



VIDHYAYANA

An International Multidisciplinary Research e-Journal

ISSN 2454-8596

www.vidhyayanaejournal.org

**Treatment of History in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh and Manubhai Pancholi: A
Comparison**

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VIDHYAYANA



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Abstract:

The meaning of the word 'history' is intentionally misinterpreted and forcefully drilled into the general psyche. Amitav has tried to redefine the word history, whereas, Darshak has taught us what to learn and how to learn from history books. The general meaning of history is believed to be the record of the past events. However, who writes history, why he/she writes history, who is history written for, what events are excluded and included are the questions generally overlooked. Amitav has written *The Shadow Line* to question the accepted interpretation of history. On the other hand, Darshak has written many essays on the history itself. However, to put the present study in context, I have tried to compare the history in the select novels in this paper.

Keywords: History, Historical Fiction, Treatment of History



VIDHYAYANA



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Amitav named his book after a chronicle which was then resealed in Burma. The name of the chronicle was *'The Glass Palace.'* In the works of Amitav Ghosh, there would be two things guaranteed: a cultural background and cultural trials observed from the characters' viewpoints. Ghosh enhances the importance of history by aligning each work in a separate time and place, dealing in a comprehensive framework with problems antagonized by men. In the art of fiction, he claims history to be dominant and constructs it at both individual and social stages. With the eyes of laymen, he perceives history and grants the abandoned state of normal people whose lives are manipulated by the voracity of decision-makers. The works of Ghosh depict the effects of history on the lives of ordinary men and communities. The characters' close family past is inextricably linked to greater occurrences in world history. His literature is a stirring mixture of fact and literature; what is referred to as historiographical metafiction by Linda Hutcheon. "Historiographic metafiction shows fiction to be historically conditioned and history to be discursively structured" (Hutcheon 843).

In *Deep Nirvana* and *Socrates*, Darshak himself has compared two democracies that enjoyed the best of the forms of governance. Ramesh Dave writes,

Navalkathama aapane tya je ganarajyo hatate jamananu chitr aapyu che. Jem 1857na itihās – aalekhan pachal Rāstriya bhavana hati tem aama paroksh rite Rāstriya bhavana j che. Aapana deshana bhutkalma pan e jamanama ganrajyano Deepak zalhalto hatō. Pachi bhale te Deepak holvai gayo pan ganrajyoni bhavana aapane tya pan hati e babat batavavano lekhakno aashay che ane teni pachal rāstriya bhavana raheli che. (Dave 185)



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(The novel *Socrates* depicts the time of Indian provinces then. The way there was national patriot feeling present in the depiction of the history of 1857, there is a patriotism behind writing the same novel. We had a bright light of small provinces then and they were as functional as the provinces of Greek. Though it was extinguished gradually, but there is patriotism behind talking about the history of Indian provinces then in the novel.)

Darshak believed that history is not just a repository of the past events. But it is an inexhaustible source of human experiences. He believed that we should never be cut off from our past. For to be cut off from the past means to forget what went wrong in the past and such oblivion mind may invite the same incident to be repeated again. Darshak was a committed student of the history, along with that what attracted him the most was the cultural currents that dictate the historical events to take place. For example, it was none other than Socrates' own student who ditched him. Moreover, Darshak has also shown the cultural practices of homosexuality in the same novel. There are couple of scenes that have very intimate description of relationship of Socrates and his students. And he also states that Socrates was attracted towards his student. Inclusion of such incidents make it clear that *Socrates* is the best work of art by 'a cultural historian.'

Located in Burma, Malaya and India the novel *The Glass Palace* takes the students from the overthrowing of King Thebaw to the elastic flourishing of the industrial age, from the organization of teakwood timberlands in Burma to the growing of rubber estates in Malaya, from the front lines of World War II to the growth of freedom activities, from the fall of expansionism to the revolution of Burma into Myanmar beneath a martial autocracy. In the context of the outline of these countless historical trials, Ghosh positions the histories of



An International Multidisciplinary Research e-Journal

persons carried composed by the disillusioned foreign history. The decussate lives of the Burmese imperial domestic, the family of teakwood businessman Rajkumar and that of Saya John and Uma Dey is interrelated with the consistent histories of India, Burma and Malaya. Amitav Ghosh has associated history and fiction in an artistic flare that both airs not only as intimate entities but complementary to each other.

