

## Introduction

Amitav Ghosh is a postcolonial novelist born in Calcutta on July 11, 1956. He writes the novels having themes of emigration, exile, cultural displacement and on examination of Postcolonial rationality. Among many of his novels *The Circle of Reason* is his first novel and winner of Prix Medici Estranger award which is France's top literary award. In *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh examines the post colonial rationality in post colonial India. Post colonial rationality here means the sense and reasonableness of repressive forces of the government applied in the name of maintaining order, peace and rule of law in the nation. This force is used in the name of prospering the life of people. In *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh also examines the reasonableness of obsession of reason in the people of postcolonial India which has come as a hegemonic appeal of Enlightenment Rationality and Colonial belatedness.

The novel *The Circle of Reason*, covers the middle decades of twentieth century, the period of decolonization, and it concludes in 1980s. Much of *The Circle of Reason* is set against the backdrop of the Bangladeshi war of independence in 1971. Its narrative tracks the misadventure of the protagonist Alu, an orphan, who becomes embroiled in a feud between his foster father and the village strong man. He is accused falsely as a dangerous insurgent and set a special agent on his trail. When Alu flees to a Gulf Kingdom, SP Jyoti Das, the detective assigned to pursue him, eventually joins him and his companions in his flight. Seamlessly interweaving description of characters and events, the three parts of the *The Circle of Reason*, chronicle the Alu's quixotic misadventures in India, Al-Ghazira, and finally Algeria. Alu an entirely innocent fugitive from police gets reader's sympathy. SP Jyoti Das who was reluctantly inducted into police, abandons his pursuits to Alu and rejects his job as a police detective and starts his interesting job observing and drawing birds rather than tracking human quarry.

In *The Circle of Reason*, evaluating the characters of modernity in India, Ghosh emphasizes the Enlightenment rationality and police, when he traces the police activity of the post independence India in the face of explicitly imagined political threats. Ghosh underscores the repressive aspects of colonial rationality that linger in the structure of postcolonial government. He suggests that post colonial state is heir to the anxieties about order and control that are characteristics of colonial regimes, and the full force of post colonial rationality is seen in the state's response to insurgency and subaltern migrancy. Ghosh's novel, *The Circle of Reason* stages a succession of utopian projects that bear the imprint of Enlightenment reason. It points to the liberatory dimension of reason and valorizes the character's pursuit of these Enlightenment projects. Balam's motto "Reason rescues man from Barbarity" and his campaign on Pasteur's principles of hygiene is overcome by brutish force of postcolonial India. The forces of police criminalize the protagonists of novel and defeat their enlightened utopian projects. A deliberation upon intelligence gathering and policing in postcolonial India, the novel engages, disrupts, and parodies the generic convention of police fiction in order to challenge its coercive logic. By turning the generic convention of police upside down, Ghosh critiques the repressive tendencies of Enlightenment reason. Therefore my research titles with the text I think has good combinations and certainly contributes to the study of postcolonial rationality and concern issues.

### **Statement of Problem**

In the novel *The Circle of Reason* innocent people are accused of terrorism, and they are compelled to be fugitive by the repressive force of the government. The character such as Balam who has the campaign of hygiene and reason based practical planning is destroyed by the brutish force of postcolonial India. His Motto "Reason Rescues Man From Barbarity"

is made failed. The forces which are applied in the name of maintaining national security, order and rule of law has given people so much suffering. Balam's utopian projects are destroyed by the forces of government. Is this type of rationality has reason? From the story of Ghosh here I think wanted to raise two sets of question. The first concern the relationship between enlightenment discourses of reason and the apparatuses of police in the post colonial context. Is there a necessary complicity between these? Does the advance of reason authorize and rest upon a greater rationalization of police? The second set of question has to do with the ambiguous status of Enlightenment reason in postcolonial India. Are there multiple forms of reason? Can an alternative non repressive rule be imagined in a post colonial world? Is the government force really to maintain the order and rule of law? Or are the discourses and apparatuses of postcolonial nation's force inherited from the colonial state restrained by postcolonial nation? Who is responsible in the disturbance of people's utopian project either the repressive force of nation or reason obsessed mind of people inherited from colonial period which is now debunked?

