

# Amitav Ghosh: A Study of Social, Domestic, Economic and Human Values with Special Reference to Social and Cultural Aspects

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## Abstract:

Research provides a review of Amitav Ghosh's books through combined lenses that include various social, domestic, economic, and human values. Aspects of culture and society are especially important when reading the novels. The research used a variety of texts, including *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace*, *The Hungry Tide*, the Ibis trilogy and *Gun Island*, plus relevant critical sources for the appropriate texts. The thing that distinguishes Ghosh's fiction is that he does not isolate individuals from their surroundings; rather, the characters are all linked together by multiple elements, including family history (historical background), migration, and the colonial-era transatlantic trade, ecological issues or crises (e.g., global warming), caste, gender, and labour. These cultural connections weave together to impact the character's existence within Ghosh's novels. This article discusses how Ghosh's fiction illustrates the existence of long histories between everyday experiences. For example, in Ghosh's novels there are sites of displacement, poverty, injury, and interruption of people living apart due to borders and different languages; however, these people continue to build meaningful relationships of love, memory, and resilience regardless of their physical or psychological displacement from others. Ghosh's work showcases how social organization continually evolves through the interdependence of human cultural, economic, and traditional values with respect to domestic life and ethics.

**Keywords:** *Amitav Ghosh, social values, cultural identity, domestic values, economic struggle, human values, migration, postcolonial literature, ecology, memory, Indian English fiction.*

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Amitav Ghosh's works sort of stand out in Indian English literature, because his novels can shift, almost effortlessly, from the personal to the historical. Like there's this family discussion, or a trek down memory lane, or a village yarn, or a voyage, a cyclone, even the path of trade, it's never just a minor detail in his books. Instead, those bits of everyday life

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seem to grow into a wider world of imperialism, uprooting, violence, ecology, and the messy but real contact with other cultures. And it is exactly for this reason that Ghosh's books can't really be pinned down as only historical or post-colonial novels, they're also novels of values, in a quiet kind of way.

These chosen novels are kind of examples, for the variety of the topics dealt with by Ghosh's works. Like, *The Shadow Lines* talks about memories within the family, nationalism, boundaries, and then communal riots. *The Glass Palace* is more about colonialism, exile, and the cultural shifts coming from Burma into India, and also Malaysia, in a way that feels continuous. *The Hungry Tide* circles environmental vulnerability, myth, language, the remembered lives of refugees, and human survival in the Sundarbans. *The Ibis Trilogy* turns the opium business, indenture laborer's ocean voyage, and all the consequences into something like human archives, including language, cultural patterns, community formation, and caste. *Gun Island*, meanwhile, shows how an ancient legend blends with climate migration and globalization. When you read these together, you start to feel the nature of movement in Ghosh's fictional world, even if that movement looks different every time. Still, movement, as it appears in his novels does not always mean travel.

## **1.2 Amitav Ghosh as a Social and Cultural Novelist**

Ghosh's social visions are kind of huge but they aren't really idealized, not in that simple way. He also isn't a writer who just hangs around the social as such; instead, he keeps writing about people, who end up having experiences of the social through institutions, customs and those everyday relations. The family unit in *The Shadow Lines*, feels like a tiny little microcosm, where the protagonist gathers knowledge about Partition, nationalism and riots, bit by bit, almost like it sneaks in. In *The Glass Palace*, the collapse of the Burmese monarchy turns into a personal tragedy, and that one event rewires marriages, migrations, kinship ties, and even the feelings inside families. Then in *Sea of Poppies*, the opium trade comes right into the rural landscape, and it reaches into agricultural land, the body, and the domestic arena, like it belongs there. So, in these novels' "culture" isn't just some scenery for the action, no, it decides what they eat, what they say, what they recall, who they marry, how they worship, and even what they end up fearing.

Some of the studies cited here for this paper kind of support the reading stated above of Ghosh's works, even if they do it with different emphases. Huttunen 2011, for instance, argues that Ghosh's works need to be understood in relation to ethical representation, voice, silence, and the lived experience of the other. De 2016 then looks at the selected texts, through the interlocking of ideologies, and it becomes clear how Ghosh's narratives manage to catch social historical cultural and economic forces that are moving around. Yesapogu (2016) adds another postcolonial angle to Ghosh's novels, focusing on colonial discourse, identity, displacement and how history keeps shaping society. Taken together, these interpretations suggest that Ghosh's writing is not just about one person's personal life experiences, and it rather keeps pointing outward toward larger structures.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Much of the critique of Ghosh has centered around postcolonial, historical, ecological,

descriptive, and global analyses; these are valid methods for analyzing him as a writer, but they often render Ghosh's values implicit in his writing. Values in Ghosh are not overtly stated; they are expressed in the choices that his characters make e.g. loyalty over safety, memory over forgetting, solidarity over class hierarchy, and care over indifference. Ghosh's domestic values are made explicit in his depictions of home, family, kinship, and a sense of belonging. His economic values are evident in the nature and extent of his depictions of labour, trade, and the exploitation of the poor and vulnerable. His social and cultural values can be seen through language, myth, ritual, migration, and the formation of community; and his human values express themselves through the importance of compassion, dignity, resilience, and a sense of ethical responsibility.

To solve this issue, the challenge lies in uniting these disparate spheres without creating an artificial divide between them. If you were to look solely at a sociological perspective, you would miss out on the domestic pressures experienced in society; if you were to focus on economics, you would be unable to see how the exploitation we witness has inflicted emotional and cultural wounds; lastly, if you were solely concerned with culture, you would fail to appreciate how labour, poverty and violence have helped define the existence of a culture. Thus, this paper will be analysing Ghosh's selected fiction as one large collective area of literature that encompasses social, domestic, economic and human values from each person's perspective.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The proposal identifies five major goals: (1) To explore Ghosh's perspectives on society and culture through his fiction. (2) To analyze the home life portrayed by Ghosh in terms of domestic values: family, household, marriage, memory, and belonging. (3) To examine the economic realities of colonialism, including trade systems, social classes, labour relations; immigration, and exploitation. (4) To identify Ghosh's perceptions about human values in relation to compassion; dignity; freedom; love; memory; and survival. (5) To demonstrate the way Ghosh connects personal and societal experiences in a way that reflects the historical and cultural context in which he lives.

