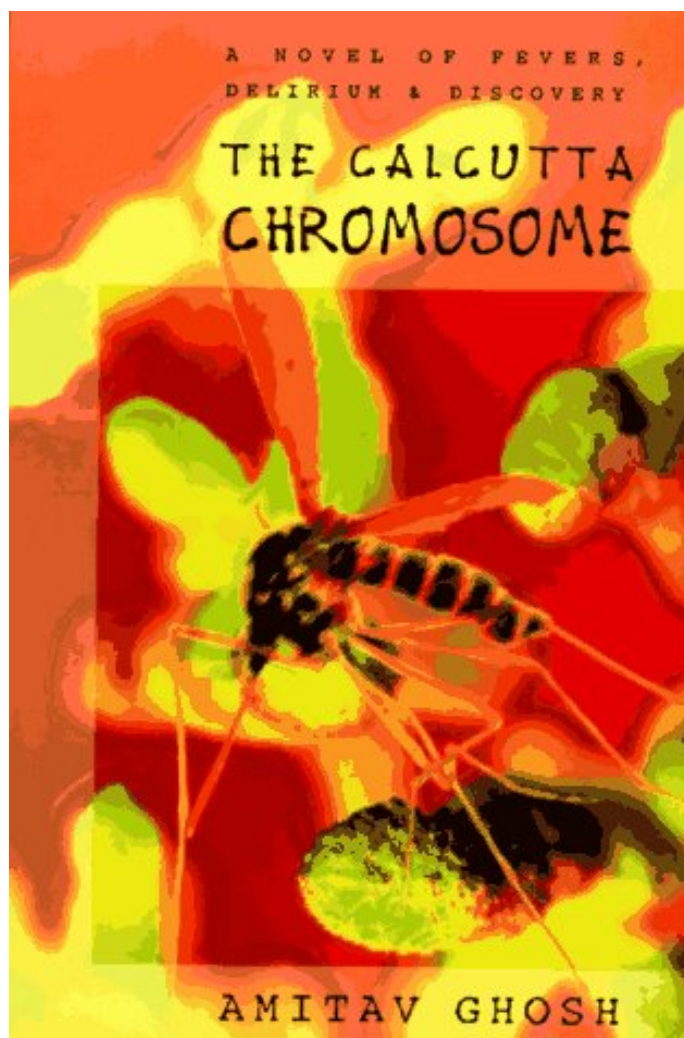

Amitav Ghosh

The Calcutta Chromosome



Title: The Calcutta Chromosome

Author: Amitav Ghosh

Format: Hardcover

Language: English

Pages: 311

Publisher: , 0

ISBN: 0380975858

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 5.9 MB

Download: allowed

Description

It begins in a near future New York City, when Antar, a low-level programmer and data analyst for a large bureaucratic concern, comes upon the lost and battered I.D. card of a man he once knew--a man who vanished without a trace some where in the teeming excess of Calcutta, India, several years before. Strangely compelled, Antar initiates a search into the facts behind the disappearance of the enigmatic L. Murugan, and is unwittingly drawn into a bizarre alternate history of medical science. Leaping backward in time, we join Murugan in Calcutta in 1995, as he follows the twisted threads of science, counter-science and ritual back a hundred years further to the laboratory of Ronald Ross, the British scientist who discovered how malaria is transmitted to humans. Obsessed with the weird, fortuitous coincidences that led to Ross' groundbreaking discovery, Murugan has stumbled upon evidence of an impossible ongoing experiment in controlled destiny, protected by a powerful unseen society that moves the world in secret and in silence.

Suddenly, every fact hitherto known can no longer be trusted, for everything has been revealed to be other than it appears. In this steamy, overcrowded city of clashing cultures and hidden faces, L. Murugan has opened a Pandora's Box that carefully orchestrated death and misdirection have long kept shut. And the truth that is revealed will have momentous consequences--for Murugan, for Antar, for a troubled female journalist and an exquisite Indian celebrity...for everyone and everything human.

