CHAPTER IV

THE HUNGRY TIDE AND THE POSTCOLONIAL SETTLEMENT IN THE SUNDERBANS


“Between the sea and the plains of Bengal, on the easternmost coast of India, lies an immense archipelago of islands. Some are vast and some no larger-than sandbars; some have lasted through recorded history while others have just washed into being. These are the Sundarbans. Here there are no borders to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea, even land from water. Here, for hundreds of years, only the truly dispossessed braved the man-eating tigers and the crocodiles who rule there, to eke precarious existence from the mud. Here, at the beginning of the last century, a visionary Scotsman founded a utopian settlement where peoples of all races, classes and religions could live together.” (1)

Ghosh employs the fictional form to expose a past which had been forgotten long back beyond the Sundarbans. In 1979, the recently elected Communist government of West Bengal vehemently expelled tens of thousands of expatriates from the island of Morichjhāpi in the northern-most wooded region of the Sundarbans. Only four years earlier, the island’s mangroves had been cleared for a government-sponsored agricultural program (2); however, the refugees’ eviction was justified on environmental grounds. The settlement of Morichjhāpi was described by Jyoti Basu, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, as illegal
trespassing on a state Forest Reserve and on land designated for tiger preservation (3). There is scant documentary evidence to produce a conclusive history of this event (referred to variously as the ‘Morichjhāpi incident’ or the ‘Morichjhāpi massacre’); however, (ibid) estimates that as many as 17,000 of the refugees who had settled on the island died of starvation or disease, were drowned when police scuttled their boats, were shot by police, or were brutally killed by men hired to assist the police with eviction. (4) explains that, while there will never be certainty about the number of deaths, locals consistently report that only one in four of the refugees survived: “This figure is important because it reflects what the villagers feel rather than for its factual veracity” (5) The refugees were principally dalits—untouchables—who had fled to India from Bangladesh in waves after Partition in 1947 and then, in increasing numbers, after the 1971 Bangladesh war of independence. Enormous numbers of these refugees were detained in resettlement camps in east-central India. Not only were the camps desolate and dangerous, they were “entirely removed, both culturally and physically, from the refugees’ known world” (6) As Ghosh states in the “Author’s Note” in The Hungry Tide, while the Morichjhāpi incident was covered in the Calcutta press at the time, when he came to write his novel, only one scholarly account was available in English: this was (7) essay, titled “Refugee Resettlement in Forest Reserves: West Bengal Policy Reversal and the Morichjhapi Massacre”. As Tomsky explains, “Prior to its fictionalization in Ghosh’s novel, Morichjhāpi history had all but lapsed into oblivion”. (8)

The detailed but the most suitable prologue lays down the character of this novel, with a charming site. Once again, Ghosh has effectively brought to being a
Amitav Ghosh is one of the principal modern novelists whose novels deal with the major modern-day problems such as present-day man’s perpetual troubles of survival catastrophes, problems of separation, problems of agitation, having no roots and being to settle down, problems of seizing power etc. In this novel The Hungry Tide, he has portrayed the dissatisfied expectations and desire of the post war and post partition subaltern classes of the subcontinent. The problems which are portrayed in the novel are the post war culture of postcolonial relocation and resettlement of persons in exile and orphans. The resonance of identity ruin, sense of isolation and dislocation of the migrants’ insecurity, vagrancy, cultural and linguistic uniqueness, all vibrate throughout the novel. Amitav Ghosh in his novel
describes the liberty of home in connection to nation and in connection to the
global village.

_The Hungry Tide_ abridges the events occurred at Morichjhāpi in 1979 and
the subaltern awareness. Not only he pays attention to the world but also
recognizes with the refugees as he is aware of the worldwide longing of the
miserable people of the earth, the destitute millions. Amitav Ghosh in his novel
puts in plain words the post immigrant incursion of population from East Bengal to
West Bengal. The problem of the Bengali Hindu immigrants was not restricted
geographically to one state only to a certain extent surpassed the eastern border in
West Bengal mostly in Kolkata and its fringes also. In the novel _The Hungry Tide_
the entries that Nirmal has made in the diary unfolding Morichjhāpi and the
troubles of the Fokir's mother Kusum provide a true certainty of the Sundarbans.
The expatriates struggled for existence turn out to be the victim of Morichjhāpi
after the water and food provisions were stopped to the islands to force the
refugees to run off. The question of hopelessness and disadvantaged people, who
were the subaltern representatives, waited there unaided and pay heed to the
policemen making their proclamation, listening to their saying that their lives, their
experience, are not more valuable than dirt or dust.

The well-known columnist of subaltern is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (10)
whose all-time suitable expression is completely appropriate –“Can the subaltern
Speak?” means that shutting up is the vital element of immigrant personality. The
manipulating Dalit and the gendered subaltern Kusum’s story retold by the
gentleman and privileged group representative Nirmal are interestingly portrayed.
The character and the intricacies of the inferior section language are also excellent in the novel. The customs and traditions and the gender crossways are the melting points for expressing the association between inner colonialism and subaltern studies which has been outstanding in the novel *The Hungry Tide*. The expatriates were the subaltern sections who were compelled to find out a place of abode somewhere else but regrettably enforced to refuge into resettlement camp set in someplace in Central India. Here home is not only something which is an inanimate thing but it is a place which the mind makes up to be its personal room, a space liberated of all restraints. But the truth is that they cannot make a home just to lead a life of their own. In Fanon's words (11) these colonizers are the storehouse of the wicked powers, the lifeless and the irreparable device of blind forces. Nirmal, an avant-garde, all through his earlier days is inspired by the drama of flexibility shown by the Morichjhāpi episodes. He is determined to record the whole thing in his notebook so that history can achieve as sure popularity through Kanai.

Nirmal in his journal locates a firm ideal line in his venture, in his effort by the deprived to have a little of his own. But it is cruelly withdrawn by the government forces and consequently Kusum is killed. Nirmal as a socialist believed in restoration of harmony across category obstacles that are able to bring subaltern people and the privileged mutually together which after a generation Piya reiterates with Kusum's son Fokir. The Morichjhāpi for a long time was in both for an academic world and make – believe fantasy which can be accredited to the namelessness of the inferior caste and class identity, which are the built-in grounds of the atrocious violent behavior.
The West Bengal State Committee Meeting in 1982 also legitimized the deportation by indicating that the expatriates could not be given any habitat under any conditions. Amitav Ghosh shoots an important question to the global people—“If you care for the environment, does that mean that you don’t care about the plight of human beings, especially impoverished people?” (12). Hence the state of the homeless, dislocated, dishonoured is inconstant and antagonistic in the topography of the Sundarbans. The mass murder, the tiger killing, Kusum’s father and Fokir’s defencelessness to the government authorities are some of the illustrations in the novel that gives a picture of the expatriates as well as the demeaned people’s difficult situation.

The influence of the public, their struggle and sacrifices which passed unobserved in the records of the history started to receive a surpassing influence in the fiction of Amitav Ghosh in a specmanner. History stops to be the strong point of those who exercise supremacy. The novelists of modern day are at present preoccupied with in getting hold of the vanished history in which the ineffective, marginalized and dominated communicate themselves and progress towards the centre. But the centre and the trance of the exploited on seeking a secure refuge in the tide country and finding a supportive voice for them encounters an unspoken fatality. Amitav Ghosh represents these immigrant sections by means of history as a device which at least acknowledges with the current problems.

An Indian American maritime ecologist, Piyali Roy, is full of enthusiastic to achieve a renowned name in the cetological space. Hence Piyali sails all over this watered-down maze in search of the Irrawaddy dolphins which were once
bounteous. In her search she encounters Fokir, an uneducated fisherman who shows her the way to a dolphin–rich river region helping to complete her enterprise triumphant, at any rate competently. She also meets a stylish Delhi capitalist, Kanai Dutt, a multilingual person and an interpreter, also has come to this country from New Delhi. He has come with an intention to recover his late uncle Nirmal’s writings addressed to him. Through Nirmal, an ex- school headmaster and an one-time activist, Ghosh speaks out the history of the Sundarbans islands with a comprehensive account of the exact story of the 1979 episode of Morichjhapi in which impoverished unauthorized residents were cruelly expelled by the Indian Govt. in order to conserve a wildlife sanctuary, again which demonstrates Ghosh’s inclination for crossing the margin of fiction/non-fiction. With an Intention to shun a plot of simple romantic love story, Ghosh blends ecological enterprise, matter of language and land in disclosing the difficult associations among Piyali, Fokir and Kanai. The perplexed relationships are found solution by the crowning conclusion of the novel which ends with a tropical storm that kills Fokir, who dies while making an effort to rescue Piya.

The background of the novel in the core of nature keeps the ecological perception at the front position. Nature can be assumed as the main protagonist of this work and it would not be an overstatement. Besides other troubles, *The Hungry Tide* is fairly expressive about the ecological annoyances of the Sundarbans, the mangrove forests between the sea and the plains of Bengal, which is slowly being disrobed of its natural biological environments. The ecological balance in Sundarbans, with a population consisting of the utmost deprived section of people, is being endangered fatally. As the scientist Mr. Piddington showed his
unwillingness against the establishment of town Canning, he told if the forest itself is in danger of annihilation then it is sure to reduce the likelihood of Calcutta being shielded any longer against the shocking oceanic storms of Bay of Bengal.

This care for the ecological balance is noticeable right through the novel. The constantly sensible Mashima is preoccupied with the care for the deteriorating aquatic life. Moyna tells Kanai how Nilima wished to make the nylon nets prohibited.

“These new nylon nets, which they use to catch ‘chingrir meen’ – the spawn of tiger prawns. These nets are so fine that they catch the eggs of other fish as well.” (134.)

Nature projects as unfriendly and antagonistic to men right in the first place when Ghosh acquaints the readers with the world of mangroves:

“A mangrove forest is a universe unto itself. Mangrove leaves are tough and leathery the branches gnarled and the foliage often impassably dense. Visibility is short and the air still and fetid. At no moment can human beings have any doubt of the terrain’s utter hostility to their presence, of its cunning and resourcefulness of its determination to destroy or expel them. Every year dozens of people perish in the embrace of that dense foliage, killed by tigers, snakes and crocodiles” (7-8).

The extreme enmity of the land is obvious in nearly all the particulars of its physical features. In the section ‘Canning’ Kanai benumbs in incredulity on seeing the condition of the passengers in the boat due to the vast stretch of the surging mass of the mud:
“...on stepping off the plank, there was a long-drawn out moment when each passenger sank slowly into the mud, like a spoon disappearing into a very thick daal. Only when they were in up to their hips did their descent end and their forward movement begins. With their legs hidden from sight all that was visible of their struggles was the twisting of their upper bodies” (24-25).

In the episode with the heading ‘S. Daniel,’ Nirmal and Kanai talk about S. Daniel’s pains in making the residence of people in the fuming and antagonistic land. The infuriated picture of the dangerous environs is highly pitiable “...think of what it was like: think of the tigers, crocodiles and snakes that lived in the creeks and nalas that covered the islands. This was a feat for them. They killed hundreds of people” (52).

Quite early in the book Piya’s fall is also described in the same tone “...the muddy brown water was rushing up to meet her face. With her breath running out, she felt herself to be enveloped inside a cocoon of eerie glowing murk and could not tell whether she was looking up or down. In her head there was a smell or rather a metallic savour she knew to be not blood, but inhaled mud. It had entered her mouth, her nose, her throat, her eyes. - it had become a shroud folding her in its cloudy wrappings” (.54-55).

The protagonist Kanai, a professional analyst and translator, discloses the history behind the classification of the Sundarbans through his uncle’s interpretative notes.

Even the mythological reference as to the source of the watery maze delivers the image of an disorderly and wild aquatic organisms. Krishna Dutta in her review of the book comments:
“Hindu myth has it that the mighty Ganges frees herself from the
taming dread locks of Shiva – the God of creation and destruction
near the Bay of Bengal in meandering strands, to create the
Sundarbans. It is an immense stretch of mangrove forest where
thousands of hectares become immersed and remerge with the tide.
Ghosh skillfully depicts this truly vengeful place, where fantasy and
reality constantly overla”(13)

Nature is a generous mother as well as a hostile force, to the residents of
the island. The storms and the tigers are the types in which nature articulates its
enmity to mankind. Piya, the cetologist from America is reluctant to the residents
take vengeance over the unkindness of these forces. Piya’s firm counteraction to
the event when an ensnared tiger is being tormented by the people from an island,
who were the losers of many men and livestock because of the beast, shows her
who is an environmentalist at her dynamic best. But the residents triumph and even
the author seems to feel sorry for them. The compassionate features of nature are
symbolized by the river dolphin which Kusum names for her son as ‘God’s
Messengers’. Even the least alteration in river waters or big threats like tropical
storms can be envisaged with a change in the dolphins’ behaviour and
manifestation in and out of water. Even mythology is marvellously associated with
nature and science. Nirmal in his dedication to teach the children of Morichjhāpi
resident’s skill fully brings the river dolphin in his exposition of the rivers Ganga
and Sindhu. He envisages himself while saying to the children:

“And do you know how you can tell that the Sindhu and the Ganga
were once conjoined? ... Because of the ‘shushuk’ – the river
dolphin. This creature of the sea was the legacy left to the twins by
their mother Tethys. The rivers nurtured it and made it their own.
Nowhere else in the world is the shushuk to be found, but in the twin rivers, the Ganga and the Sindhu” (182).

Nature is symbolized as the most vital power in the elimination of all partitions and even consequence of generation, in *The Hungry Tide* which is the chief concern in almost the entire Ghosh’s works. Nirmal conveys to Kanai about S. Daniel’s dream and why he selected the specific area of Bengal: “The specialty of mangroves is that they do not merely recolonize land; they erase time. Every generation creates its own population of ghosts” (50). Nirmal in his journal uses the metaphor of mohonas to bring together rivers of language:

“…the mud banks of the tide country are shaped not only by rivers of silt, but also by rivers of language: Bengali, English, Arabic, Hindi, Arakanese and who knows what else? Flowing into each other they create a proliferation of small worlds that hang suspended in the flow. And so it dawned on me: the tide country’s faith is something like one of its great mohonas, a meeting not just of many rivers, but a circular round about people can use to pass in many directions – from country to country and even between faiths and religions”(247).

An analysis of Amitav Ghosh’s novels certainly incorporates contemplation on the unpredictability of border lines whether physical, racial or psychological. This novel engages additional personal divisions between men and women, besides other borders. Self admittance Ghosh admits himself that he is concerned with the difficult situations of the individual against a broader historical or a geographical backdrop as in *The Hungry Tide*. Here nature itself challenges classification and continues to change its appearance.
“The rivers’ channels are spread across the land like a fine-mesh net, creating a terrain where the boundaries between land and water are always mutating, always unpredictable... There are no borders here to divide fresh water from salt, river from sea. The tides reach as far as three hundred kilometers inland and everyday thousands of acres of forest disappear underwater only to re-emerge hours later. The currents are so powerful as to reshape the islands almost daily - some days the water tears away entire promontories and peninsulas; at other times it throws up new shelves and sandbanks where there were none before” (7).

Ghosh’s characters gain knowledge to identify the impermanence of these separations among individuals regardless of their social group, just as the nation wide tides of the watery maze wipe out the feel of enduring partition between the land and the sea.

Each work of Ghosh occupies a union of characters of dissimilar environments and character. Piya and Fokir are separated in terms of language, social group and the tradition of marriage. The elderly couple, Nirmal and Nilima, is at odds in their dreams and visions, which is identical to the couple Balaram and Toru Debi in The Circle of Reason. Instead of leading a happy life together for years, Nilima’s outbreak against Nirmal discloses her unhappiness:

“It was for your sake that we first came to Lusibari, because your political involvements got you into trouble and endangered your health. There was nothing for me here, no family, friends or a job. But over the years I’ve built something... All these years you’ve sat back and judged me” (214).
On the other hand, the communication between Piya and Fokir, even if they do not have a common language and same culture, build understanding and trust in a very short period.

“... the two of them, Fokir and herself, they could have been boulders or trees for all they knew of each other; and wasn’t it better in a way, more honest, that they could not speak? For if you compared it to the ways in which dolphins’ echoes mirrored the world, speech was only a bag of tricks that fooled you into believing that you could see through the eyes of another being” (159).

Piya, the exceptional epitome of science, hunt fora place of safety in doing research to lead a life free of any restrictions and attentions and at the same time associated freely with the global community.

“As with many of her peers, she had been drawn to field biology as much for the life it offered as for its intellectual content because it allowed her to be on her own, to have no fixed address, to be far from the familiar while still being a part of a loyal but loose-knit community” (126).

But at the same time she has developed into a Piya who is very much mixed up sensitively into a relationship with Fokir. Sagarika Ghose points out the paradoxical interaction of these characters:

“Piya learns to love (Fokir) without language. Kanai, the translator of cultures, finds himself stripped of all urban defences facing a tiger in a swam Fokir, the unlettered fisherman, falls in love with a woman who is an embodiment of science (Piya). A massive storm brings death and terminates a potentially rich love. Nirmal falls in
love with Kusum and finally breaks with his armchair past. Ghosh’s musings on language, on translatability on the forgotten massacre of Morichjhapi in which dominant cultures forcibly wipe out movements form below, are deftly woven into the interactions between the characters, yet the most dominant theme is of a great sweep away by water, the flood on land, the revolution in the mind. As the reigning deity of the tide country Bon Bibi, in Ghosh’s vision a plural syncretic local cult presides over this flood, she is Goddess of hope but also of vengeance.”(14)

Nirmal understands the make-believe quality of borders, while sailing on the water on their way to the shrine in Satjelia, Kusum informs Nirmal that they had presently traversed the boundary between the world of humans, safeguarded by Bon Bibi, and the world of the heinous Dokkhin Rai and his evil spirits.

“I realised, with a sense of shock, that this chimerical line was, to her and to Horen as real as a barbed wire fence might be to me … To me, a townsman, the tide country jungle was emptiness, a place where time stood still. I saw now that this was an illusion, that exactly the opposite was true” (224).

Nirmal recognizes himself to be one among the refugees, who turn down to go away from the island of Morichjhapi and who scream in harmony to the aggressive police force. “Who are we? We are the dispossessed.” Nirmal articulates his compassion with the miserable dislocated millions of the people of the earth, without a home to live.

“How strange it was to hear this plaintive cry wafting across the water. It seemed at that moment, not to be a shout of defiance, but rather a question being addressed to the very heavens, not just for
themselves but on behalf of a bewildered humankind who, indeed are we? Where do we belong?”(254)

John Hawley remarks on the theme of subsiding borders in the novel:

“Like many other fine novelists, in setting the book in this very strange spot, Ghosh has found a metaphor that represents an erasure of the border between what is familiar and what is uncanny, and he invites into it a man of letters and a woman of science.”(15).