Ghosh's objectives are significant because his novels cannot easily be categorised. For example, *The Hungry Tide* is an ecological fiction, an example of postcolonial fiction, a work written using a particular language, a novel about refugee memory, & as an act of human care! In addition, *Sea of Poppies* can be interpreted as a novel that deals with many themes including opium, caste, indentured labour, gender, work, and shipboard community. The current research maintains this concept of multiple ideas being integrated into one work.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The objectives of the research are defined by the questions below: In Ghosh's novels, what methods are used to depict both social and cultural life? How will Ghosh portray family life, home life and domestic relationships in his novels? How does Ghosh depict how economic struggles, labour, immigration and the effects of colonialism affect the lives of individuals? How does Ghosh demonstrate human values through his characters and through particular narrations? Finally, how does Ghosh utilise his biography in defining historical and cultural

changes through storytelling?

These questions cannot stand alone. For example, in *The Shadow Lines*, the question of home is related to nationalism and partition. In *Sea of Poppies*, the question of labour is related to caste, gender, and the colonial economy. In *Gun Island*, the question of myth is related to anxiety about climate change and migration. Thus, the research questions can help facilitate the cross-examination of the various tiers in Ghosh's works.

## **1.6 Scope and Methodology**

This research focuses on seven principal texts in writing of Amitav Ghosh where the main subject matter concerns: familial memory; cultural identity; domestic displacement; colonial economies; labour and migration; as well as ecological and human value. The chosen texts are as follows: *The Shadowlines*; *The Glass Palace*; *The Hungry Tide*; *Sea of Poppies*; *River of Smoke*; *Flood of Fire*; *Gun Island*. The following works are included in this research because they address Ghosh's later ecological and ethical concerns: *The Great Derangement*; *The Nutmeg's Curse*; *The Living Mountain*. Methodologically, this research is qualitative and analytical. The primary texts will be examined through a close reading style of analysis. Additionally, there will be a thematic review of critical literature related to the primary texts being examined. The theoretical orientation of this research is based upon post-colonial studies; cultural studies; ecocriticism; diaspora studies; gender studies; and humanistic criticism. The primary aim is not to impose a single theoretical perspective onto Ghosh's fiction but rather to read his works as they were meant to be read: across boundaries, languages, memories and life forms.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review**

The key criticism offered for the purposes of this analysis, reveals that there have been a number of ways of reading Ghosh over the years. Some critics have placed his work under post-colonial writing, others have learned in on ecocriticism, migration, memory, diaspora, anthropology, Orientalism, gender matters, or cultural identity. This variety of criticism on offer here is a pretty clear sign of the depth in Ghosh's work. While his literary work, mixes history with narrative, it is also just as important to ask which kinds of narratives stay missing or left out in historical writing.

The relevance of the reviewed articles comes from the fact that each of them—kind of in its own way—throws light on some facet of Ghosh's works. Taken as a whole, they aid in shaping a comprehension of the values he stresses across social, household, economic, and humane spheres. One of the gaps that was spotted in the literature review is that not many studies look at all of these values together, at one time, or in the same sweep.

### **2.2 Studies on Amitav Ghosh as a Postcolonial Writer**

Ghosh's oeuvre is also a good case for a critical-read of the Postcolonialism perspective. According to Yesapogu (2016), Ghosh's novels offer insights into coloniality, postcoloniality, dislocation, and the relationship between colonized peoples and modernity. De (2016)

emphasises how ideology structures a novel by analysing a range of chosen books through a lens that combines historical, economic, national, familial and social factors. Singh (2023) looks at *The Circle of Reason* and *The Glass Palace* through a postcolonial lens with respect to the colonial era and hybrids. Anjana and Shakil (2023) offer *The Calcutta Chromosome* and *The Glass Palace* an Orientalist interpretation.

The Economic and Social aspects of these Studies are very much a part of this Paper. Colonialism is presented by Ghosh, not just as a political event that ends with a country's gaining its independence, but as an event that has transformed trade, land, labour, language, self-identity and family life. In *The Glass Palace*, the British takeover of Burma is associated with the availability of teak, oil from the teak resources of the country, military labour, and exile. Similarly, in the *Ibis Trilogy*, we find that the opium trade links Indian peasants, Chinese consumers, British merchants, and routes of ocean-level labour. In Ghosh's work, post-colonial history is therefore also social & Economic History.

### **2.3 Studies on Social and Cultural Identity**

The issue of identity is a key element within the critique of Ghosh. Hasan, Islam and Sufian (2025) examined themes of cultural dislocation and the diasporic identity in Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, *The Glass Palace* and *The Hungry Tide*. Their work provides insightful information about the experiences of the characters as they experience culture shock, alienation and a sense of homelessness, while moving through geographic and social spaces. In their examination of cultural heritage, memory and identity, Gurulatha and Padmashini (2025) argue that Ghosh's works examine fixed identities through mythology, memory, historical fragments and narrative. In his analysis of *The Calcutta Chromosome* from both an anthropological and literary perspective, Wilson (2021) discusses the topics of representation, subaltern knowledge and voice.

These texts provide evidence for the claim regarding Ghosh's concept of culture as mobile and active. Culture travels through stories, language, customs (such as eating and dressing), memories, and local knowledge. A person can depart from a location, but culture is carried with that individual in fragmented, altered, and frequently painful ways. This can be seen in *The Shadow Lines*, where family narratives carry the memories of Dhaka; in *The Glass Palace*, where exile modifies Burmese identity but cannot erase it; and in *Gun Island*, where modern migration has given birth to myths emergent from ancient peoples' traditional routes.

### **2.4 Studies on Domestic Life, Family and Gender**

Gender and domestic relationships have been a major area of research focus. Sanzum (2012) studies how women's roles within Ghosh's novels are created by their location, time and space, sexual orientation and relationships with men. Yesapogu (2016) discusses the importance of women as central figures within Ghosh's novels specifically in terms of how their social positions are impacted by postcolonialism and their domestic responsibilities. When referencing Ghosh's novels, it has been continuously noted that Ghosh's female characters are not portrayed as passive. Characters like Tha'mma, Ila, Deeti, Paulette, Piya, Nilima, Moyna, and Uma represent a range of social class/moving between locations, and all of these female characters help illustrate how gender identity is constructed through home,

nation, class, caste, labor, and movement.

