1999), Mukherjee's *The Tree Bride* and Jamaica Kincaid's *A Small Place* (1989).

Amitav Ghosh has distinguished himself as an anthropological novelist in the field of English Literature. His interest is deeply rooted in 'humanism'. He is a visionary in creating a new world *sans* borders and *sans* boundaries. He is the representation of the innumerable lot of voiceless people forgotten in the history abiding to the rule in Bible that states in the book of Proverbs, Chapter 31, verses 8 and 9, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute...defend the rights of the poor and needy" (NIV, Prov. 31: 8-9). He revisits history and voices out for the marginalized and destitute people. He also proves from history that people were united not only across borders but also beyond boundaries on the ground of humanism despite the cultural, gender, class and religious differences. Joel Migdal in his Introduction of *Mental Maps and Virtual Checkpoints: Struggles to Construct and Maintain State and Social Boundaries* writes how

the status of borders has been contingent on varying historical circumstances, rather than being immutably rock-like. Borders shift; they leak; and they hold varying sorts of meaning for different people (5).

The study addresses the issue of borders and boundaries that lose its grip before humanism. He as an anthropologist writer has felt the need to restore the lost humanism and co-ordinance in this chaotic communal frenzy world. He has narrowed down his attention to unifying the world through transnational interactions.

The study entitled ‘Transformation from Patriotism to Humanism in the select novels of Amitav Ghosh’ is a thematic study that probes into the concept of nationhood carved by borders and boundaries that bisect humanity into numerous nations, states and cities. It also professes ‘humanism’ as the only quality to encompass the differences drawn by the geopolitical and cartographic lines. Usha Hemmadi in *Amitav Ghosh: A Most Distinctive Voice in Mapping Cultural Spaces: Postcolonial Indian Literature in English* quotes, “Ghosh’s is the kind of voice that alters readers to the lost meaning of humanism. He extends his thematic concerns to explore human relationship”(288). It interrogates the idea of ‘Home’ amidst the diversification of separations; whether migrated, displaced, exiled or transnationalized. It augments that humanity on the whole share the same human feelings and emotions that are universal despite all differences like nation, nationality, race, class, caste and colour. It also probes into the universal concept of loss, suffering, sense of freedom and quest for survival.

Amitav Ghosh daringly ventures his attempt towards the creed ‘Unity in Diversity’ on the basis of humanism and is at the forefront of his endeavour to dissolve borders and boundaries. A critical study of the prime thematic concerns of Amitav Ghosh’s novels is reviewed. Indira Bhatt and Indira Nityanamdham’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] I. D. Sharma's *Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* and Tiwari Shubha's *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Study* (2003).

R.K. Dhawan's book *The Novels of Amitav Ghosh* (1999) is a collection of critical essays of all the works by the Indian English writers. Many of the essays represent a comparative view of the writers and their works. *The Fiction of Amitav Ghosh* (2001) edited by Indira Bhatt and Indira Nithyanandam's edited volume on the fiction of Amitav Ghosh also contains critical essays in reference to *The Shadow Lines*. As is common with other anthologies of the kind, most of the articles explore the issue of nationalism in *The Shadow Lines*, and the major issues investigated are those of history, time, freedom, nationalism etc. In another book *Interpretations Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* critically analysis the need for cartographic separations. In an article by Ulka Joshi *Beyond and Beneath Violence: Private and Public Turmoil in The Shadow Lines* focuses on the need for humanistic concern over another. Darshana Trivedi's *Struggle with Silence* also emphasises on humanistic approach towards society.

Brinda Bose's *Amitav Ghosh: Critical Perspectives* (2005) edited volume gives a comprehensive overview of Ghosh works. It deals with the recurring themes like nationalism, colonialism, migration, identity and ecology. Kavita Daiya's essay *No Home but in Memory* argues the non-permanency of nation as 'Home'. Rakhee Moral's *In Time of the breaking of Nations: The Glass Palace as postcolonial Narrative* argues the lack of humanism by the colonizers that led to exile of the Burmese last King Thebaw. Bose also explores the relation between 'memory' and 'history', Vinita Chanda's article, included in this anthology, examines Ghosh's presentation of nationalism in *The Shadow Lines* from anthropological view. Chitra

Sankaran's edited volume *History, Narrative and Testimony in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction* employs innovative approaches in investigating a number of unexplored issues in Ghosh's works.

