Chapter - V
Summation

Amitav Ghosh, who is thoroughly cosmopolitan and espousing the cause of universal humanism is unique among Indian writers. In this regard critic Anshuman A. Mondal in *Amitav Ghosh- Contemporary World Writers* observes:

Ghosh is a highly intellectual writer, whose preoccupations largely overlapped with this new generation of critics, and whose innovative textual experiments offered new insights and openings into the cluster of conceptual and theoretical concepts that had been developed to describe, analyse and interpret the complex of colonial and postcolonial relations (164).

His guard against social, cultural and religious parochialism testifies the fact that Ghosh is a global citizen with immense faith in humanity. He emphasises the significance of universal humanism for a harmonious and peaceful society and exhibits hopefully the convergence of different cultures that try to understand one another and live in mutual harmony.

The trajectory of the present dissertation thematically analyses Ghosh’s advocacy for the necessity of universal humanism, wherein the researcher brings into focus the fractured and tortured psyche of the subalterns under the colonial hegemony. It is significant that Brinda Bose, a well known critic of the writings of Amitav Ghosh holds a similar view in *Amitav Ghosh- Critical Perspectives* by saying:
Diasporic identity in its inherent fracturedness clearly intrigues him [Ghosh]; he analyses the ‘space’ with reference to its histories. Patterns begin to emerge as he travels between cultures/ lands that diasporas straddle (India/ Bangladesh/ England in The Shadow Lines; India/ Egypt In In an Antique Land; India/ Burma/ Malaya in The Glass Palace) (17).

Since Ghosh empathises with the affected lot, he traces the construction of the self of the people in the troubled times. To understand the identity crisis of such people, Ghosh positions himself with them in bringing out their problems. The protagonists of Ghosh’s novels suffer because of their insignificant positions in the society. To have a clear understanding of the consciousness of the self, Ghosh analyses various agencies such as colonialism, religion, subalternity, occident and the occult. Alu in Reason, Tha’mma and Tridib in Lines, Bomma in Land, Rajkumar in Palace, Nirmal in Tide and Deeti in Poppies are set out to search for their cultural identities, by moving from the margin to the centre. These marginalised people, according to Ghosh, become rootless, because of the geographical dislocation. To explore a sense of belonging, these people go in search of new pasteurs. In their struggle for existence in the alien land, the people living in the periphery try to ‘accommodate the differences’ in the multicultural atmosphere.

Ghosh narrates the haunting experiences of Alu in Reason right from his stay in his uncle’s house, suggesting that suffering is very much inside the four walls, which is normally not known to others. But, the constant struggle of the self in overcoming such hardships sometimes makes the self more vibrant. Alu’s urge for emancipation takes him
to various places. The self of Alu undergoes a lot of change in accordance with his accommodative nature. Ghosh is of the view that when one is away from home, he/she has to sail with the current, attain a sense of belonging to sustain oneself in the alien atmosphere. On the other hand Rajkumar in Palace, who is often dehumanised by the colonial power, becomes a man of colonial mentality, internalising the methods of hegemony. His mental colonisation makes him exercise atrocities against his subordinates. Through Rajkumar, Ghosh ridicules the vengeful attitude of the tortured self which in turn inculcates the socio-political parochialism.

Apart from analysing the subjugated self, Ghosh studies the rational self through Balram in Reason and stresses the need for education for the upliftment of the subjugated people. According to Ghosh, a sense of rationality should be there for the ontogenesis of the self. Ghosh advocates the sharpening of the human sensibility through education. He suggests that the aim of education is to kindle a social consciousness beginning with children. To substantiate this, Ghosh in Reason, through Balram, exemplifies the life of Louis Pasteur who started his life from scraps to attain great heights. Moreover, Ghosh argues the necessity of the propagation of scientific knowledge when Gopal in Reason proclaims, “Science doesn’t belong to countries. Reason doesn’t belong to any nation. They belong to history- to the world” (54).