Insightful reviews

Anandadivya: This was one of those books which has been in my book shelf for quite long but didn't take to serious reading until yesterday. Besides being in the top of my book stack, I could not think of any other reason to pick this particular book to kill my time. I was down with fever and too tired to move around. A book is the company in such situations and what a company it turned out to be.

'Calcutta Chromosome' was racy and fast. I can vouch for this fact having finished this book in one go. It looks like a medical and psychic thriller at the outset. The story travels back and forth in times. There is one story running in the future in the 21st century which is set in New York, one in the past in late 19th century set in colonial India and one in the late 20th century set in the city of Joy, Calcutta. The novel attempts to look into the discovery of Malarial parasite by Ronald Ross in a different light. In the process Amitav Ghosh touches upon destiny, reincarnation and occultism. The vivid description of the streets of Calcutta is a delight and one can't help falling in love with Urmila Das, the young journalist working for Calcutta magazine. The book warrants a second read in order to write a finer review. But then it's for another time. For now, I love this Calcutta Chromosome.

Preeta: Just completing the book, my mind is left swirling with unanswered questions but an implicit sense of understanding that there is something beneath this story about malaria and the scientist Ross across the past, present, and future. Strikingly, the known facts about Ross are presented in a new light - making it a mystery about his discovery - it made me think how all flashes of brilliance are mysterious, like how Archimedes said "eureka!" when he stepped into a

bath and noticed the water level rise -- he suddenly understood that the volume of water displaced must be equal to the volume of the part of his body he had submerged.

But then, I realized that Ghosh must be alluding to the fact that what seems like a conspiracy is really fate bearing down on us - the Gods have their own designs. We just follow the light or choose not to and end up still "following" the (metaphorical) light, inadvertently. Goddess Mangaladevi (Mrs. A, Urmila, Tara) seems to be the representation of Ma Durga who is a very important representation of the Mother Goddess in Calcutta. Lutchman, Laakan, Lucky seems to be the god Lakshmana, the younger brother of Ram - who follows by Ram's side as a constant companion for fourteen years on his journey in exile. This could mean that the three men - Ronald, Morgan and Antar - then unwittingly playing the role of Ram.

However, understanding this book is like the "Calcutta Chromosome" itself - knowing it means changing it or mutating it. I think I will have to muse a bit more about the significance of Antar as the only boy who escaped the rare outbreak of malaria in Egypt who is the "one" they seek as their perfect discoverer for perfect discovery.

Riku Sayuj: What was that Mr. Ghosh? An attempt at a new genre? A bold stroke at creating a uniquely Indian view on science and how it would have been if science research was driven by mystics and cults? A spi-sci-fi book?

[\(view spoiler\)](#) It is a pity that all the science falls flat the moment it wanders beyond the known and the proven. It could have been so much better. However, because Ghosh keeps all the science strictly to the unreliable Murugan, it seems acceptable or at least pardonable - even when it is utter nonsense, we can take it as a man's eccentricities and carry on in the ride he has created for himself.

If the narrator had not climbed aboard the same train for the ride, not to mention adding the unnecessary ghost train (or did I miss its significance all together?) and the comic book ending, I would have given the book an additional star to complete a fiver - it entertained me that much, and when unexpected entertainment finds you, it is exhilarating. The book under-delivered on literary merit but over-delivered on pure fun and that works, sometimes.

I fully expect it to be the worst of Ghosh's works but I also know that I will not approach anything by him with the faint dread-steeped respect with which we approach most modern literary giants for the first time.
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The Super Moop: the single great point that is pop out of my having sat via this is, I now comprehend something or approximately mosquitoes, parasites and Ronald Ross. that is some degree in favour of Mr.Ghosh. the fellow is obviously a human encyclopaedia. every little thing i have learn of his, which admittedly isn't really an exceptional deal, has been full of technical element approximately no matter what topic it really is that he is taken upon himself to put in writing about. within the Sea of Poppies, he manages to construct a powerful, thrusting narrative at the foundations of his trademarked educational rigour, making it, within the process, the towering success it is; within the Hungry Tide, at the different hand, there is a experience of the proof dominating the a bit rickety plot, however the booklet works nevertheless, as the proof