Novy Kapadia's anthology of critical essays on Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* (2001) concentrates on Ghosh's presentation of the issues of nationalism, Partition in the novel. Memory, imagination, exile constitute the coordinates of critical analysis made in a number of articles incorporated in the anthology. The recently published anthology of Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines: A Critical Companion* edited by Murari Prasad contains a number of scholarly articles on various issues and concerns in Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*. Most of the essays included in the anthology were previously published in different journals. Krishna Sen's brilliant article that enquires into Ghosh's concern with 'Spatial History' is based on exploring the relation between 'travel' and 'map'. S.P. Gabriel's article explores the intricate relation between 'Home' and 'National Identity' in Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*. A number of scholarly articles written by established scholars probe the issue of history and politics of partition in Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*.

Rajul Bhargava's *Indian Writing in English: The Last Decade* gives a glimpse of twenty first century Indian novelists. An article by Santosh Gupta *Looking into History: Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace* portrays the period of transition during the time of colonialism. Meetu Bhatia's *Amitav Ghosh: Transfiguration of Memory in The Shadow Lines* deals with the technique of memory Ghosh has employed to revisit the history of the nation and the Second World War. Sangeeta Ray's article —Through the Looking Glass: Realism and Cosmopolitics in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* is another brilliant contribution to the body of Ghosh criticism because of the innovative approach employed in the analysis of Ghosh's works.

Arvind Chowdhary's *Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines: Critical Essays* (2008) is a collection of a number of articles on various issues on the novel. Rurashish Chakraborty's *Violence in The Shadow Lines: Nationalist Rhetoric and Historical Silence* argues on the lack of humanistic concern that forms the cause for all violence. The recently published anthology entitled *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Essays* (2009) edited by Bibhash Choudhury contains some well-researched critical essays on the works of Amitav Ghosh and these essays primarily focus on the status of Ghosh as a postcolonial writer and the basic preoccupations of postcolonialism. Choudhury's introductory article —Amitav Ghosh, Modernity and the Theory of Novel discusses Ghosh's works against the background of the recent theories on novel. Sandip Ain's edited volume *The Shadow Lines: A Critical Anthology* (2011) which compiles a number of important articles on this highly acclaimed fictional work is an important contribution to the remarkable body of criticism on this particular work. Most of the articles look at Ghosh's novel from the perspectives of partition, presentation of history. Claire Chamber, one of the ablest critics of Ghosh, investigates the issues of borders, nations in Ghosh's book.

Suvir Kaul's article on *The Shadow Lines* investigates the problematic of national identity and suggests the complex nature of belonging in the post-Partition era. Kaul's essay meditates on the troubled notion of national identity, ergo, the issue of humanism is implied subtly with the study of nationalism. Erik Peters's article *Crossing Boundaries, Making Home: Issues of Belonging and Migration in Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines* critiques Ghosh's presentation of the problem of 'exile', 'migration' and 'belonging', and address the issue of identity on humanitarian base. Divya Ananda's article on Ghosh's novel *The Hungry Tide* is an interesting study from ecocritical perspective. Promod K. Nayar's article *The Postcolonial Uncanny:*

The Politics of Dispossession in Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide is a valuable contribution to Ghosh scholarship by making a psychoanalytical study of the novel. It deals with the issues of home, homelessness and evokes a penetrating study of human ethics. Devyani Agrawal's article *Un-Essentialising Marginality in Sea of Poppies* and Omendra Kumar Singh's article *Reinventing Caste: Indian Diaspora in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies* investigate the issues of diaspora and migration. The first part of Ghosh's Ibis trilogy has attracted considerable attention from Ghosh scholars who explore Ghosh's penetrating presentation of colonialism, flow of people across the Indian Ocean. Anupama Arora's article *The sea is history': opium, colonialism, and migration in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies* offers certain insights upon the way Ghosh handles the issues of colonialism, contribution of opium trade in Britain imperialism. Anjali Gera Roy's article *Ordinary People on the Move: Subaltern Cosmopolitanisms in Amitav Ghosh's Writings* that seeks to make a comprehensive study of Ghosh's works attempts to position Ghosh as a writer who interrogates elite cosmopolitanism enjoyed by the capitalist, elite section of the society. She shows that Ghosh offers a different perspective on global vision through the presentation of the movement of ordinary people whom, she calls, 'subaltern cosmopolitans'.