The Glass Palace starts with the incursion of the British army on Burma. “The English are preparing to send a fleet up the Irawaddy, there’s going to be a war” (*The Glass Palace* 15) knowledgeable Mathew to Rajkumar. These words portent the end of kingdom and the birth of colonization in Burma. The deposing and the exclusion of Thebaw, the king of Burma is given in a convincing manner. An English timber company was side-stepping the customs rules of the kingdom, cutting up woods to avoid gainful duties. When the regal customs officers had required debts of payment for fifty thousand fuels, the English men complained. The British Governor in Rangoon refused to pay and authorised the grievances. Shadowed with humbling requirements. The Kinwun Mingyi had suggested that one of the senior officials comply with the terms so that the British could allow the Royal personnel to let the royal palace live. The arrogant queen refused to yield and publish to the British demand that the kings of Burma should never overestimate them as rulers who had defeated the Emperor of China, occupied Thailand, Assam, and Manipur.

As the Japanese insurgents were alleged to be deluded and cruel, the Indians and European residents were eager to quit Burma. In the emigration of about three hundred thousand Indians, which is chronicled as one of the most problematic and anxious mass removals in human history, the resentment of the Burmese close to the Indians and a fear of a



battle by the resident people caused. In addition, another historical event that occurred in the same year is also recorded and is interwoven with the chronicle. Coincidentally, it was the year when it felt appropriate for Gandhiji to launch the Quit India Movement against British rule. People in huge numbers were placed behind the bars along with Congress committee workers. The novel's character, Uma, was one of those who was confined to jail but allowed to return home due to illness. Uma had been at home sometimes when, one fine afternoon, her old doorkeeper came to say that there was a poor outdoor request for her around. Then, as Bengal was in the throes of one of the most vile scarcities in history, it was normal that the city was full of starving rural immigrants. Hunger was so worse that people went through the drains to winnow for ounces of rice. It alludes to the famine of Bengal in 1942, which is known as the Great Famine of Bengal. Before the independence of Bengal, the state of West Bengal in India and Bangladesh was roofed by Bengal. In the 1940s, when it was calculated that famine and malnutrition caused the death of just 2,00,000 people in the Indian province of Bengal, a catastrophic famine agonized. The crop failure in 1942, the impairment of the crop due to tidal waves and a fungal sickness epidemic were the factors that led to the calamity. Nevertheless, this starvation is often referred to as a man-made genocide as the situation worsened by the insignificance of the British Government to the predicament of the starved people of Bengal. When Japan detained Burma, a major rice exporter, the British borrowed and amassed massive amounts of rice. This hoarding, exploitation and the government's failure to deliver the obtainable food grains in a reasonable manner led to enormous price increases. In addition, the continued export of rice from Bengal to extra British territories and British crowds around the globe and the British Government's refusal to allow spare food products led to a snowballing toll of famine deaths in Bengal.



VIDHYAYANA

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The novel begins with the echo of the English standard that closed down Burma's military and an eruption of gunshots is heard towards the end, proclaiming the beginning of injustice. On the very day of the uprising, many students were shot down within the college, the author records. Virtually all personal land has been confiscated and given to various state organizations run by the military. "Notes of specific sections were proclaimed to be worthless; overnight huge number of Kyats became wastepaper." The old world class of commerce left the country while many academic people of the nation fled into the open country. "With each year the generals became more powerful while the rest of the country grew ever feebler: the military was like an incubus sucking the life from its host" (*The Glass Palace* 535).

Another limitation system has been developed and the inspection equipment must incorporate each book and magazine. As her composers were analyzed by the defense spokesman, Dinu's best half needed to go through the difficulty of experiencing the investigation board. The working environment closely resembles a school and there was a scent like latrines in its passageways. Finally, when she showed up in, the official censored her truism that he had torched through a huge amount of time modifying her story, she was made to sit tight for quite a while. She had seen her autographed document covered with red spots on the pencil. The official was "barely literate. He had run his pencil through everything he hadn't understood- puns, allusion, archaisms" (*Sea of Poppies* 536). As the concept of yet another such knowledge made the hours were spent formulating awful, Daw Thin Aye quit formulating. Dinu and his best mate were continuously careful about what they've said never correlated with policy matters, mixed in with not many people.