Ghosh’s enduring concentration in traversing borders and his eventual annihilation of all partitions is obvious in Nirmal’s threatening forecasting to five years old Fokir that the crabs are eating away the embankment and at an unspecified future time the lane will sink under the tide:“...because the animals (Quoting Rilke) already knew by instinct/we’re not comfortably at home/ in our translated world” (206).

The very setting of the novel appeals to a county where the well-known indicators of identity are changing continuously. According to Hamilton’s rules: “It was impossible to tell who was who, and what their castes and religions and beliefs were” (79), geographically too “there were no borders to divide fresh water from sea” (7).

The journey across the borders and cultures which is an obsession in the entire works by Ghosh is significantly able to be seen in The Hungry Tide also. Piya’s statement that “the world Kanai inhabited was as distant from the India of her father’s memories as it was from Lusibari and the tide country” (200). Brinda Bose very fittingly remarks here:
“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), the burden of India’s colonpast appears to weigh heavily on a migrant post colongeneration, and Ghosh seems to be constantly in search of that elusive epiphanic moment in which individuals may come to terms with their histories, thereby releasing themselves from the metaphoric and metaphysical burden of their condition ... In Ghosh’s fiction, the diasporic entity continuously negotiates between two lands, separated by both time and space-history and geography - and attempts to define the present through a nuanced understanding of the past.” (16)

The researcher in Ghosh governs all his fictional works and makes them emerge as industriously allocated research expanses. All his stories are firmly based on history which he lays bare in front of the reader. The novel presents an entire historical account of how the geographical backdrop of the novel i.e. the Sundarbans, the islands came into existence is endowed with complete lucidity. Nirmal discusses in detail the Daniel Hamilton’s dream and the account of settlers. He even lodges in detail on the categorization of the islands like Lusibari, Emilybari, and Jamespur etc.

“And as the population grew, villages sprouted and S’ Daniel gave them names. One village became “Shobnomoskar” “welcome to all”, and another became “Rajat Jubilee”, to mark the silver jubilee of some king or the other. And to some he gave the names of his relatives that’s why we have here a Jamespur, an Annpur and an Emilybari, Lusibari was another such” (51).
S. Daniel envisages a world where all are received freely without any isolation pointing to their caste, sect or ethnic group just as Ghosh has made Alu generate a Marxist society borderless and divisionless as in *The Circle of Reason*.

“They could not bring all their petty little divisions and differences. Here there would be no Brahmins or untouchables, no Bengalis and no Oriyas. Everyone would have to live and work together when the news of this spread, people came pouring in, from northern Orissa, from eastern Bengal, from Santhal Parganas” (51-52).

Ghosh’s visualization of a temporal world which is free from trivpartitions and borders provides the work the sense of a Marxist zone. Daniel Hamilton’s dreams articulate for him:

“What he wanted was to build a new society, a new kind of country. It would be a country run by co-operatives, he said here people wouldn’t exploit each other and everyone would have a share in the land” (52).

Even the currency that he has sketched for this innovative free land says:

“The note is based on the living man, not on the dead coin. It costs practically nothing, and yields a dividend of one hundred percent in land reclaimed, tanks excavated, houses built, etc and in a more healthy and abundant life” (53).

Through Nirmal, Ghosh gives an account of the history of the islands elaborately. Nirmal’s narrative of the true story of the 1979 blockade of Morichjhâpi, in which poor unlawful resident were cruelly expelled by the Indian Government in order to conserve a wildlife sanctuary, exhibits movingly the author’s talent for going across the fiction/non-fiction boundary.
As more prominently in his earlier works such as *The Calcutta Chromosome*, Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* circulates scientific information with minute details of procedures and observable facts, and in a very artistic style. The readers are educated in geography, climatology and marine biology and are taken through the use of the GPS, and the behavior of the river dolphin along with the research history. Everything is meticulously explained.

“They had said much about Calcutta, for instance, yet had never thought to mention that the first known specimen of Orcaella Brevirostris was found there, that strange cousin of the majestic killer whales of Puget Sound” (95).

Ghosh the researcher and representative of characters and associations, unites a practical fisherman and a woman of science and develop a perfect agreement in the accomplishment of their individual tasks:

“It was surprising enough that their jobs had not proved to be utterly incompatible especially considering that one of the tasks required the input of geostationary satellites while the other depended on bits of shark-bone and broken tile. But that it had proved possible for two such different people to pursue their own ends simultaneously – people who could not exchange a word with each other and had no idea of what was going on in one another’s heads – was far more than surprising: it seemed almost miraculous” (141).

The learned scholar, Ghosh, even takes care to make clear to the readers about the deeds during the Indian freedom struggle while having a discussion about the building of Port Canning. For example he reports to the readers:
“If you were here then, on the banks of the Matla, you would never have known that in northern India chapattis were passing from village to village; that Mangal Pandey had turned his gun on his officers; that women and children were being massacred and rebels were being tied to the mouths of cannons” (285).

He even unfolds to the readers, the secret of Languages like how the English word ‘typhoon’ derived from the Indian word tufaan and how Mr. Piddington the scientist studied cyclones, and it was he, who invented the word ‘cyclone’ to describe them.

Ghosh’s portrayal of the anticipated ideal socorder is miscellaneous not just in the socmilieu of the inhabitants, but even the religious values and the way they worship their gods, show acrossing out of borders. For example, Fokir and Tutul pay reverence to a place of pilgrimage in Garjontola and their way of prayer is a combination of Hindu and Muslim methods.

“Fokir began to recite some kind of chant, with his head bowed and his hands joined in an attitude of prayer... It contained a word that sounded like ‘Allah.’ She had not thought to speculate about Fokir’s religion, but it occurred to her now that he might be Muslim. But no sooner had she thought this than it struck her that a Muslim was hardly likely to pray to an image like this one. What Fokir was performing looked very much like her mother’s Hindu Puja” (152).

Nirmal has already noticed such a routine with Horen, Kusum and Fokir as a child.

He was surprised to hear Horen perform a Islamic hymn:

“I was amazed. I’d thought I was going to a Hindu Puja: imagine my astonishment on hearing these Arabic invocations. Yet the
rhythm of the recitation was undoubtedly that of a Puja: how often, as a child, had I heard those endless chants, rolling on and on in temples as well as in our home?” (246)

Nirmal shares his astonishment on noticing the religious book of the islanders Bon Bibir Karamoti art hat Bon Bibi Johurnama. “I had another surprise; the pages opened to the right, as in Arabic not to the left as in Bangla. Yet the prosody was that of much of Bangla folklore. So it dawned on me: the tide country’s faith is something like one of its great mohonas, a meeting not just of many rivers, but a circular round about people can use to pass in many directions – from country to country and even between faiths and religions” (247).

The novel is filled with unusual characters. Each character stands noticeably out in the multitude and is apersonage in his own right. They are powerfully united to the Sundarbans, but each links in a different way with the islands. Fokir is deep-rooted in the old way of life; his wife, Moyna, who is undertaking training to become a nurse, desires to have better future for her son. Nilima carries out acharitable trust, a hospital, a guest house and educational services in the name of Badabon trust, for the wellbeing of the island populace. Piya and Kanai, both are learned scholars; experts in their personal wish desires to return to the Sundarbans.

Nirmal Bose, a school teacher, former activist and an optimist is brought back to life by the earlier description. The readers gain knowledge about the Sundarbans through his point of view and socawareness, his comprehension of history, geography and geology. His recordings in the diary about the revolt that
stretches all over the island of Morichjhâpi are ingrained in a real mutiny among expelled people struggling to find for them, a life, a world, and a survival afar that of the native Indians. But the rebellion does not accomplish anything and the homeless continue to be as they were previously. Their pursuit to renovate themselves ends useless. The same is with the Nirmal’s lifetime mission for a chaste upheaval.

Nirmal leaves his diary to Kanai Dutt, his nephew, who has a successful trade of translators and interpreters. He appears to be an arrogant person but he is caring and kind to his uncle and aunt. Kanai arrives at the island in order to comprehend and interpret Nirmal’s diary, on the request of his aunt Nilima Bose. In the course of this action, his comes across Piya, the American scientist of Indian basis, who has come to the tide country on an exploration of the Gangetic dolphins.

Piya is a competent, well-informed investigator, enthusiastic on her study and yet is conscious to the natives and the environment. Her pursuit for the river dolphin takes her along the circular and complex watercourse of this tide country. During the course she meets Fokir and other natives. Her rapport with the calm and well-informed fisherman Fokir achieves perfection which cannot be understood to someone like Kanai. It is Fokir who spares his life to rescue Piya from the crucempest.

Piya’s discovery about the river dolphin gives birth to a brilliant task of research and inferentway of thinking. But the hard-working and practical socworker Nilima’s help was required for this project. Honestly her help proved beneficto the inhabitants of the island and produced a security guard against the
whims of nature and life. Piya and Kanai after being hit repeatedly by their adventures and experiences seek their shelter with Badabon trust and the tide country. Above and beyond satisfying her lifetime mission of researching and recording the Orcaella Brevirostris, Piya may become capable to take care of Fokir’s distressed family to whom she is owing a favor of her incredibly life.

In *The Hungry Tide*, among the half-dozen main characters, the most forceful character is the Sundarbans. The ecstatic portrayal of the Sundarbans in the opening section of the novel gives an idea about how important the setting is to the plot and how far the novel is owing a favor for its appeal to the waters and forests belonging to the Sundarban islands. The design of the novel is structured through twists and twirls of nature and the book is conveniently divided into two parts ‘The Ebb’ and ‘The Flood’. The story is narrated in the leisurely style to be anticipated in such a story connecting normal track. Charles For an in his review of the novel says;

“What since the sodden Fens of Graham Swift’s Waterland has a contemporary novel so abandoned itself to the kind of primordial literary landscape first conceived by Thomas Hardy more than a century ago. For the most part we fancy ourselves too light – footed and plugged in at the mercy of such 19th century determinism a self conception as pleasing as it is naïve.” (17)

Two narratives, the one is the diary and the other one is the instant experiences of Kanai, Fokir, Piya and Nilima –that are illustrated by the novelist move on the same line to each other. The former enhances the admiration of the latter, each journeys along the course of the culmination and at the same time causing disaster
in the character’s minds, lives, way of thinking and features of human temperament and friction; each performs a role in the bigger design of belongings that the island signifies. Suchitra Dutta says:

“Characterisation and the minutiae of narrative technique take a back seat in this exquisitely researched product from one of the most refined minds in serious fiction writing today. However, it is Amitav Ghosh’s erudition, researched sensibilities and his eye on the larger meaning of all human activity that makes the book, and its images so riveting, that make the mind read and rethink the realities of our environment and its various facets- human activity, human predisposition to ignore the other, and our environment. These are the facts we take for granted.” (18)

The structure of the novel, in addition to episodes substituting between Piya and Kanai has many links, engrosses Nirmal’s notebook, which is a significant link which joins the whole book together. The events accounted by Nirmal are very essentin the most recent history of the Sundarbans. The hometown fable of the goddess Bon Bibi and Dokkhin Rai is also skillfully woven in the analysis. Nirmal, a devotee of Rilke, cites his poem at each and every page in his notebook which most of the time are not in fact appropriate. Aleksandra Nita compares The Hungry Tide to James Michener’s novels:

“I could compare The Hungry Tide to James Michener’s novels, it is in the same way well researched (Ghosh is an anthropologist so his interest and knowledge of the natural sciences are profound) and concentrates on the specific region. Unlike Michener though, Ghosh tells one actual story and his book is a real novel, an attempt to span the centuries of history, so it is way less superficand concentrated on his characters.” (19)
His previous novel *The Glass Palace* tells the story of Burma, Malaya, and the Indian National Army during the World War II. It can be considered as a classic legend of south-east Asia. Whereas ‘The Hungry Tide’ is in contrast, restricted to Sundarban islands and is geographically fairly contracted. Other than from a variety of interlinking stories and characters, it has only two significant plots. The Firstdeals with how the humans’ contribute to a difficult and dangerous ecosystem with animals (river dolphins and tigers) and the other is the pathetic condition of dislocated refugees of the Morichjhâpi islands who are actually slaughtered by the government. Amardeep Singh writes in his review of the novel:

“*The Hungry Tide* is the work of a novelist at the peak of his powers. It is similar in style and tone to Ghosh’s overlooked masterpiece, *The Glass Palace*. But despite the similarities, smaller scope and more limited range of characters makes it feel somewhat more accessible than the earlier book. Ghosh has managed to turn *The Hungry Tide* into a veritable page turner – beautifully controlled and plotted while sacrificing none of his trademark historical swee” (20)

The Sundarbans has an exclusive history, environment and background. Half of it is covered with water and half land. It is a landscape where making the most part of it into land has not yet come to the closing stages. It is a place where people inhabited and uninhabited alternatively. Perhaps it is the only place on earth that is being in jeopardy at one time by cyclones, tidal waves, and lack of clean water, tigers, crocodiles and venomous snakes.

The Sundarbans is the largest mangrove forest and the only mangrove tiger land in the world. Here the tiger stands at the pinnacle of both the aquatic and the
terrestrial food chain. The area lies south-east of the city of Kolkata (Calcutta) in the 24 Parganas District of West Bengal and is part of the Gangetic Delta, which borders on the Bay of Bengal. It is shared between two neighbouring countries, Bangladesh and India. Its larger part (62% of the total mangrove ecosystem) occupies the southwest corner of Bangladesh. The western boundary of the Bangladesh Sundarbans runs along the Harinbhanga – Raimangal – Kalindi river system. (21)

The deterioration of the establishment of mankind in the Sundarbans may be because of certain alterations in the atmosphere of nature, such as a change in the track of rivers resulting in in adequate fresh water and therefore an upsurge of salt water, which makes the land inappropriate for agriculture. The Sundarbans stay dent angled in confusion for the next three hundred years. The conditions did not recover even in the nineteenth century.

**Environment and countryside**

The Early British explains the environmental atmosphere of colonial India which constantly aroused an exceptional awareness among the Europeans, in whose writings the natural world is forever attributed rather outstandingly. Initially the Sundarbans landscape was not successful in breeding a great deal of attention in contrast with the common curiosity about the Indian environment among the European travelers. However, ultimately, the “jungle” developed into a vital theatre for the communication of Euro-American “Selves” and Indian “Others” – a communication registered by a massive colonial literature that increased the quantity in the due passing of time. (22) Alongwith the progression of the nineteenth
century, the environment of the colonial assets happens to be progressively liable to systematic inspection by wildlife experts and environmentalists. It also served as an arena for the display of colonial power. The equatorrain forest is very much unlike the plant life of northern Europe. (23)

The colonial knowledge provided earlier was haphazard and the primeval countryside portrayed by the travelers from England also finds the same. This is factual of the first English influence of the Sundarbans, which are a mixture of relations, descriptions, concepts, ideas, and real detail. This disorganized style of accumulating knowledge endured all through the nineteenth century. The second half of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century travelogues of the Indian countryside employ the word “jungle” to indicate thick and knotted plant life, so dense as to be practically impassable. The jungle was probable to provide a few openings to pursue immense and petite entertainment, but to the Europeans the word meant peril and unsystematic. Usually Europeans used to witness tropical forests as centre for deadly equatorial maladies and hiding place for robbers and greedy animals. The similar optimism dashes throughout the majority European anecdotal records during this epoch: that at some point in future the tropical forests would be cleared. These records recommend a scheme of enhancement, the very important floorboard of which was the assembling of fresh facts to administer the indefinite.

The past account of the retrieving the Sundarbans forest is captivating. When the British East India Company gained power, the Sundarbans forests enlarged towards the neighborhood of Calcutta. The previous efforts in the
eighteenth century to recover the land ended fruitless. The recovery effort was undertaken in complete operation in the second decade of the nineteenth century, but could not achieve victory in a large level because of the destructions of tigers. William W. Hunter’s depiction of the Sundarbans as a terrified area – “a sort of drowned land, covered with jungle, smitten by malaria, and infested by wild beasts” – brings to culmination all the earlier descriptions of the area. Hunter portrayed the Sundarbans as an area “intersected by a thousand river channels and maritime backwaters, but gradually dotted, as the traveler recedes from the seaboard, with clearings and patches of rice land” In his influential essay, published in 1875, (24) He pointed down that the area was an immense terrestrial plain, where the development of land-formation was still continuing. He illustrated the jungle as very intense and remarked that the marshy environment of the landscape obstructed advancement all the way through the tropical forest. The Sundarbans possessed a mystical value for the guests who visit the tropical forest at every instant of the expedition all the way through the expanse watery backwoods, where tigers and crocodiles hang about. They were investigating the baffling tropical forest. Some divisions of the center of the area, remarkably its stretches in the southern side were impassable. “With its intertwining trees and brushwood and dangerous looking creeks running into the darkness in all directions, and the shimmering tidal waters bordered by mangrove trees, the place appeared as a fantasy world to Englishmen like Hunter”.(25)

However, the Sundarbans was a different arena for the communication between European “Selves” and Indian “Others”. The Europeans and Indians constructed analytically on one another’s consideration or thoughts of known
places. Colonial formations of the Sundarbans were crossbreed that were partially British and partially aboriginal, and frequently neither of the two. The Raj was neither completely British nor totally resident. Like the British, the native people of the Sundarbans perceived the region as cruel and perilous, a place full of banda (bushes) and kada (mud), and infected with tigers and crocodiles. Thus, native and foreign observations were at times in harmony. The amalgamation often ended in new ecological or environmental thoughts concerning to the administration and misuse of the less known environment.

The interruption of the colonial condition, the execution of Project Tiger in the post-colonial age, and the opening of the biosphere reserve programme forced a new kind of unhappiness on the population of the Sundarbans. Preservation of nature has often concerned the rearrangement of inhabitants; for example, during the early history of the US and in the past colonial world in Africa. The world’s first national park was created in Yellowstone in 1872. It included some two million acres at the intersection of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. The formation of the park concerned with the dislodgment of the NezPerce Indians from this matchless landscape. There have been many such occurrences.