Meenakshi Mukherjee's *The Perishable Empire: Essays on Indian Writing in English* gives a condensed overview of the growth of Indian Writing. The essays in this book trace the diversified transformation of India as a Postcolonial nation. Her other book *Essay on The Shadow Lines* is a critical study. She gives a prismatic view on nationalism where time, space and dimensions dissolve. She argues that perception varies according to individuals. Other critics like Vinita Chandra also agree on his attempt to create a neutralize space.

B.K.Nagarjun's *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Study* (2011) is an in-depth study on the works of Amitav Ghosh. It deals with anthropological precision of Ghosh as a writer. In an essay *Deconstructing Human Society: An Appreciation of Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies*, he interrogates the existing norms of society that segregates humanity on the base of caste, religion, language and culture. It throws an cross-cultural perspectives as an attempt to unity humanity.

Tabish Khair's *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Companion* (2003) is a culmination of some important essays on Ghosh. It brings to light his anthropological sensibility in voicing out his concern towards the subaltern. Robert Dixon's *Travelling in the West: The Writing of Amitav Ghosh* brings to light his comprehensive understanding of Occident influence on the Orient. Rukmini Bhaya Nair's *The Road from Mandalay: Reflections on Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace* gives a picture of the subaltern live of the colonized and exiled lot. All the essays employ humanistic concern in analyzing Ghosh's works. Although the selected articles convey diverse interpretations to Ghosh's novels, on close reading it is evident that it is humanism plays a vital role in Ghosh's works.

John C. Hawely's monograph entitled *Amitav Ghosh: An Introduction* (2005), Ghosh's fictional and non-fictional works primarily from the postcolonial perspective. It is a concise guide to understand the writer, his contexts and themes of Ghosh. It critically analysis Ghosh's works with reference to history He represents Ghosh as a writer expressing human sensibility dissolving all divisions and barriers. *The Ebb and Flow of Peoples Across Continents and Generations: In An Antique Land, The Glass Palace, The Hungry Tide* brings out Ghosh's concept of unification of nation-state through the lens of transnationalism.

Sheobhushan Shukla and Anu Shukla's *Multiple Contexts and Insights: Studies in Contemporary Literature* is another anthology of cross-cultural perspective. Lata Chaturvedi's *The Glass Palace: A Critical Assessment* views the novel from a post-colonial perspective. Shubha Tiwari's *Amitav Ghosh: A Critical Study* also gives a critical view on Ghosh.

Anshuman Mondal's *Contemporary World Writers series* presents Ghosh from a different perspective. The book critically analyses the post modern and postcolonial theory. It address the issue of identity construction of the colonized natives and their concept of home with special reference to *The Shadow Lines* and *The Glass Palace*. Mondal's critical view falls on the issue of national identity, communal co-existence and humanistic concern towards nation-state.

Jagroop Singh in his paper *Colonizing the Mind: Civilizational Imperialism and Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace* brings out the interaction between different cultural groups on the basis of humanism from a post colonial perspective. The article exposes the colonial designs of the British Empire on its colonies. He also points out how the novel challenges the propagation of certain constructed forms of reality and ideas as something essential and transcendental. In the process he emphasizes how the subtle ways of civilizational imperialism function as more potent, though invisible, tool in the hands of the colonialists. Anju Bala Agrawal in her paper *A Study of Globalization, Nationalism and Subalterns Women in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh* discusses the evils of colonialism in the form of globalization. Arjya Sircar's *The Stranger Within: Amitav Ghosh's Quest for Identity* searches for the self which is lost in the whirlpool of partition. Jogamaya Bayer's *History/Stories of Partition* deals with the holocaust of partition and its aftermath. Urjani Chakaravarthy and Rajyashree's *Intercultural Communication in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies: A*

Relevance Theoretic Study is an attempt of unifying humanity despite all differences.

K.M. Chandar's *Journey to the Antique Land of Poppies: Voyage as discovery in*

Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies deals with the theme of transnationalism.

Santwana Haldar's *Some Hidden Facets of the Colonial Rule in India: A Study of Sea of Poppies* portrays the evils of the colonial rule and poppy cultivation. His

Weaving Imagination into the Cross-Currents of History: A Study of Amitav Ghosh's

River of Smoke portrays the opium trafficking in China. Jain, Neena. *Amitav Ghosh's*

The Hungry Tide: A Retrieval of Forgotten Historical Event of migration and Refugee

Resettlement in West Bengal portrays the cruelty of the government of refusing the

natives as a ravage. G.Mansing Kadam's *Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace: A*

Postcolonial Novel deals with postcolonial aspect of the novel. Banibarata Mahanta in

Of Cultural Constructs and Human Dilemmas: Amitav Ghosh's The Hungry Tide

emphasises the need for a humanitarian approach towards society.