Similarly, because of geographical dislocations, people like Tha’mma in Lines also undergo the altering of the self. By highlighting the artificial creation of national border, Ghosh analyses the nature of the ambivalent self torn between two countries. When Tha’mma sarcastically asks whether she could see the border while travelling in the
plane, Ghosh brings into focus the meaninglessness of man made shadow lines. By tracking the problem created by the demarcation of borders, Ghosh brings out the problem of homelessness. In such situations, the self becomes affected because of its difficulty in accommodating the new socio-politico-cultural paradox. This disturbing paradoxical situation of the self affected by the intricacies of partition and subsequent geographical dislocation makes it feel both alien and native simultaneously. That is, the uprooted self’s quest for identity entangles itself in an insider-outsider imbroglio.

The construction of the self of Tridib in *Lines* highlights the need for love and concern for the fellow beings in a society. Tridib’s attempt to save an old man from the hands of communal fanatics in the streets of Dhaka, stresses the need for a humanitarian self in this communally polarised world. Ghosh through the accommodative selves of Ben Yiju and Bomma in *Land* reiterates the need for an atmosphere free from regional and religious parochialisms. The peripatetic self of Amitab in *Land*, underscores the need for transnational identity of the self which is essential in a communally charged world. While delineating the character of Mangala in *Chromo*, Ghosh provides an insight into the occult self. Nirmal, a Marxist sympathiser in *Tide* is a fictitious counterpart of Ghosh and he stands for an uncompromising spirit of the self. By participating in the struggle for restoring their native places, Ghosh through Nirmal conveys the message of mature love and respect for fellow human beings. The progressive thought of Nirmal which prompts him to fight for the rights of the subalterns remains an answer to the problems of the islanders.
By presenting a victim like Deeti in *Poppies*, Ghosh underscores the role of myths and rituals in subjugating women. Since Deeti is born under the influence of Saturn, it is believed that she has to suffer a lot and is forced to marry an old man against her will. The self of Deeti undergoes a lot of changes and finally she grows determined to face the domestic atrocities. Ghosh’s characters are life givers and sustainers that try to express themselves in demanding situations. The selves of the protagonists of Ghosh become more expansive but enduring, accepting the crises of life.

Being a new historicist, Ghosh analyses the part played by history in shaping the destinies of people. Through the sufferings of the workers in the sand dunes of al-Ghazira, in *Reason*, the plight of the subalterns in the alien land is brought to limelight. The immigrant workers, who are not considered even humans, suffer a lot at the hands of the establishment. Ghosh lends his voice for the marginalised and says that such people should be embraced into the mainstream. Ghosh in *Reason*, explores the oppressions perpetuated on the migrants and affirms that reason and capital become metonymic and circulating forces. The novel focuses on the motley group of migrants drawn from various parts of India into the Middle East. It marks the search for meaning in the lives of those who have been displaced by globalisation, and whose bodies bear the violent marks of the passage of migrant history.

Similarly, Ghosh in *Lines* ventures into issues of religion and nationality, belonging and displacement, and the necessity of suppressing memories that threaten to disrupt the tidy narrative of history and national identity. He highlights the role of minor riots within the pre independent India that were crucial in forming the psyche of religious
identities. He attempts to reveal the manner in which these riots are quite deliberately erased from the national memory, because they serve to undermine the dominant historiographers’ narrative of battles with foreign enemies, located outside national borders. Ghosh uses the character of Tha’mma to serve as a mouthpiece for the dominant discourse of nation. This discourse produces knowledge about national identity by focusing on the moment of its birth through the blood-sacrifice war, and defines it in geopolitical terms encompassing all those who are included within it. Ghosh exposes the instability of the hegemonic discourse through Tha’mma’s nervous breakdown when she is forced to confront the falsity of her illusions. He addresses crucial issues concerning the writing, and the role of historiography in relation to the ways in which national identities are constructed. When Tridib in *Lines* observes: “… a longing for everything that was not in oneself, a torment of the flesh that carried one beyond the limits of one’s mind other times and other places, and even, if one was lucky, to a place where there was no border between oneself and one’s image in the mirror” (29), Ghosh reiterates the need for a world without borders.