Moreover placing the forest under fortification, the government steadily commenced user fees, licenses and duty under the alleged reason of conserving the reducing natural assets. The habitual consumers of the Sundarbans forests witnessed these as unaccepted interruptions of the government. The initiation of Project Tiger in 1973 and the execution of the Biosphere Reserve Programme caused additional problem to the native people of the district.
The title of the Sundarbans as a Protected Forest was particularly important. The cultivable lands and villages in and around the Protected Forest were terrestriands that had been created after 1793 and wereout of the authority of the Permanent Settlement (1793). (27)

Current studies propose that in the nineteenth century the Sundarbans and the more lively divisions of the deltaic region have soaring economic prospective and communal mobility. Starvation was a constant outbreak of nineteenth century India, and the Sundarbans became a storehouse of food grains for distraught district. (28)

The district possibly will provide accommodation effectively to the dislocated people attimes of tragedy, natural calamity or financpresssure. Thus the Sundarbansis endowed with a sort of indemnity in favor of unanticipated declines. The social and economic growth of eastern Bengal recollects the Turner theory, which highlighted the determining role of the wilds in the molding of American culture and politics. As in North America, the interior border of Bengal was not fixed. The Sundarbans’ active delta was constantly being expanded as land formation and recovery went on. The area also confirmed competent of mitigating political turmoil somewhere else in Bengal.(29)from severe damages was another significant job in the Sundarbans In the early days of the Magh intrusions, it was the custom of the settlers in the Bakarganj Sundarbans to look out for some little stream leading into the centre of the forest, where they would launch a settlement, clear the forest and develop the land.(30)
The district not only provided refuge to people from *Magh* intrusions, but also greeted many other settlers. Sir Daniel Hamilton, a prophet Scotsman, established a utopian establishment in the Sundarbans which received all, despite of caste, creed or way of life. Jatindranath Mukherjee or Bagha Jatin, an Indian activist against the British, chartered land in the Sundarbans from Sir Daniel Hamilton to refuge revolutionaries who ran night schools for adults and start an cost-effectively feasible society in 1906. (31) This is a locality on earth where everybody is equally unable to help in the face of nature and therefore on an even foothold. In 1978 a group of refugees slithered away from the Dandakaranya camp in Madhya Pradesh and came to Morichjhapi, one of the Sundarbans islands, where they prepared the land for cultivation and began to fish and established cattle farm.(32) Such intrusions of people into the Sundarbans on occasions of economic crisis were regular. Thus, like the American border line, the Sundarbans also has performed the function of a security regulator, even though to a slighter degree.

The analysis now focuses on the efforts taken by the natives to make the most of income invited the colonial rulers into around about clash with the Sundarbans tigers. In the nineteenth century the restoration of the land in the Sundarbans confirmed awfully complicated. One of the major challenges came from the local tigers, branded as “man-eaters” in the authorized documents. The tiger often assaulted the vulnerable forest clearers and created such: “Among these islands, it is in many places dangerous to land and great care must be had that the boat, which during the night is fastened to a tree, be kept at some distance from the shore, for it constantly happens that some person or another falls prey to tigers. These ferocious animals are very apt, it is said, to enter in to the boat itself while
people are asleep, and to carry away some victim who, if we are to believe the boatmen of the country, generally happen to be the stoutest and fattest of the party.” apprehensive chaos that the authorities had to suspend the work temporarily.(33)Thus the coolies (workers) have to be escorted by shikaris (hunters) who would shoot with their guns at gaps to scare the tigers away, which flourished in the wooded area. On number of times the occupation has to be stopped totally and the domesticated land would ultimately degenerate to Jungle.(34)

The tigers appeared unwilling to differentiate between white and colored men. White people emerged out to be similarly vulnerable in the encounter of the beast. In 1782 the Henckelganj market was established. Mr. Henckell’s native agent named the place after Mr. Henckell with the aim that the local tigers would no longer try to kill the people belonging to that area out of reverence and dread of the name of the first English Magistrate of Jessore. Nonetheless, the district headquarters did not fail to receive the news of tiger harassing the local people with the normal promptness. Tales about tigers promoted into myths and legends of astounding magnitude. The fallacies were extensive among Indians and Europeans similarly, and the man-eating tiger frequently `moved towards the position of the beast of European myths.

Environmental consciousness and environmental affairs of state would be a perfect plane to sketch a statement of the accomplishment of the universal. The notion of globalization first started to take its form in the post-Second World War era in this particular area. The theory of ecology was instigated in the nineteenth
century and was planned to include the study of the made-up balance between organisms and the exterior world. However, Ecology was not measured to be a very significant discipline until after the Second World War

The clash between mankind and the tigers in the Sundarbans is embedded in the socio-economic status of the local people and the man-eating behavior of the tigers. The total earnings in the Sundarbans are calculated at less than half of the country's average. Thousands of people in their fight for continued existence enter the forest courageously which is home of the crocodiles, sharks and tigers in order to gather honey, cut wood and catch fish. Their endeavour leads them face to face with the tigers. Occasionally the tigers cross the threshold of the villages near the defense regions and take away men, women or cattle. This is the area where tigers slay hundreds of people in a year. But in view of the fact that they are a safeguarded variety, killing a tiger that has been plundering a village will be penalized by the authorities to undergo the punishment; a frightening panorama for the dead one's relatives and friends. Therefore, the latest widow and the children of the deceased are not allowed to cry and trained to say that their father has kicked away the bucket because of diarrhea, because if the real reason of the death is identified the family members of the deceased will be compelled to compensate for the dead intruder, the tiger and will be handled like culprits. In his extraordinary novel *The Hungry Tide*, Amitav Ghosh offers a dramatic explanation of the clash between the native people of the Sundarbans and the beasts. In the novel, a tiger is by chance ensnared in a cattle enclosed space while attempting to take away a calf. An annoyed mass assembles rapidly and molests the injured animal with pointed long staves. A boy plunges a sharp pointed bamboo post through a window and pokes
into its eyes. Piya endeavors to the greatest to safeguard the beast but is powerless in front of the aggressive mass. Even her friends Horen Nand Fokir slide with the mob and take part in the murder. Such incidences are ordinary in the Sundarbans.

The incident depicted in the novel is descriptive of a basic and even subtle issue that keeps on attributing significantly in worldwide discussions on the administration of nature. The establishment of the tiger reserve has given rise to a flock of fresh unidentified problems, together with the human-tiger clash. The conversation that Kanai and Piya have later regarding the butchery of the tiger exposes the fundamental nature of the numerous critical moments in this intricate issue. [289-295] Ghosh has carried out wide-ranging expeditions to the central part of the Sundarbans and there is plenty of proof to illustrate that Ghosh’s depiction of that actuality is perfect.

The issue of the tiger-man clash in the Sundarbans, portrayed in this story, has its line in the policy followed both by the colonial and the post-colonial state in India. The colonial forest policy, stimulated by global laissez faire, showed the way to the displacement and dreadful conditions of the native people. The post-colonial scheme of tiger protection has additionally bequeathed to their wretchedness. The forest policy of the postcolonial state has barred the native people from the Sundarbans tiger reserve. It has dispossessed them of the right to make use of the forest, which it has conserved only for the animals. To suppress the native’s aggression towards the government’s preservation strategy, international organizations have suggested the participation of natives in the management of regional assets. The biosphere store and Sundarbans tiger preservation schedules are grounded on a greatly cooperative movement of
regional groups. But the on the earth execution of tiger preservation has ignored the immense information of the inhabitants of Sundarbans regarding their ecosystem and the territorial natural world. Accordingly, the crack between the worldwide authorized expression of preservation and the tangible putting into practice of guiding principles intended at the legitimizing the regional groups has broadened. The Forest administrators applaud themselves on the fasten hancement of the tiger populace; however, everything is not sound in the Sundarbans. Smugglers and poachers, molest the sheltered forests for precious materials to transport abroad, which is buttressed by the political and commercial benefits and protected by regional natives.

The regional residents’ aggression at the authorized officers who are in charge of protecting the forest permits the poachers to hunt in the forest very easily. The government puts forth its close watch of the sheltered forest chiefly with the help of the Forest Department, whose executives have been identified to misuse their post for their personal gain, performing a main part in the stealing of timber, deer meat and hides of the tigers. The Sundarbans has also given protection for inhabitants who make a living through the robbery at the riverside and others who make a benefit of the border adopt two new larcenies: kidnapping and piracy. (35)

**Dialogues for the Sundarbans**

Ghosh obtained his Doctoral degree in Social Anthropology from the University of Oxford in 1982. His fictional and non-fictional work powerfully exchanges his concern in “representation in both its political and discursive senses” (36) On these conditions, Ghosh speaks of and speaks up for the Sundarbans in *The
*Hungry Tide.* Before writing the novel, Ghosh stayed a considerable amount of time in the Sundarbans (37) including travelling with Annu Jalais (401), a postdoctoral researcher at the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and the author of a recent monograph, *Forest of Tigers: People, Politics and Environment in the Sundarbans* (36) In *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh wanted both to narrate a fictional story set in the Sundarbans and to present a meticulously studied realistic description of the country’s amazing past. Ghosh puts in plain words: The characters in this novel are fabricated, as are two of its main locations, Lusibari and Garjontola. However the less important locations, such as Canning, Gosoba, Satjelia, Morichjhapi and Emilybari, do in fact be real and were definitely established or developed in the method hinted at here (401). The integration of fictional and factual pasts and natural features is vital to Ghosh’s mission in *The Hungry Tide* and communicates to his analysis of the novel as “a meta-form that transcends the boundaries that circumscribe other kinds of writing, rendering meaningless the usual workaday distinctions between historian, journalist, anthropologist etc.” (39) In a nutshell, Ghosh’s illustration of the Sundarbans both echoes and facilitates his examination of the places between academic disciplines and literary genres. More significantly, this passionate and focal point on the environmental precision of specific sites and their pasts is characteristic of Ghosh’s profession of fictional and non-fictional writing. While reading the Postcolonial Island in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide* islands, it is certain that he is undoubtedly enthralled by his passionate spheres such as oceans, tide waters, rivers, when he uses often such locations as the settings with the intention of scrutinizing and analyzing pro-self-government details of British
colonialism and its consequences. In novels such as *The Glass Palace*, a distressing family and political narrative which engages a series of the seaside, waterways and Indian islands, Burma and Malaya, the changeableness and uncertainty of his background, both in terms of politics and geography, is vital to Ghosh’s examination of the remarkable brutality of nation wide guiding principles and international clashes imposed on families and groups of people living in territories of controversy and on the border regions of the nations.

Similar to Ghosh’s many works, *The Hungry Tide* investigates the implication of the spots to the creation and expression of individual and communal identities in India and the Indian diaspora. Ghosh’s resistance to the tag “postcolonial” is well branded. In an interview in 2007, he stated his first choice to be attentive to the particularity of each “place” (Kumar, 2007: 105), more willingly than “to imagine”, for example, “that the post colony of India is the same as the postcolony of Pakistan” (40) Ghosh elucidates the effect of this observation on his approach to writing novels: I don’t want to write just about the individual in a particular place. I also want to write about what is there, the geology, the deep time that exists outside the individual, and the immediacy of time, and the times that make up every aspect of the circumstance (41)

Hence, for Ghosh *The Hungry Tide* indicates to the sensitivity to the precision of particular places involves imagining them in spatand temporal words: “All narratives are really the unfolding of events in time”(42) And, in connections to the Sundarbans, a land characteristically explained in terms of “nature” and accordingly by the “absence of history” (43), he recommends, “the dense layering
of… history is what makes this place possible, that gives it a location, [and] makes it continually surprising” (44). Jalais (45) writes, “The usual portrayal of the Sundarbans is that of an exotic mangrove forest full of Royal Bengal tigers rather than that of a region which is often referred to as 'mager mulluk' for the lack of control and aggression which typify it; Besides, the inadequacy of fundamental framework such as electricity, drinking water and health centres originate it as one of the poorest regions of West Bengal”. *The Hungry Tide* asks the booklovers to pay specattention to chronological past and modern-day approach to the islands and waterways of the Sundarbans, an area known very little in outside India. In this regard, the language with which one of the vital characters, Nirmal, starts his journal vibrate more than the text: I am writing these words in a place that you will probably never have heard of: an island on the southern edge of the tide country, a place called Morichjhāpi … (67).

**Reading the Postcolonial Island in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Hungry Tide***

The portrayal of the Sundarbans as “virgin” country, the countryside in its undamaged normal state, is both innocent and measures to a severe disparagement of native information and individualities. Anyway, *The Hungry Tide* portrays the Sundarbans as a region where clear unfriendliness of people residing in the country and out of the country and well - informed to ill - informed collapse and turn out to be indefensible; the landscape of the tidewater islands emerges to be symbolic of the weakness of human kind and individuality, particularly in connection to the relations to place.
The Hungry Tide and Key Issues for Island Studies

_The Hungry Tide’s_ intensely touching story of “outsiders” who sojourn and then inhabit in the Sundarbans might plan a path past the intellectual predicament which this islander versus outsider duality creates. In other words, the analysis of the predominance of the insider/outsider duality jeopardizes strengthening the supposition that the most legitimate and believable explanations of islands will be provided from the natives, an individuality which this novel makes difficult.

The novel begins on the platform of a Kolkata train station where Kanai and Piya are each waiting for the train to Canning, a port on the “threshold of the Sundarbans” (9). Piya is a scientist, a cetologist; she has intended a sight observation tour to study the aquatic animal community of the Sundarbans. Kanai, who possesses a profitable trade as a translator, is on the way to the island of Lusibari, at the appeal of his aunt, Nilima. She desired him to scrutinize some documents left for him by his uncle, Nirmal, of late found out those documents only many years after the death of Kanai’s uncle. The first chapter is projected from the Kanai’s point of view, Kanai, who “spotted [Piya] the moment he stepped onto the crowded platform” (3). While Kanai experiences and reveals a positive cosmopolitanism, Piya is taken aback from the beginning by sensing even more a “stranger” (34) in West Bengal than she has on field tours to other places. On the Kolkata railway station platform, she is “struck” by the “unabashed way in which [Kanai] stared at everyone around them, taking them in, sizing them up, sorting them all into their places” (10). Piya on the contrary to Kanai is fully conscious of her scarce of knowledge of “her own place … in the great scheme of things” (35).
It is instantaneously obvious to Kanai that Piya is “out of place” (3), but he is not able to reveal his own strangeness in this environment. Kanai is the “one other ‘outsider’ on the platform” (4). His look of “middle-aged prosperity and metropolitan affluence” (5) suggests he is also out of place, and “quickly attract[s] his own share of attention” (4). Nonetheless, as the story develops, it grows to bemore and clearer that neither Piya nor Kanai is, in any clear-cut way, an “outsider” in the island. They both are not only attached to the island by their Bengali heritage, but also by the intricate knots of family and memory, but everyone in the Sundarbans becomes an “outsider”. As (46) makes clear, the characters in this novel “[operate] under the sign of migration” rather than native belonging. Even Fokir, a survivor of Morichjhâpi and the character with the most cherished information of the country, is more a refugee who has settled there rather than a native islander. As The Hungry Tide illustrates, stirring one’s familiarity of the science and traditions of islands and its “waterscape” (47) should engage both being adjusted to an assortment of points of view and being aware that there is no bird’s eye through which any area in the island can be wholly observed. The more significantly, the novel reveals clearly that the insecurity and changeableness of islands is not just an occupation of the confines of human viewpoints, but built-in traits of meeting points where land and water merge together.

As Mondal (48) comments, Ghosh’s novels repeatedly deconstruct the hierarchy of national character. Nirmal, a retired school principal, suggests assisting the Morichjhâpi colonizers by teaching the children about the Sundarbans. He envisages his first lesson to the children should begin by screening a map of the Bay of Bengal, not as a way of presenting facts, but to start with the
stories of the island: “This map shows that in geology, as in myth, there is a visible Ganga and a hidden Ganga: one flows on land and one beneath the water” (181), whereas Nirmal never got the chance to teach the children of Morichjhāpi. His story of the Sundarbans educates his nephew how to ‘read’ the islands, but with consciousness that no analysis is ever last or absolute: ... a landscape is not unlike a book—a compilation of pages that overlap without any two ever being the same. People open the book according to their taste and training, their memories and desires: for a geologist the compilation opens at one page, for a boatman at another, and still another for a ship’s pilot, a painter and so on. On occasion these pages are ruled with lines that are invisible to some people, while being real for others, as real, as charged and as volatile as high-voltage cables.(224)

As cited above, Ghosh employs the tributaries as an intense representation for the “flow” between the present and the past of the characters and locations in the novel. The current story of Piya’s and Kanai’s exciting and scholarly exchange in the Sundarbans traverse with, and is informed by, the tale of Nirmal’s change twenty years earlier. In the same way, the early clash between Kanai’s and Piya’s views of the world reverberate the nervousness between Nirmal and his wife, Nilima, which attained its peak in the course of time guiding to the Morichjhāpi event. When Piya starts her research, she is sure that the accomplishment of field study tours to strange places relies on residual settler, on keeping away from “intimate involvements” (112); she evades friendship with natives and suppresses any inquisitiveness about native language and culture. Anyway, the occasion when she was in the riverboat with Fokir—a “small island of silence, afloat on the muteness of the river” (84)—completely alters her feeling of her own place in
connection to her “vocation” and her Bengali tradition. In the next half of the novel, Piya goes on board on her second study of the tide water dolphins with Fokir as her guide and Kanai as her translator. Early in the journey, Piya is being informed by Kanai about the past of Morichjhâpi and its blow of it on his aunt and uncle’s bond. He explains how Nilima inferred Nirmal’s back up for the expatriates as an endeavor to stick on to the Marxist principles of his formative years; “she would tell you that the reason he got mixed up with the settlers in Morichjhâpi was because he couldn’t let go of the ideals of revolution” Kanai disagree: “As I see it, Nirmal was possessed more by words than politics. There are people who live through poetry and he was one of them” (282). Nirmal’s sensitive advancing towards the world, particularly by reading Rainer Maria Rilke, which to Kanai means, that his uncle’s faith in historical utilitarianism which was built on an eccentric explanation of Marxist ideas: For him it meant that everything was connected: the trees, the sky, the weather, people, poetry, science, nature. He hunted down facts the way a magpie collects shiny things. Yet when he strung them all together, somehow they did become stories – of a kind. (282-3)

The tenseness of any resistance between native and immigrants standpoints, between the conditions of islands and the conditions of other places, is also exposed through the portrayal of an islandic setting which is “always mutating, always unpredictable” (7). In the Sundarbans environment, standard descriptions of Sundarbans landscape, seclusion, lagging, miniaturization, disintegrate. At ebb tide, Lusibari, an imaginary isle designed after original locations, a “gigantic earthen ark, floating serenely above its surroundings. Only at high tide was it evident that the interior of the island lay well below the level of the water ... a
flimsy saucer that could tip over at any moment...” (37). At Lusibari life is potential only because of the “tall embankment that circled its perimeter, holding back the twice-daily flood” (59). The Hungry Tide tenders a great interpretation of the weakness and eventual temporariness of civilization; this novel disallows to establish the relationship between people and locality. Instead, it interprets the level to which such relationships are constantly constructions of language and culture. the storyteller appears to be the closest to Kanai in this aspect.

