PREFACE

The intent of this thesis is “THE STUDY OF CULTURAL HISTORY IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF GRAHAM SWIFT AND AMITAV GHOSH” under the guidance of Dr. Pranava Dave Associate Professor of English, Department of English, S.P. University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Anand, Gujarat, India.

Wish You Were Here opens in 2006 on the Isle of Wight off the southern coast of England, a setting of almost magical natural beauty, but Jack Luxton’s thoughts are of madness. He’s recalling the 65 head of healthy cattle that had to be shot and burned on his family’s old farm back in Devon. Mad cow disease crippled their precarious livelihood. Then his angry father died. Then terrorists flew planes into office buildings in New York. And now his brother, 30, has been killed while fighting in Iraq. It’s a ghastly collection of disparate events, separated by thousands of miles and significant degrees of import but connected by the rage that seems emblematic of our modern age.

Shuttlecock is the story of Prentis struggling to establish an identity independent of his father and also the story of his father's adventures as a World War II spy. This second tale comes in the form of an autobiography written by Prentis's father, entitled "Shuttlecock" and The Sweet Shop Owner, Shuttlecock, and Waterland war is experienced second hand, either through the experiences of one's father or through peers, but none of the main characters are forced to fight. Harry Beech is the single exception, though he too manages to avoid the actual fighting to become an official photographer a "detached" observer and the perfect narrator of the dismal events that he witnesses. What is interesting is that there are actually very few battle depictions, but they are unnecessary in light of the tone assumed in the descriptions of the aftermath of the war, such as Harry's time spent at the Nuremberg War Trials as a photographer. The most frightening thing of all, says Harry, is that the perpetrators of the Holocaust were not villains or monsters but "dull, nondescript, headphoned men, thin and pale from months in prison, with the faces of people in waiting rooms or people co-opted into some tedious, routine task." The Sweet Shop Owner is also the story of a small London suburb as it grows into modern times, experiencing growing pains along the way. The High Street shops evolve from family operations into corporate enterprises and along the way lose a great deal of
their humanity. The evolution of the street is depicted especially well by the real estate office of Hancock, Joyce, and Jones. As the patriarchal owner of the store grows too old to run it (and eventually dies) the names on the door shift and Hancock attempts to expand it into a chain of reality stores. The only thing that remains constant through all of the change is Willy's devotion to his own store, the only way that he is allowed to demonstrate his love for Irene. World War II leaves a strong impression on Willy and his wife Irene. The war and its effects upon both the landscape and the lives of ordinary people is a recurrent subject in Swift's writing. Conflict of one sort or another is visible even in the papers that Willy sells in his shop "PEACE BID FAILS" is one particular headline that appears at several places in the work. Statements like this have a dual significance for Willy, referring both to his attempts to find inner peace and to society's somewhat more fruitless efforts to make some sort of lasting peace with itself.

Graham Swift has pointed out aftermath of The World War II that resulted in miserable condition. History is an important backdrop for Prentis's exploration of his father's heroism. Without the challenge of World War II the old man would never have written his novel and the central conflict of Shuttlecock would not have taken place. Learning to Swim has a troubled family relationship and a vast generation gap form the themes of the title story of Swift's collected short works. This is fitting, as the same concepts recur in the tales that follow as well as in Swift's novels. The story has three central characters, Mr. & Mrs. Singleton and their son Paul. It is significant that the narrator refers to the couple only as "Mr. & Mrs." since they become not people but types throughout Swift's writing. "Singleton" is representative of their nature as individuals. Although their marriage works it does not work well and each ends up using Paul to hurt the other. Paul, like St. Paul, is being martyred for a cause.

Out of This World is a novel that often reflects upon the parent-child relationship, painting a fierce competition for affection between the mother and father and a struggle for the respect of the child. On a holiday to the seaside where else do the English go? Harry thinks that his daughter Sophie is drowning and promptly goes to her rescue. This leaves the reader with one question: was Sophie really drowning, or was it only Harry's
over-protective instincts at work? This episode illustrates the central conflict that exists between man and wife in Swift's works the battle for control over the child.

People suffered lot and they had to live in poor condition. Jack, Lenny, Ray, and Vic were victim of the world war. Most of them did soldier’s job but they were not able to earn much money because after war they were jobless. They were sent back home and result of that they had to accept odd professions. Most of them did which they did not like. Jack accepted butchery, Ray accepted Insurance, and even he was reputed as a lucky gambler, Lenny Tate had several good bouts, Vince started up Dodd’s Motor. People became not only jobless but also distressed of their poor condition. Amy’s daughter June was retarded because of the impact of World War.

