

# A Tale of Colonial and Consequence in Amitav Ghosh Sea of Poppies

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**Abstract-** *The story deals which is deals with said prior to the first opium war on the banks of holy river Ganges and in calcutta. The novel “SEA OF POPPIES” as one of the AMITAV GHOSH’S Ibis trilogy vehemently attacked the scourage of imperialism and colonialism. Ghosh was born in Calcutta, and he studied in Oxford, Delhi. Amitav Ghosh’s work has been translated into more than thirty languages and he has served on the juries of the Locarno and Venice film festival. His works are The Shadow Lines, Flood of Fire, River of Smoke. He holds two Lifetime achievement awards and four honorary doctorates. The novel interweaves the stories of a number of characters, who all, in the latter half of the novel, find themselves taking passage from Calcutta to Mauritius on a schooner named the Ibis. The influence of East Indian Company Opium Factory demolished the life of number of characters portrayed in the novel.*

**Indexed Terms-** *Scourge, Vehementary, Schooner, Juries, Poppies.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

It happened at the end of winter in the year when the poppies were strangely slow to shed their petals; for mile after after mile from Benaras onwards, the Ganga seemed to be flowing between twin glaciers, both its banks being blanketed by thick drifts of white petalled flowers. It was as if the snows of the high Himalayas had descended on the plains to await the arraival of Holi and its springtime profusion of color.

In presents how the British controlled the people and land of india. The natives do not choice to fight, because they were helpless with the invaders. But unlike Deeti, there is a desire to oppose growing poppy on her land. Drug smuggling and humkan

trafficking by the hands of the British in India and china.

The story of the former slave ship Ibis extends to various parts of Bengal including off the coast of Ganga saga Island where the ship drops its anchor at one point. The narrator mentions the ironic history of the Ibis: although it was once used by British and American naval officers. Post colonialism in Amita Ghosh’s novel sea of poppies, colonization of peasants who are stigmatized as losers as people who must be under the control of the invaders in aspect of their lives. And the people who were colonized had the perception that the colonizer was a very powerful great and strong person.

The central character of Sea poppies, Deeti is situated on the outskirts of the town of Ghazipur in North Calcutta India. She belongs to a family of farmers who supply poppies to a British run opium factory at Ghazipur in colonizrd india.

The story begins with Deeti a simple, spiritual lady, efficient house wife. Hukumsingh a crippled worker in the Ghazipur Opium factory. Deeti was married to Hukumsingh. Deeti the prominent woman lives in the ordinary village. Deeti is leading the character of the novel around the whole. The position of this woman from lower class to upper class is not different. Colonialism is one among the main themes of the novel. In Sea of Poppies, Ghosh has shown the plight and sufferings of people during colonial rule. She is called ‘chaudaliya, dainiya as if she were a witch: but Deeti had only to turn her eyes on them to make them scatter and run off’ (5). Deeti married to Hukumsingh without knowing her. Deeti’s dreams are shattered on the very first night of her marriage when she is inhaled opium by her husband. Due to this inhale of opium in the state of unconsciousness and she is raped.

After this incident she is ignored by her husband through this she begins to doubt about him. It was late too realise that whole tradegy happened to her and she becomes pregnant. In order to know about the truth she gave opium to her mother- in-law. By intaking opium her mother-in-law became unconscious and she confesses the truth about the incident occurred. Hukumsingh opium addict husband of Deeti is in his death-bed. Her brother-in-law assault her physically in order to escape she says, “Listen to me: I will burn on my husband’s pyre rather than given myself to you”.(154) She sits on the pyre in a state of unconsciousness. “ To have a sati in the family will make us famous. We will build a temple for you and grow rich on the offerings”. (155)

Deeti had a daughter Kabuthari. Her daughter becomes the hindrance in her way. Deeti send her daughter Kabuthari to his brother’s home in order to be safe there. Kalua, a low –caste man, who saved Deeti from the sati. Deeti married Kalua and she forgot about her past and she started her new journey of her life. Kalua becomes her second husband. Deeti willed with whom she choose and she knew it was with Kalua, that this life would be lived, until another death will claimed the body that he had torn from the flames. (175)

Another victim Munniah on the board of Ibis by Ghosh as another victim of the patriarchal system of Indian society. Munniah becomes pregnant due to illicit relationship with a man working in opium factory. She has to live in her village with her parents. Her child was dead due to the fire in her village. Jodu (Azad) realtionship between a Hindhu girl and a Muslim boy. This was not accepted by the village people. Due to this Jodu is beaten and Munniah is locked in the room.

One of the main and significant elements that Ghosh attempts to expose in *Sea of Poppies* is the patriarchal system dominated over its different parts which creates an undesirable condition for the Indian women. Ghosh illustrates Deeti who marries Hukam Singh only because Deeti’s own brother, Kesri Singh, had proposed the match. The two men had belonged to the same battalion and had served together in a couple of overseas campaigns (SP- 21). In a

patriarchal society, it is the law of the male member of family that controls their values, dreams and desires. Brother is the representation of the men in a particular community surrounded the women. They control everything in the family, the law, the rules, desires, decisions, personal affairs and the women have to obey, because, as Landry and Maclean state, they are inescapably patriarchal (SP- 86). Patriarchal system creates a situation for the woman, as Spivak declares, figure of woman is at issue, one whose minimal predication as indeterminate is already available to the phallogocentric tradition (1988: 82). She explains the unpleasant situation of the women in patriarchal societies and under their rules. Power of colonialism in particular establishes a kind of oppression based on a central consideration named colonial power and some untrue suppositions regarding the Orient through which different dimensions of the social and personal aspects of the life of the colonized people such as economic, political, cultural, and religious have been under its control. Responding her brother-in-law’s proposal and answering his threat concerning that she will be burnt with her husband in his funeral pyre, Deeti imagines better by far to die a celebrated death than to be dependent on Chandan Singh, or even to return to her own village, to live out her days as a shameful burden on her brother and her kin (SP- 108). Obviously Ghosh attempts to portray the position of the Indian women in such a rigid society in which there is no equality between its different groups.

The another character of Heeru, a plight of woman left by her husband. Due to the disease of forgetfulness Heeru is left alone by her husband. On the way to Mauritius, by ship she agreed to marry the indentured labour who is much older than her. Sarju an oldest woman in the ship, committed a mistaske in the delivery of a Thakur’s son and for this she is punished and send out from her village to Mauritius.

Sarju gives Deeti the seeds of poppy, for future use in Mauritius. Deeti realises the importance of seeds and for their future use as it is used for agriculture. Ratna and Champa are the two characters with whom Ghosh reveals about the truth. Both Rathna and Champa are sisters married to a pair of brothers who are working in opium factory. Dokhane is the

woman who left for her house with her husband in the oppression of her abuse mother-in-law. She is unaware of the hardships and the living conditions of the slave workers in Mauritius.

Malti, the next new character and he is wife of Neel. She is handcuffed between colonial loss. Elokeshi betrays Neel, she married him only for his property. Malti leads as a silent spectator in her house by performing duties without questioning her husband. Her husband was in jail. Through the various characters, the author has depicted the nature of typical people who migrated themselves towards Mauritius.

From the above evaluation, it is clear that the people working in the opium factory had lost their lives by suffering a lot. The nature of narrative concentrating on the presentation of these situations becomes complicated overwhelming presence of the story elements now seems replaced by creating different situations and the responses of the characters.

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