The Hungry Tide does not recommend that recognition with or connection to locality is therefore erroneous or found on forged ideologies. The coast, the “bādh”, is representational of the significance and the requirement of creative natural features. Nirmal gives details in his notebook about the bādh that “…the bādh is not just the guarantor of human life on our island; it is also our abacus and archive, our library of stories” (202). At the time of the Morichjhāpi disaster he takes Fokir, who was five years old that time, to look at the bādh: “See how frail it is, how fragile. Look at the waters that flow past it and how limitless they are, how patient, how quietly they bide their time. Just to look at it is to know why the waters must prevail, later if not sooner” (205,). Nirmal desires to put the boy’s “young mind at rest” (ibid.), but makes up his mind not to mislead him: “A storm will come, the waters will rise and the bādh will succumb, in part or in whole. It is only a matter of time” (ibid). Nirmal says to the boy to lay his head on the bādh and listen; he perceives sound of grating of the “multitudes of crabs ... burrowing into the bādh” (206). This important scene puts in a nutshell the thoughts about migrant establishment and tide water islands that occupy the pivot of this novel. Nirmal enlightens Fokir that the “frail fence” of the bādh will be shattered by the
“monstrous appetites [of the] crabs, the winds and the storms”. Nirmal lets know the boy, when the subsequent tempest hits the island, “Neither angels nor men will hear us, nor, as for the animals, they won’t hear us either” (ibid). He quotes Rilke: the animals “already know by instinct/we’re not comfortably at home/in our translated world” (ibid) to make his point clear. Nirmal and Fokir’s discussion at the bādh indicate the colossal and destructive tempest in the final episodes of the novel, where Fokir passes away while trying to rescue Piya from the gigantic waves and flying wreckages. In a nutshell, adopting any localityas home includes “translating” it into language and narrative, but the “epic mutability” (154) of the Sundarbans discloses the tenselessness of immigrants’ establishingdevelopment.

*The Hungry Tide* helps tocomprehend that the human knowledge of an island or cluster of islands is dependent upon the intricacies of language, excursive and worldly issues. The novel unintentionally bestows to the investigation of the collaborative prospective of island researches, because it exemplifies the grade to which no particular punitive structure is up to the mark of a complete analysis of a specific island or peninsula. *The Hungry Tide* may possibly drive the readers to imagine in novel ways about immigrants’ establishment on; particularly, it evaluates the sense of belonging to islands is even now noted by the inheritance of British colonialism. Any link to a locality is constantly in the course of being complete and responsible to alteration. Whilst Nirmal’s maxim, “A place is what you make of it”, proposes that mankind has organization in connection to their setting, the portrayal of the ‘terrain’s hostility to their presence” (8) in the Sundarbans reminds people neither own nor be in charge of the places where they live.
Altruism and contentment of the inhabitants are the impulses of the immigrant characters that encompass the forces to forward the story of Ghosh towards the essential possible culmination conclusion of their jobs. Nilima endures the coldness of her husband. But she never lets widows of Sundarbans to struggle with their own group. She is touched by her impulse for some legal deed that would associate an effect on the back breaking wretched survival of disaster and famine in Luciburi.

She is strained by the view of the miserable life at Luciburi, a village in West Bengal. She arrives there because of some adverse situations. She observed that, most of the families manage to survive on a single meal every day; their store is deprived by flood and tempest. The island where they try to accommodate also does not provide much of instant human values. Besides it establishes deadly to lead life there. Not even a single day passes without the reports of someone being attacked by a crocodile, or killed by a tiger or bit by snake, etc. she discovers the shocking fact that a majority of the women belonging to the island are clad in white which indicates widowhood. They are also recognized by white saris without any designs or border, lack of ornaments, bangles or kumkum, very shortly after her coming to Luciburi. The spectacle inspires her compassion with helping impulse. She recognizes that, their condition is made worse by the excessive tax assigned by the Lucibur’s skilled shopkeepers. Their wretched position imbued in her an attitude of discharging something favorable for the said degraded human beings of the earth: This tiny seeding of an ideal Mohila Sanghatan-The Women’s Union and ultimately to the Badabon Trust... the union Nilima had founded...continue to grow,
drawing in more and more members and offering an ever increasing number of services medical –paralegal, agricultural (81).

She makes an effort to evaporate her grief by doing service to the downtrodden like all the other characters. She establishes to be a well-wisher of the ill-treated and degraded people. She also tries to regenerate, reposition the evacuated, ill-treated and vulnerable, widows and the youths. She is mocked by her husband when she turns down to help the immigrants of Morichjhâpi on his intimidation. She gives good reason for her choice by disputing that she does not wish to carry out something which is brutal and annihilative. She may have wished to help but it was not possible on certain grounds. The government had made it clear that they would put an end at throwing out the inhabitants.

Any person who is found alleged of helping those ill-treated people was certain to land into problem. Nilima had the hospital and the amalgamation to think of: “she could afford to alienate the government. She has to consider the greater good” (122). Philanthropy attributes almost all the downtrodden characters in Ghosh. Fokir in The Hungry Tide forfeits himself to safeguard Piya’s life from the deadly wind speed of Tsunami. Kusum is ‘used’ killed, and thrown into water with other women of settlers. But she is not willing to desert the settlers (262-277). She prefers brutal death but does not have enough courage to separate herself from others.

The recipients of the benefits of sacrifices also try to give back as much as probable because of unselfishness made known to them who have offered them something. Piya is powerless to forget Fokir. She accumulates money from the United States to serve for the folk in Sundarbans.
After having a majority reading of Ghosh, it is understood that the selection of characterization in his works are of subjugated. Always there is a tone of the people who have been estranged and disillusioned by the system that is harsh and mean. But as per human tendency, they are able to forget the tyrannical conditions and go beyond both interior and exterior restrictions and arrive at great pinnacles. At the outset they are certainly deficient in optimistic involvement. This lack emerges from shocking exchanges and domineering destructive residential milieu. With the stimulations to achieve genuineness of their survival, by admitting their fate and their duties, they are made stronger by the barrier of time. Each one of them comes out successful and confident. They tackle all the tests that come across their path to live their lives. This impulse is predominant in the characters of this novel.

Boundaries and margins are very important in everyday life of the people. Amitav Ghosh also knows the importance of borders and boundaries and it is well reflected in approximately all the novels of Amitav Ghosh as they reflect the idea of borders. The talented Amitav Ghosh has taken care of the idea of continuous passage, or with the denial of boundaries and borders. In order to disclose the notion of crossing the border, he at times gets the aid of characters, events and on occasions symbols too. The contemporary idea of boundaries and margins selected by Ghosh, consist of two diverse, but interconnected area of connotation. Hence Ghosh argues both the legislative effect and the practical aspects of boundaries and margins by revealing the organized associations. One can without difficulty locate these sorts of associations in The Hungry Tide.
The concept of border is in someplace straight on the one stand point and described by symbols on the other. Ghosh shows clear distinction between native and foreigners and this epitome is ground on physical and cultural mind-set of the characters. Kanai, Piya and Refugees are portrayed in this novel as foreigners. Whereas Fokir, Moyna, Nilima, Nirmal, Kusum and Horen as natives. Kanai Dutt is a multilingual person who owns a translation agency in Delhi. Ghosh positioned him as a foreigner, "Kanai was the one other 'outsider' on the platform. . ." (4). At the age of forty he returns to Lucibari to study the documents left by his uncle Nirmal during the last days of his life at Morichjhāpi. As he has nothing important to accomplish with the culture and atmosphere of Lucibari, he is considered as a foreigner.

Another foreigner is Piyali Roy, the Indian-American cetologist. She is researching the unusual species of Irrawaddy dolphin that exists in the waters of the Sundarbans. She has missed her individuality and considers herself just as a scientist and researcher, who works without any feeling in isolation and bodily uneasiness, and in areas where she knows either anyone or their language. So she is also considered as a foreigner. The other foreigners are the immigrants who come across East Pakistan in the forties and fifties. They were kept in the expatriate camp in Central India against their will. In 1978 a group of expatriates escaped from the encampment and arrived at the islands of Morichjhāpi in the Sundarbans with the aim of inhabiting there. But as they were foreigners they were expelled by the government in May, 1979. Fokir, Moyna, Kusum, Horen are the characters who are residents of the Sundarbans. Fokir is Kusum’s son. After the death of Kusum in the ever forgettable mass murder, Fokir is taken care of by his
remote family member, Horen. Fokir grows up into an uneducated fisherman; even then he loves and is familiar with the labyrinthine water ways of the flora and fauna of the Sundarbans. And he always continues to be a native. Like Fokir, Moyna is also a native of that specific land and marries Fokir. Kusum is also called a native. Although Kusum has departed to Dhanbad looking for her mother, married and settled there. But she came back to Sundabans after her husband’s death. Nirmal and Nilima do not belong to that land; they first came to Lucibari in 1950.

Nirmal taught English Literature in Calcutta. Nilima was a student in one of his classes. Though belonging to a high class society she selected Nirmal as her husband and married him in 1949. Owing to some situations they move towards Lucibari. They determined to reside a couple of years on that island. Nirmal joined a school, and Nilima established a union which was later named as Badabon Development Trust. Both Nirmal and Nilima agreed and adopted the culture and way of living of that island and slowly emerged as natives. Expatriates from Bangladesh, together with Kusum, Fokir, Moyna and Horen are portrayed in this novel as weak and Government, natural world, flora and fauna as powerful. Ghosh has skillfully drawn the line between the powerful and weak as the line inverted in some situations.

In West Bengal, Left Front government was in authority, when the expatriate colonizers were expelled by force from the island. They are totally vulnerable against the power of government. They have no food to eat, no water to drink. There was no one to help them because, “. . . anyone suspected of helping them was sure to get into trouble” (122). The people of the islands are also
powerless on the other side against the strength of the wild animals such as tigers, snakes and crocodiles. The weak, poor and underprivileged people turn out to be the trouble-free victims for these wild animals.

This weaker community does not have a leader of their own. Hence, they are not able to make anyone listen to their words and comprehend, and no one takes care of their condition. Nature also plays its powerful role, as the island always has to mete out the constant hazard from tropical storms and tides. But if nature is a destroyer it also acts as a preserver for the survivors. The Mangroves forest “...served as a barrier against nature's fury, absorbing the initial onslaught of cyclonic winds, waves and tidal surges” (286). If they were not there in the Sundarbans, the tide country would have sunk earlier.

Ghosh has thrown some serious queries. One of them is the boundary line that separates the human life and animal life. The Left Front government of West-Bengal by force expelled the Bangladeshi settlers from Morichjhāpī. In that atrocious expulsion hundreds of innocent people were murdered, their habitats were set fire; this action shows that there was no worth for human life. Kusum in The Hungry Tide is one among the expelled at Morichjhāpī struggled against the government's efforts to eliminate them from their residences. Kusum narrates her struggle to Nirmal... the worst part was not the hunger or the thirst; it was to sit here, helpless, and listen to the policeman making their announcements, hearing them say that our lives our existence, was worth less than dirt or dust. “This island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals, it is a part of a reserve forest, it belongs to a project to save tigers, which is paid for by people
from all around the world."... Who are these people? I wondered who love animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them. (262). What is given emphasis here is the spontaneous way in which the refugees' lives are handles by the government because it associates "development" with overseas support. It is a mockery that men were slain by men for saving animals. It was a truth, a sad happening that really occurred in Sundarbans, and not simply a fabricated relating of an imaginary experience. The same fact is underlined again when Piya notices a tiger is killed by the villagers for having debilitated men and cattle. Piya is very much disturbed by the tiger killing and in a dreadful show of selfishness to human life expresses disapproval of the killing of the tiger: "Everywhere in the world dozens of people are killed every day – on roads, in cars, in traffic. Why is this any worse?"(301). This is what activates Kanai to provide the notable statement in the whole novel:... it was people like you... who made a push to protect the wildlife here, without regard for the human costs. And I'm complicit because people like me – Indians of my class, curry flavour with their Western patrons (301). The pain of an animal surpassed Piya's feeling can still converse "emphatically" about "preserving" species and observing them in habitation and also about nature "intended". Her opinion is that the purpose of nature is the largest part vital for every life form, for it maintains them to be lively; if this butchery continuous then no other species will remain. Since it is extremely tough to traverse the invented line that detaches human life from animal life, there is necessity for a border line that segregates animal life and the human life. Authenticity is exceedingly far-off from utopia, it is what one can sense and experience while the fantasy can carry an individual to utopia. Ghosh in this novel pencils in a distinguishing line between
actuality and utopia through the characters like Sir Daniel and Nirmal. A Scotsman, Daniel MacKinnon Hamilton, arrives at colonial India to search for his riches. He joins a company in Calcutta. During his sailing in P&O lines by chance he travels on the waters of the Sundarbans islands. “When the Scotsman looked upon the crab-covered shores of the tide country, he saw not mud, but something that shone brighter than gold” (49).

Being unobservant of the land and directed by archetypal civilizations, he asks: “why is this valuable soil allowed to lie fallow?” (50). The island was completely incompatible for human inhabitation, as it is likely to disastrous starvation, inundation and tempest. It is occupied by tigers, crocodiles, snakes and multitudes of the country’s impoverished. It is in this country he determined to establish a Marxist utopian human inhabitant, where everyone would be considered as equivalent. His effort was to set up a casteless, classless human social order and enforce his opinion of human–environment bond on the Sundarbans. Hamilton’s utopian civilization could by no means in fact be successful because he had disregarded the historical authenticity of sects. Indeed Hamilton was simply an English colonizer and he also was short of the requisite when first came to Lucibari in 1950.

Unlike Fokir, Kusum and Kusum’s mother are helpless living beings. The influential Dilip Choudhary, captures Kusum’s mother and puts her up for sale at someplace in Calcutta. Kusum is fortunately rescued by Horen. Moyna also is associated with the helpless community though she is very desirous. There was no school in her village and so she walked daily to neighboring village to fulfil her
school education. Her parents gave her in marriage with uneducated Fokir who was catching crabs to make an earning to lead his life. Even then she did not abandon her decision of completing her idea, and joins the trust and undergoes training in hygiene, nutrition, first aid and midwifery, and serves as a complete nurse in the hospital and grows to be dominant.

Considering neither past reality nor natural issues into consideration and working on the maxim “revolution or nothing”, Nirmal seems to be a odd man out. Like Hamilton, Nirmal also conceived of a society where: “...men and women could be formers in the morning poets in the afternoon and carpenters in the evening” (53). He trusts that everything can be attained by “revolution”. But both the men were unsuccessful because they unobserved the actuality concerning historical conditions of the community and their natural landscape. It is a worldwide truth that one cannot achieve something by being totally blind to actuality. Fantasy may lend a hand but one has to surpass the imaginary line that separates actuality and imagination. The Hungry Tide is also an evidence of the boundary that is present between lack of knowledge and knowledge. Those who surpass the limitations of ignorance can get knowledge. But sometimes this border may be deceptive as it is tricky to cut a line between innocence and knowledge. Sometimes innocence works as knowledge and knowledge as innocence. Kanai as a translator -cum-interpreter has the education of six languages. He takes the occupation of relating Nirmal’s journal in English which is how the Morichjhâpi episode is conveyed to the reader. Afterwards he also assumes the duty of translating Fokir and other native people to Piya. At one point Piya asks Kanai to make clear the substance of a customary song that Fokir is reciting? Kanai replies:
“You asked me what Fokir was singing and I said I couldn’t translate it: it was too difficult. And this was a history that is not just his own but also of this place, the tide country” (354). Hence inspite of his profound awareness, Kanai becomes illiterate. Fokir is an uneducated person; his innocence forms his information about environment. He never exhibits his education. Through him Ghosh communicates the principal subaltern care of being listened.

The uneducated Fokir’s response, which addresses a definite comprehensive notion about existence and the relationship between human and the natural world, is in harsh dissimilarity to Piya’s cracked and defective ideas regarding environment even though it is branch of her vocation. Piya’s scientific knowledge proves to be of no use, when she was in danger; it is the Fokir’s innate awareness that saved Piya. Ghosh also wonderfully depicts the margin between the discarded and the received. Sir Daniel, Nirmal and Kanai are also discarded by nature because they did not comprehend the rule of natural world. Saswat S. Das aptly comments, “Kanai’s fall, in a literal sense, indicates nature's way of rejecting those who rush into its fold without understanding its law, which is one of perpetual change and transformation” (235). Love also tracks the similar law. Between Nirmal and Horen, Kusum selects the second. Once more, Piya and Moyna inherently make out that Fokir is more valuable than Kanai. Moyna, despite her discontent with Fokir's not good enough habits, identifies his right – minded personal heart and prefers to live with him. In this fashion Moyna passes through the boundary Ghosh in this novel defines the subject of boundary passage not only through his characters but also through images.
The mainly important and attractive one is the religious group of Bon Bibi, which has been inherited through the generation, through the oral tradition of story and song. When Fokir, Tutul along with Piya visit Garjontola, Piya notices an undersized hut, a “leaf thatched alter or shrine” (152). It rings a bellof her mother’s pooja-table, but the Gods statues placed inside do not look like any of the Hindu gods. There is a statue of Bon Bibi and Shah Jangoli along with a tiger. Fokir and his son carry out a ritual and proffer some leaves and flowers before the idols: ... Piya acknowledged a slogan that echoed like 'Allah'. Actually she had no consideration to guess in relation to Fokir's creed, but it came to her mind then that he may be a Muslim. But more rapidly she had contemplated like this, and then it hit her that a Muslim would never pray to an icon like the one presented there. Fokir’s way of prayer seemed very much similar to her mother’s Hindu poojas – and yet the words seemed to suggest otherwise”. (152). The bizarre concomitant of the name of Allah with pooja gesticulations is a symbol of passing over the edge between the Hindu and Muslim communities. In this novel Ghosh has also engaged the mark of dolphin to propose the idea of passing over the frontier.

The Gangetic dolphin, Orcaella brevirostris fascinated Indian – American cetologist Piya, who has come to Sundarbans passing so many substantial precincts. “Piya chases dolphins, who carry her always across fixed boundaries...” (235). For researching the atypical dolphin in Sundarbans she also crosses the communal cultural blockades. Piya’s lacks the proficiency of her mother tongue, which is also the native language of Sundarbans. The deficiency of the community familiarity drives her to take up the help of Fokir for her study. In this endeavour
Kanai is also engaged who is assigned the task of translating the Fokir’s language as well as community to Piya.