Amy regularly visited her hoping that she would be well but did not happen even she could not recognize her mother Amy. They visited pub and discussed there. Swift wants to show the people that war made people crippled. It is nothing but the question of ego of some people but innocent people have to suffer from it. It can affect economy of country as happened in Last Orders. Some people’s decision can make many lives miserable. War affect people not only mentally but also physically like June. Even Vince could not bear when his friends used to tease him about June that his sister is retarded. Its effects are not for short time but long time. Even today, it can be felt in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. People can not bear all these things but it befalls on them whether they are ready for it or not. People can not understand plot behind the war, they are interested in livelihood. Roti, Clothe, and House are the fundamental question for them not war. Because of monetary problems, Jack had to sell his butchery shop. People are not enemies but monetary matter create unfriendly environment for them, even in London like developed city. Swift wants to represent that June like girl is the evil impact of war and there is no cure of it. Amy like mother wants to hear a word from her daughter that one day her daughter will call her mother but it does not happen. The mother’s feeling is not understood and hope is converted into hopelessness but none cared. Swift has emphasized not only the evil impact of war but also many facets.

Swift has created Dick in Waterland who is also retarded. He is also bad impact of World War I. The Cold War between two nuclear-armed superpowers, the United States
and the Soviet Union, meant that the world lived under the threat of nuclear annihilation. Graham Swift has emphasized that in 1943 abortion was illegal in Britain, and the result was that illegal abortions were performed by untrained people like Martha who did Mary’s operation. Abortion was legal if performed in the first twenty-eight weeks of pregnancy. This law was established by the 1967 Abortion Act.

Swift also emphasizes problems of people who have to face unemployment condition. Even progress is on but this progress is just for few people and the rest have to bear. The impact of World War I in Waterland suggests that Mary wants to bear a baby but she can not and the result is that she has to steal a baby from super market. Swift represents here that fertility is affected because of the World War and women are becoming infertile but their wishes to bear a baby is not gone it is still there in their minds. People are fighting for their existence, for their fertility and for their livelihood. The World War has created major problem of livelihood as a result of it people attack on people. They lose their temper and accepted money making in short cut method. Jack Parr is Freddie Parr’s father. He is a signalman and guardian of the Hockwell level-crossing. He exploits the war time black market solely for the purpose of procuring alcohol.

Swift has tried to say that war is the cause of making people distressed and disappointed. There is no achievement without loss. The value of honesty is decreasing day by day. Swift has also pointed out destruction, waste and the destructive effects of war in Shuttlecock. It becomes the cause of breakdown in people as happened with Prentis father. His father was held captive by the Nazis in World War II. Even Prentis feels stress on his job and he did not treat well with his parents. People feel alienated because of stress of the war. Even family relations were dispersed like the leaves of autumn.

Swift has pointed out about the study of history. According to him, history must be taught because it is the best medium for story telling. Modern people think that science is important in modern time so there is no meaning of studying history. Curiosity is the quality that connects human beings to the web of life. If curiosity dies it means life dies. It is humanity that creates history because there is collection of life stories in history.
Nowadays people are becoming materialistic so they think that there is no importance of history. History seems more art than science. It does not restrict himself merely to the facts that can be known. Only truth is not history. There are two kinds of history. One is artifical and the second is natural history. History contributes to the preservation of life and its value. Curiosity is the way that leads to the history. ‘Why’ is the word that hints towards curiosity. Tom Crick was a history teacher and he was told that there was no requirement of history so he was forced to leave his job. It shows people’s attitude towards history. Swift believes that without history people can not be curious. It is the only way to learn about one’s own nation and culture through history.

Amitav Ghosh was born on 11 July, 1956 in Kolkata. He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Indian Government in 2007. In 2009, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. His works are The Circle of Reason (1986), The Shadow Lines (1988), The Calcutta Chromosome (1995), The Glass Palace (2000), The Hungry Tide (2004), Sea of Poppies (2008), the first volume of The Ibis trilogy, set in the 1830s, just before the Opium War, which expresses concisely the colonial history of the East. Ghosh’s latest work of fiction is River of Smoke (2011), the second volume of The Ibis trilogy. The Shadow Lines is winner a Sahitya Akademi Award. There are memories, relationships, and images. He questions the meaning of political freedom and the force of nationalism in the modern world. It is set against a backdrop of war and strife. The Hungry Tide describes story between the sea and the plains of Bengal, on the easternmost coast of India, lies an immense extensive group of islands. Some are vast and some no longer than sandbars; some have lasted through recorded history while others have just washed into being. These are the Sundarbans. There are no borders to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea, even land from water. The arrival of Piyali Roy, of Indian parentage but stubbornly American, and Kanai Dutt, a sophisticated Delhi businessman, threatens to upset this balance. Kanai has returned to the islands on the request of his aunt, a local figure, for the first time since the death of his uncle, a political radical who died mysteriously in the aftermath of a local uprising. The Circle of Reason has a story of Alu, an orphan enlisted by his foster father as a soldier in his crusade against the forces of myth and unreason. Suspected of terrorism, they are about to be arrested when a tragic accident forces Alu to flee his village, pursued police officer, Alu finds his way through
Calcutta to Goa and on to a trawler that runs illegal immigrants to Africa. *The Glass Palace* is set in Burma during the British invasion of 1885, this masterly novel by Amitav Ghosh tells the story of Rajkumar, a poor boy lifted on the tides of political and social chaos, who goes on to create an empire in the Burmese teak forest. When soldiers force the royal family out of the *Glass Palace* and into exile, Rajkumar befriends Dolly, a young woman in the court of the Burmese Queen, whose love will shape his life. He cannot forget her, and years later, as a rich man, he goes in search of her. The struggles that have made Burma, India, and Malaya in stressed. *Sea of Poppies* (2008) is a novel by Indian novelist Amitav Ghosh which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2008. It is the first volume of what will be the Ibis trilogy.