The corpus of scholarship on Ghosh's work has made it possible for this article to analyse domesticity (as defined above) in an acceptable framework of study. In Ghosh's writing, domesticity does not merely refer to shelter but also includes aspects of nostalgia, burden, imprisonment, nationlessness, morality, and struggle. Domesticity has shaped Deeti's experience in *Sea of Poppies* through patriarchal domination, caste oppression, and poverty. On the other hand, Piya's experience in *The Hungry Tide* illustrates a different type of homelessness, which is linked to issues of gender, diaspora, and language. Similarly, Tha'mma's conception of domesticity in *The Shadow Lines* is rooted in nationalism and borders, thus reinforcing the connection between the domestic and the public history explored in Ghosh's works.

## **2.5 Studies on Economy, Labour and Colonial Exploitation**

It feels like the economic critique of Ghosh shows up more and more, especially when people look at the Ibis trilogy and *The Glass Palace*. In the Ibis trilogy, the anthropological side of cultural contact, plus identity really, is explored by Yogita (2025). Then Karpagavalli and Kavidha (2026) take a different angle, they analyse *Sea of Poppies*, *The Glass Palace* and *River of Smoke*, but more from an ecological perspective, and also as postcolonial texts that focus on environmental exploitation and plunder... Roy (2023) meanwhile digs into Ghosh's eco-aesthetics, linking it to precarity, climate change and migrant labour, in *Gun Island*, and also in Ghosh's more recent eco-criticism.

The importance of these texts is that they demonstrate how Ghosh's economy is not limited to cash transactions. The economy is a system that impacts soil, crops, forests, ships, labour contracts and people. In 'Sea of Poppies', the cultivation of poppy impacts the agrarian economy and forces the peasant community into debt, as well as indentured servitude. 'River of Smoke' describes opium as an imperial commodity that moves through the Indian ocean and China. The third book 'The Glass Palace' details the profits obtained from teak and oil.

## **2.6 Studies on Ecology, Migration and Human Survival**

Contemporary ecological readings of Ghosh's work have rapidly become prominent within contemporary criticism of his work. Maharajan (2017), for example, provides an ecocritical reading of *The Hungry Tide*, drawing attention to the formidable and perilous agency of nature in the Sundarbans region of India. Additionally, Pradhan and Kumar (2022) criticise universalist preservationist approaches to environmentalism, contending that *The Hungry Tide* raises questions about conservation policies that overlook impoverished and dispossessed communities. Also contributing to the study of Ghosh's novels through an ecocritical lens, Lakshmi and Basha (2024) specifically examine Ghosh's representations of environmental consciousness, the climate crisis, deforestation, resource extraction, and the interdependence of ecosystems. Karmarak and Chetty (2024), who analyse *The Nutmeg's Curse*, discuss understanding, colonial epistemology, and the need for decolonial ecological ethics.

The studies presented in this article expand upon our knowledge of what constitutes human value. Ghosh's ecological work does not merely address trees, rivers, dolphins, or the climate.

It also examines how environmental crises are distributed unequally among different social classes. In *The Hungry Tide*, local residents, refugees, fisherman, tigers, dolphins, and a bundle of tides share the same fragile environment. In *Gun Island*, climate change creates migration and anxiety, while simultaneously forming unexpected alliances. Thus, Ghosh's ecological conception encompasses both social ethics and environmental philosophy.

## **2.7 Studies on Human Values**

Naha (2023) interprets Ghosh as a compassionate diasporic author whose subject matter revolves around themes of pain, alienation, displacement, nostalgia, survival, and identity. Huttunen (2011) provides an alternative ethical framework for understanding Ghosh through themes of language, silence, representation, and duty towards the other. Dutta (2023) makes comparisons between Manto's and *Gun Island*'s representations of trauma/loss through the prisms of memory, collective suffering, and migration. Ahmed (2024) utilizes the previously uncommon pairing of disability studies and ecocriticism within *The Glass Palace* to potentially broaden this topic to encompass social and ecological inclusivity or justice. Each of these works provides evidence to support the thesis of this paper: Ghosh's works contain narratives of sustaining humanity despite the world being damaged. His characters are rarely portrayed as ideal heroes. They frequently find themselves confused, afraid, constrained by social class or caste, and caught in a historical period larger than themselves — yet they manifest compassion, friendship, courage, and memory. The value of Ghosh's works lies in his refusal to allow history to destroy an ordinary human face.

## **2.8 Research Gap and Relevance**

Much has been written about Ghosh; however, this paper examines an important gap that has yet to be addressed in existing literature. Most of the previous studies of Ghosh's work have focused on a singular lens (postcolonialism, ecology, gender, migration, identity, Orientalism, narrative technique). This paper seeks to bring together the social, domestic, economic, and human aspects of Ghosh's literature, with a particular emphasis on the cultural context. Attending to all of these areas simultaneously is useful because Ghosh's writings themselves do not distinguish among them. Colonialism can form the fabric of the home; trade can alter the shape of a culture; the economy can create migration; and migration can engender new forms of human relationships.

The significance of this research can be summed up as Ghosh's literature continues to be relevant in today's world. Topics such as migration, climate change, cultural conflict, exploitation of workers, gender inequity and belonging are considered historical issues; however, they are still prevalent in our society. Through his stories, Ghosh creates awareness between readers about many of these issues by providing an intellectual examination of them while still being emotionally based.

## **3. Social Vision in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction**

### **3.1 Society as a Historical Space**

Society is not a static setting but a dynamic historical space that is created out of a myriad of events, including (but not limited to) war, colonialism, the partitioning of countries, and

globalization. As such, Ghosh's novels encapsulate a very large social canvas (the world at large) with a complimentary close view of individuals within this world. The *Shadow Lines* serve to illustrate this contrast between the macro (those things impacting the “world”) and the micro (those things impacting the “individual”). Here, we see how memories of his family’s experiences, memories of places visited (e.g., Dhaka and Calcutta), and experiences of horrific violence (communal riots - silence as violence) all shape the narrator’s understanding of society. Furthermore, you can see how the concept of nation is not a concrete entity but rather one that is formed via memory, fear, desire, and loss.

A similar approach is used in Ghosh’s *The Glass Palace*. The fall of Mandalay is not presented just as an event recorded in history as it also has effects on the lives of Rajkumar, Dolly, Uma, the royal family and Indian troops and subsequent generations. The colonial society depicted in Ghosh's novels is also presented through exile, military service, plantation labor and ideas about identity that are constantly changing. De (2016's discussion of ideology as related to Ghosh's work helps to clarify that social life in the novels is influenced by political, historical and economic forces, but there is also a level of openness in the text so that no single ideology can dominate it.