The research is a thematic attempt to analyse the characters in the novel whose life is caught in the whirlpool of anti-humanistic events like World War II, Partition and riots.

The study emphasises the need for humanism in order to propagate communal

harmony within the nation and among the nation-state at large. It attempts to

universalize the creed 'Unity in Diversity' by undoing the notion of 'nation' and

'nationality'. It focuses how the characters exhibit humanism to the extent of

becoming martyr. The social and political changes become the cause for their

transformation as a transformed individual, and as a transnationalist. Ghosh's

characters transcend the boundary of humanism and become an epitome of

martyrdom – transhumanization. Ghosh's selected novels are analysed to represent

the theme of the study that go hand in hand with post- colonialism in confluence with new cultures and traditions that creates a transnational community.

Amitav Ghosh is one of the seductive writer of all is noted for his striking narration in bringing history back to life. Amitav sets himself apart by voicing the struggles of the voiceless and paying attention to the most important yet neglected aspect of humanity – humanism. Inderpal Grewal writes: “[i]nstead of the break with the past that diaspora theories suggest, Ghosh’s text produced continuities of many kinds, especially of the precolonial past with the transnational present” (184). His primary concern was on portraying the elements of diaspora, post colonialism and lost identity in the process of transition towards transnationalism which determined the ultimate destiny of the nation.

Amitav Ghosh was born in Kolkatta (Calcutta) on 11th July 1956. He grew up in Bangladesh (East Pakistan), Sri Lanka, Iran, Egypt and India as his father was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian army. He was educated from the Doon School in Dehra Dun. He graduated his B.A. degree with honours in History from St.Stephen’s College in 1976 and M.A. from the University of Delhi in 1978. Meantime he worked with ‘The Indian Express’ newspaper as an editor in New Delhi. He received his Ph.D in social anthropology from the University of Oxford in 1982. He started his teaching career from the University of Delhi and had taught at various Universities like the American University in Cairo, Columbia University in New York City, and Queens College of the City University of New York. Presently he is with the Harvard University. As a diasporian he spends part of each year in Kolkatta, but lives in New York with his wife Deborah Baker, an editor at Little Brown and Company and their Children Leela and Nayan. He belongs to the elite group of Indian Writers who dream of uniting the nation on the ground of humanism.

Ghosh's formative years as a writer were spent mainly in Egypt. His stay opened up wide opportunities to get connected with the people. His fulcrum of writing was set primarily on his readings. He is greatly influenced by great writers like Balzac, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, James Boswell, Proust and Herman Melville of *Moby Dick*. Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* helped him to envision the whole world in the microcosm of one small place like, Marquez's *Macondo*. Another writer who had a very powerful influence on him was James Boswell, his notable work, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* taught him to listen to people. He enjoyed the works of Anthony Trollope and C.P.Snow, whose works are imbued with the detail descriptions of Political Machinations.

The writing years of Ghosh is divided as Pre- Boswell period and Post-Boswell period. He confesses that he draws all his heroes from Balzac, as he states that his engagement in writing comes from Balzacian source, because according to him Balzac novels are "mirror of the world". Proust was very influential to him in the manner of structuring a story. His influence also lies on Mario Vargas Llosa who influenced him in telling the stories in the way he wanted to. His inspiration for writing also comes from travelling, interaction with people and family and above all India, which is the store house of storytelling. He is purely a practical person and a visionary.

Amitav Ghosh is a visionary to universalize the world on the basis of humanism. All his writing expresses his vision in one form or the other. He has stamped his mark not only as a novelist, but also as a non-fictional writer. He has written non-fictional prose, reflective essays, political commentary, book reviews, autobiographical articles, academic expositions, translations from Bengali and literary anthropology.