Ghosh investigates the notion of elimination of limitations or religious conviction, sects, language and gender, through the communication among Piya, Kanai and Fokir and through their hardships and their past life. In this moving novel all the characters disclose the idea of passing boundary. All through the novel, Nilima is the only individual who handles life and work effectively. She leads her life in an unstable equilibrium, with the consciousness that all her life’s vocation can be demanded by nature in minutes. She is conscious that, “... building something is not the same as dreaming of it: building is always a matter of well-chosen compromises” (214). She passes the boundaries, while she witnesses the anguish and women abuse of that island which shocked her. Hence she makes up her mind to institute a “Mohila Sangothon” – the union for that island’s women. By means of setting up this union she desires to lend a hand to the underprivileged, deprived, exploited women of that island. She even crosses the cultural margin when she becomes aware of the bond between Kusum and Kusum’s husband and takes care of him commonly. Nirmal also surpasses the limit when he gives education to the children of the Morichjhâpi settlers. His compassion for Kusum proves his notion of go beyond the limitations of sects. Similar is done by Piya when she recognizes she loves Fokir.

In this connection Christopher Rollason sincerely comments, “If Nirmal as a Marxist believed in a rapprochement across class barrier that could bring him and Kusum together on some level, a generation later Piya repeats this pattern with
Kusum's son Fokir”. She ones again outpaces the margin as she makes a decision to set her residence in Lucibari and to facilitate the widowed Moyna and Tutul whilst she keeps on her research project. Kanai also exceeds the limitation. He deserts his pastway of living which he followed in Delhi so as to come back to his ancestry in Calcutta, to revive his vanished love of native language, and to Piya. In this background Banibrata Mahanta remarks: “It signifies a symbolic relocations of the earlier positions of Kanai and Piya and symbolizes a return to native traditions, away from borrowed constructs of knowledge” (104). The “hungry tide” as an emblem of environmental powers, provides to refuse the authoritative creation of frontiers between higher culture and life styles.

The tide helps to set things in view. The flood takes away the life of Fokir. It seems to be a Nature’s price because Fokir has lent a hand to a foreigner to cross the threshold of that island where those who enterprise there with an adulterated spirit will not go back. The same flood which kills Fokir transforms Kanai and Piya also. They understand the unimportance of border lines existing between science and creed and that science cannot fight against the rage of nature. The flood also discloses the momentary temperament of man built positioned in opposition to basic powers. It also exhibits the importance of those things that are referred to as not suitable for the needs of the modern globalset-up.

Thus the tide is a mediator of natural world, which hands out in its stir the consciousness for a requirement of discourse with the native culture of the world. It is obvious from the above analysis that tide (nature) wipes out the concept of partitions and permits everyone to lead their life without any restraint.
Conclusion

_The Hungry Tide_ is an essential novel other than a heroic novel. It does not authorize the position of man in the world as readers may precisely look forward to, and surely not the cleverness of one section, the educated over that of another, represented by the fisherman.

Even though the story starts with such diversities, there is a wonderful balance between various points of view and the limitations of creed, gender and land are surpassed, with the implied denial of margins and limitations. In this novel, Ghosh struggle with giant questions like the clash between mankind and their environment, the daily fight of livelihood and insensible hypothesis of justice that never considers the distress of the people. Environmental turn down in Sundarbans is also a grave problem hoisted by Ghosh. Ghosh himself says: . . . one of the things that strikes you so much is the real paucity of bird life. You hardly see any birds at all. . . . In years past, when you went to the mudflats, they would be covered with crabs. Now, the crabs have just vanished. Similarly, the Sundarbans was named after a kind of tree called the sundari tree. These trees have become incredibly rare; you hardly ever see them these days.

The Boundaries are marked due to some political intentions which ultimately affect the pleasant atmosphere. These kinds of partition ends in nothing but wars, mass murder, rebellions and discontent among the residents. Ghosh depicts the limit between languages, religions, socsects, ancestry, mankind and natural world and also between, city and village. _The Hungry Tide_ is a profound, delicate and multifarious novel.
The widespread stretch of water enclosing tiny islands and meandering watercourses known as the Sundarbans spreads from India to Bangladesh. This less popular tide country tenders no detectable borders between the river and the sea, and at times not even stuck between land and water. The island is given name after the Sundari tree, as the mangrove is called in the vicinity. It is a region of islands that become visible and vanish, occasionally quickly, sometimes greater than several years. In this unstable place, the natives try to make out a survival, along with the other living organisms such as tigers, crocodiles, and the omnipresent thick mangroves that emerge as soon as the land is uninterrupted for a short span of time. In this gloomy survival Ghosh attractively presents the subject of traversing the borders. In this extensively read novel Ghosh has portrayed the borders between natives and expatriates, wealthy and unfortunate and influentand helpless. He even deals with the borders of language, religion and communal sects.

The tiger- threat has always been the major issue of supervising the unidentified in the Sundarbans. This is the past condition as well as present condition. During the period before colonialism, the Sundarbans normally performed as a safeguard helping people to challenge any unanticipated proceedings. It effectively shelters the dislocated people at times of disaster, natural calamities or finanepressure. In the early British India, the Sundarbans continued to be a “mystic drowned land”, “dangerous”, “unknown” and difficult to handle or regulate. However, in due course of time, the Europeans understood its prospective as an unexploited natural reserve and started to take the required actions to alter it into an income producing jungles. The activities incorporated adjusting with the tiger threat; a task that was assigned to the native shikaris. The
British authorities were persuaded that native equipped with effective native details would be more competent of fighting the tigers on this unsafe territory. The post-colonial government has expelled the local residents and their awareness from their preservation scheme. The blind-fold attitude of the authorized preservation guidelines in independent India is revealed in its ignoring of the immense knowledge of ecosystem and wildlife management, innate in the local community. This native familiarity is hit by the administrators whenever needed and then cast away when not needed. The importance of conventional familiarity of biological assets requires to be recognized in the completely of the native socand cultural environment, together with the immediate residencies. But regrettably the native groups of people have never been requested to be a component of the decision-making procedure. The worldwide idiom of preservation and its execution have agreed to new complications which have separated the native groups of people, and this has prepared the new unexpected even more uncontrollable. The Sundarbans is accordingly a perfect example of how all the people traverse across the differences and are stimulated and altered because of their travelling. It is through this hostility that universals turn out to be sensibly successful. Nevertheless they can by no means accomplish their guarantee of universality. They may go beyond districts, but cannot form the world according to their likeness. Today, the Sundarbans still remains a concealed, indistinctly measured ecological reserve, regardless of the truth that on document it is a National Park. (49)
CHAPTER - V

THE CIRCLE OF REASON AND
THE DIVERSE CULTURE

As a literary writer Ghosh turns out to be the exemplar of the truth that, the novel should be focussed at identifying key to the general habitual troubles of people which comprise middle class people among the general public of diverse customs and belief. He exposes the historical actions in evaluating with the postcolonial conditions and employs the life of refugees under attack for survival, for employment opportunities, for salary, for finance, for a dwelling, eventually for an enhanced well - being. The search for identity of The Circle of Reason is in several ways dissimilar from the conventional subject matters of the novels of former period.

While colonial history and the Eastern society turns out to be his storyline device, his diminutive scrutiny, remarkable features, extensive research and widespread journey facilitate him create his characters emerge life-like and his plots spellbinding. He takes efforts to cross-examine and reconstruct marginalized pasts and individualities and in the course evaluate the authorized construction of authority and knowledge.

All the fictional works written by Ghosh include a distinctive subject matter of their own but there is an internal unity in every one of them. The strings around which he fabricates his tales consider the force of colonization on the inhabitants of the terrain, the unsure affiliation of the identical social order to
current trend and visiting again and rebuilding the past account of the people, conventionally believed to be subdued. Ghosh gives powers to them with a right to be heard. When the British marched into India, the Indian community was already segregated on the grounds of four prominent castes. The British rulers easily affected another extensive based-division, Westerners and non-Westerners with terrible penalties.

Ghosh selects the persistent setback of caste and creed in the Indian social order and illustrates how the under-privileged public, the subaltern who continued an unspeakable life. But he does not depict them as unvoiced and timid. The common public portrayed in both his works of fiction and non-fiction is labor class who willingly or unwillingly departs from their native soil either due to political conflict or of their being harassed before and after the Indian independence. The mass departure in the history of the nation caused an issue to the crucial thoughts of one’s self, group of people and country. These unfortunate characters miss their personal as well as national identities being plucked down from their family tree because of colonial or post-colonial dislodgment. They have to migrate from Burma to India, Malaya, Singapore and reverse again and in the course they miss their feeling of affection and possession to motherland or country.

‘The Circle of Reason’ makes an unconventional reading. The form of the novel may be taken to symbolize the chaotic state of today's society. But the parallel can be taken only to a certain limit because howsoever unorthodox; the novel does have plot, theme and characterization. The effect that it produces is not at all chaotic.
The subdued people like Dolly and Rajkumar in *The Glass Palace*, addressed as the ‘Kaala’ in the beginning of the novel, Alu in *The Circle of Reason* and Deeti in the Sea of Poppies, etc. are the main characters around whom the novels are fabricated normally. These subordinates are oppressed for hereditarily, are providers of assistance to observe life and civilization from their points of view. Ghosh travels back to the past with an eagerness to observe life through characters like Dolly who are helpless, neglected or are specified a trivial place in history.

Ghosh’s first novel, *The Circle of Reason* (1986), follows the providence of a young weaver, Alu, who is a Bengal village breed. He escapes westwards, initially to an imaginary Gulf state and later on to Algeria on being accused fallaciously that he is one of the associates of an aggressive terrorist section. Ghosh’s *The Circle of Reason* is written in the technique of magic realism, familiarized by Salman Rushdie in his *Midnight’s Children*, a blending of historical and imaginary aspects to generate an exciting fictional work. Plenty of occurrences in the novel epitomize the excellent merging of flight of the imagination and practicality in *The Circle of Reason*. The bizarre head of Alu: the head was “huge, several times too large for an eight year old, and curiously uneven, bulging all over with knots and bumps.” A “big spectacle shaped lump which covered a large part of the back and sides” (37) was a picture of awesome sight for the villagers.

“It was large enough to contain a multitude of organs and yet its boundaries were too shadowy to say which. And the worst part was that it was right on the
trickiest part of the skull, for the founders of the science of phrenology were all agreed that the organs which govern the lowest and least desirable propensities, all grow on the back and sides of the head. For all Balaram knew, a witch’s brew could be bubbling in that lump, destructiveness perhaps, mixed with amativeness or secrecy and peppered with combativeness and acquisitiveness” (37). The Magic Realism and the hero Alu is undoubtedly the main character, the bonding agent that fits tightly to an itinerant work of fiction collectively. However, he is the soundless focal point around which a plenty of other stories are narrated.

Many of these stories comprise remarkable components and even though Ghosh never departs from the bounds of what is strictly possible, the use of fantasy suggests a universal outlook that has kinship with both current magical practicality and a variety of South Asian story-telling customs.

Ghosh is skillful at fabricating his plot. Finally the story reaches catharsis in the AlGhazira sector with a row that will spot Alu, an optimist resembling his uncle, made to run by the authorities in the power. Alu’s battle to annihilate the influence of currency, which Alu has recognized as the cause of all vice, is eventually rooted out. Nonetheless Zindi tries to liberate Alu, from the chaos produced by Alu’s impracticable plan. Zindi, Kulfi and Boss, and two of the other family members work together and finally they all finish up in the small town of El-Qued at the northeastern edge of the Algerian Sahara.

In historical terms, the period when Ghosh was creating this novel, was a very critical era for India. The nationalist aggression in Punjab, revolutionary outbreak on the Sikh shrine of Amritsar, the brutal murder of the then Prime
Minister Indira Gandhi, the revolutions that exploded following the after the murder were the most important communal and political actions of the epoch. But, prior to going on board on a thorough study of The Circle of Reason and significantly scrutinize the method and the substance of the novel, it would be a successful work out to become familiar with the foremost improvements in the domain of Anthropology and the art of fiction writing because Ghosh emerges from the milieu of Anthropology.

Currently the Anthropologists are chiefly bothered with the penetrable quality of cultural borders which is coextensive to the elimination of margins in fictional works. Robert Dixon fittingly comments:

“The characters in Ghosh’s novels do not occupy discrete cultures, but dwell in travel in cultural spaces that flow across borders, the ‘shadow lines’ drawn around modern nation states.” (1)

Renato Rosaldo elaborates more on the subject matter:

“In contrast to the classic view, which posits culture as a self-contained whole made up of coherent patterns, culture can arguably be conceived as a mere porous array of intersections where distinct processes cross from within and beyond its borders.” (2)

Anthropology is the study of humans, past and present. To understand the full span and intricacies of cultures across the entire human history, anthropology draws and builds upon knowledge from the social and biological sciences as well as the humanities and physical sciences. A central concern of anthropologists is the application of knowledge to the solution of human problems. Hence Anthropology is not a study of separate, authentic cultures that it used to be, but it has shifted its
concern to a study of borderlands between cultures. Such hybrid cultures are a result of the relocation across the boundaries and mass departure of residents from one nation to another.

James Clifford gives emphasis to the vanishing boundaries and the making of a gigantic civilizing space without any margins, languages and national or religious practices belonging to it personally. He argues:

“Once we begin to focus on these inter-cultural processes, the notion of separate, discrete cultures evaporates; we become aware that all cultures have long histories of border crossings, diasporas and migrations.” (3)

**Elements of the Story**

The initial segment of the novel has a number of circumstantial interpretations on Indian resettlement. For instance, Balaram was born on the year 1924, which strikes the narrator a chord of significant occasion in the past of Indian migration to the West, the Canada’s colonial government determined not to allow “eight thousand Indians … after deciding that the ancient purity of Canada could not be endangered by Asiatic immigration.” (00)

Ghosh also endows with quite a lot of illustrations of interior migrants in this part of the novel. For example, the residents of Lalpukur have been “vomited out of their native soil” in the bloodshed coupled with the separation of India; within the period of the narration of the novel these residents observe once more the manifestation of people being “dumped hundreds of miles away” because of
the communal confrontation that showed the path to the materialization of Bangladesh.

**Quest for Identity**

The identity in *The Circle of Reason* is quite at the start and it deviates from the theme of traditional Indian writing on social customs and religious as well as political confrontation, in particular family or section of the society. The novel reveals the meaning of unhappy events in the society faced by the middle class families growing to progress by economic uplift or even by migration. Ghosh writes through the character of Zindi:

But let something happen outside, and that is the end, there is nothing I can do? Why because I can give them food, I can give them roof, but I can’t give them work… the house is almost empty now and work is gone… Where can I go? (219) Zindi is worried about the migrant. Ghosh has presented a powerful character like Zindi, who plans a shop for the migrant, but does not succeed. The cause and problems of migrated people are narrated in the novel. The characters in the novel move from one place to another for better work and for better future. The character Rakesh with Alu migrates from India to Al- Ghazira for better changes of success. Bala Kothandaraman, in his article, “Circular Reasoning: Amitav Ghosh’s Rhetoric” comments: “The different locals are small overcrowded places with refugee’s population adding socio-cultural dimension as well as economic and political problems.” (4)
The postcolonial situation and modern man’s problems of alienation, migration, and existential crisis in the life of ordinary unprivileged class of the society is expressed through the fictional characters. The themes of rootlessness migration, feelings of displaced are extensively narrated in deep sense and corner of human heart. While exploring the concepts, of migration of small group, the problem of individual is exposed rather than the problems of group as a whole.

Another significant concept in the novel is education. The Circle of Reason is certainly a novel of thought and reason inclusive of three philosophical elements of Indian philosophy from where the titles are derived and expressed in the context of ordinary men and women’s views of life. Sarva – Reason, Rajas – Passion, and Thamma – Death. These stages of life are explained through the characters like a doctor, a professor, a scientist, a tradesman, a weaver, a merchant, a lawyer and above all, house wives, and how such housewives face the existential challenges and problems to earn money to maintain life. Here Ghosh poses a question. Does philosophical values end where the power of money begin?, is a controversial question. Ulka Joshi in her article argues:

The concept of reason is very much western and it is associated with many traits like the power to think rationally, scientific way of discriminating between right and wrong, a state minus superstition. Progressive attitude and civilized way of life. The writer without making any loud announcements brings together Indian and western elements.” (5)

Ghosh as a literary personality becomes the example of the fact that– novel should be aimed at finding out solution for the common routine problems of people
which includes middle class men and women in the society of different culture and faith. He projects the historical events in comparing with postcolonial situation and puts forth the life of men and women struggling for existence for work, for wages, for money, for home, ultimately for better life. The quest for identity of *The Circle of Reason* is different in many ways from the traditional themes of novels of earlier times.

The novel apart from other themes, comments on the theme of social system constituted in training for getting jobs. Ghosh questions the system of education that makes a man a near machine for certain function. Through the character of Gopal and Balram, Ghosh says: Well, Gopal said, you must explain to Alu that if he does not go to school he will never be able to get a job. What, Balram looked at him in stunned arrangement. How could I say that it would be wrong; it would be immoral children go to school for their first glimpse into the life of the mind. Not for jobs, if I thought my teaching is nothing but the means of finding jobs, I would stop teaching tomorrow (52)

Ghosh tries to stress the need for rational method for imparting education and professes, that the reason is the basic tool for getting education, and that monotones exchange of information should not prevent the impulsive curiosity of student (a man) about life and training. This is further substantiated in the novel as: “After much careful thought Balram had decided to name one the Department of Pure Reason and the other the Department of Practical Reason: a meeting of the two great forms of human thought” (107).
Balram’s school of reason is not successful as the story goes on. Here Ghosh takes no sides but simply puts the ideas before the reader or the society. In this context, Alok Kumar and Madhusudan Prasad comments: “The Circle of Reason is about the insufficiency of ‘Reason’ as the ordering principle of the human universe” (6)

Ghosh concludes through the character of Balram as: “Be quite, Gopal. Don’t say any more, you don’t know what you are saying, science does not know what you are saying, and science does not belong to countries. Reason does not belong to any nation. They belong to history – to the world. (54) That is how the ideological theme on “reason” / “rationality” is evoked. Ghosh projects the evaluation of meaning of many phenomena of life of Indian middle class families in compared to historical facts.

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

The Al-Ghazira part of novel displays evidence of Ghosh’s consciousness and precarious lives of migrant workers. Alu’s journey through Indian ocean portrays thousands of Indians who leave their native place for prosperous life style, and along with these are illegal emigrants which include professor, traveling salesmen, and men and women, who risk their life and resort to dangerous crossing in search of economic stability but when the migrants reach Al-Ghazira, they find
problems of one or another kind, irrespective of their income. Ghosh, in this regard writes: “But still there was problems the mechanic complained no medical benefits, no accommodation, no security at all. It was all a big problem... Things like that matter only at home, and foreign places are all alike in that they are not home. Nothing binds you there” (.266).