VIDHYAYANA

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Severe police violence and steady economic failure caused an insurrection and students ransacked into the roads, including cash devaluation. Persuaded by her youngsters, Daw Thin Aye began going to meetings and aided them in writing a leaflet. Aung San Suu Kyi's community location restored Dinu's lost interest in photography. He set up a pictorial record of development in its rockiest days. On July 8, 1988, youngsters and allies went on a walk requiring the popular government to retrieve it. Dinu and his better half were managed to capture with a great many evolving network people. General Ne Win renamed his government the State Law and Order Restoration Council in the fall of 1988. With unpredictable arrests, any opponents to his government was met; schools closed; speed restrictions were forced and meetings were avoided. The military system is under investigation in the sophisticated province of Myanmar, towards the finalization of the novel. In the place where her introduction to the world takes place and her interest in seeing her uncle Dinu, Jaya's lethargic involvement led her to Myanmar. At the time it appeared in Myanmar in 1996, the nation was poor, as Sovereign Supayalat had predicted a hundred years before. The dividers of the houses were either fixed or soiled. It was fairly complicated to number the houses with numbers and letters, parts and muddled into similar model outlines. All over the place, there were spies, and there was a stable vigil for the military. Every family had an enlisted rundown of people and visitors were not permitted to remain without the permission of the public body. Conventional checks were made in the nights by the police. There was no chance and they made life hellfire for individuals. People live in continual dread. The tale ends with an optimistic note of Aung San Suu Kyi's presence at the large event held at her home.

**An International Multidisciplinary Research e-Journal**

Each date in the spectrum of a century of recorded significance is explicitly introduced and is related to the lives of anecdotal characters. *The Glass Palace* began in 1885 with the colonisation of Burma. On 14 November 1885, the supreme armada crossed the fringes. That was the year in which the motor cart was unveiled by Karl Benz in Germany. When King Thebaw was ousted and banished to India, Rajkumar was eleven years of age. In 1905, the nineteenth year of the ruler's outcast, the new District Collector Beni Prasad Dey appeared in Calcutta when regulatory problems were a lot in the psyches of Indians. Contrary to the British norm, gatherings and walks were held and people were advised to blacklist unfamiliar products. When he showed up at Ratnagiri, Beni Prasad was in his mid-forties and his better half was about 26, fifteen years junior to him. In 1907, the very year in which Uma lost her better half, Rajkumar married Dolly. The death of Duke Ferdinand of Sarajevo occurred in 1914, the year of the conception of Dolly's child, Dinu, and Elsa's wife. The subsequent princess absconded with a normal British citizen in December 1916, causing the ruler to die. That was when Dinu suffered an episode of fever and was hospitalized for a month. Dolly is transformed by this incident and she turns out to be more disposed to the statutes of Buddhism. The Queen began her trip from India on April 16, 1919, and showed up in Rangoon four days after the event. In 1925, 6 years after her return from Ratnagiri, the sovereign passed on. Rangoon had acquired an air mail administration in 1929. When the Japanese Rangoon air assault on December 21, 1941, Rajkumar lost all of his assets. He returned to India with his family in 1942, when Bengal was suffering from extreme hunger. In 1948, at the time of the nation's freedom, Cart returned to Burma.

As tea, silk and marble were popular in Britain, China sent immense measurements of product lines to Britain. Due to the low benefit of European goods in the East, China was not

**An International Multidisciplinary Research e-Journal**

keen to introduce any European goods. For Britain, this caused an enormous shortage because they needed to pay the Chinese in silver for the imported products. As Mr. Burnham brings Neel up, "... There is nothing they want from us-they have it in their minds that they have no use whatsoever for our services and packaging. But we couldn't do without their tea and their silks, on the other hand (Sea of Poppies 112). Warren Hastings decided to build an East India Company to impose a business strategy in Bengal to adjust the exchange, urging Indian workers to plant poppies in their fields and then send the great opium to China. Opium agencies were established in Bihar and Banares-Ghazipur to manage the enterprise, constituting a separate branch of the colonial administrative structure. This is what became known as the system of agencies (Farooqui 14). Following the history of the development of India's opium exchange, Farooqui further clarifies that the worker manufacturers were given the task of developing and extracting crude opium that must be handed over to the officials of the institution. In the organization's foundations, the preparation and pushing was done under the supervision of the East India Company. The *Sea of Poppies* gives a clear representation of the managing of heroin at the Ghazipur Processing Plant. The pressed opium was transported for purchase from Calcutta and the opium bought with opium had been sent to China.