The anthropological historian in Ghosh is brought out in *Land*, in which he analyses the events in history of Asia and the Middle East. Ghosh, further excavates the uncircumscribed nature of Indian trade and commerce before the advent of Vasco-de-Gamma in India. He brings into focus a forgotten period of history, which nourished a free and liberal India’s collaboration with the Arab world. *Land* can be considered a contemporary novel which delineates the relevance of uninhibited trade relations. An obscure tale grows into a story, ordinariness becomes history, and anthropology merges
with fiction. Ghosh shows that the intervention of the West has destroyed the process of dialogue and exchange, between the people of two nations. Instead there are the dynamics of domination, classification and violence, which Ghosh rightly characterises as Western. *Land* demonstrates 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. He juxtaposes the medieval and the modern worlds of the twelfth and twentieth centuries in two different civilizations of India and Egypt with diverse cultures of Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. In this regard, his fictional discourse addresses the need for human understanding and religious tolerance. He creates a world where people are mutually sympathetic and faithful to each other by keeping “kinship between people who are otherwise unrelated” (Land 260).

In this context, *Chromo* fits well into the Third World counter narrative to the Raj enterprise. Ghosh reconstructs a hidden history of medical research. He exposes the alleged manipulations of the British scientist, Ronald Ross and reveals the role of the Indian occultism which could have been the actual guiding spirit operating behind the process. Taking a similar stand that like of Ghosh, critic Deepak Kumar in his *Science and the Raj* avers that “the figure of the State Scientist (Ronald Ross), is a concept that emerged in the colonies” (229).

Ghosh makes an elaborate case for those forgotten underlings who did the spade work for all those grand discoveries, which are then credited to their superior masters. He, in fact, relies on the current trends in the field of social medicine as more and more scientists, and social workers are coming around to the view that scientific investigations,
specially those related to social medicine, health, hygiene and control of epidemics can be conducted with more economy and efficiency by those who are born and brought up indigenously rather than by those experimenting in remote, sanitised laboratories with little knowledge of the actual situation.

Ghosh’s fascination with the colonial patterns of history and its dissemination in society and the notion about migrancy and the subsequent hybridity are brought out through a new historical point of view. Anshuman A. Mondal in his *Amitav Ghosh-Contemporary World Writers* shares the view of Ghosh by saying that, “Ghosh’s texts straddle the border between history and fiction and it is from this indeterminate site that they attempt the impossible double-task of writing historically about pasts that could not have been articulated through historical discourse” (162).

*Palace* as discussed earlier is an attempt to recover the viewpoint of the colonised subjects. It is a critical revisiting and reinterpretation of the colonial past. Regarding this, Ghosh in his interview to Frederick Louis Amanda for *World Literature Today* remarks: “For me at some point, it became very important that this book encapsulates in it the ways in which people cope with defeat, because this has really been our history for a long, long time” (89). Ghosh, by dwelling on small details and bestowing on ordinary lives an attention that the traditional historian’s annals cannot afford, creates an alternate interior history. The narrative in *Palace* becomes collectively a varied, heterogeneous and multi-directional history that is different from the established accounts available in the histories of Burma and India. By introducing the politically emergent Aun San Su Kyi in the post independent Burma, Ghosh conveys the idea that the nation is constructed to
serve the interests of power mongers. *Palace* appears in the interpretive shadow of the colonial ideologies, and the new history has the effect of countering and dislodging the Eurocentric discourse. Ghosh offers plenty of scope to read subaltern history as a counter discourse to national identity that would disrupt and alter the Eurocentric projections. He challenges the institutionalised renderings perspectives of the colonial history. His perspectives subvert and dethrone the considerations of the canonised opinion foisted by colonial rules. So Rajkumar, who has learnt the methods of suppression from the coloniser is presented as “a re-invented being, formidably imposing and of commanding presence (132)”.