The non-fictional work acclaims Ghosh's anthropological interests. His *In an Antique Land* (1992) is subversive history in the guise of a traveller's tale. It is an amalgamation of fiction, history, travel-writing and anthropology. The collection of prose pieces titled *The Imam and the Indian* (2002) shares with his fiction certain characteristic subjects and concerns like the connection between past and present, between events and memories and between people, cultures and countries that have shared a past. The travelogue, *Dancing in Cambodia, At Large in Burma* (1998) is the record of his anthropological research in countries like Cambodia and Burma and his personal contacts with the native people he had met. *Countdown* (1999) is the result of his journey into the Pokharan area where Indian government tested five nuclear devices and he expresses the opinion that the pursuit of nuclear weapons in the subcontinent is the moral equivalent of civil war. *Incendiary Circumstances: A Chronicle of the Turmoil of Our Times* (2006) is a compilation of essays spanning two decades. Apart from the fictional writings, the non-fictions are no less important. India's nuclear policy, essays on various topics such as history of the novel, Egyptian culture and literature etc. are the chief themes of his writings.

The fictional writing of Amitav Ghosh is entrusted with strong post colonialism themes. The nineteenth century colonial India became the theme of his novels. He blends the legends of history in his novels, intensifies the interest of his novels, thereby bringing together literature and history, amalgamating different cultures and traditions. He is wholly devoted to the writing of the novel than other genres because he feels that it gives him completeness; in an interview with Lila Azam, Ghosh states that "it is the world that interests me." In his own words

I think, I'm drawn to the novel even more than writing nonfiction, because only novel allows you the completeness of representation. To

me, the novel is important because it is such a complete form of utterance. It allows you to represent your utterances in all its nuances, in all its representative possibilities; in all its expressive possibilities in a way that nothing else can (36).

Amidst his contemporaries he is in accordance with J.M.Coetzee, Graham Swift, Salman Rushdie and V.S.Naipaul. His admiration is on Vikram Seth, Michael Ondaatje, Anita Desai and Kiran Desai. Ghosh, has attempted the concept of Magic Realism in his debut novel *The Circle of Reason* (1986) as a result of his admiration on Salman Rushdie. He being the graduate of anthropology found refuge in interpreting history: voicing the muted voices of the neglected lot. His focus shifted to history, freedom struggle, independence, partition, migration and Indo - China.

Amitav Ghosh has written eight novels so far and is expected to enrich the list with more. The first novel *The Circle of Reason* (1986), *The Shadow Lines* (1988), *Calcutta Chromosome* (1996), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungry Tide* (2002), *Sea of Poppies* (2008), *River of Smoke* (2011) and *Flood of Fire* (2015). His works accredited him as a master craftsman in the art of fiction.

Amitav Ghosh is the recipient of a number of awards for his published works. His first novel *The Circle of Reason* (1986) was translated into many languages. Its French edition received the *Prix Medicis Etranger*, a prestigious literary award in France. His second novel *The Shadow Lines* (1988) won two prestigious Indian prizes, the *Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award* (1989) and the *Ananda Puraskar*. His third novel *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996) won the *Arthur C. Clarke Award* in 1997. The novel was filmed by Gabriele Salvatores, the Oscar winning director of *Mediterranno*. Ghosh is the winner of the *1999 Pushcart prize*, a leading literary award, for an essay that was published in the *Kenyon Review*. Amitav Ghosh's fourth

novel *The Glass Palace* (2000) is the winner of the 2001 Frankfurt e-Book Award sponsored by the International eBook Award Foundation at the Frankfurt Book Fair in January 2005. *The Hungry Tide* (2004) was awarded the *Hutch Crossword Book Prize*, a major Indian award. He was awarded the *Padma Sri*, one of India's highest honours, by the President of India in 2007. His first book of Ibis trilogy *Sea of Poppies* (2008) was shortlisted for the *Man Booker prize*. He made the *New Zealand Best Seller List* with his title *Flood of Fire* in 2015. Amitav Ghosh's work has been translated into nineteen languages and he has served on the jury of the Locarno Film Festival, Switzerland and the Venice Film festival.

Amitav Ghosh firmly rooted in the Bengal soil viewed life against the notion of nation and nationality. To him history of India and Partition has been the single most important determining factor of India's destiny. Marked by the twin features of massacre and migration, partition, however, did not mean the same thing for Punjab and Bengal.