### **3.2 Social Boundaries and Human Relationships**

Ghosh has a keen interest in boundary issues; however, he is even more fascinated by how humans relate to one another and how this affects existing boundaries. Lines of division based on caste, class, gender and nation are present throughout Ghosh's writing, but those divisions are often in motion. For example, in *The Shadow Lines*, the boundary between India and E. Pakistan (now known as Bangladesh) only has meaning through the perceptions, fears, crossings and recollections of people about that division and how it has impacted their families. Furthermore, the title of *The Shadow Lines* indicates that while the boundary may have political power, it has a shadowy quality when viewed from a human perspective.

In Amitav Ghosh's novel, *Sea of Poppies*, caste distinction is very prominent on land, but that distinction does not transfer onto the Ibis ship as it changes all of this. When people migrate to the Ibis ship (as well as convicts and workers), they enter a completely different social world, the *jahaz-bhai* and *jahaz-sister* concept creates a type of kinship amongst the people aboard, which may not eliminate the suffering of the people aboard but does open up other avenues for the people aboard to create a sense of belonging. Yogita (2025) explained that the Ibis trilogy was the site for the development of interaction between cultures and for the development of new identities because of the transformation that occurs where people of different regions, caste and language had been brought together through the colonial economy.

### **3.3 Community and Collective Memory**

In Ghosh’s works, memory is less about the individual and more about families’ and communities. The narrator of *The Shadow Lines* constructs memory through the stories he has heard from others’ (Tridib, Tha'mma, Ila, and May) experiences. Thus, the narrator’s conceptualisation of his own memory combines with the narrative forms used by other characters to create a social memory that contains multiple perspectives on similar events and/or experiences of violence. Huttunen (2011) suggests that Ghosh has a strong focus on

narrative, silence, and ethical representation, and this focus can be seen through the memory of violence in the novel.

The *Hungry Tide* has another way in which collective memory operates. There are numerous stories about the Sundarbans: Bon Bibi's myth, Morichjhapi's memory, local knowledge of tides, wildlife and danger. In this respect, Gurulatha and Padmashini (2025) successfully link Ghosh's fiction to cultural memory and mythology. The ties of community within this novel are based not only on institutions, but also on the stories, songs, rituals, and the mutual vulnerability of the people living in those communities. Through these forms of collective memory, people will not be viewed solely as numbers or victims.

### **3.4 Social Conflict and Violence**

Ghosh's novels do not idealize communities; instead, he presents violence in its diversity as a function of community conflict, colonialism, caste, patriarchy, ecological inequity, and economics. In the novel *The Shadow Lines*, Ghosh presents communal violence as painful because public history and private memory are separate. In *Sea of Poppies*, Ghosh emphasizes structural violence by showing the consequences of debt, caste, domestic abuse, and indentured servitude on both individual and collective levels. *The Hungry Tide* details the use of state violence toward those displaced by conflict as well as the hardships faced by communities living along the tide's edge. Pradhan and Kumar (2022) reveal that Ghosh has drawn a connection between human suffering caused by environmental policy and larger societal conflicts through his work.

## **4. Domestic Values in Amitav Ghosh's Novels**

### **4.1 Family as a Source of Identity**

Identity is predominantly constructed within families, and in *'The Shadow Lines'* the narrative constructs a history of the world through the memories told by his family members; Tha'mma's past recollections of Dhaka, Tridib's imaginative geography, stories told by Isla of her travels abroad as well as the later testimony offered by May enable the narrator to establish some form of historical understanding. Thus, he does not receive a definitive set of inherited characteristics from the family, but rather multiple fragments, contradictions and gaps within the family narrative. He learns from all this that identity is constructed by more than just parenting or genetic characteristics but is also created through the re-telling of historical places and events by those with which we share our lives with.

In *The Glass Palace*, we see the relationships of families spanning generations and nations. Rajkumar and Dolly's family history is encompassed by Burma, India, Malaya, war, commerce, and exile. The family's domestic existence is frequently disrupted by public historical events; therefore, the family acts as a site of emotional traces from colonial processes. One of the key familial values that Ghosh illustrates is that families are not isolated from their historical contexts but that they accept, endure and sometimes withstand historical circumstances.

### **4.2 Home and the Idea of Belonging**

Home is a major theme in the works of Ghosh. In *Shadow Lines*, Tha'mma's home is linked

to Dhaka, a city that is divided by borders, which illustrates the pain and absurdity of partitioning. Ila's home is misplaced because of global migration, while the narrator sees home through other people's memories. In *Hungry Tide*, home is ecological and emotional, with Piya feeling at home with dolphins, Fokir being at home with the river and the tide, and the refugees carrying their losses. Subasini and Vanitha (2024) present home as identity, environment, and power across a variety of different Indian contexts.

### **4.3 Women and Domestic Responsibility**

Despite the fact that women in Ghosh often carry domestic obligations, they are not relegated solely to domestic passivity. Deeti begins her position within a harsh domestic environment of caste, patriarchy and poverty in *Sea of Poppies* (2009) and although leaving that world is not without difficulty, her movement out of it ultimately becomes a means of survival and creating a self. Paulette also crosses through the social expectations of her colonial and gendered roles, repurposing the narrow place designated for her in those categories. In *The Hungry Tide* (2004), Nilima develops an organization of care through the Badabon Trust and Moyna seeks educational and vocational opportunities as a means to ensure her child's future.

Ghosh's (2012) book regarding the position of ladies in Ghosh's work is pertinent here, as the domestic realm throughout his novels is generally a means of exercising power. Marriage, sexuality, widowhood, movement about the home, and reputation define how much autonomy a female has to act. Yet, his female characters possess both intelligence and agency. Each of them does not resist in an identical manner, hence does not experience success in a similar manner; however, they all reveal the domestic work and emotional resolve that history typically overlooks.

### **4.4 Marriage, Kinship and Social Expectations**

According to Ghosh, marriage is more than just a private relationship; it is influenced by many aspects of society such as caste, class, family honour, etc. In *Sea of Poppies*, the marriage of Deeti and Kalua shows how violence is hidden behind the facade of respectability in society through their defiance of caste and societal expectations to establish a close bond that puts them at great risk both personally and socially. In *The Glass Palace*, the issues of business and being exiled from one's homeland as well as having to deal with war affect the way families are connected to one another. In *The Shadow Lines*, family relationships come with expectations regarding the nation one belongs to, their level of respectability, gender, etc.

