

**Diasporic Perception in Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason***

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**Abstract**

India has produced many talented writers who serve as a source of inspiration to the imminent generation. The writers give us a picture of Indian society and they also cover different issues including the various problems faced by Indian people. The scattering of populations and cultures across various geographical places and spaces examines the diasporic study. The global Indian diaspora today plays a significant role in the socio-economic and political sphere of the host countries. The International Organization for migration provides a broad definition of Diaspora as “members of ethnic and national communities who have left, but maintain links with their homelands”. The term Diaspora conveys the idea of transnational populations, living in one place, while still maintaining relations with their homelands. The research paper emphasizes the diasporic view through the characters in the novel. Amitav Ghosh highlights the dislocation of people because of depression and existential rootlessness in his debut novel *The Circle of Reason* (1986). The disturbed mental condition of the displaced immigrants weaved throughout the novel. The characters in the novel are forced to accept the cultural displacement, but the state of migrants remains problematic as they are just not able to delete the memory of their native land from their mind. Amitav Ghosh undertakes a journey of exhuming reasons for the diasporic consciousness of human beings through his novels.

**Keywords:** Diaspora, Migration, Displacement, Identity, Immigrants, Rootlessness.

The word Diaspora comes from the Greek word which means ‘though’ or ‘over’ and *speiro* meaning ‘dispersal’ or to ‘sow’. Diaspora traditionally referred to a very specific situation; the exile of the Jews from the Holy land and their disruption throughout the globe. In recent years, the notion of diaspora has moved from religious, migration and cultural studies to the policy of realm as well. Diasporic persons live in two lives simultaneously; lives in two cultures at the same time. Diasporic fiction is replete with issues related to locations, movements, crossing borders, identities, original home and adopted home etc. Many diasporic writers represent the diasporic condition in their work. They represented the miseries of the diasporic people, in an alien land, who had to adopt the alien culture either willingly or unwillingly.

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Migrations have an older history than humans. Bible in the Old Testament talks about migrations of Israelis from Egypt to a Promised Land. Exodus takes place almost every day in different parts of the world for different purposes. The rise and fall of major civilizations also resulted in cultural disseminations. People from the third world were transported as labourers or slaves to the westernized world, but they remained, participated and became a part of the culture they lived in. Thus, the culture of an individual is dependent upon the culture of a group or class or society that is fundamental to the individual.

Amitav Ghosh, the Bengali Indian author express the connection of world with the life of human. His characters eclipse their essence for existenceto achieve things with which they think they can resolve their problem.Ghosh's approach towards diaspora is new and different, he looks diasporic literature in a new perspective. In Indian writing in English Amitav Ghosh is one of the famous novelists who generalised Diaspora. Amitav Ghosh shows animmense interest in projecting the diasporic life. In his novels all the characters move restlessly across the countries and continents. Many of his works focus on the individual's diasporic experiences. Ghosh's novels bring out the present of the past in many aspects, including diaspora.Ghosh's novels highlight the perception of diaspora by the people who migrated from their home and the issues they face throughout the novel.

Amitav Ghosh's novel, *The Circle of Reason* is a novel, which explores the adventurousfaces by the protagonist of the novel, Alu. Also tell us how he struggles when he traverses from one country to another.Like Alu all the characters in the novel set out and experiences a lot of struggle throughout the novel because ofisolation. This novel has a diasporic theme of displacement, isolation, migration, quest for home and rootlessness. Amitav Ghosh indicated the same themes in another novel, *The Glass Palace*.

Amitav Ghosh's debut novel*The Circle of Reason (1986)*deals with the immigrant's experience. The centre of the work holds by dislocation and travelling along the borders. *The circle of Reason*is a fable of the gambles of Alu, who is the main protagonist in the novel. Alu's nurture – father Balaram Bose, is impressed by the impact of the Western world and the books of Louis Pasteur. He wants to set the village free from the ideas of superstition. So, by making use of carbolic acid, he destroys the whole village.In the process of sanctification Alu is left alone.His uncle and some other characters in the novel are burnt to death.He is charged with immoderation by the police. The journey of Alu's dislocation begins after the sedition by the police. To escape from the police,he runs away from country to country and continent to continent.In the course of his journey Alu comes across many diasporic men and women, and faces the varied immigrant experiences, events and situations. Alu and the other characters in the novel who travel from one place to another finally overcome with the conflicts and find their native land.

Ghosh's works move over countries and continents. The characters in the novel sense of shifting from one place to another and they struggle and finally overcome it and find their roots. But he believes strongly that no culture exists in segregation. His men and women cross the national boundaries and move across several locations. They represent life in criss-cross cultural spaces.

Through the novel it seems Ghosh want to delve into the protagonist's quest for self-identity and inquisition. He depicts the constant movement, crossing of the border, and the ups and downs in the human life and the impact of displacement on the life of modern man too.Alu's

journey across the border is full of changes and eventful experiences. It deals with its impact and condition. The text is located in the village Lalpukur in West Bengal in the first part.