In *Tide* Ghosh brings out the theoretical underpinnings of the postmodern debate of the problem of homelessness caused by geographical dislocations. Besides the imperial and political patterns, migration and dislocations were devised to serve colonial powers and thrust upon subalterns by ruling classes. Ghosh questions the creation and validity of borders which make people aliens in their native land.

Ghosh, being an anthropologist highlights and proposes the essential idea of multiculturalism, which is a safe exit passage from for the ill that plague the society and proposes the alternative of ‘respecting the difference’. To bring into limelight the need for universal humanism, Ghosh analyses the problems caused by suspicion and lack of mutual love and respect. By tracking the sufferings of the people from the time of Partition to the present, he draws one’s attention to the problem of imposed migration. Ghosh’s personal experiences in the post independence society in south Asian countries like India, Burma, Bangladesh and Srilanka and his research experience as a Ph.D scholar
in Egyptian Studies make his works authentic and history-related. Being a progeny of Bengal Renaissance and a follower of Marxist ideology, Ghosh voices his concern for the voiceless and subalterns, who are often pushed to the margins. Ghosh’s works represent a particularly interesting and complex example of the tenacious hold that humanism has had on Bengali cultural imagination. His association with Bengal Renaissance inspired the attempts made by Ghosh to wrestle with the ideological challenge of colonial modernity.

The researcher’s analysis of Ghosh’s works brings into fore the need for sympathy and empathy for the neglected lot in a world of religious parochialism and political highhandedness. Ghosh’s works deal with the cultural dislocations and their resultant anxieties. He interprets the issues of fractured nationalities in close and recreates these encounters. When Alu in *Reason* sets out on a journey for greener pastures in the Middle East, Ghosh is in fact narrating the hardships encountered by similar South Asians in alien lands. Ghosh sympathises with those who leave their homes and cultures, and struggle with their new destinies. These dislocated lives are marked by tensions of conflicting philosophies and incongruous forms of social behaviour. The acculturation leading to hybridity gives a new meaning to cultural translations, which is a counter discourse established hegemonic discourses. In addition to the cultural dislocation, Ghosh explores the residual effect of foreign domination in the political, social and economic spheres. Dispossession and cultural fragmentation, colonial and neo colonial power structures, postcolonial corruption, cultural degeneration and identity crisis preoccupy the lives of migrant workers in *Reason*. Extending a humanistic hand to the voiceless in
Reason, Ghosh conveys that oil rich countries benefit immensely from the inexpensive and often highly skilled labour from underdeveloped countries. He says that efforts should be made to integrate them with the mainstream society so that and justice, love and peace would flourish.

Lines, tells the story of three generations of a Bengali family spread over Dhaka, Calcutta and London. Ghosh lines up characters from different nationalities, religions and culture. The novel is written against the backdrop of civil strife in post-partition East Pakistan and the riot hit Calcutta. The friendship and sojourn of the Indian family with their English friends, Tha’mma’s ties with Dhaka and the spontaneous communal combustion in 1964 in Dhaka claiming the life of Tridib are challenges and responses to the intercultural understanding and friendship in contemporary society divided by arbitrary demarcations of national boundaries. While stressing the need for universal humanism, Ghosh captures alive the trauma of emotional rupture and choked human relations and also the damaging potential of the siege within people who are torn asunder by politics. Lines discuss the problem of ‘border politics’ which is a serious threat to universal humanism and democratic accommodation. To Ghosh, borders are lines of identity that marks oneself off from others and one’s own community from others. The intolerance caused by political borders and the ensuing bickering physically mark and limit the spatial and temporal coordinates of the citizen’s experience. This aspect is closely scrutinised by Ghosh to expose the ugly face of political and cultural narrow mindedness. The frequent journeys of the characters in Lines, for Ghosh, enacts the
transgression of shadow lines, moving across space and time with an ease that challenges the categorical permanence that political borders aspire to achieve.