In Ghosh's novels, kinship has been redefined. By sharing an experience through traveling and being in peril, the people aboard *Ibis* build a new type of kinship based on their experience rather than genetics. This kinship represents one of the trilogy's most significant domestic or personal values. The *Ibis* serves as a place where individuals can create relationships free from the strictures of traditional Indian caste and village life, although Ghosh does not depict this as a utopia. Ghosh demonstrates to the reader that even under the most demanding circumstances, individuals can establish new domestic meanings.

### **4.5 Domestic Life and Historical Change**

Ghosh's major achievement has been the demonstration of the ways in which history comes

into the house. Partition has brought the violence of that event into families' memories in *The Shadow Lines*; colonial conquest has entered into marriages/exiles/inheritances in *The Glass Palace*; the opium economy has come into the village home in *Sea of Poppies*; and the daily lives of fishermen, mothers and children have been greatly affected by ecological disaster in *The Hungry Tide* and *Gun Island* (among other works by Ghosh). Therefore, what Ghosh calls domestic life is never small; it is a site where gigantic historical forces directly impact individuals.

The author's approach creates dignity for ordinary individuals. In Ghosh's novels, there are kings, merchants and officers, but they also question what history is for those who cook, travel, care for others, have memories, grow crops, fish, translate or flee from something. Consequently, domestic values are not simply sentimental additions to historical fiction; they are a way for history to become comprehensible in human terms.

## **5. Economic Values and Material Conditions**

### **5.1 Colonial Economy and Exploitation**

The colonial economy as depicted by Ghosh relies on extracting resources from colonies. In *The Glass Palace*, the physical aspects of empire are represented through resources like teak, oil, and labor provided by the military. The reason for conquering Burma was to obtain resources from that place and *The Glass Palace* divulges that colonialism does not consist of flags and governments only; it includes forests, labor paths, transportation systems, plantations, and profits. Karpagavalli and Kavidha give prominence to this violent relationship between the environment and economy in their analysis of *The Glass Palace*, as well as in some other novels.

The Ibis Trilogy provides a much more complete account. *Sea Of Poppies* reveals that the cultivation of opium to meet the needs of the Empire destroys food production and creates severe food shortages for peasant farmers whose properties become part of an imperial trading network. *River Of Smoke* then takes the perspective of the global opium trade and the impact on Canton and how the profit is transported around the world via the sea and the suffering is felt by peasants, workers and addicts who grow and handle or use opium. The oppression that creates economic value in colonialism is therefore morally perverse; the same thing that creates wealth for merchants creates hunger, debt and displacement to countless others.

### **5.2 Poverty, Class and Survival**

Poverty in Ghosh is not just a condition but is integral to the options available to the characters. Deeti and Kalua make their way to the Ibis out of necessity; their social & economic worlds have become unbearable for them. Likewise, many migrants in *Gun Island* are forced to migrate due to climate-related issues, lack of work and global disproportionality, all of which lead them down dangerous paths. According to Roy (2023), these are precarious lives, especially related to migrant labour, the climate crisis & neoliberalism.

Class is important to how we understand and communicate. In *The Hungry Tide*, Kanai has formal education, relative wealth, and is comfortable speaking in ways that will help him be successful. Fokir has knowledge about his surroundings that can't easily be put into the

language of the educated upper-class. Piya's scientific knowledge of the river and dolphin becomes more significant when she brings it into contact with Fokir's experiential knowledge of the river and dolphin. Ghosh challenges traditional views of merit by questioning the way that people's skilful and creative contributions are valued, based either on their educational accomplishments or economic success.

### **5.3 Labour and Marginalized Communities**

Through Ghosh's novels, he places emphasis on "workers, peasants, mariners, fishermen, refugees and convicts" as morally significant persons instead of minor characters. For example, the girmitiyas in *Sea of Poppies* expose the human costs of empire; refugees and fishermen in *The Hungry Tide* preserve the history of the tide country; and finally, migrants in *Gun Island* expose the global crisis. Wilson (2021) focuses on the subaltern in *The Calcutta Chromosome* as an example of the failure of anthropology to address these forms of knowledge. Through his work, Ghosh encourages his readers to acknowledge those who produce the products that support society but whose stories are excluded from official records.

### **5.4 Trade, Empire and Global Connections**

Ghosh's view of trade is multifaceted. While it connects nations, it also creates disparities between them. The *Ibis Trilogy* traces the paths of opium, people, language, and currency from their point of origin to their final destinations in many regions, specifically India, China, Mauritius, and the oceans. Sathya (2024) studies how the transfer of culture and narratives in the *Ibis Trilogy* are noteworthy and should be considered when discussing trade because trade does not solely transfer objects; it can also transfer language, culture, food, clothing, religion, and communities.

At the same time, Ghosh continually depicts oppression and exploitation through cultural exchange. Ghosh depicts the opium trade as not being a simple trade between two equal people but as being a trade that is backed by the British Empire (which uses commercial language to validate and justify its morally violent actions) and that the effects of the British Empire's exploitation and oppression of global communities are further amplified by war as illustrated in *Flood of Fire*. Thus, the *Ibis Trilogy* compels readers to think critically about what are the ramifications of establishing global connections through imbalanced forms of power?

### **5.5 Ecology and Livelihood**

Ghosh identifies ecology as being part of the economy. *The Hungry Tide* shows how the economy of local fishermen relies on rivers, the tides, the fish they catch, forests and the animals they depend on; therefore, any conservation effort that does not consider the livelihoods of these communities is an act of injustice. Pradhan and Kumar (2022) criticize conservation models that view poor communities as being in conflict with nature. Ghosh further emphasizes the relationship between nature/hunger, nature/displacement and nature/dignity. *Gun Island* extends this analysis to cover the effects of climate change on storm damage, migration due to climate change, and other factors that lead to failure of livelihood. Karmakar and Chetty (2024) examine how ecological damage is related to colonial processes of knowledge, cognitive injustice and capitalistic extraction.

## **6. Human Values in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction**

### **6.1 Compassion and Solidarity**

Solidarity may be Ghosh's most important value system in his writings. His characters routinely build connections across many of society's perceived barriers, including caste, place of origin, religion, and language. People from all these different backgrounds can come together aboard the Ibis ship. In *The Hungry Tide*, Piya and Fokir are shown to have a special relationship not based on the fact that they share a common language. Additionally, the narrator of *The Shadow Lines* learns through the use of his imagination how to connect to others across physical distance and all the responsibility that comes along with being a connected person.