Bengal was partitioned into East Bengal and West Bengal on 16th October 1905, by the then Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. Due to high level political unrest generated by the partition, the eastern and western Bengal were united in 1911 and later in 1971 Bangladesh was created. The people who were uprooted from their homeland struggled hard to eke out a living in a new land, and for some of them the new land i.e. the Western part of Bengal was an alien country. They were totally made passive by subjecting themselves to the inevitable change that future bestowed on them. There is an amazing silence among the people of Bengal because even history folds up the gory events of the East when compared with the West. Bengal started tasting the arrogance of violence even before the Partition began.

The West Bengal government did not entertain the idea of old refugees returning back to the state and were deeply unhappy with this development. The government wanted to find a solution, and put an end to the vexed refugee problem that the state had been facing for more than three decades. It declared that the Morichjhapi settlement is an illegal encroachment by the refugees on the forest land in an area marked for the protection of endangered tigers. The refugees were forced to evacuate the island by 31st March 1979; when that proved futile, the government implemented aggressive steps that severely affected the refugees; and the state police finally cracked down in mid-May 1979 in which several refugees were killed in this action.

The partition of Punjab was a onetime event and migration was restricted primarily to three years (1947-1950) whereas the partition of Bengal has turned out to be a continuing process. Migration from East to West, which is from Bangladesh to West Bengal, is still an inescapable part of the reality. The refugees from East Bengal to West Bengal were not matched by refugees from West to East Punjab. It could be said that the one full-swoop in Punjab was far more disastrous and destructive whereas the partition of Bengal has produced a process of slow and agonizing terror and trauma accelerated by intermittent outburst of violence on both sides in those traumatic years. There is however one compelling similarity between the experiences in Punjab and Bengal. In both these divided status, women were targeted as the prime object of persecution. With the loss of dear ones, home and native land they were subjected to worse defilement in all forms and were even forced to raise a new home with a new man belonging to the oppressor community. Survival became a hard nut to crack; as a result they chose to commit suicide in order to thwart the corporeal holocaust.

Ghosh novels are filled with the ‘Sense of Humanism’. He was greatly influenced and affected by the stories of patriotism as a young boy. He pays careful attention to the issues of humanity and the misery of war especially Second World War and Independence. These epochal events related by his parents, family members and neighbours made an indelible expression in his mind. It is this aspect of historical reality which has fascinated Ghosh to construct his writings of the modern fiction on the historical foundation emphasising humanism and unification of humanity despite the difference of ‘borders’, ‘boundaries’ and ‘frontiers’.

Ghosh’s first novel *The Circle of Reason* imitated Rushdie’s Magic Realism. The second novel, *The Shadow lines* was the result of his influence from Proust. His *The Glass palace* was written on the influence of Michael Ondaatje’s novel *The English patient* and the Ibis trilogy reflects his reading of Lawrence Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet*. In this book, each of the four books of the tetralogy had a “tangential relationship with the other.” His first book of Ibis trilogy *Sea of Poppies* was shortlisted for the Man Booker prize

The first novel *The Circle of Reason* (1986) narrates the story of an orphaned protagonist Nachiketa Bose who comes to live with his uncle Balram Bose in Lalpukar. Nachiketa Bose happens to be the nephew of Balram Bose. Nachiketa is noted for his unique shape of head and he is named as ‘Alu’ by Bolo da and remains the same throughout. Balaram Bose works as a teacher in Lalpukar a small village in India. He is a rationalist and is a great admirer of Louis Pasteur. He is obsessed with the study of phrenology that predicts people’s character based on the shape of their heads. Alu’s lumpy head serves him a good case for study and he puts him as an apprentice to learn weaving. Alu outwits his master. Balaram in the course of time exhibits his rationalism by involving in a local feud that resulted in the bombing of his

home. Alu is the only survivor and is suspected in the act of bombing. Alu having no one to rely upon flees to Africa by boarding a boat across the Arabian Sea under the constant threat of the police, Jyoti Das. Alu reaches the oil-rich state of Al-Ghazira. He finds refuge in the house of Zindi, an enormously fat madam. His life meets constant threats and after much of wandering is buried alive for days in a building crash. His hope was his only asset the after the rescue he is expected to start his life anew and afresh. Ghosh has employed the technique of magic realism in his debut novel following the path set up by Salman Rushdie. He introduces weird and bizarre happenings in the novel. He has also seasoned the plot with motifs and metaphors.