Ghosh demonstrates the fluid and depressing nature of identity in the subcontinent. He depicts how national identities are always troubled by their intimate, yet conflicting relationships with other identities that traverse national boundaries through the narrator in *Lines*. Ghosh laments that the canonised version of history very often forgets the minor riots which have also played havoc in the lives of the people after the Partition: “By the end of January 1964, the riots had faded away from the pages of the newspapers, disappeared from the collective imagination of ‘responsible opinion’ vanished, without leaving a trace in the histories and bookshelves” (*Lines* 230). He mocks at the physical, political and existential security that borders are supposed to represent. The recurrent turbulence existing between India and Pakistan along religious lines remains a trauma in the national imagination. The religious and political unrest in the sub continent is a severe hindrance to the precincts of universal humanism and democratic idealism. The descriptions of the Partition, riots and the resultant pain by communal hatred drive home the idea that such divisions only cause havoc in the lives of the people. To Ghosh, barbed wires, fencing and patrolling are the symbols of a collective failure to understand the faith of spirit and love of the humanity. Ghosh subtly suggests that shadow lines divide, tear and embitter human lives. He is of the view that Partition has brought an abrupt and painful end to a long and communally shared history and cultural heritage.
In *Lines*, while analysing the impact of Hindu-Muslim hatred due to Partition, Ghosh says that the Hindus and Muslims are not yet free from suspicions, distrust and anger that were engineered by vested interests and rejection of habits and practices of one group by the other long ago. This obnoxious atmosphere, Ghosh says, is perpetuated further by other political interests. Ghosh, while highlighting the need for the essential presence of universal humanism gives a call to reject malevolence and communal frenzy and in their place advocates common bonds of good will and companionship. Ghosh hopes that even though there are deep disruptions in the path of universal humanism, the rich heterogeneity of the life of various religions and faith could become remedial tools for establishing universal humanism and establishing lost relationships. For instance, the romantic relationship of Tridib and May in *Lines* transcends the shadow lines of nationality and cultural boundary.

Ghosh explores the subtle and strong bond between Tridib and May and the abiding intimacy between the two families even when the two countries are pitted against each other. He emphasises the need for such links that endure across the illusive realities of nationality and racial discrimination. The necessity of such relationship is highlighted by Ghosh when he reflects on Tridib’s thoughts when he wanted to meet May: “He wanted to meet her… without a past, without history, free, really free, two people coming together with the utter freedom of strangers” (*Lines* 144). Ghosh questions the validity of geographical boundaries and celebrates the union of seemingly disparate humans drawn together by self-propelling empathy and attachment. Tridib and May, Jethomoshai and Khalil in *Lines* rise above the prevailing passion for war, racial hatred and communal bad
blood. Their familial bindings and intimacy subvert the political logic of partition and border demarcation.

Similarly, to substantiate the need for such a heterogeneous atmosphere, Ghosh falls back on historical facts and recreates the relationship based on love and comradeship between an Indian slave Bomma and his Jewish master Ben Yiju in *Land*. This footnote taken from the annals of history gives a sense of entitlement to Ghosh to pursue field work in Egypt. The twin narratives, the first one that deals with Ghosh’s field experience as a research scholar in a couple of villages in Lower Egypt in 1980s and the second narrative as a historian in tracking down the archival documentation, are subjected to a thorough analysis of involving a comparison between the twelfth century trade without borders and the modern corporate business based on capitalist urge. Ghosh’s reconstruction of the lives of the Indian slave and his Jewish master of the polyglot, cosmopolitan, hybrid world offers a reflective contrast to the rigidities of the modern world. Such a focus on the transnational movement of people, with its accompanying emphasis on the hybrid will foster a deep and enduring universal humanist society. This idea is further reiterated by Ghosh when he says in the interview with Frederick in *World Literature Today* that “my real interest is in the predicament of individuals” (89).

