

Exploration of Histories in Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosome*

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Abstract

Invasion, defined as a forcible entry into a person's domain, provides opportunities for history to be made. It occurs on a massive scale occasionally and has the potential to drastically alter the ecosystem of the nation affected. History, as a record of previous human action, serves as a road map, source of information, and source of criticism. It is unavoidable for any author to describe or depict a nation that is crucial to his or her work. It emphasizes empathy, honesty, understanding, and social conscience through a series of lessons that provide important moral instruction. Literature and history are inextricably linked. Events in history are disordered chronologies of unknown data, necessitating the creation of a paradigm and making sense of them by a historian. In this way, how Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Calcutta Chromosome* explores the history of malaria hypotheses is the main discussion of this paper.

KEY WORDS:

History, reinvent, disease, discovery

Ghosh is a writer who recreates the history, proposes a framework, and interprets it. It has had a significant influence on his work that ultimately has a sequential circulation since the history gives information for his artistic appreciation and creative impulse. In his writings, he discusses the histories of several nations as well as the individuals who live as witnesses to their lives and experiences. His extensive study experiences, as well as his travels to multicultural countries, have provided him with sufficient opportunity to reflect on cultural and historical disparities.

Ghosh's writings show how history impacts people's lives, personalities, and fates. He wants to recreate India's history by connecting the past events. All of his works are based on his own historical study, both social and scientific. The prominent figures depicted in Ghosh's novels

are authentic representatives of the nation's socio-cultural and political structure. His works are all based on historical, sociological, and political sources. In all his fiction and non-fictional works, Ghosh's writings depict historical significance. To justify this context, Latha Chaturvedi states as: Almost all Amitav Ghosh's books... invariably focus on history and its ramification across geography, a theme that has seldom been explored before and which he does well with his creative imagination equipped with his own anthropological training. (199)

In his works, historical events are closely entwined with the writer's personal thoughts, emotions, assessments, and life philosophy. The occurrences are detailed chronologically and geographically.

His famous "postcolonial" piece of science fiction, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, is well-known. This work explores the concept of "alternative" history, which focuses on "subaltern" people, as well as the life of Ronald Ross, the famous scientist who won the Nobel Prize for his discoveries concerning malaria transmission. The work is also primarily about the "subaltern," their silence, and their past.

Pradip Trikha in his article "The Calcutta Chromosome: A Literary Touchstone" comments as, "Ghosh is a novelist who conformingly writes about a vanished era. In his novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, he traces the past like social historian and chronicler" (258). The approaches he employs, particularly in dealing with sensitive issues and the style of narration, are the more important features of the work. From the beginning until the end of his story, he alternates between the past and the present. Further, P.S.Ravi in his article "History Politics and the Individual", considers this technique as a "radically different perception of history are artistically synthesized that the events of the past come alive, making it a living experience" (39).

The Calcutta Chromosome is a dystopian and magical tale based on the life and study of British scientist Ronald Ross. Literature, physics, philosophy, history, psychology, and sociology are all incorporated into it. It combines horror, health history, and magical realism. It's a search and exploration story that ties together the past, present, and future in a complex web. There are two parts to it: *The Day After August 20th*. It's about Dr. Ronald Ross, a British medical scientist working in colonial India when he discovered the malaria parasite. The fictitious Ross is untrained in his field, but is guided in the correct route by a small religious community. With its subtle and funny blending of science and folklore, it is a fascinating read.

The novel *The Calcutta Chromosome* chronicles historical study from the eighteenth century through the twenty-first century's lateral revelation of the mysteries involved. It's a rewrite of medical history in the Western world. Ghosh develops a chronological conceptual structure for this storey by fusing reality with fiction, a technique called as faction. Ronald Ross's past is a tangle of contradictions. Murugan is fascinated by the early days of malaria research, and he delves into the intriguing life of Ronald Ross. To build a historical backdrop for a spectacular fiction, he largely relies on Ross's Memoirs. More than two decades after the discovery, Ross' Memoirs were published in 1923.

The narrator realizes a long-forgotten memorial in Calcutta dedicated to Ronald Ross, the Nobel Prize recipient for discovering the malaria parasite. Murugan feels that there is still a hidden history which has been deleted from colonial current societal scribbling records and medical historiography, and he wants to find the missing ties. Ghosh has gathered enough evidence to develop a ground-breaking theory that turns science and religion on their heads. The hypothesis of displacement is supported by his footsteps. Murugan believes that there is a "Other Mind" (TCC 35), a group of people who steered Ross to his findings and kept him away from other paths of thought. Ross has never been intellectually interested or research oriented, according to Murugan's account. Only after Dr. Patrick Manson has persuaded him to verify his [Manson's] theories on how the country's oldest and most widely distributed illness is transferred does he begin his search for the malaria vector. Ross was the first one to identify that the malaria transmission parasite is transferred orally, via water supply, from mosquito to man. Ross' path shifted in an instant, and on August 20, 1897, he discovered the link between plasmodium zygotes and *Anopheles stephensi*. This prompted Murugan to uncover a power other than Ross who assisted Ross in his findings.

Ross's findings have always been made by chance, thanks to a bizarre happenstance Lutchman, a friendly dhooley bearer, has. There is very little information in the biography regarding Lutchman, the subject of Ross's first malaria studies. In the youthful Lutchman, he notices an uncommon quality. Throughout his malaria inquiry, he maintains him in his service. Lutchman, who initially came as a patient, later becomes a Ross employee. Ross carries out his experiment on the colonised country's destitute illiterate locals. Ross' discoveries are solely due to Mangala, a lab cleaner. She heals it by telling a storey about soul displacement. Resurrection was once practised by renowned sages. Ross uses the Indians as examples in his studies to establish

this act scientifically. Westerners see Mangala's research as counter-science. Science is concealment to Indians, but transparency to westerners.

Science is viewed by Indians as a mythical and superstitious concept. They are unable to or are not permitted to flourish in the alien world, whereas Indian soil has no differences in terms of enabling people to be successful. The intruders obtain names by utilising various Indigenous knowledge. Many more Indians than Ross would care to admit have aided him in his malaria research lab. Westerners have no qualms about deceiving those who have assisted them with their study.

Ghosh concludes the tale with the deep transformation to suggest a future for the impoverished in which they appear to wield authority. As a result, Ghosh's work is concerned with the past, voice, and future of the underclass.

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