As Naha (2023), who describes Ghosh as an empathic diasporic author, points out, it can be helpful to understand Ghosh's works through the lens of empathy. However, Ghosh's expression of empathy is not sentimental; instead, it is a challenging form of imagining and/or sympathising with an individual's (or individuals') suffering, lived experience, and knowledge. Huttunen (2011) also supports this interpretation with his emphasis on ethical representations in literature. Ghosh's fiction challenges the reader to re-evaluate the lives of groups that have traditionally been overlooked: refugees, labourers, women, migrants, fishermen, and the displaced.

### **6.2 Love, Friendship and Emotional Bonds**

In Ghosh's work, love is very rarely a purely romantic relationship; instead, love manifests itself as an expression of care, loyalty, memory, friendship, and sacrifice. The relationship between Deeti and Kalua, for example, defies both social and caste-based violence. The relationship between Piya and Fokir is marked by danger, silence and mutual trust. In *Mother Ganges*, Tridib's relationship with May is rooted in tragedy, imagination and desire. All of these different kinds of relationships may not ultimately result in happiness, but they reveal how we continue to reach out to each other despite the tremendous barriers facing us.

It's also essential to have close relationships with others. Relationships are shown through the shipboard community in *Sea of Poppies*, the memories shared by the characters in *The Shadow Lines*, and through the relationships established by emigrants in *Gun Island*. Ghosh does not portray individualism as sufficient for survival; rather, each of his characters requires the assistance of those around them in order to remember, to escape, to interpret, and to grieve before being able to start over again.

### **6.3 Dignity and Freedom**

The theme of dignity is prominent throughout the selected fictions—characters experience indignities due to caste/class/gender/empire/poverty/racial hierarchies. Deeti's struggle is to provide herself with autonomy over her own body and future. Kalua's suffering illustrates how the caste system humiliates the body. The royal family's political exile in *The Glass Palace* raises questions over what happens to dignity following defeat. The migrants in *Gun Island* are not looking for luxury, but rather for a viable life.

In Ghosh's fiction, freedom is not simply national independence; it's also freedom from

hunger, forced labour, domestic violence, caste stigma, the destruction of the environment and the erasure of history. This broad definition of freedom contributes to the social strength of Ghosh's writings. Ultimately, he demonstrates to readers that social/economic dignity must be achieved alongside political freedom.

#### **6.4 Memory and Moral Responsibility**

In Ghosh's works memory plays an active role, and it is a means of carrying out responsibility. For example, in *The Shadow Lines*, remembering Tridib's death and the riots becomes an act of morality as official histories cannot contain sufficiently the private experience of pain. In *The Glass Palace*, family memory offers a means of preserving histories of exile, commerce, warfare and displacement. In *The Hungry Tide*, Nirmal's notebook serves to sustain the memory of Morichjhapi. In *Gun Island*, myth has its own vehicle through which it can traverse time and place, thus providing yet another example of how Ghosh uses memory as an ethical force.

Dutta (2023) draws connections between trauma, displacement, memory, and migration, through which she demonstrates that Ghosh's later fiction can be viewed in relation to the collective suffering of historical movements. Gurulatha and Padmashini (2025) also examine the use of narrative memory in Ghosh's works, thus supporting the idea that memory in these texts functions as an ethical force. To remember is to resist the easy disappearance of suffering.

#### **6.5 Survival and Resilience**

While the characters in Ghosh's novels endure life, it is not always easy to do so. To survive often takes movement, silence, creation, sacrifice, acceptance and bravery. People who live in the Sundarbans must deal with the tides, tigers, wind, state negligence. Girmitya's who are on, or washing over the Ibis, experience black water with both dread; and optimism. The migrants in *Gun Island* cross the boundary seemingly without any certainty of their destination. Survival in these novels is not typically heroic; it is mundane, day to day and extremely frail.

Ghosh illustrates that humans have a capacity to rebuild after destruction by being resilient. Humans reach out to one another to form new relationships, create community through or by telling their story, remembering the deceased, taking care of children, speaking the language of that place and making adjustments to their new environment. Although resilience does not explain or justify suffering, it does provide a means to resist suffering becoming the sole focus of the story.

### **7. Social and Cultural Aspects in Selected Novels**

#### **7.1 The Shadow Lines**

One of Ghosh's key novels for exploring social and cultural values, *The Shadow Lines*, critiques nationalism using memory and imagination based on the experiences of individuals and families. The narrator illustrates his experiences of London before ever seeing the city, while he learns of Dhaka through stories of family. Spatially, the novel shows how culture comes to exist prior to the physical boundaries of the places being described. Borders may divide nations, but they do not divide memories, fears, or relationships.

Critically, the social value of the novel is to expose the destruction caused by communal violence, as well as to question identity based upon nation, rather than being based upon collective memory. Thamma wants her borders to be clear-cut; however, her memories are resistant to this desire for border clarity. Similarly, Ila aspires to have freedom from traditional expectations placed on her as an Indian, yet she is impeded in this regard due to her gender, race and socio-economic class while living in another country. Tridib represents an alternative way of interacting with others through imagination, and through paying attention to where other people live, and what their lives are like. Therefore, the shadow lines create culture based on memory, desire, conflicts and imagination.

## **7.2 The Glass Palace**

The Glass Palace tells the story of colonial history, family life, and cultural transformation. The story begins with the British invasion of Burma and follows a variety of people through Burma, India, and Malaya. The Glass Palace gives us insight into how empires change our definitions of home, work, loyalty, and identity. The exile of the royal family of Burma represents both a tragedy in their private lives and a major political occurrence. Rajkumar's rise through the world of teak and business reflects the uncomfortable position of colonized people who have the chance to be a part of an exploitative system.

According to Anjana and Shakil (2023), the Glass Palace can be considered from the perspectives of Orientalism and colonial representations. Karpagavalli and Kavidha (2026) focus on ecological exploitation in the novel, such as teak, oil, and the consequences of colonial greed. These two articles demonstrate that the Glass Palace is not only about empire as a form of governance but also about empire as an institution that restructures land, labor, culture, family, and identity.

## **7.3 The Hungry Tide**

The Hungry Tide is an important work for both social and cultural reasons as it situates humanity within a harsh ecological environment. The Sundarbans serves as more than simply a location; it also gives shape to language, labour, beliefs, fears and survival. Piya's scientific search for dolphins intersects with Fokir's local knowledge; Kanai's ability to translate language into other languages has its limitations; and Nilima's work in social service encounters the complexity of local needs. By establishing these relationships among characters, Ghosh demonstrates how culture has its origins in the environment.