In *Sea of Poppies*—The main characters include Deeti, an ordinary village woman, a mulatto American sailor named Zachary Reid, an Indian rajah, zamindar called Neel Rattan Halder, and Benjamin Burnham, an evangelist opium trader.

The story is set prior to the Opium Wars, on the banks of the holy river Ganges and in Calcutta. The author compares the Ganges to the Nile, the lifeline of the Egyptian civilization, attributing the provenance and growth of these civilizations to these selfless, ever-flowing bodies. He portrays the characters as poppy seeds emanating in large numbers from the field to form a sea, where every single seed is uncertain about its future. In *An Antique Land* describes a fascinating story which blends a historical detective story with his own experiences as a young Indian graduate student in the small Egyptian village of Lataifa, a few miles out side the city of Alexandria.

*The Circle of Reason* won the Prix Médicis étranger, one of France's top literary awards. The Shadow Lines won the Sahitya Akademi Award & the Ananda Puraskar. *The Calcutta Chromosome* won the Arthur C. Clarke Award for 1997. *Sea of Poppies* was shortlisted for the 2008 Man Booker Prize. It was the co-winner of the Vodafone Crossword Book Award in 2009, as well as co-winner of the 2010 Dan David Prize. River of Smoke was shortlisted for Man Asian Literary Prize 2011.

Ghosh famously withdrew his novel *The Glass Palace* from consideration for Commonwealth Writers' Prize, where it had been awarded the Best Novel in Eurasian
section, citing his objections to the term "Commonwealth" and the unfairness of the English-language requirement specified in the rules. Subsequently, he landed in controversy over his acceptance of the Israeli literary award, the $1 million dollar Dan David Prize.

Ghosh's most notable non-fiction writings are *In an Antique Land* (1992), *Dancing in Cambodia* and *At Large in Burma* (1998), *Countdown* (1999), and *The Imam and the Indian* (2002, a large collection of essays on different themes such as fundamentalism, history of the novel, Egyptian culture, and literature).

Amitav Ghosh has pointed out that when there were no plane, railway and other travelling convenience, people used to travel and visit other countries like Bomma for the purpose of trading and other business. People were curious to about people and their cultures who lived in other countries and they did something to know about them. After making borders, even people could not prevent themselves. They have to take Visa and then they go there. All people were not enemies as it was thought. A few of them who are selfish tried to make borders, these borders can be made between people and countries but it can not be made between feelings and in their hearts. Ghosh has pointed out that Riots of 1964 was between India and Pakistan at the time of partition. There was also in Burma and people were forced to leave Burma but they could not forget their friends who were still there and whom they loved and respected. Tridib’s grandfather and Mrs Price’s father, Lionel Tresawson has been good friends since he lived in India. Mrs Price lived in London and she respected Tridib’s family and invited to there in London. Amitav has pointed out that borders can not be made between hearts of people. Long ago there was no need of permission to cross the borders now there are borders yet people go and do their business and trade. Even people sacrificed their lives for others as Tridib did in *The Shadow Lines*. Love does not require Visa to enter into the hearts of people. It does know what Visa is and what country is. People are same, their blood is same their feelings are same, their trading and business are same, all of them same hearts, they feel sadness, happiness, annoyingness so why people should have borders. Amitav Ghosh has pointed out that it is really a shadow line that is made between two countries they are not real because people cross these boarders to meet people and for their trading and business.
People are interested in knowing others cultures as happened in *In An Antique Land* that women asked about cultures of India that why people of India call the cow mother. Even the narrator was not ready to go to mosque for praying. Some cultures are heart bound and those cultures draw a line that is very difficult to cross those lines. The narrator does not hate Islamic religious ceremony yet he is not able to persuade himself. Ghosh says that people of Egypt can not believe that Indian people do not circumcise. They were unknown about Indian culture so they could not understand and the result is that they think Indian people are impure. The most surprising thing for them was that people of Egypt wanted to know about the cremation done in India. This Indian culture made them puzzled because in their culture it done differently. Sometimes it seemed insulting way as they asked but actually narrator did not answer because he knew that it was only curiosity that they asked him. Ghosh also journeyed to Egypt like Bomma only purpose is different. People went other countries for religion, political, economical and social purposes it happens still though there is Visa. There were different languages yet they could understand one another but nowadays people have common language like English yet unable to understand.