### **Hypothesis**

In this novel repressive force of government destroy the utopian project of people, this force gives more suffering to the people, because of the repressive force of the nation Alu becomes fugitive, Balam's projects is disturbed, and Sp Jyoti Das himself abandons his job as police detective, from this analysis, this research assumes that the state's police rationality has no principled and pragmatic value, yet people's obsession in reason as a hegemonic appeal of Enlightenment Rationality and Colonial belatedness is also in some extent the cause of their projects and suffering, Hence Postcolonial Rationality has no reason, no sense.

### **Review of Literature**

*The Circle of Reason* which has the themes of emigration, exile, cultural displacement and examination of Postcolonial Rationality. This novel gets so many criticisms from various postcolonial critics from India America and many more countries. Some criticisms are negative and some of them are Positive. Criticisms related to the research title is included here.

Michael Ondaatje's novel *Anil's Ghost* traces the investigation by a forensic detective of human remains in Sri Lanka driven by war between the government insurgent in the south and Tamil separatist in north . In Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* the protagonist becomes entangled during the 1971 Bangladeshi war through a friend a guileless and conscientious policeman who works for a corrupt state, with which a scheme for money laundering and arms sales . *The Circle of Reason* examines the adverse effect of administrator. Yamuna Siddiqi writes;

Even when the motives were benign the colonial regime's limited knowledge of local customs meant that "rational" administration could have adverse effect .Rational administration was premised upon general principle rather than upon local exigencies. (178).

Positive and negative senses of police cannot be distinguished in any clear way in this novel As Ranjit Guha Writes "Dominance was exercised without hegemony" (255). Yamuna Siddiqi writes:

Nation state form is energetically vested in newly decolonized countries with the promises of liberation from oppressive rule. It holds out the assurance of true equality and true fraternity, Yet, the newly liberated nation inherits the

repressive apparatus of the colonial state, apparatus that are freshly deployed against a "free" citizenry. (179-80).

"Reason" can not be assumed to be identical for the West and European colonies in Europe and America its enabling condition and ultimate goal was purportedly freedom where even in the view of "enlightened" intellectual such as Raja Rammohun Roy the use of reason did not necessarily signify political freedom. The rational exercise of power could be doubly oppressive. Ranjit Guha Says: Historians have documented the many areas of society that were subjected to the rationalizing force of colonial power. (56)

Gayatri Spivak in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* says: "The colonial other is not assimilable to the meaning making process of the west is both excluded as well as recuperated as that which is to be reconstituted in the image of west"(7) . Keya Ganguli' in brief discussion of this novel writes, "In *The Circle of Reason* bureaucratic surveillance and regulation of the character is not only legacy of Enlightenment rationality. Interwoven with the narrative of Alu's run from the police, is the story of his recruitment in various utopian schemes." (7)

## **Methodology**

The research will be conducted with analysis of major characters in the novel. For this and theoretical solution, various sources will be used and utilized. Analyzing the life of characters, their activities and happenings in course time will be analyzed. Reading concerned novels, theories of Postcolonial theorists, library studies, searching various internet sites which can be useful for the promotion of this thesis, textual and visual analysis, Suggestion of experts, Guidelines from teachers and many more while conducting will assist the completion of this research.

## **Delimitation**

The main focus of the research will be to bring out the Postcolonial reality of India. Its main motto will be to check out whether postcolonial rationality and police administrative force of government are really to prosper the life of citizen or not. This research will not offer a comprehensive study of postcolonial theories whereas it will limit its study within the question raised in the statement of problem analyzing the character such as Alu, Balaram, Zindi, Bhubdev Roy, Inspector Jyoti Das, Kulfi and ,many others . The theories which will be used while conducting research will be only the assisting guides for the promotion and completion of the research.

## **Tentative chapter**

The research will follow the given tentative chapter division

Chapter1: Introduction:Amitav Ghosh as a Postcolonial writer

Chapter2: Postcolonial Rationality as a Theory

Chapter3: Post colonial Rationality in Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason*

Chapter4: Conclusion: Failure of Nation to Maintain order and Prosper life of citizen

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Amitav Ghosh as a Postcolonial Writer

Amitav Ghosh is a postcolonial novelist born in Calcutta on July 11, 1956. His writing career blossoms in the postcolonial era. He writes the novels having themes of emigration, exile, cultural displacement and on examination of postcolonial rationality. Ghosh has written many novels. Among them *The Circle of Reason* is his first novel and winner of Prix Medici Estranger award, France's top literary Award. His second novel *The Shadow Line* wins the Sahitya Academi Award, which is India's most prestigious literary award. *The Calcutta Chromosome* wins the Arthur C Award for 1997. Another novel *The Hungry Tide* wins the Hutch Crossword Book Prize in 2006. In 2007 Amitav Ghosh was awarded the Grinzane Cavour Prize in Turin, Italy. His *Sea of Poppies* is short listed for the Booker Prize. In 2007, Ghosh is awarded the Padma Shri. Ghosh was also awarded the Dan David Prize along with Margaret Atwood which finds him in the midst of huge controversy.