Ghosh presents his concern for all these workers and professionals in their quests for a better life. The theme may look interesting but R. K. Kaul in his article “Another Triumphant Entry – Amitav Ghosh, The Circle of Reason” comments:

This is the first novel which depicts the life of expatriate Indians in the Gulf States. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh may be engaged in recriminations among themselves but emigrant from these countries are treated as one ethnic stock by Arabs. The Arab employers look upon their informal dress as less than decent and their cooking as unhygienic. Ghosh observes strict objectivity in his presentation. He tells us what the Arab think, without either refuting or confirming their opinions. (7) Thus one major theme of The Circle of Reason is continued domination and exploitation of men and women of middle class families threatened by the political and anarchical system of ruling in the time of colonial and postcolonial India. Ghosh merely puts forth the historical events and its evaluation in the context of individual feeling of being exploited.

The fictional break which Amitav Ghosh creates, being part of the prevailing discourse, abounds in such postcolonial vagrants driven by a quest for identity and migratory instinct. His protagonists are either orphans or aliens to the cultural and social milieu in which they are placed. Celebrating the orphan
protagonist’s quest for identity, Amiav Ghosh’s novel, *The Circle of Reason* is initially located in a refugee village of Lalpukur. Since journeys are eloquent metaphors of quest motif, the protagonist Nachiketa Bose is shown to move from Lalpukur in East Bengal of Malabar in Kerala, and then to the East African port of Al-Ghazira, finally to end up in the sand dunes of El-Qued on the Algerian Sahara. Nachiketa Bose, called Alu, is introduced as an eight year old orphan coming to live with his uncle Balaram Bose at Lalpukur. The curiously uneven shape of his head, suggestive of the disfigured and decadent postcolonial society, earns him the name Alu, precisely alienating him from the locale. It is Bolai-da who suggests the name of Alu: “It’s an alu, a potato, a huge, freshly dug, lumpy potato. So Alu he was named and Alu he was to remain” (3). Alienated and proving himself a misfit in the society, Alu gives up his studies in Bhudeb Roy’s school and learns weaving from the disreputable Shombhu Debnath. Alu’s search for a new technique on the loom is reflective of his own search for his moorings.

Dislocation meets with Alu in the form of war when he undertakes his uncle’s plan of cleaning the refugee Shanties with carbolic acid. Carbolic acid, the abundantly employed metaphor in the novel, works as a psychological treatment for awakening the villager’s latent spirits against oppression. After Balaram and his belongings were wiped off by Bhudeb Roy, Alu is once again shot off from Lalpukur with the police hot on his trails since Bhudeb Roy has denounced him as a terrorist. First, he takes refuge in Gopal’s house in Calcutta and before he leaves for Kerala with eight thousand rupees and a few addresses from his friend Rajan. Alu’s next migration is on a boat to Al-Ghazira in the company of Professor Samuel, and the whores Kulfi, Karthama, and Zindi.
In Al-Ghazira, Zindi secures him a job in a construction company. The most significant incident in Alu’s life happens six months later when he is trapped in the collapse of the huge building “the stat”. He is mysteriously saved by two sewing machines holding up a steel girder. After being rescued, Alu becomes a totally changed personality, with a new solution for all the evils of the world. But his principles face with backslide due to the disregard of man’s cupidity. After being tear-gassed at Al-Gazira, Alu flies to El-Qued with zindi, Kulfi, and Boss. It is the meeting with Mrs.Verma in El-Qued that brings about comfort to his troubled spirit. In the composure he decides to return home, India.

The characters in The Circle of Reason travel almost half-way across the globe through diverse environments with what seems “almost the biological necessity if not always with the ease and nonchalance of migratory birds” (8). National boundaries seem to make no sense but increase the vulnerability and misery of Alu and his companions, their journeys discharging the most significant function of doing away with border. The all pervading journey motif that unites the three parts of the novel Satva, Rajas, and Tamas epitomize the predicament of severe dislocation common to all postcolonial societies.

A historical record of Al-Ghazira

Indeed, Al-Ghazira is an occurrence to which Ghosh is one of the first recorders: the mass departure of multitudes of mankind of the under developed countries to the Middle East looking for a substitute, and feasible prospect.
A squint-eyed trader of eggs is supposed to glimpse at Cairo and Bombay concurrently. The Physically Challenged persons, Filipinos, Indians, Egyptians, Pakistanis, even a few Ghaziras, a complete realm of cosmopolitans. Indeed, some regions of Al-Ghazira are filled with the multi-ethnic jostle and activity of a present-day narcissistic hub. It is more or less as “though half the world’s haunts had been painted in miniature along the side of the single street of the city”. (58)

Although these people and the spaces have packed the barren regions of the Middle East, they were not competent enough to build Al-Ghazira into their home, because problems were existing all over the place, “no matter what you were paid, and because foreign places are all alike in that they are not home. Nothing binds you there”. (69.)

**The Story of Alu, the Wanderer, Seeking a Home**

The diasporic realization of Ghosh is expressed very plainly in the middle segment of the novel where Alu has to wander all over the India and the Middle East. In India, initially Alu travels to Calcutta and then to the southern part, constantly managing to escape from the police and Das, till he arrives at Mahe, the southernmost part of India’s west coast, at last. Finally after arriving at the country’s last part, Alu, yet tasks to avoid being taken into the Indian police custody, obtains the eventual diasporic solution. He abandons his motherland behind and navigates above the Indian Ocean to AlGhazira.

The main protagonist is Alu, whose picaresque adventures in the course of his journey from Lalpukur, across the Indian Ocean to the oil town of al-Ghazira
on the Persian Gulf, form both the setting and the chief concern of the novel. The village Lalpukur, where the first half of the novel is set, is a perfect embodiment of diasporic, porous cultural space where people from different cultures, nations and languages dwell together and interact with one-another in perfect harmony. The village does not symbolize Indian tradition in contrast with Western tradition and culture, as a conventional post-colonial novel usually would depict in a setting. Rather the village was settled by refugees from East Pakistan after the formation of Bangladesh in 1971. Thus, the village apparently a symbol of traditional India is itself the product of a diaspora. The people of Lalpukur were;

“Vomited out of their native soil years ago, and dumped hundreds of miles away... borders dissolved under the weight of millions of people in panic-stricken flight from an army of animals” (59-60). Lalpukur, with its mixture of technologies, ‘its blend of Hinduism and Bruce Lee movies’ (75), is not a site of tradition but of hybridization.

“The village is churning like cement in a grinder and Balaram was busy chasing its shooting boundaries with buckets of carbolic acid, his hair wafting behind him, in the germ free air” (76).

The novel can be studied as a bildungsroman, the story of Alu, the main protagonist, who arrives as the orphaned child of Balaram’s elder brother, to Lalpukur where Balaram lives with his wife Toru Debi and is still childless. The lengthy opening section of the novel further describes Alu, apprenticed as a weaver with Shombhu Debnath, a master weaver, while his uncle Balaram the village school master is obsessed with western ideas, epitomized by his passion for
phrenology and the writings of Louis Pasteur. In his enthusiasm to propagate his peculiar scientific notions and obsession with cleanliness he establishes the Pasteur School of Reason where he teaches the construct of Reason, and carries out drives of disinfecting the village with carbolic acid. He employs Shombhu Debnath to teach weaving while his wife teaches sewing and stitching. It is his obsession with carbolic acid and enmity with Bhudeb Roy, the owner of village school that brings about his destruction along with the rest except Alu who escapes to embark upon the rest of his journey to other parts of the globe.

**Tradition versus Modernity**

*The Circle of Reason* like Ghosh’s other novels deconstructs any simple opposition between tradition and modernity or discrete oriental and occidental cultures. The history of weaving and the international cloth trade keep on recurring in this and each of his subsequent novels. It becomes a synecdoche of that ‘intricate network of differences’ in which all cultures are enmeshed with their neighbours. When Balaram decides to make the young Alu a weaver, he convinces him by citing the history of the technology of weaving and how weaving too evokes the cultural instability and porous boundaries, a result of borrowings across borders. According to Balaram: “...the loom has created not separate worlds but one, for it has never permitted the division of the world. The loom recognizes no continents and no countries. It has tied the world together” (55).

Balaram develops and reinforces the idea that culture is a process of circulation that has nothing to do with national borders. Weaving forms the
background of this idea and he cites the example of world cloth trade, which traverses every possible route notwithstanding the cultural differences.

“Indian cloth was found in the graves of the pharaohs. Indian soil is strewn with cloth from China. The whole of the ancient world hummed with the cloth trade. The silk route from China running through central Asia and Persia to the parts of the Mediterranean and from there to the markets of Africa and Europe, bound continents together for more centuries – than we can count... All through the centuries, cloth in its richness and variety, bound the Mediterranean to Asia, India to Africa, the Arab world to Europe in equal bountiful trade” (55-56).

Thus, the history of weaving has no single national roots, but it traverses complex international routes. It can be read as an example of a traditional craft as opposed to western science and technology. It is another illustration that questions the idea of discrete divisions between cultures and nations. Weaving is not the only binding factor in the novel. Rather there are various other patterns that keep on repeating in the course of the novel, imposing a kind of order on a chaotic world. Carbolic acid, birds, germs, the Life of Pasteur and sewing machines are the other repetitive patterns that keep recurring and bind the narrative together. Besides these, there are other attempts at forming a pattern like singing, weaving, politics, theories of straight roads, and queues among others.

Sewing machines enter the novel very early when Toru Debi is worried about the newly arrived Alu: “...Toru Debi knew nothing of children. Children inhabited another world, a world without sewing machines. They neither hemmed, nor chain stitched nor cross–stitched, nor quilted. What did they do?” Later she
plans “the clothes she would make him on the sewing machine” (5-6). She tries to pacify Bhudeb Roy and Parboti Debi by offering to make six blouses for her. When Parboti Debi elopes with Shombhu Debnath and comes to her house to seek refuge, she thinks it’s for the blouses, and cries out: “Can’t you see how serious it is? She’s coming, and it’ll be the end of everything if the blouses aren’t ready. Only the sewing machine can save us now” (136).

Just a few seconds earlier the fire extinguished than the total is burnt to ashes, Toru Debi calls Alu and hands him over the weighty tailoring machine, to be toss it away into the small lake and appeals to him to purchase a new one for her. The same old tailoring machine protects Alu at the time of crisis and also afterwards when Alu is ensnared when the shopping complex was rumpled. It is in the companionship of these tailoring machines that Alu contemplates on riches and additional tribulations that annoys humanity. It is the tailoring machines, which the Rajas people are going to repossess when the Al-Ghazira police force assault them. In the end Jyoti Das yells to Alu, “…don’t worry about the sewing machine; they make them better at home now” (423).

Obviously Life of Pasteur also has a word to provide spherical pattern to the novel. Earlier in the novel Balaram gives a lecture to Alu about the book with an intention to infuse sensation and zeal in him. Giving in return Balaram’s care, Alu exhibits care and love by regaining the book from fire when Toru Debi had kindled fire to all his books. Carbolic acid, a donation of Pasteur against the realm of germs is again and again utilized in the novel, initially by Balaram and Alu, and later on by Alu in Al-Ghazira. Even at the end, Life of Pasteur is found out by Alu
on Mrs. Verma’s (Dantu’s daughter) bookrack and Mrs. Verma makes use of carbolic acid as an alternative of Ganga-jal to pour in the deceased Kulu’s mouth. Indeed it is the book on Life of Pasteur that is in charge of Mrs. Verma’s living there in Algeria. She informs Alu the explanation for her becoming a microbiologist: “My father told me that microbiology was Pasteur’s heritage and that I was to keep it alive” (395). At the end both Mrs.Verma and Alu appear to be in opposition to the plan of battle against the germs and provide a memorial service to the Life of Pasteur and thus finishing the cycle. “Without the germ, life would be impossible because death would be incomplete” (396). This modeling and spherical pattern brings forward the past times and storylines and attaches worth to human lives. It figures a very significant constituent of Amitav Ghosh’s novel. GJV Prasad comments:

“He is a careful craftsman precisely because craft is all in this life of ours. His journey across borders of various kinds in his life and works show us Ghosh’s abiding interest in the ways in which changes can be and are being wrought in our understanding of the world.” (9)

The settings of Amitav Ghosh’s novels amply illustrate his constant attempts at creating a space where all kinds of borders are immaterial. This tendency makes Ghosh the most cosmopolitan of contemporary writers. It is this quality that forms the backbone of all his works, fiction or non-fiction. Prasad goes on to say:

“Amitav Gosh is arguably the most cosmopolitan of contemporary Indian English writers as also the most significant. His significance
has its roots in his cosmopolitanism, for he is a writer who travels
and remaps the world drawing connections across the boundaries of
modern nation states. It is in this creative engagement with
historical and political realities and truths, it is in this clearheaded
erasure and redrawing of cultural and political lines that divide and
unite, that Amitav Ghosh finds his mission as a writer. With an
anthropologist’s sense of detail, and a historian’s grasp of facts and
chronology, and with a creative writer’s curiosity about causation
and effects and great narrative skill and imagination, Ghosh weaves
together a pluralistic and self reflexive view of the world – one that
challenges the smugness of accepted narratives and points of views
and the certainties of post-colonial borders as well as generic
boundaries.”(10)

Demise of the Individuals and The Burials of their Dreams

The Al-Ghazira segment of the novel presents brand new proofs of Ghosh’s
attraction with the diasporic awareness and the unstable existence lived by the
refugee laborers. This segment of the novel starts with an account of the interment
of Alu in the debris of the construction – The Star. The multi business shopping
complex crushes because of untrained craftsmanship.

Running his dividend of adventures in the assorted cultural filled Lalpukur,
Alu sticks together with the surge of migrant Indians allured at the affluent oil
market of the Middle East. *The Circle of Reason*, Part two, is laid down in al-
Ghazira of the Persian Gulf. There Alu takes up again his skill of weaving, but is
accidentally buried alive when a new concrete building collapses. When Alu’s
body is being covered in the wreckage of a newly constructed shopping complex
that misshapen, he is rescued by a very old tailoring machine on which a massive
slab of dropping substance gets nearer to fall on some object or floor. “just a hair away from his nose” (194). The misshapen shopping complex, The Star, which is a representation of revitalizing entry of the western countries on al-Ghazira, is distinguished with the long-established market place, the Souq: “… the old bazar’s honeycomb of passageways … obscure(ed) every trace of the world outside… Nor did any but the most alert in the Souq feel the soil of al-Ghazira tremble when ‘The Star’ fell” (194). Still the Souq could not symbolize a distinct tradition deep-rooted in a country. To a certain extent it is a minute fraction of the system of commercial means, substantiating Balaram’s dispute that weaving creates not a single but various human races. Alu starts to weave again at the loom of his Egyptian neighbor Hajj Fahmy, who gave up his long-established weaving trade for the additional money-spinning building industry. Alu has to excel the barriers of language and learn Arabic, as he had learnt English before, as an attempt towards the restoration of the art of weaving. A close analysis of the characters existing in the Souq reveals more about Ghosh’s cancellation of boundaries in conditions of culture, country, language and even vocation. In the vein of the Lalpukur village, the Souq of al-Ghazira does not symbolize a constant genuine ethnicity, but a system of very old commerce that spreads out like a fabric through a huge, edgeless expanse.

“Since the beginning of time, al-Ghazira has been home to anyone who chooses to call it such” (261). But when the British identified the oil wells, they disconnected the past with the help of armed forces to convince the aged Malik to give consent to an agreement. “al-Ghazira was just a speck of sand floating on a sea of oil. So the British… sent a resident to al-Ghazira, to make the Malik sign a
treaty which would let them dig for oil... The resident arrived in a battleship.” (248-249). This act points up that the multicultural contact and substitution that constructs those areas without boundaries did not happen on the same level. Renato Rosaldo argues;

“All of us inhabit an interdependent late-twentieth century world marked by borrowing and lending across porous national and cultural boundaries, but we do not do so on equal terms. These boundaries are saturated with inequality, power and domination.” (11)

The landowner of the domicile where the majority of Alu’s associate refugees dwell is an owner of ill famed Egyptian house named Zindi. She plans to purchase Durban dressmaking shop from Jeevanbhai Patel, one of the migrant Indians. Patel is a Gujarati Hindu who has come from Durban in South Africa. He has arrived at Al-Ghazira after a marriage of his own without his parents’ approval. His actions call upon the current of the Indian Ocean commerce: “The Indian merchants along the coast pulled (the couple) northwards like a bucket from a well. First they went to Mozambique, the Dar-es-Salaam then Zanzibar, Djibouti, Perim and Aden” (261).

Zindi’s house is filled with emigrant workers, with whom she expects to the bring up the waning textile industry diverting their focus from the building construction industry: “al-Ghazira was a merchant’s paradise, right in the centre of the world conceived and nourished by the flow of centuries of trade. Persians, Zanzibari Arabs, Omanis and Indians fattened upon it and grew rich” (261).

Amitav Ghosh defines that his fictional works includes studies as discrete as anthropology, novel, historical exploration, public commentary, otherwise - the liberty to discover new varieties.
“In Ghosh’s worldview all such borders that hem us in an attempt to define us should be challenged – be they political, cultural, linguistic, racial, communal, spator even temporal. All these borders are constructs and meant for crossing. Perception is all-imagination and articulation can enable you to cross all such shadow lines, to ‘colonise’ other spaces, to find your place in your story. Travel is a spiritual quest, a quest for narrative design, for personal significance in a meaningful world. This quest that is narrated in The Circle of Reason is present in all subsequent works by Ghosh.” (12)

The Circle of Reason is a clear illustration of Amitav Ghosh’s testing with a variety of kinds and structures of fictional writing.

“It is at once a travelogue, a detective story, a story of exile, a women’s rights tract, Marxist protest, a plea for humanistic camaraderie etc.” (13)

The storyline skills engaged in the novel at times includes the uniqueness of magic practicality, for instance Toru Debi, glances affectionately at her singer sewing machine as she gazes child, however, it is usually practical and frank. The novelist deals with a number of characters, period specific and environments in the course of his narrative. John Hawley comments on his style of writing:

“Ghosh’s roots are in journalism and academic writing – investigation and analysis, a revelation of subterranean connections and patterns – but first and foremost, and overriding all the many ideas that inform his work are the stories, the Dickensian proliferation of characters whose lives engage us and who take us to some richly imagined places and times.” (14)
Ghosh conveys a sensitive compassion with the refugees in majority of his novels. Indeed his central characters emerge from the distressed section. The assorted immigrant faction that moves from Mahe to Al-Ghazira on the boat named 'Mariamma' along with their assorted environments, is an ideal picture of the uselessness of partitions stand on social group, race or religious conviction. The hero Alu who is escaping an inept Indian police run after and a silly accusation over a trivial conflict between his uncle Balaram and the dishonest Bhudeb Roy; Zindi, a ‘madam’ who owns a brothel in Al-Ghazira after her husband discarded her on account of infertility; Karthamma and Kulfí who have been chosen up by Zindi to undertake prostitution there; Rakesh, a past nomadic salesman of Ayurvedic purgatives which he possibly will never trade Professor Samuel who advocates theories regarding files; and other characters are all on board of the international boat on their route to Al-Ghazira.