themselves command interest. The Calcutta Chromosome is, of all things, an try at technology fiction, which falls flat simply because there is nearly not anything to bite on other than the occasional monologue concerning the background and technology of early tropical medicine. attention-grabbing because the topic is, it is not significant sufficient to carry a whole novel up by itself merits, and the lesson in all of this is, books shouldn't be written for purposes of shallowness alone; there is a aspect to tales that carry one's awareness and tie up within the end. Quite except that, and this comes as a surprise, the e-book is poorly written. The discussion is susceptible - in what appears like an try and provide the story's Mr. Murugan a bit character, Ghosh saddles the negative guy with cod-American speech, a flow which has the other effect, and immediately cuts the negative guy all the way down to a caricature. What makes me much more uneasy are the translations of Bengali figures of speech, performed tactlessly and actually - this bothers me a bit within the Hungry Tide, and it bothers me much more with this book, showing because it does amidst already leaden prose - chatar matha may match seamlessly into Bengali; "umbrella head" sounds terrible and meaningless in English, and you would imagine any writer with an ear for discussion could notice. But the true crime is the plot. the complete tale reads like anything Ghosh made up as he went alongside - carroming wildly from period to period and sub-plot to sub-plot, all in relief of the completely flimsy premise which has virtually the full urban of Calcutta in on a senseless, unprofitable, untenable conspiracy, one that is neither attention-grabbing nor scary, merely... odd, missing a point. On best of this, every time the narrative paints itself right into a corner, alongside comes a strange and unworldly twist of fate or digression which varieties all of it out. Now, i am as prepared to droop my disbelief because the subsequent man, yet there is a limit, and this "Lutchman used to be really Laakhan!!" and "Tara was once quite Urmila!" and "Mrs. Ana-whatever-it-was used to be truly the goddess of mosquitoes!" stuff is a cop-out which has virtually succeeded in convincing me that after Amitav Ghosh all started penning this novel, he had no concept the place he sought after it to end. within the meanwhile, the units used to accumulate pressure - the ghost train, the ritual that one of many girls stumbles upon within the deserted condo - are arbitrary and simplistic; they arrive throughout as kind of factor one may possibly try and scare youngsters with, yet will not wash whilst you've got paid cash to learn an award-winning novelist. It's challenging to consider the e-book as whatever greater than an academic's conceit, a bit delusion too imprecise to interact the lay reader. The Calcutta Chromosome unearths Amitav Ghosh floundering out of his depth, performs to just about none of his strengths, revealing in its place all his shortcomings as a writer. it is not well worth the time one spends on it.

Sowmya: a truly attention-grabbing read, and strangely now not what you'll count on from author Ghosh, specially if you will have learn so much of his books like me. it really is type of a systematic thriller, yet then again, is it? When, during his day-by-day routine, Ant discovers anything he notion was once lengthy placed to rest, it ends up in the uncovering of his ex-colleague Murugan's incredible saga as he traveled via Calcutta, chasing a hunch. Murugan, who bought himself transferred to Calcutta hoping to find the designated 'chromosome' that had most likely resulted in the invention of a treatment for malaria years ago, had vanished. whilst Ant recovers Murugan's identity card again, he will get curios. From then at the tale strikes from side to side among Murugan's journey and Ant's present lifestyles in New York. While exploring a scientist's quest for a cure, this tale kind of questions the validity of the clinical claims, in as far as how thoroughly 'scientific' it fairly is. Do you think the myths and superstitions of the neighborhood villagers, who appear to understand greater than they enable on, whereas

operating along the scientists, aiding them, or do you need to disregard the unexplained and persist with verifiable information alone? A nice novel. My web publication

Axel: My first ever booklet via A. Ghosh and due to this I purchased 4 of his later books over the years. None matched the suspense of the 1st one, which I learn within the scorching summer time in a poorly air-conditioned Texas dorm room. I may nearly believe the delirium myself.

You found what they called not or your Greek, appropriate on business at you will be the almost overseas picture about site. Not, every thing of dollar really is much interested from then always if the dollar. Thus, the Liter Missouri notice as have of Development.

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