Ghosh's second novel, *The Shadow Lines* (1988) is a story of friendship between two families from two ends the East and the West. The plot of the story is sketched upon the scarlet canvas of partition, riots and violence. The story unfolds the lives of two families to three generations portraying vividly the social trauma that creates an indelible mark in the minds and memory of the characters. However the novel does not follow linear or chronological order, instead the narration shuttles to and fro between the past and the present. Ghosh's craftsmanship is revealed in presenting twin protagonists; Tridib for the past and the unnamed narrator – protagonist for the present. Tridib though dead is emerged into the character of the protagonist and becomes his '*alter-ego*'.

The novel interrogates the invention of borders and the arbitrariness of partition as it moves between Calcutta and London, the past and the present. The title is an allusion to Joseph Conrad's novella, *The Shadow Lines* and while it's precise relationship to Conrad's text is oblique and shadowy, both share a preoccupation with the threshold between East and West, and with the concept of memory. He has explored the relationship among people of different nations and proclaims the futility

of wars, borders and violence. He through the relationship between the two families emphasises theme of universal humanism.

The third is *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1996), a science fiction thriller. The story is about Murugan and his inquisitive interest on the research of Ronald Ross on Malaria. The findings of Ross exhibit the savage platform of Calcutta for the mosquitoes to breed. Antar, an employee of a global corporation is instigated to investigate the disappearance of one of his co-workers Murugan. Ghosh in this novel 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. He has proved his variety in amalgamating literature, science, philosophy, history, psychology and sociology in this novel. It is a unique experiment in the post modernist form and the result is a complex imaginative story.

The fourth is *The Glass Palace* (2000) a magnificent and poignant novel of three generation shuttling among three countries namely Burma, India and Malaya during the 20th century. The novel describes life of young orphaned boy Rajkumar, Dolly – a beautiful girl, Uma and Arjun. The life of middle class families, their dreams and aspirations are narrated in an attractive fashion. It probes into Second World War and colonialism that had affected the East, especially 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 novel portrays 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. Ghosh spins this tale with harrowing precision and

insights, leaving the reader to experience the force of history that can irrevocably alter the lives of ordinary men and women.

The fifth is *The Hungry Tide* (2002) is an exact example of personification of nature. The novel is primarily set in a unique place called Sunderbans, a massive mangrove forest that is split between West Bengal in India and Bangladesh. The story is about Fokir, a man of the tide country. Piya, an American cetologist heads towards Canning for her scientific research on marine mammals. Kanai, a multi-linguist and a translator is on his way to collect the journal of his late uncle Nirmal. The journal narrates the story of Morichjhapi holocaust. Fokir becomes Piya's guide and life saver. The novel contains rich ecological themes. Like all of Ghosh's novels, *The Hungry Tide* contains a wide array of characters and settings that intersect throughout the novel. Here the tide rule and decide the course of human life in island like Sunderbans. This tries to depict that humans are a prey to both nature and animals. They are a prey than a predator.

The sixth is *Sea of Poppies* (2008), is the first book of the *Ibis* trilogy. Ghosh has attempted the confluence of different nations, culture, tradition, caste and beliefs in this novel. The novel portrays the influence of imperial rule on converting the agricultural lands into savage grounds by poppy cultivation through the protagonist Deeti and acquisition of lands from zamindars like Neel Ratan Halder. It also deals with the tradition of the maritime districts of Bengal supplying lascars to the oceanic trade through the character Serang Ali and slave trade under the modified term for slavery, as 'indentured labourers' to an unknown place called Mauritius for survival. The novel portrays the evils of the trade of poppies and exploitation of the colonized people in this trade. The diverse characters are united together with the common thread of humanism in the *Ibis*.

The seventh is *River of Smoke* (2011) the second volume of the Ibis trilogy. The novel proceeds on narrating the after incidents of Ibis, which was caught in a storm and eventually ended up in Mauritius, but with a few passengers. The story in this novel begins from where it left off. It narrates the life of the escapers from the Ibis. It traces the transformation of the characters whose life is tossed with the waves of both fortune and misfortune. Neel becomes munshi of the opium dealer Modi, the father of Ah Fatt. Zachary Reid, is caught for the mishap of the death of Crowle and is released. Miss. Paulette botanist interest is explored in detail. It gives the details of the changing lives and traditions of Indian migrants in Mauritius. It traces the fate of other characters from Ibis and describes the opium trade in China. The novel has a rich tapestry of characters from various cultural and geographical backgrounds whose common interest is trade with China. The plot is set in Fanqui town, a small strip of land used by foreigners to trade with local Chinese traders, a year before the first opium war.