“In both The Circle of Reason and The Shadow Lines, through the experiences of poor and middle class female migrants, Ghosh makes visible the bodily and psychic violence done to those who are minor to the hegemonic languages of the nation and of globalization - by their class, gender, race or ethnicity ... he reveals how the much celebrated global flow of human bodies and its associated tropes of empowerment can also be differently, and violently abjecting processes – processes that disempower by stripping away the realization of equal citizenship for those marked other by their race, ethnicity, gender and class belonging.” (15)

The Circle of Reason integrates the qualities of diverse literary kinds. On occasions it emerges to be a bildungroman as it unfolds the growth and the flight of Alu, a Bengali orphan from the indistinct village of Lalpukur to Calcutta, Kerala
the Middle East and Algeria. It contains the essential features of the picaresque novel, the novel of thoughts, the crime novel or investigative novel (with ASP Jyoti Das), tracking the suspected terrorist, Alu all the way through more than a few continents) and the Hindu epic (when the Doctors stage a play Chitrangada) and they look for water from the Ganges for Kulfi who is dead.

Some important historical occurrences like the struggle of Indian Independence in the 1930s, the Bangladesh war of 1971, and the global surge of immigration to the Middle East of the 1970s are highlighted in *The Circle of Reason* establishing it appropriate to be named a historical novel. However the novel is more inclined with the epoch of British colonisation of India.

*The Circle of Reason* can also be interpreted as a scientific expanse in view of the fact that it introduces into its story unexpected and incomprehensible sciences like ‘Phrenology’ and ‘Criminology’, Balaram’s fixation with phrenology discloses the expertise elaborately to the readers who develop into conscious of the mechanism. Criminology is exposed through phrenology and moreover it is demonstrated by the manner in which Jyoti Das tracks Alu and the mode in which the majority of them are ensnared and a few run away. Ghosh also launches the legends, folklore and stories to point out that these let optional ways of glimpsing at the cosmos into the novel.

Femininity in *The Circle of Reason* locates appearance in the figure of the nomad woman. Ghosh evaluates both the globalization and post-colonial patriotism, through the knowledge of the nomad woman. The chapter with the heading ‘Be calmed’ discloses and expresses Ghosh’s dream of globalization as
well as the challenges of the expatriate women. An assorted set of emigrants from
different places of India are leaving to a fantasy island Al-Ghazira on a boat named
Mariamma. The set contains Alu, who is taking effort to flee the accusation of an
idiotically overstated rural clash; Zindi, who is the organizer of this unlawful mass
departure and who, after being cast away by her husband for the reason of not
being able to give birth to a child carries out the business of a brothel house.
Karthamma, who is in her last phase of pregnancy and Kulfi who have been found
by Zindi, Rakesh, who was a journeying salesman of Ayurvedic purgatives which
he was not able to sell easily; and Professor Samuel, who is preoccupied
everlastinglly with his hypothesis of queue.

The condition is an ideal presentation of the subjugated woman tempted
into voyaging to a cosmos which appears to be packed with numerous prospects,
but the truth is that it is in tricky in mask. Professor Samuel speaks about Zindi,
“She’s a madam … If she wasn’t, why would she be herding these poor women
across the sea? Why would she be keeping them shut away like prisoners in the
cabin? I tell you, she’s going to sell them into slavery in al-Ghazira. Something
like that or worse!” (173) But adversely Zindi observes herself as the redeemer of
these subjugated women:

“And, as for the women, why, when I get to India I don’t have to do
anything. These women find me and come running. Take me, Zindi
– no, me, Zindi-didi – don’t take her, she’s got lice. They go on like
that. But I don’t take them all. I take only the good girls – clean,
polite, and hardworking. That’s why I have to go to India myself to
look… the whole of al-Ghazira knows that Zindi’s girls are reliable
and hardworking… And so I get a little extra too, not much. It’s not
a business; it’s my family, my aila, my own house, and I look after them, all the boys and girls, and no one’s unhappy and they all love me” (181).

Hence, at one point, the unproductive Zindi encompasses herself with an alternate family unit, rather which was denied to her by the parental construct. The diverse viewpoints of both Zindi and Samuel articulate the making the women as objects and commodities. To illustrate this “I take only the good girls,” “she’s going to sell them”, or labourers like “Zindi’s girls are hardworking and reliable.” Here it could be significant to hint at Karthamma’s complicated pregnancy. She repudiates to give birth to her baby, in spite of being in complete matured condition, for the reason that she desires to fill up certain official forms before giving birth to the baby. “She won’t let the labour start. She’s sitting on the floor and kicking and fighting. She’s stuffed her hands into her womb, right in, up to her wrists” (177).

The strange disposition of the woman refugee, that is, Karthamma can be experienced as one who is craving for a family and protection, or an idiom of her aspirations and desires or more possibly an attempt to bestow legality, to her illegal baby. This craving for home and defense is intrinsic in each and every move of the main characters and is demonstrated in the individual survival that they together carve out a niche in the alien country. The deceived Zindi’s final attempt to settle with her patriarchal habitat is rundown and insulted. The influentZindi herself is a prey to this parental system which is yet more brutal to the welfare of women.

Indian values encourage the spherical outline of this novel. Ghosh gets stimulation from The Bhagavadgita, to give titles to the three parts of the novel,
which are after named the three characteristics (gunas) – Satwa, Rajas and Tamas, with every characteristic given an English alternate term. Indeed this spherical outline of the novel can be identified as one of its chief interests. It can also be considered as an effort at implying regulation on a disorganized earth, an attempt at transforming it into valuable to live. Satwa: Reason is the first part of the book: Satwa entails the illumination of realization which Ghosh favors to term reason. The inside of each part rationalize the classification. The western notion of reason is related with the very Indian notion of Satwa whereas a scholar Balaram and his friend launch the Rationalist society with the dictum ‘Reason rescues man from barbarity’. According to Balaram’s opinion ‘Reason’ unites community as one and challenges countries. Balaram says, “...science doesn’t belong to countries, Reason doesn’t belong to any nation. They belong to the history – to the world” (54). Balaram identifies ‘Life of Pasteur’ as an embodiment of reason. Weaving can also be considered as reason because it has linked the world closer. He quotes ‘Reason’ as the principal factor to oppose his friend Gopal in one of the meetings of the rationalist society – “If we can’t make them change their lives, if we can’t make them see Reason, what can we even have to say to the masses of Hindoostan?” (50) When he starts his own school in Lalpukur he split it into two sections: one being the department of Pure Reason and the other that of Practical Reason. The entire village is evidence to Balaram’s fixation with carbolic acid as he endeavors to decipher all the complications using pails of carbolic acid. But at the end, he turns out to be a baffled character, preoccupied with artifice science ‘Phrenology’, which is closer to fallacy than science.
The second part of the novel is given the title Rajas: Passion. It commences with Alu’s entrance at Al-Ghazira. This section of the novel is really administrated by passion. The passionate public involve in chatting, listening and narrating stories, chitchat drinking tea at Zindi’s house, combating in front of Hajj Fahmy’s house, entertaining themselves in machinations, becoming victims to schemes, dancing, bothersome about matters. Succeeding in the path of Balaram’s mania with sanitation, Alu together with Rajas public conducts battle in opposition to money, sterilizes the area with carbolic acid, generates a socorder free of money, transforms the shops into common assets and every one of the citizens started to carry dust cleaners on their dress materials. The art of weaving and the tailoring machines started to reappear finishing the round. When the tailoring machines are revived, there is a massive pandemonium as proceeding towards the end of this section of the novel.

The mystification makes the readers ready for the bleak third part named Tamas: Death, connotation of inactivity or demise. This third part of the novel takes Zindi, Alu and Kulfi to El-Oued a small urban in the mid-Sahara desert while escaping from Jyoti Das. Alu, who admires the art weaving as an expression of one’s identity, is not able to weave because of an inflexible thumb finger. Kulfi expires in this part when Jyoti Das was performing the role of Arjun; in a drama Chitrangada prearranged by the local Indian medical community. The book ‘Life of Pasteur’ makes an entry once more as Mrs.Verma recognizes that Alu is the nephew of Dantu, her father, Balaram’s friend. The book opens threateningly saying “life would become impossible because death would be incomplete” (396).
Zindi also articulates this diffusion of death: “I can smell death in this house: it’s there in writing - one of us isn’t going to leave this house alive” (393).

However the climax of the novel witnesses the beams of hope emerging as Mrs Verma says, “If there’s one thing people learn from the past, it is that every consummated death is another beginning” (404). Alu’s inflexible thumb fingers started to work. After having experienced many catastrophes, Alu comes back to Satwa escorted by Zindi and Boss. But the reason attained at this juncture is not the fixation which was with Balaram at the start. Here it is a further unprejudiced account of reason, mixed together with both zeal and a fragment of inactivity.

In addition to the metaphors like the sewing machine, carbolic acid, Life of Pasteur, we also have Jyoti Das’s obsession with birds which contributes to the central idea of the novel. Jyoti Das recalls ‘ducks and cormorants and storks’ (37) that he had seen when he went to the zoo to celebrate his birthday, when he goes to Mahe, he sees ‘Malabar Kingfisher’ (159), when he’s about to land in al-Ghazira, he’s eager to see ‘Barbary falcon and the Saker falcon’(269) and then in El Oued he’s looking for vultures. After the vultures Jyoti Das actually sees “a sky alive with Cory’s shearwaters and honey buzzards, white storks and steppe eagles, Montagu’s harriers and sparrow hawks” (421). When he is to go to Düsseldorf through Tangier he realizes “the whole sky will be migrating over Tangier now” (314).

These metaphors add circularity to the novel. The concluding sentence of the novel suggests a new beginning “hope is the beginning”. The narration of events is not done in a linear method but moves backward and forward in time. Hem Narain Mathur who disappears in the first section appears again in the third
section. While talking to Jyoti Das, Gopal tells him about how when Alu was eleven, Toru Debi burnt Balaram’s books which takes Jyoti Das back to the time when he was eleven years old.

All the characters in the novel are trapped in a useless sphere. The infertile love of Alu and Maya that they have for each other, Master Ram’s solo love for Kulfí, the love of Kulfí and Abusa; Jyoti Das’s fascination for Kulfí and Alu and Karthamma’s love, all these dealings collapse. Balaram’s school of reason, Zindi’s efforts to buy Durban tailoring shop, Toru Debi’s endeavours at stitching chemises for Parboti Debi, Ghaziri people’s enthusiastic assignment to transport tailoring machines and the aspiration to be freed from the love of money, Jeevanbhai’s wicked efforts to institute Malik’s superiority and thereby his own power; and Mrs Verma’s sketch to bring down Chitrangada result in total disappointment. Jyoti Das runs after Alu but he himself is suspended from the service for a short period. All the characters are ensnared in an useless ring and harvest nothing. Yet optimism never passes on as the novelist himself says, “hope is the beginning.”

Above and beyond these figurative and allegorical spheres, there are a few materspheres as well: When Balaram was teased in the Presidency College hostel, he was encircled by the elder boys, and the monitor of them was standing before Balaram and “the others were standing in a circle around him” (44). When Balaram gets ready for combat in opposition to Bhudeb Roy, he positions himself in the middle of the ‘circle of oil drums’ (137). Zindi is encircled by the “circle of frowning intent faces,” (213) when she narrates the tale of Abusa and Mast Ram. Likewise Abu Fahl marches ‘into the circle’ (314), to narrate the anecdote of Adil
the Blue’s misconduct. In the end Zindi observes, “the vulture circling patiently above” (367). In contradictory to these spheres is Bhudeb Roy’s fixation with the straight lines and Prof. Samuel’s theories of rows, which equalizes the spherical model of the novel.

The novel is periodic in temperament even though it is not structured firmly in that manner. Based on this logic, it can be called picaresque. The novel travels from Sattva to Rajas to Tamas, the three segments of the novel, but the journey seems to be unbalanced. Conventionally the hero Alu must have moved from 'Tama' (darkness) to 'Satwa' (purity). Amitav Ghosh generously blends past, present and future in his novels. He does the same with this book also. He writes down in a sequence of thoughts. The novelist starts to illustrate one event and if the incident connects itself to any of the past occurrence, then he right away departs to that past event. So the whole fabrication of the novel continues to float, swing to and fro. And this can be rather reasonable in its own method. The present is born out of past in all the incidents. So there is no any reason to establish that one should not linger on the huge store house of reminiscences, ideas and wishes, which is past.

The novel is fully loaded with characters. The chapters are only linked loosely. Alu is the only steady person who leads a life of trials and tribulations; falls down at some situations, stands again from the fall and lastly progresses on to become conscious his capability, if he possesses any. The novel highlights the distressed periods, in the course of which all the human beings are surviving. Like a characteristic without a climax novel, it ends without offering handy resolutions.
There is a comforting consequence at the last part. Diverse cotton strands appears to bring as one however there is no attempt taken at sermonizing. In a characteristic picaresque trend, Alu travels from Laipukar in India to Al-Ghazira in Egypt and then to a small township in the northeastern border of Algerian Sahara. The journey did not fetch either any sort of contentment or achievement. It commemorates the wisdom of restless meanderings. The wandering continues to search a dream appropriate for current times; it is similar to pursuing a ghost that eventually disappears into the space. The voyage is the final sto

**A Tale of Images**

*The Circle of Reason* consists of both past as well as legendary elements. Mythological indications have been shaped to echo the present-day situations in an authentic new history writers’ trend. Ghosh fabricates thoughts, characters and images through enchantment and sarcasm and builds up his story bound images. The characters themselves turn out to be metaphors. The characters as well as various circumstances of the novel exemplify alienation. The modern literature gives the impression of being preoccupied with the design of resettlement. Relocation, migrant mind-set, alienation and a novel sort of emotional response emerged out of these issues are distinctive to the modern era.

Extensively, the novel is basically situated in a migrant rural community. It merely inhabits the mankind for the time being as a person in exile on this earth. It travels to and fro to Bangladesh and Calcutta. Finally it arrives at the Middle East via Kerala. The final setting again significantly is that of a desert with violent wilderness. The story progresses in a vague environment. One can never be certain
whether it is a metropolis or a rural community. Even the ideas are not stable. ‘The Circle of Reason’ can be called as a never-ending tale of agitation, vagueness and transformation.

Basically the novel narrates three tales. The first section narrates the story of Balram. He is a pessimist and is inspired by the life history of Louis Pasteur. He is unrealistic to the level of behaving heartless. He has no affection for the fellow humans. He considers others just as matters of examination and transformation. He takes his impulses to the excessive and befall to be self-devastating. Actually, he stumbles upon his own strength of character in Bhudeb Roy. He is also pessimistic just Balram. He belongs to the congress party. Alu, the hero, is Balaram’s nephew. He is the only survivor in the family. The second part of the novel narrates the next story. A mortal, sensible and enthusiastic dealer takes effort to unite the group of Indians in the Middle East. But once more these pains establish to be impractical. The third section is the tale of Mrs. Verma, who absolutely discards reasonable contemplation. She for a second time tries her hand at generating Indian representation of society life in the desert. Nonetheless Alu, Zindi and Iyoti Das, who is a police officer, depart Mrs. Verma and her research in the desert. Towards the climax of the novel, these three people seek for newer possibilities, shapeless expectations and thoughts. Optimism is their only single benefit.

There is no usual affiliation between Alu and Jyoti. Initially as a police officer, Jyoti suspects Alu as a terrorist. She kept him in constant watch precisely from the beginning. The story of Alu and Jyoti supplies chief basis for continuance in this novel. Their bond also attaches a sense of excitement. Yet, as the
rendezvous place of their contact is administrative system and power of the state, there is no feel of human. This relationship can be identified as a remark on current man-woman get together which is not natural and at times completely non-natural. Man-woman bond has turned out to be a pastime of strategy.

**Journey as a Metaphor**

Traveling beyond many borders and traditions for identity is an additional principal topic in *The Circle of Reason*, which portrays the exciting activity of a boy emerging rural Bengal to Middle Eastern cities of Al-Ghazira and El Qued, a desert town in Algeria. The novel portrays the life of an Indian refugee in the Gulf Countries. The first part of *The Circle of Reason* illustrates various explanations on Indian migrants.

Journey as an image flows throughout the novel and brings the three parts together. According to G.J.V. Prasad’s observation, “Characters cross border with almost the biological necessity, if not, always the ease and nonchalance of migratory birds.”(19). The image of journey is chiefly coupled with Alu, who is on the notorious identification as a revolutionary by the police force and Jyothidas following Alu’s path all the time. Alu runs from Lalpukur to Kerala and then starts to Al-Ghazira in the Middle East together with a bunch of characters who make a journey seeking riches and better prospects. Travel is transformed into motherland.

The Al-Ghazira segment of the novel exhibits proof of Ghosh’s realization and unstable existence of refugee workforce. Alu’s voyage traversing Indian ocean represents multitudes of Indians who discard their motherland for flourishing life
fashion, and along with these are illicit migrants which includes professor, journeying trader, and public, who jeopardize their existence and select the hazardous journey in search of financial strength but on the reach of Al-Ghazira, the refugees faced troubles of one or another kind, regardless of their earnings. In this regard Ghosh writes: “But still there was problems the mechanic complained no medical benefits, no accommodation, no security at all. It was all a big problem... Things like that matter only at home, and foreign places are all alike in that they are not home. Nothing binds you there” (266).

Ghosh exposes his care for all the workforce and experts in their search for a enhanced existence. The idea may seem appealing but R. K. Kaul in his article “Another Triumphant Entry – Amitav Ghosh, The Circle of Reason” comments:

This is the first novel which depicts the life of expatriate Indians in the Gulf States. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh may be engaged in recriminations among themselves but emigrant from these countries are treated as one ethnic stock by Arabs. The Arab employers look upon their informal dress as less than decent and their cooking as unhygienic. Ghosh observes strict objectivity in his presentation. He tells us what the Arab think, without either refuting or confirming their opinions. (17) Hence one of the main concepts of The Circle of Reason is sustained; supremacy and misuse of the commons belonging to the middle class people intimidation of the political and revolutionary order of ruling during the period of colonial and postcolonial India. Ghosh simply brings forward the historical occurrences and its assessment in the background of exclusive feeling of being oppressed.
Almost all the characters in *The Circle of Reason* voyage more or less half of the earth crossing varied surroundings with what seems “almost the biological necessity if not always with the ease and nonchalance of migratory birds” (18). The nationwide borders appear to bring out no logic but boost up the helplessness and desolation of Alu and his accompanying persons, their voyages releasing the very important purpose of putting an end to the borders. The theme of journey, which is interspersed fully in the novel, brings together the three parts of the novel Satva, Rajas, and Tamas and, characterizes the difficult situations of harsh dislodgment universal to all postcolonial civilization.