The writers Subasini and Vanitha (2024) examine the novel as an examination of a variety of Indian realities such as identity, power, environment, gender and post-colonial conditions. Pradhan and Kumar (2022) address the conservation politics and indigenous knowledge. Maharajan (2017) conducts an ecocritical interpretation of the novel. These studies support the idea that The Hungry Tide connects social values with ecological ethics and questions if people can survive while they also care for the environment or are they always going to be viewed separately from one another?

## **7.4 The Ibis Trilogy**

Ibis is among the most socially expansive settings created by Ghosh in his works. The

series travels from opium groves and villages to ships, ports, Canton, wars, and the imperial trading system. This is populated by peasants, sailors, criminals, traders, women, soldiers, translators, and migrants. This diversity provides Ghosh the opportunity to define culture through interactions. Languages are blended, individuals travel across castes and regions, new family ties are created, and the sea itself becomes an arena for pain and transformation.

Economically, the violence in trade becomes apparent through the trilogy. The economy of opium transforms agriculture, debt, the law, and labor. Socially, the trilogy depicts the construction of community among displaced people. Culturally, the trilogy documents the linguistic diversity and hybrid identity. Both Sathya (2024) and Yogita (2025) become helpful in this case since they refer to the cultural exchange aspect of the trilogy.

## **7.5 Gun Island**

In Gun Island, the same concerns expressed by Ghosh earlier are brought to the current reality of climate migrants and globalization. The novel ranges from the Sundarbans to Venice and elsewhere while connecting the myth of the Gun Merchant to the contemporary ecological disaster. Migrants, refugees, smugglers, climate change activists, academics and other such people constitute the world of the novel. The novel intimates that the crisis of the current age cannot be explained in purely modern terms.

The novel is related to precarity, climate change, and migrant workers by Roy (2023), in which she illustrates the role played by migrants, who are vulnerable, in global inequities. Additionally, the connection between Gun Island, displacement, memory, and migration can be achieved using Dutta (2023). The value of the novel from a human point of view is that climate change is not only science. It is an urgent human crisis.

## **8. Cultural Identity and Cross-Cultural Encounters**

### **8.1 Culture as a Changing Process**

The writer never fully paints culture as something fixed, or, as totally pure. Instead it feels more like a flexible thing that travels, you know, it goes from one place to another with people, and it gets tweaked through the act of remembering, migration, and also crisis. This theme comes through in *The Shadow Lines*, where culture seems to matter in different ways for Tha'mma, the narrator, and Ila as they move across Dhaka, Calcutta, and London. Then in *The Glass Palace*, culture gets examined too, but more like through the lens of Burma, India, and Malaya, while colonialism is pushing everything around, along with exile, commerce, and matrimony. Hasan et al. (2025) also describe the whole process as cultural dislocation and diasporic identity.

### **8.2 Language and Multiculturalism**

Ghosh's multicultural perspective is reflected in the diversity of languages he employs in his works. Multiple languages such as Bengali, Bhojpuri, English, Hindustani, Laskari, Burmese, Chinese, and local dialects, portray the complexity and richness of his diverse societies. As an illustration, Piya, Fokir, and Kanai's varying styles of communication in *The Hungry Tide* serve as examples of the ways in which translation can act as a vehicle for creating

connections amongst humans and how shared experiences or gestures can be used to build relationships. Subasini and Vanitha (2024) support Ghosh's assertion about hybridity, language diversity and multiculturalism. In addition, the employment of mixed languages in the Ibis trilogy illustrates migration, work/labour and colonial trade.

### **8.3 Migration and Hybrid Identity**

Characters in Ghosh's fiction possess hybrid identities because they belong to multiple places, histories and languages as a result of migration. In *The Hungry Tide*, Piya is not simply a stranger or an insider; Kanai is an urban dweller with much uncertainty about himself; and Fokir has extensive knowledge of his local environment. In *The Glass Palace*, characters live in states of fragmentation, due to their experiences of exile or diaspora as a result of colonization and generations of displacement. Both De (2016) and Yesapogu (2016) examine these aspects through an examination of post-colonial history, ideology, and the concept of displacement. In *Gun Island*, hybridity is present today through migrants carrying fears, dreams, and stories with them when they cross borders. Roy (2023) highlights precariousness in the contemporary moment. As such, hybridity represents both possibility and vulnerability in Ghosh's works.

### **8.4 Myth, Folklore and Cultural Memory**

Myth and folklore within Ghosh do more than just embellish storytelling; they serve to maintain collective memories, offer definition for risk or threat, and contribute to an individual's continued existence. *Bon Bibi* provides language to the Sundarbans locals for the purposes of safeguarding their culture, creating equilibrium among themselves relative to the tigers, rivers and forests of the Sundarbans, and preserving their ability to coexist with these elements. Pradhan & Kumar (2022) further demonstrate how this type of local knowledge can contest the idea of a limited view of environmental preservation. The *Gun Merchant* legend from *Gun Island* can be used to illustrate the connection that Sundarbans people have had to migration and climate change while preserving memories of resilience from their environment. Gurulatha & Padmashini (2025) use Ghosh's works to contribute to historical understanding of cultural memory and identity, while Karmakar & Chetty (2024) provide non-Western ecological perspectives. Thus, the myth can be used as a source of ethical knowledge in the contemporary world.

## **9. Gender, Society and Human Values**

### **9.1 Women as Agents of Change**

Ghosh's female figures meet social pressure, but they are not these quiet, aching types. Like Deeti in *Sea of Poppies*, she resists a too-tight domestic arrangement and inches toward the Ibis, almost as if it is a small stairway to selfhood. Then there is Paulette who pushes back against rigid colonial identities, and Piya in *The Hungry Tide* who becomes more independent by picking up knowledge from Fokir and from the Sundarbans too. Nilima also transforms care into something public—via social work, not just private feeling. Tha'mma, Ila and Uma each carry different problems around nationalism, gender, race and that whole idea of colonial respectability. And overall, Sanzum (2012) and Yesapogu (2016) suggest that in Ghosh women

still act on society , not just endure it.