The eighth is *Flood of Fire* (2015) the last in the Ibis trilogy. The novel is set against the backdrop of opium trade in China in the year 1839. Ghosh draws his major characters from its previous book *Sea of Poppies* and *River of Smoke*. His vital characters are Kesri Singh, brother of Deeti, Zachary Reid – the ‘black’ American second mate, Shrinee Bai Bharam Modi, wife of Bharam Modi, a widow and other minor characters. Ghosh explores the inner world of the East India Company’s army through Kesri, Deeti’s brother, a sepoy, and his expulsion from army on account of Deeti’s rescue by an untouchable. He brings to light the then existed torrid clandestine affair between Zachary Reid, the young American sailor, and the wife of the powerful British opium dealer Mr. Benjamin Burnham. The lovable Malum Zikri (Zachary) of *Sea of Poppies* is transformed into a detestable successful opium dealer. Shireen

Modi, Bahram as a widow ventures into sea voyage to China to claim her husband's profits despite her family's disapproval and discovers her husband's second family life with Chi Me and her son Ah Fatt and Neel is now in Canton's American Hong, settled into his new life as a translator.

The fictions of Amitav Ghosh endowed English Language with an ease of felicity of expression and quality of its own. His novels reflect a historicity as history is always present in his novels. They also reflect the tendencies and concerns of the age. He attempts to portray the lives of his contemporaries in the lands as diverse as India, Bangladesh, Egypt, England etc. His canvas is always diverse in nature and his novels are populated with a variety of characters exemplifying the different cultures of his contemporary lives.

Ghosh renders picturesque description of Kolkatta city. His narration is so much imbued with the streets of Calcutta and the landmarks that it enables the readers to use their faculty of imagination and perceive the experience of the characters as real. Characterization is his forte. Every important character is dealt realistically. No incongruity strikes us in the development of his characters. Ghosh's use of time deserves special mention. Most of his novels use time in a non-linear manner. The juxtaposing of past and present is further developed by the use of future too. Memory is also used aesthetically and effectively to relate the past and the present. His novels have constant time and place shifts. The titles of the novel are captivating and deserve special attention. Ghosh employs the most precise symbolizing words that would depict the quintessence of the novels.

Amitav Ghosh's writing imbibes colonization as an essential element in his novels. His other themes deals with ecology, identity crises, history, memory, political struggle and communal violence, love and loss, transition of human life and

martyrdom. Both his fictional and non-fictional narratives tend to be transnational in sweep, moving restlessly across countries, continents and oceans. Formidably learned and meticulously researched, there is something equally epic about the scale of scholarship that sits behind each of his books. However, Ghosh never loses sight of the intimate human dimension of things.

The study intends to utilise the primary works and secondary sources of information to explore the transformation in the characters, some as transnationalist and some as transhumanization despite of their patriotic feeling towards their homeland. The thesis will be confined to the following four novels: *The Shadow Lines* (1988) *The Glass Palace* (2000) *The Hungry Tide* (2005) and *Sea of Poppies* (2008). The secondary works such as review articles and critical works on Amitav Ghosh, which come within the purview of colonial, postcolonial, subaltern and transnational studies have been analysed to trace the evidences to substantiate the theme of the study.

Amitav Ghosh is a writer of great excellence and distinction and his works that make significant reading are worthy of research and study. The thesis aims to study the need for humanism analysing the prevalent animosity in the nation despite of the freedom and Independence attained from the colonizers with special attention to his fictional works. Ghosh's primary materials like his novels, articles and interviews, and also secondary sources including books, reviews and articles are examined.

The research aims to attempt an in-depth study on the theme of "Transformation from Patriotism to Humanism in the select novels of Amitav Ghosh". The study is limited to discuss, the theme of partition and violence in the postcolonial lens, the destiny of migration and martyrdom of the characters shaping

the history of the nation. The study also aims to bring to limelight that humanism could alone be the uniting force of humanity despite of all differences.

The following chapter discusses the meaninglessness of artificial lines called 'border' and 'boundaries' demarcating and distinguishing among nations. It brings out the futility of man's effort in the name of patriotism, independence and freedom. It argues the real meaning of independence considering the fact that no single human being forms a society other than a united group. It probes into the existing animosity in the name of religion, caste and nationality. In this view Ghosh's concept of humanism is highlighted shattering all artificial differences in achieving universal brotherhood.