The story starts when Nachiketa Bose, an eight-year-old orphan arrives at Lalpukar to reside with his uncle Balram Bose. His rickshaw is run after by Boloi da, who owns a cycle mending shop and keenly makes use of each and every possibility of pleasure. The only extraordinary matter about this orphan is his unusual head. It is ‘an extraordinary head, huge, several times too large for an eight year old, and curiously uneven, bulging all over with knots and bumps’. While everybody is hectic in evaluating the head with other appropriate items and transports it in a point of view, it is Boloi da, who offered Alu his long-lasting name as well as part of his individuality, ‘No, it’s not like a rock at all. It’s an Alu, a potato, a huge, freshly dug, lumpy potato. So he was named Alu he was to remain’ (3). On symbolic level, Alu is somebody ingrained in earth and so in individuality. But as his tormented meander, Alu appears only to ridicule his name.
Balram is a fanatic. He asserts to be a pessimist. He respects scientists like Jagdish Bose, Meghnad Saha and above all Louis Pasteur. They are his icons. He is preoccupied with the discipline of Phrenology. It is the study of the dimension and form of people’s head. Through this study one can discover the individuals’ characters and aptitudes. It is not a surprise that Alu turns to be an analytical case study for Balram. Alu’s uncle Balram administers his apparatus for determining heads on Alu, to his misery on a great deal. Gradually he becomes accustomed to it. Balaram is resolute to match ‘outside’ of a man with his ‘inside’.

Alu inhabits Lalpukar, but his plight does not end. He joined in Bhudeb Roy’s school. Roy’s son Gopal torments Alu and at last Alu is compelled to go away from the school. Shombhu Debnath is a humble man in Lalpukar village. It would not be just reputable to gain knowledge of weaving from him. However, Alu carries out alike. This provides the novelist a chance to give a past outlook to the skill of weaving. Ghosh is expressive about the historical importance of weaving: Man at the loom is the finest example of mechanical man [...] it has created not separate worlds but one, for it has never permitted the division of the world. The loom recognizes no continents and no countries. It has tied the world together with its bloody ironies from the beginning of human time. Human beings have woven and traded in cloth from the time they built their first houses and cities. Indian cloth was found in the graves of the pharaohs. Indian soil is strewn with cloth from China. The whole of the ancient world hummed with the cloth trade. The silk route from China, running through Central Asia and Persia to the ports of the Mediterranean and from there to the markets of Africa and Europe, bound continents together for more centuries than that it cannot be counted.
The characters in *The Circle of Reason* are transformed into feasible images. Their search is for a particular organization of their identity based on the whole of their experience. However trivial and illogical it is. The characters attain this significant acceptance through their original potentiality while the novelist himself realizes this through aptitude to the characters that move about in alien locations.

The novel flourishes in weird juncture but is fundamentally a severe effort to deal with man’s illusory pursuit for rationale within the framework of present-day migrancy that has used numerous human resources of underdeveloped countries across continents in search of an improved life.

No doubt that Ghosh’s handling of these themes is attractive without fail. The journey as an image runs throughout the novel and unites the three parts of the novel. Characters cross borders “with almost the biological necessity, if not always with the ease and nonchalance of migratory birds”. (79)

The image of journey is chiefly connected with Alu who is always running, having been accused as a terrorist by the police and shifts from Lalpukur to Kerala and then starts to Al-Ghazira in the Middle East together with a few characters who is looking for of riches and more prospects. Journey itself is transformed into a mother country.

*The Circle of Reason* spins around a discussion regarding the association among science, technology, and patriotism in India, and gets back to the starting of the nineteenth century. Ghosh employs a conversation regarding convention versus
modernity which has absorbed the Indian nationalists from Rammohan Roy to Tagore, Gandhi and Nehru and colonial philosophers such as William Jones and Macaulay. Ghosh cross-examines the position and value of diverse branches of science in India. He provides the significant point that India did not obtain the benefits of science, technology and medicine completely from the British as in a single day transfer procedure, but as an effect of cross-cultural exchanges, transformation, and alteration. Balaram’s appeal with science produces a great deal of the novel’s discussion about the materialistic scientific rationale of the west. Balaram occupies the latter place, debating that “Science doesn’t belong to countries. Reason doesn’t belong to any nation. They belong to history – to the world” (57).

Balaram is a constructed by western discipline inspite of his ardent Indian patriotism; he has incorporated the notion in his selfhood that western science goes beyond nationwide borders in its hunt for facts. This is due to the British officers unfailing every effort to make obvious that the discussion of rationale was in the Foucaultian sense which is their special asset. For case in point, in India, the “natives” were labelled as irrational brooding persons of impulse, while Britain’s technical and methodical processes were submitted as evidence of their better-quality faculty of reasoning. Western science was also represented as being purposeful, ethnically unbiased, compassionate in purpose, and letting admission to “truth.”

With advent of Industrial Revolution, Western technology and science was recognized as leading indicators of “civilization.” The faith on the leading indicators rationalized the colonialist disagreement that non-western countries
were substandard, innocent, and required assistance from that supposed epitome of superior rationale, that is, the west. The advancement in the field of Science and Technology facilitated Britain to institute and combine power in colonized countries. The scientific and technological progress may be construed as ‘tools of empire.’ (54). Simultaneously the western science is repeatedly described as a field of study established in the lead of reason, analysis, and classicism, albeit these goals are not accumulated at all times. The dissimilarity between science and pseudo-science began to gain significance just subsequent to the Industrial Revolution. There are a handful of other main characters in the novel. Balaram’s friend Dantu is a misanthrope. The name Dantu has a history. As the novelist illustrates it: … his sharply domed head, of course, and his thin, hollow face those two long, peeping front teeth from which he took his name. It’s his bregma, said Balaram. I can see now that it was Veneration that had pushed his skull up so sharply. Besides, he always had the look of a saint. (15)

But Dantu’s pious appearance is misleading. He is in fact a politician in the attire of a saint. Bhudeb Roy is Balaram’s neighbour and later on his enemy. Balaram’s friend Gopal, explains him thus, “He had looked like a fairly ordinary young man then, with thinning hair and a large pleasant face. He was stout even then but far from fat, and in his starched white dhoti and Kurta he had even possessed a certain kind of grace” (23).

The Bird Watcher

Jyothidas, Assistant Superintendent of Police, is an inspiring character in the novel. He is swollen with pride that he is able to give the impression of being
youthful. He is expressed as: He is a slim man, of average height, dark complexion, with straight black hair. He has a stretched, level face with a curved chin and a small, straight nose. His only lopsided aspects are his eyebrows, which are to some extent out of position, one being a portion elevated than the other and a little more sharply curved, and that has a tendency to project him appear a little astonished even when he is surprised really. He has trained his eyes over the years to register even the insignificant particulars of collection of feathers and multiple colors and so they are widely awake always. He is clean shaven and prides himself on it, for it distinguishes him from his colleagues, who tend generally to be aggressively moustached. He is pleasant, if not goodlooking and he looks younger than his twenty-five years. He is often mistaken for a college student. (133) He follows Alu always, with a judgment that Alu is a revolutionary. Throughout the three parts of the novel, he only accompanies Alu. His next interest is watching birds. He is also identified as bird man.

Jyoti Das shadows Alu as part of his professional duty. The strong desire to observe birds during travels leads him to do so. The journey of Alu from Al-Ghazira through Alexandria, Egypt, Lisbon, Tunis to a little town of Elqued is created by Jyoti Das. He travels alongwith Zindi, Boss and Kulfi, and whenever Zindi and Alu say something, Jyothidas appears to eavesdropping them because he emerges everywhere they go. But Jyothidas is cut short from his service as he is compassionate towards Alu. Jyothidas arrives even at Elqued to observe additionally more birds, uncommon vultures and counterbalance for his earlier mistakes. But the irony is that he is visioned as a vulture by Zindi. She says that he appears to be bringing death to the people in the places where on earth he goes,
“That man carries death with him wherever he goes. He can’t help it; it’s in his eyes. Think of what happened to Jeevanbhai; think of Karthamma and all the rest. And this time he’s come with a vulture” (424).

Being all alone in the desert, Alu is frightened of his upcoming life. Jyothidas is captivated by Kulfi but even before he starts to propose her at the time of their rehearsal for the dance drama Chitragada, Kulfi all of a sudden passes away because of a heart attack. As he had no relations or no work to return to India he starts to Dusseldorf in Germany to live with his uncle who is an engineer. When jyoti Das is disclosed that Alu and Zindi are going to Tangier on their return journey to home, he is able to envisage a sky glowing with diverse birds flying above Tangier, “sky alive with Cory’s shearwaters and honey buzzards, white storks and steppe eagles” (454). He procures the consent of alleged Zindi to go together with them up to Tangier, “I’m migrating myself - to Dusseldorf. I’ve got nowhere else to go. Can I come with you, too?” (455). To Jyothidas his past life and future life are lands of defeat, defeat at home, and defeat in the society.

The way Jyothidas observes the birds add to the central idea of the novel. Since he observes a variety of birds at different times, they appear to bring to light a journey from water to desert and in the ending yet again to water. Jyothidas recollects his seeing of ducks and cormorants and storks when he had visited the zoo. Afterwards he searched for Paradise Flycatcher when he goes to Mahe and there he in reality sees a Malabar Kingfisher. When he is about to get down in Al-Ghazira he becomes enthusiastic to observe Barbary Falcon and the Saker Falcon. When he is in Elqued he is excitedly in search of vultures. When he is about to
visit to Dusseldorf through Tangier, he is amazed to recognize that the whole of the sky will be voyaging over Tangier.

Shombhu Debnath, a talented weaver as well as Alu’s educator is a physically powerful man with self-esteem: “He was tall, spectrally dark and skeletally thin. He was usually nearly naked, with only a thin gamcha wound around his waist, displaying proudly the corded muscles he bore all over him as a legacy of his years of weaving and wandering” (74). Rakhal, son of Shombhu Debnath’s and brother of Maya, is a man of vices and ambitions: “Rakhal was only sixteen but already among the tallest in the village, and known everywhere for this skill with the bamboo pole. He had a special one for serious fights studded with nails” (34). The character of Rakesh emerges in the second segment of the novel. In the company of Alu, he nomadizes from India to Al-Ghazira for better prospects. Before that, “Rakesh was a travelling sales man for a small Ayurvedic Pharmacy in Bhopal which specialized in a patented herbal laxative. It was the only job he had been able to find—despite his bachelor’s degree in commerce—and that, too, only after a year’s efforts” (195).

Amitav Ghosh is a literary writer who never differs in providing remarks on politics and power equalizations inside India. In an era of internationalization and Universalization, ‘restlessness is only too natural’. On one hand, there is the conventional and perchance ‘out-dated’ faction of people who are preoccupied with colonization of India by the British and decolonization of what the British has done to India. But Ghosh’s focal point is also on re-colonization and neo-colonization of the world by international corporations. Balram’s gears for self-
sufficiency are carbolic acid, weaving loom and tailoring machine. The today’s condition may be post-colonial but Ghosh successfully illustrates how communism and egalitarianism is disloyal to this land. Ghosh all through his profession as a writer exhibits a love-hate bond with decolonization. On some occasions he is provoked by the damage and abuse inflicted by the colonizers and however at other times, he is generous in his hit on double standards and dishonesty of the settled people. At one point Mrs. Verma yells at Mishra, ‘Who sabotaged Lohia? Don’t think we’ve forgotten-we’ve seen you wallowing filth ..., white high theory drips from your mouth, we’ve heard you spouting about the misery of masses' while' your fingers dig into their pockets' (380). Even the procedure of arranging political gatherings is not dispensed with. The politicians are not genuine, nor are they appealing any more. They employ human resources and through those labor forces listeners are set. Bhudeb in indecent political exposition conducts a meeting under the banyan tree. His employees have collected people from the whole village. But Balram, the rationale man, in his earnestness upsets the meeting. Yet even without adequate number of volunteers he copes up with to upset the meeting with pails filled with carbolic acid. On the other hand Bhudeb’s sons and his followers hang up his life size picture on the tree. Ghosh finely handles the approaching ‘advertising’ culture of Indian political beliefs. It also marks towards slavery in the supposed democratic system of India.

The utmost attention-grabbing character in the novel is Jeevanbhai Patel, a tradesperson from Gujarat. He is the owner of the Durban Tailoring House. Being a sensible man, he regularly adores riches. He is of the opinion that monetary benefit is both knowledge and authority. In view of the fact that he has married a
Bohra girl, he is alienated from his family by his family members. He shifts from place to place, misses his name and fame, lots of battle for his life, and, he once more accomplishes in setting up his company, after his wife passing away. He is the originator of New Life Marriage Agency. He lives invariably with the fear of death, and one day he strangles himself with his belt, forlorn without any relations. The character of Nury the egg trader appears in the second segment of the novel. He is typical theorist character. Ghosh explains him so: Nury had imagination. But, more important, Nury was the only man in Al-Ghazira who went from house to house every day, talking to people, even going into courtyards, taking in, in one glance, as much as other people take in ten. Not a leaf fell, not a sheep shat in al-Ghazira without Nury’s knowing of it. But all this he did quietly, for silence was in his nature. (267). The Character of Dr. Mishra emerges in the third segment of the novel. Besides being a doctor, he is well-known for Sanskrit and Indian testament. He is a skeptic similar to Balaram. The impression of his mastermind is apparent, when he says, “The world has come full circle, he groaned. Carbolic acid has become holy water” (444). The women characters of the novel also fight for their survival. Nonderma, the maid servant of Balaram and Torudebi, is an old widow who takes care of Alu and carries out the household chores at Balaram’s house. Maya, daughter of Shombhu Debnath and sister of Rakhal, is an innocent character: Maya was eleven years old, a few months younger than Alu, but taller than him and strongly built. She wears a red sari, wrapping her potentbreasts. It was an old emaciated piece of cloth, and it flow well short of her ankles and left her shoulders bare. She had bamboo of six-foot length in her hands. Her firm, rounded face and her gently slanting eyes were dark with anger (34). Kulfi didi,
who is a widow, is a miserable character in the novel. She is a delicate woman with long slim upper limbs and a skinny, carved-out countenance. Her cheeks look as if they have been misshapen, like the membrane of a pierced drum. She labors as a cook in a rich family. On unimportant causes she misses her employment. She passes away of a heart attack and is buried with all rituals in the Sahara desert.

The only learned and balanced woman who emerges in the third part of the novel is Dr. Uma Verma. She is unconventional and a symbol of the changing scenario of the women’s condition. She is a microbiologist and a compassionate and affectionate woman. She anguishes concerning human race. She says, “Nothing’s whole anymore. If we wait for everything to be right, again, we’ll wait forever while the world falls apart. The only hope is to make do with what we’ve got” (450).

Hence life is the best teacher. Experience and exposure to real life situations are more vital than classroom teaching. Education makes life the best but we can get better education from life. Shombhu Debnath says, “Skill is not enough; you have all that you ever will. Technique is just the beginning. The world is your challenge now. Look around you and see if your loom can encompass it” (86). There is also mention to politics and power aspirations within India. There are a group of people, conventional and possibly old modelled, and who bother about decolonizing of what the British has done to India. The novel focuses on decolonization and neo-colonization of the world by international corporations. The novel also takes effort to point out how democratic system has become futile in India. Ghosh hits at both the colonizers and the colonized; the colonizers
because of the damage they have inflicted and the colonized for their deception and dishonesty. In one situation Mrs. Verma yells at Misra: Who sabotaged Lohia? Don’t think we’ve forgotten. We’ve forgotten nothing. We know your kind inside and outside, through and through: We’ve heard your sugary speeches and we’ve seen the snakes hidden up your sleeves; we’ve seen you wallowing in filth with the Congress while High Theory drips from your mouths; we’ve heard you spouting about the Misery of the Masses while your fingers dig into their pockets. (411)

Nevertheless, at the closing stage of the third segment, there are clues of renewal of life of rationale. There projects a fresh understanding, a fresh life as Mrs. Verma says, “If there’s one thing people learn from their past it is that every consummated death is another beginning” (447). Alu, after experiencing several critical situations, comes back to rationale, and signifying the conclusion of the problems.

In The Circle of Reason there is surplus zeal but scanty insight; there is a kind of wavering of insight or sense All characters are engrossed in a fruitless circle: love of Alu and Maya for each other, Ram’s one-sided love for Kulfi, Kulfi and Abusa’s fondness for one another, fascination of Jyothidas for Kulfi, and completely implied love between Alu and Karthamma ends in breakdown. Balaram’s “School of Reason,” Zindi’s efforts to buy the Durban Tailoring House, Toru- debi’s endeavors to stitch blouses for Parboti-debi, ardent operation of Ghaziri people to fetch tailoring machines and the aspiration to get rid of money, and Mrs. Verma’s arrangement to stage Chitrangada end in absolute collapse The
tracking of Jyothidas after Alu outcomes in his own. The characters are ensnared in such an unyielding sphere that their combats drive them to emptiness. Toru-debi and Zindi have no issues, Kulfi becomes a prostitute, Abusa gets under arrest, and Prof. Samuel is terminated from his job. Nonetheless, the novel offers a ray of hope: “Hope is the beginning” (457). The Circle of Reason formulates an exceptional interpretation; the structure of the novel can be considered to be a symbol of the disorganized condition of present society. On the other hand, the novel has a plot, theme and characterization. The novel looks like to propose that the whole thing is in fact an issue of how one looks at it. Ghosh develops his unusual tale with the aid of amazing characters. In all the three segments the novel locates pieces of colonizers’ life. Each segment is an account of challenges to better society. But a lot of efforts blaze into devastation and banishment. However the novel does not glide into disparagement.

Towards the climax of The Circle of Reason the chief characters recommence their journey once again, being got ridden of artificvisions. Zindi and Alu travels towards their home through Tangiers. Jyothi Das also sets out with them tillTangiers, where “migrating birds fill the sky as they make their annual flight between Europe and Africa, apt symbols of the universal tendency to leave behind continents of defeat and move forward to a world full of hope” (423). Their travel is eternal. No problem is solved. Despair, homelessness and isolation stay behind as the blazing troubles of life.