To Ghosh, history offers a calculative convenient selective picture of the past. By reconstructing the long forgotten life of the slave and the master, Ghosh questions this established and carefully drawn imperialist history. His historical outlook is prompted by the postcolonial consciousness and his fascination for the tenets of universal humanism. Ghosh considers narrativism as a means of retrieving one’s long lost past. He uses
ignored individuals and societies to narrate their experiences to establish their identities. Being a new historicist, Ghosh brings into focus the individual and collective histories that have been bypassed in the march of imperial legacy. He expresses incredulity towards the universal created by prejudiced history as a narrative. Through the new narrative of Ghosh, each individual brings forth his/her own personal narrative which thereafter turns out to be a personal but real history. In this sense, Ghosh traces the theme of *Land* to its deeper layers of history and civilisation.

Ghosh’s perception of the basic characters of man, and his essential feelings and emotion, spring from love and fellowship. He reveals human relationships that efface the distance between the Middle Ages and the modern times, between antiquity and modernity. His artistic success lies in conveying a valuable insight into some abiding aspects of human life and character which are above socio-cultural parochialisms. In *Land*, Ghosh deals with the unique culture that is born out of the subversion of the categories of Hinduism, Islam and Judaism. This culture is nurtured by peaceful tradition of oceanic trade, irrespective of religious faith. It is vivid that one must go back to history, understand humane attitude and apply it in one’s own life, driving home the need for accepting the difference. Ghosh chooses to study a civilisation that was subjected to a process of exploitation and self estrangement by the colonial perspectives. Its cultural significance is apparent in the way he uses history to bring Egypt close to India by setting up a series of exchanges between different interactive sites located across the two countries.
Ghosh maps out the trade routes between India and Egypt through the Mediterranean and compares hybrid Jewish communities with the cosmopolitan settlements of Malabar and shows how cultures are cross fertilised when people travel across nations. He vividly represents Bomma’s medieval cosmopolitan world that puts to shame the current notion of love and affection. Speaking of the unique link between the Tunisian Ben Yiju, his Nair wife and his Indian slave Bomma, Ghosh asserts that religious differences are in no way a hindrance to such multicultural confluence for people “who would otherwise seem to stand on different sides of an unbridgeable gulf” (Land 263). In the process of tracking down the importance of universal humanism, Ghosh discovers that the advent of European colonialism has severed pre-existing relations and structures to create a cultural fissure that has almost erased the histories of ‘accommodating the difference’. In the face of brutal geopolitical divisions, Ghosh underscores the need for human crossings in the borderlands, thus stressing the need for a borderless region where no one owns and dominates and makes a free cultural transaction in this multicultural bazaar. Ghosh claims a liberal humanistic approach which is tempered by an ethnographical training that probes the necessity of cultural amalgamation and universal humanism. Such a focus on the transnational movement of the people, with its accompanying emphasis on the hybrid is the need of the hour, because to Ghosh “whatever religion a man lives under, the observation of the Laws, love of our neighbour, duty to our parents are the chief Acts of Religion” (Land 151).

Being a constant critic of the western monopoly in religion, science, politics, culture, trade and commerce, Ghosh exposes the riddles behind scientific discoveries in
Chromo. He exposes the deceitful arrogance of western scientific fraternity in using Indians as guinea pigs in malaria trials in Calcutta. A specific concern for human freedom and dignity in Ghosh’s understanding of humanism emerges from his rejection of colonial practices. By portraying the dehumanising behaviour of the royal family, the British looting the forest wealth of Malaya, and the imprisonment of Aun San Su Kyi in Palace, Ghosh gives a clear call against the atrocities of the mighty on the subalterns. The concept of equality of all human beings, irrespective of their nationality, religion, caste, culture, social and political status gains supreme significance in the humanistic view of Ghosh by echoing the view of Homi Bhabha in The Location of Culture where Bhabha says that the “gathering of exiles and émigrés and refugees; gathering in the edge of foreign cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gathering in the ghettos and cafes of city centres … in the uncanny fluency of another’s language; gathering the signs of approval and acceptance” (23), is the only way to save the beleaguered groups of religion and race.