## **9.2 Patriarchy and Social Control**

In Ghosh's narratives, women face many barriers and limitations due to the actions of patriarchal society controlling their bodies, choices, marriages, mobility, and identity. In *Sea of Poppies*, Deeti is constrained by her marriage, caste, family obligations, and ritual violence, demonstrating resistance to the system that views women as commodities. In *The Shadow Lines*, Ila's ability to move freely is restricted by the gendered perceptions of her behavior, and *Tha'mma* represents how deeply embedded social codes shape a woman's behavior. In *The Hungry Tide*, Moyna's desire for education, job security, and a living wage connects the idea of patriarchal control of women to their class backgrounds and socioeconomic status. Subasini and Vanitha (2024) illustrate how Ghosh connects the lives of women to larger social conditions.

## **9.3 Female Resistance and Selfhood**

Ghosh creates many kinds of female resistance through his female characters - different kinds of resistance to patriarchy and patriarchy and cultural, social, political and economic systems. All his female characters resist patriarchy and patriarchy by refusing to have to accept what they are assigned as a result of their gender and class. The female characters in Ghosh's work are complex women who have been shaped and formed by the same forces that shape and form their place in society. Ghosh shows that gender is tied to social justice and that gender, social and political justice are determined by caste, class, ecology, colonialism and the history.

## **10. Postcolonial and Historical Dimensions**

### **10.1 Colonialism and Social Transformation**

According to Ghosh, colonialism kind of reconfigures society in every way it can, in all its forms, right. In *The Glass Palace*, British colonization seems to reshape the monarchy, family life, the economy, and even the environment, especially around the extraction of teak and oil, as Karpagavalli and Kavidha (2026) say through the idea of ecological imperialism. At the same time , the *Ibis Trilogy* gives examples of colonization that show up as opium, indenture, trade, and war, mixed together in a pretty relentless manner. *The Sea of Poppies* shows how the cultivation of an imperial crop changes rural India, while *River of Smoke* and *Flood of Fire* show the strain caused by commercial activities. These angles also get reinforced by Yesapogu (2016) and De (2016).

### **10.2 History from Below**

Ghosh's fiction kind of gives history from below by putting peasants, widows, sailors, fishermen, migrants, servants and refugees next to rulers, merchants, and officials—like there's no real clean split. In the *Ibis Trilogy*, the opium trade is sort of understood through the people dragged into that whole labour system, not just via imperial commerce alone, and this angle feels deliberately sideways. *The Hungry Tide* in turn records Morichjhapi through Nirmal's notebook and Fokir's lived knowledge of the river, so the histories stay preserved outside official documents. Wilson (2021) and Huttunen (2011) then sharpen this worry about

subaltern voice, silence, and ethical representation, even when the account is messy. In *Gun Island*, Roy (2023) shows how climate migrants and precarious workers get made central to planetary history in Ghosh's later imagination as well, not as a footnote.

### **10.3 Nation, Border and Belonging**

Ghosh keeps poking at those fixed ideas about nation and border, like in *The Shadow Lines* especially. the novel kind of shows that borders can really kill, not just metaphorically, because states end up enforcing them. but then, memory fear love and imagination, somehow slip across anyway, quietly like they don't even notice. Dhaka Calcutta and London end up overlapping in the narrator's family history, so identity feels larger than nationalism. *The Glass Palace* also drifts through Burma India and Malaya , and it gives you this sense that the ties go on, despite what governments claim. and the *Ibis Trilogy* makes those oceanic bonds, like a farther relation beyond the nation, not exactly legal either. in *Gun Island* climate migration makes borders look politically strong, but ecologically they mean almost nothing. so for Ghosh, belonging is more human, more cultural and emotional , than just citizenship territory or national law.

## **11. Conclusion**

### **11.1 Summary of Findings**

By exploring the perspectives of various social, domestic, labour, economic and human values from within Amitav Ghosh's novels, this study has focused on the social and cultural dimensions of Ghosh's fictional world. The selected novels illustrate how everything Ghosh has written about - society, family, economy and culture - is ultimately underpinned by some form of connection between them. Society is connected to history; families have a connection to their past; economies rely on their communities; cultures depend on language, migration and myth; and most importantly, we are all connected by how we experience crises.

Family memory questions the nation-state and border formations in *The Shadow Lines*. Colonial impact on both society and the economy and on domestic lives is illustrated in the novel *The Glass Palace*. Relationship between ecology, culture, myth, and means of livelihood is the subject of *The Hungry Tide*. Colonial trade/indenture results in both suffering and the creation of new types of communities in the *Ibis Trilogy*. *Gun Island* deals with the existential consequences of climate change through myth and migration. Collectively and individually through these works, Ghosh places a high importance on the meaningfulness of human beings' vulnerability.

### **11.2 Contribution of Amitav Ghosh**

Ghosh's contributions to Indian English literature can be demonstrated by how he successfully merges extensive knowledge with intimate personal experiences. In his novels he employs history, anthropology, ecology, economics, migration and cultural memory to write about ordinary people and place them in familiar settings. While his novels have sweeping geographic scopes, they have close emotional ties as well. They span continents, yet they also linger over the image of a parent, an employee, a surviving spouse, a fisherman, a transient worker and a memory.

The published research conducted in this paper supports the idea that he has made an overall contribution to the area studied. For example, many scholars have categorized him according to [a] different disciplinary perspective (e.g., Colonial/postcolonial, ecological, diasporic, anthropological, ethical, feminist, historical, etc.). This paper attempts to bring all of these various categories together through a discussion of 'value.' Ghosh's fiction is significant because it raises questions regarding human dignity, responsibility to others (care), remembrance, and sense of belonging in a world that has been created through violence or movement.

### **11.3 Final Argument**

One last point made in the paper is how Ghosh's novels show that values do not always exist as abstract moral lessons but rather as tangible experiential expressions. When individuals share common humanity by crossing social lines, compassion is demonstrated. Domestic value is demonstrated when individuals recall or create new homes or question the fundamentals of what a home means to them. Economic value is determined based on the impact on the human body or the landscape; therefore, economic value will vary based on location and social structure. Cultural value can also be established through the use of language, mythology and memory, and human value has been established through resilience, love, dignity and responsibility.

Despite the obstacles of poverty, exile, ecological risk, labour coercion and historical brutality, Ghosh's literary works maintain a sense of hope. Ghosh's work depicts the people and events of history that are hidden from view, as well as the voices that are overlooked by those in positions of authority. Thus, these works continue to be relevant for research into social and cultural life today. This literature is capable of holding memories, challenging injustice and sustaining an idea of human unity that is both vulnerable and of vital importance.

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