In the thanksgiving dinner discussion at Neel's budgerow, the inaccurate terms of return and the specific idea of the trade of the provincial time frame are uncovered. The debate revealed the gnawing hunger of the pioneering aces and the real intent behind the opium war. Mr. Burnham illustrates Neel that, even so, the Chinese were trying to stop the import of opium, because it would demolish British companies such as Burnhams and the windfalls of rich Indians like Neel, they can't be allowed to have their way. "He suggests, "It is the clear majority view of all of us who do company there that it is impossible for the mandarins to



VIDHYAYANA

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have their way (Sea of Poppies 112). These expressions of Mr. Burnham reveal the power of the British and the point of view of the provincial on the incentive of the local. "At the moment when Neel hook line and sinker suggests that they could offer China something better, Mr. Burnham admits, "... They have got it in their heads that they have no use for our product lines and manufacturing companies. There's nothing they want from us. But we can't, on the other hand, do it without their silks and theirs. The drain of silver from Britain and its colonies would have been too great to maintain, if not for opium (Sea of Poppies 112). "Benjamin Burnham rejoices over the need for a battle between Britain and China, but he says, "The war is not about opium when it comes. For freedom, for regulation of expression and for the freedom of the Chinese people, it will be for a principle (Sea of Poppies 115). It is to be noted that, for the sake of chance, the colonizers validate their presentation of cruelty and colonization.



VIDHYAYANA

They tried to validate the invasion and mistreatment of the regions they captured. "Said correctly counts this colonizer's objective: "Was it not true? That 'we' gave progress and modernization to 'them'? Had we not given them request and a kind of stabilisation that they could not provide for themselves? (Culture and Imperialism 23) They forced colonisation under the affection of social advancement, which was filled with cloaked political scheme and severity. The delivery of history by Ghosh makes one familiar with the reasonable reality of imperialism. Ghosh's writings, as Inderpal Grewal emphasizes, are important consultations that emerge from an accurate story doused by Western Histories and from a world connected by its safety from European colonialism and the emergence of new accounts.



VIDHYAYANA

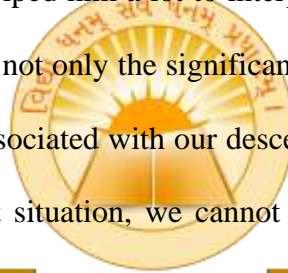
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Ghosh mentioned in a meeting with the Asian Society that war often causes a crash between history and human existence. In conditions of struggle, such as anger, mass clearing, restricted population growth, etc., no one has the choice of pulling back from history. The chosen books categorically documented the effect these instances had on individuals and nations and unearthed how the powers of history can change the lives of standard people forever.

Darshak has a downward sense of depicting history in his works, as compared to Amitav. There are many genuine characters in Deep Niravana and Socrates. Darshak, however, has also added some fictional colors to make it more ethnic and he has acknowledged in many places that his fictional characters have helped him a lot to interplay historical morals. In his novels, he researches history and portrays not only the significance of the past in current life, but he needs to prove that our vision is associated with our descendants. We must learn from the mistakes of our ancestors. At current situation, we cannot afford to reiterate the same errors.



VIDHYAYANA



VIDHYAYANA

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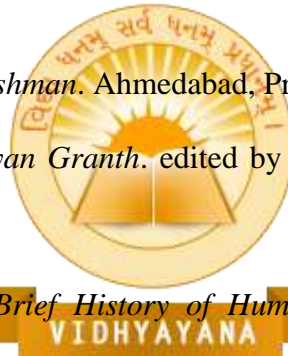
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VIDHYAYANA