In spite of the contextual meaning of humanism presented through the conflict between the British Empire and its colonies, a common thread providing Ghosh’s understanding can be observed in his advocacy for complete freedom of man, his sovereignty and dignity. In his stand against imperialism, Ghosh challenges the world view based on polarity of the coloniser and the colonized and the ruler and the ruled. He envisages a world free from the practices of subjugating others in any form. In Palace Ghosh portrays the grim attitude of the British towards the workers in the teak plantation. He hints at the inhuman values of imperialism. Ghosh’s method in his narratives
sanctions a brilliant allegory of the deleterious effects of political partitioning and hegemony of the colonial power.

Ghosh’s care for the subaltern in *Tide* is significant for his preference for universal humanism. The plight of the refugees in the Sundarbans owing to geographical dislocations is representative of the sufferings of migrant workers across the world. Unable to cultivate in the arid terrain given by the government, the settlers come to the Sundarbans, a land of hungry tides. Ghosh laments their plight and views the sufferings from a humanistic perspective. Nirmal, the Marxist in *Tide*, stresses the need of a human face in development politics. Ghosh is of the view that rehabilitation of such displaced people must be given prime importance.

Ghosh holds a view that India is communally polarised and the intensity of communal intolerance is winnowed by the political forces. Alluding to this idea, it is heartening to see that Ghosh incorporates the Bon-Bibi episode, where the people of the Sundarbans worship the Muslim deity by performing Hindu rituals. It is an eye opener to religious fundamentalists, who divide the country in the name of religion. Ghosh staunchly supports the idea of religious amity and views the Bon-Bibi deity as a harbinger of religious tolerance and communal harmony.

The need for religious tolerance and communal harmony is further developed in *Count*, written as Ghosh’s response to the unwarranted testing of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan. In, *Count*, Ghosh exposes the political wantonness of Indian and Pakistani nuclear lobbies. To him nuclearisation is not a solution to the problems of the sub continent. Ghosh sarcastically declares that nuclear explosions are carried to save the
governments from exploding within. Very often they are meant to quieten dissent voices from within. Ghosh affirms that a nation can become influential in world politics if it sorts out problems like population explosion, poverty, unemployment and corruption. To him the much dreaded nuclear weapon is a fake symbol of re-arrangement of global power and political insurgency. Ghosh stresses the need for mutual trust and respect between the people of India and Pakistan devoid of nuclear politics and border issues.

In *Reason, Land, Chromo, Tide and Palace* one can see Ghosh’s concern for the migrants, refugees and displaced people. In tracking their sufferings, Ghosh presents a historical perspective that regards social movement as a mode that transcends national boundaries. The narrative of Ben Yiju and Bomma in *Land* is based on the historical mapping of the Indian Ocean as a unity symbol which regards societies and their people as a multicultural cauldron of healthy relationship. Ghosh’s ocean is crisscrossed by journeys. For instance, Alu’s desperate flight to al-Ghazira in *Reason*, Ben Yiju and Bomma’s travel between Egypt and Malabar in *Land*, Rajkumar’s childhood plying in the swampy coastal line between Bengal and Burma, the journey undertaken by the indentured workers in *Palace*, are all concerned with the multicultural entity of both personal and social lives.