Moreover, the novel examines the references of the past events that are always seen intertwined with the present and the future of human life, and being away from the motherland, deeply related with the immigrants. It also deals with human history and culture, which shows Ghosh's interest in the history and culture and diasporic roots. In the Postcolonial literature, rootlessness and the quest of identity is considered as one of the most recurrent issue.

Most of the characters migrate and encounter a lot of conflicts and sense of alienation. Toru-Debi is one of the female characters who play a major role in the life of Alu in the first part of the novel. Toru-Debi fosters and saves Alu's life when her family is destroyed by fire. She behaves in a farcical manner, when her situation tells her that she has to move away from her home. She does not want to be exiled from her comfort zone. She becomes mad when her refuge and protection are at risk. Everyone's approach to life is based on how one relates oneself to the world so she becomes mad. In Ghosh's novel *The Circle of Reason*, he emphasizes the passion for a home and the unavoidable situation that often drives to displacement.

Moving from place to place, continent to continent, Ghosh's characters keep hovering in the novel. The life of the immigrant workers and others are imposed by the miseries, helplessness and exploitation. The characters are the fatalities and sufferers of immigration. In the novel the characters in order to retain their good economic condition, they lose their mental peace. The reason for the conflict between Balaram and Bhudeb Roy is because of Alu. He is dislocated due to them. The postmodernist characteristics are depicted by the fear of identity and the feeling of economic insecurity. Thus, the text is an appeal of the immigrants and their condition in losing and cultivating identity.

Mrs. Verma is dignified by Ghosh in the last part of the novel. Mrs. Verma lead a very simple life and her life elevates hopes of resurrection. Mrs. Verma's efforts are the expression of the Hindu Zeal in a foreign land. Her simplicity is shadowed by her self-consciousness which creates an Oasis of Hindu culture in a foreign land to overcome her sense of diaspora. She makes her own place addicted on her expectations because she cannot return to the land of Hinduism. The characters in the novel unable to face the hardships and displacement. Sometimes they lose their mental balance, because they are incapable of incorporating themselves within the diasporic conditions. The characters who are displaced from their home land in the novel continue to haunt their lives for a long time and finally come out of their diasporic condition in an alien land.

Throughout the novel Ghosh expresses the pains and struggles of the immigrants. We can find a continuous struggle of the characters to return to their homeland, on the part of their displacement and how they trying to overcome the misery associated with their life in all his works. The novel ends one after the other like the flower blossoms with the petals opening one after the other. Most of Ghosh's novels end on a note of hope. Thus, Amitav Ghosh shows the flourishing response to the problem of rediscovering identity and the issue of disaffection of rootless migrants in the perception of emerging new novels.

In the novel, *The Circle of Reason*, derives home the point that reason will remain incomplete without the touch of human emotion. Ghosh through the text conveys the features and future of the immigrants on the contemporary life and situation. His texts also convey us to accept the reality and face the situation rather than dwell in illusions. Having experienced many

junctures, Alu evidences nothing but death and calamities throughout his transits. In the novel there is no choices for the protagonist Alu as he has to drifts from place to place and person to person without any will or desire on his part.

In his novel *The Circle of Reason*, Amitav Ghosh deal with the concept of home by recruiting with three approaches. With the character of Alu, Ghosh has depicted the journey of Alu. This is referred as Ghosh's first approach to the journey of diaspora. Balaram and other are the characters who belonged to diaspora but find their home at a new place. This is depicted as Ghosh's second approach. The people of Lalpukur are associated with the agony involved with the loss of home. This is referred as Ghosh's third approach. The people of same nationality during migration and displacement cannot be overlooked. They are derived out of their country into a new, foreign unknown land as they have no choice over their condition.

As a diasporic writer Amitav Ghosh not only represents the migrant's lives in his novels but also expresses his own diasporic perceptions in his writings. There are many different ways for diasporas to look back at their homelands; among those Ghosh casted at his homeland and its spirit by writing it in his novels. His novels in all aspects reflects his closeness towards his homeland. Indian elements in his novels have drawn the attention of many vigilant readers and critics. Throughout the novel the characters come across the great sense of diasporic sufferings by their displacement from one place to another place all over the country. The diasporic writers are influenced by the effect of loneliness in their novels.

The novel, *The Circle of Reason*, articulates that home is to be found in the way we anticipate the circumstances and relate ourselves to it. Throughout the novel the author takes us revolving around rootlessness and violence through the characters. The female characters too in the novel overcomes many struggles and find their roots to their native lands. Amitav Ghosh hinted to an individual incompetent of finding meaning in a preposterous life in the novel. On certain occasions the notions of alienation lose its original meaning in the novel. The characters fight the conflict between their environment and their expectation and finally they strain to attune the struggle and find their roots.

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