Throughout his works, Ghosh seeks to locate the marginal, lost or suppressed stories of the hapless. Khamee’s wife in *Land* and Deeti in *Poppies* are the representatives of those who suffer from domestic violence. Ghosh’s unconditional recommendation for humane approach towards such voiceless is worth mentioning. When Khamee blames his wife for being issueless, without any clinical evidence, she has
to simply bear the brunt. Same is the case of Deeti in *Poppies*. Born under the influence of Saturn she is forced to marry an old man. Subsequently she has to face the atrocities of her husband’s brother within the same house. These two women suffer because of the lack of human values in a male dominated society. Ghosh, insists on a society free from such chauvinistic attitudes. Later, Deeti’s rescue by Kalua from *sati* highlights the need for care and love for fellow beings. Caste, creed, religion and colour do not become a hindrance in the peaceful life of Deeti and Kalua. Significantly, Ghosh suggests the need for coexistence and strong humanitarian ties across cultures, overlooking regional and religious considerations. This is obvious when the European Zachary, in *Poppies* argues with the American captain Chillingworth in favour of the Dalit Kalua who marries the upper caste woman Deeti: “But Sir, surely his choice of wife is not our business. And surely we can’t let him be flogged for it while he is in our custody” (482).

Ghosh’s humanistic beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of universal brotherhood, emphasise common human needs and seek rational ways of solving human problems. Through Alu in *Reason*, Tridib in *Lines*, Ben Yiju and Bomma in *Land* and Deeti in *Poppies*, Ghosh stresses the importance of individual human personality and its power to learn from sufferings and to rise above appalling circumstances. Ghosh’s aim is to allow human values to guide one’s course in life and affirm universal humanism that transcend conceptual dogmatism and conventional parochialism. Universal humanism acts as a counter to all types of authoritarianism, intolerance, and alienation. The global capitalist juggernaut, its power structures of unipolar world and the ever intensifying inane everydayness of human affairs force Ghosh to try and seek some solace in the soot-
smeared and grim-covered fold of the modern world. And future research on Ghosh may aim at his use of myths as a tool for subverting patriarchal hegemony. Journalist realism found in Ghosh may also form scopes for further research. Ghosh’s meta narrative is fascinating and the form may also be studied separately as a stylistic discourse.

Humanism wants to free man, reveal and establish his full humanness, transforming, transcending and defying human nature and achieving its harmony with the unbounded society. Modern world witnesses violence, war, genocide and creates dehumanised space to a terrified and disillusioned succession of generations. The present globalised scenario further aggravates the violent legacies of imperialism. In an era of globalisation, cross cultural experiences remain fluid and indeterminate. The diasporic writings of Ghosh inform and encapsulate an array of postcolonial and postmodernist cultural and geographical features. They explain fluidity and hybridity of human encounters with histories, memories, landscape and traditions that impel writers like Ghosh to deal with forgotten, silenced voices and biased histories. Ghosh’s values are the simple humanist values of sincerity, authenticity, empathy and tolerance. They enable an environment that allows each one to realize the necessity for a position of free life. In short, the present thesis states its findings as:

1. Construction of cultural identity is not just limited to ethnicity. It is global in perspective and is based on the offerings and reception of cultures at various levels.

2. The ontogenesis of the self as reflected in Ghosh’s writings stems from the experiences of rootlessness and is epitomised through the sufferings and subsequent creation of a new persona, free from social and cultural boundaries.
3. One's cultural opinions should be broadened and enhanced to preserve one's self-worth and identity.

4. Ghosh, like a universal humanist recommends transnational perceptions to avert cultural ambivalences.

5. Ghosh's peripatetic self gives vent to the understanding of other cultures.

6. Ghosh is accommodative, transnational, antiparochial and cosmopolitan in perception. He is against sensationalising ethnicity.

7. Ghosh, sharing the sentiments of the subalterns, prefers a dialogue between cultures and hegemony.

8. Ghosh's writings which are predominantly Indian in theme and global in perception and treatment, represent a fresh trend in today's literature.

The study reveals that the collective universal consciousness is inevitable to create a "nation without walls" and subsequently the “citizen of the world”. Consequently, Amitav Ghosh has established himself as one of the most significant Indian writers of his generation, and his works have earned considerable critical acclaim in the Indian subcontinent.