His writings are almost all in the postcolonial issues and technique including polylingualism, magical realism, emigration, exile, cultural displacement, nostalgia, postcolonial melancholy, search for national identity and many more. In *The Circle of Reason* Ghosh includes polylingualism and magical realism postcolonial issues such as hybridity, sense of loss and national identity are raised which can prove Ghosh as a postcolonial writer. Stephanie Jones referring to Deleuze and Guattari in his essay says; "As Deleuze and Guattari celebrate the 'revolutionary' potential of writing that makes use of the Polylingualism of one's own language, Ghosh also uses the technique of polylingualism for this purpose" (431). Ghosh's text reveals a more sober challenge and contained wary sense of consolation. Ghosh's etymological diversions privilege an oral mode of storytelling that distends and subverts the ideologies of empire and nation arguably inherent in the traditional novel genre. Ghosh's narrative for all its patterns and circularities more stubbornly refuses to be brought



full circle to authorize a marvelous sense of magical realism polishing the continuation of colonial patterns of exploitation and oppression.

As Stephen Slemon highlights the deconstructive impetus of magic realism as a technique for undermining the fixity of borders of binaries imposed by the totalizing systems of imperialism and more broadly the imperialism of totalizing system, Ghosh writes using this mode of expression to write back to imperialism. In surveying the works of most successful Indian novelist in English of past two decades, Jon Mee writes; “The domestic drama, family romance Indian myths and mock epic have all been deployed to re- imagine India and Indian-ness in terms of an open-ended heterogeneity” (318-19). Mee recognizes Ghosh who has variously used and subverted all these genres and more as offering “perhaps the most sustained response created by Rushdie’s precedent” (324).

In a book review comparing Ghosh with the works and technique of Salman Rushdie, Anthony Burgees writes; “Even against the wild exuberance of Rushdie’s Writing, Ghosh’s book is generally perceived as being overburdened with strange characters and events too full of exotic digression” (6). This highlights the iconic status of Rushdie’s work as the standard of the recent genealogy of Indian writing in English, commonly if loosely drawn together with a notion of magical realism. This is also can be taken as an evident to prove Amitav Ghosh as a postcolonial writer.

In the beginning of *The Satanic Verses*, Gibreel Farista, falling towards Britain from the height of an exploded aeroplane sings the indianness; “Oh my shoes are Japanese These trousers English ,If you please. On my head, red Russian hat; my heart’s Indian for all that.” (5) Unlike Rushdie, Ghosh sings Indianness in smooth way. Making slight difference between Rushdie and Ghosh, Stephanie Jones describes Ghosh’s expression of Indianess:

Ghosh's novel in comparison with Rushdie’s work may be read as a refusal to inscribe too smooth a transition from the forced migration into a more clearly

and cleverly shaped universal fable. First section of *The Circle of Reason* tells the life of a village in West Bengal, India, near the border with what in the opening present of the text is East Pakistan. Ghosh gives no dates, and does not name large historical events. The creation of Bangladesh is signified by the slow swelling of the village as starving refugees trickle and then flow across the border, settles around the village, then move on. The descriptions of these people are stark, they are also strangely peripheral to the village community, and to the relationships, intrigues and battles of will that give it life. (434)

Above description of the places shows Indianness and also the universalizing the displacement. Not giving dates, names of events places can be analyzed as universalizing their displacement in their imagination which is the characteristic of postcolonial writers. Stephanie continues:

On the first page and throughout this section, the great banyan tree under which people talk, rallies are held and rickshaws wait for custom, seems to be offered as a metaphor for the village. This encourages a reading of the community as being equally old, organic and self-contained-as timelessly and generationally moving around the tree in similar patterns, arguing politics, gossiping, chasing children. It is disconcerting, then, to discover later that the village is not even a generation old, but was created post-1947, after the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan. The people of the village are Bengali, but from East of the border, now another nation. (434)

This description from the novel shows the different between the village and the town where village is portrayed as the carrier of customs. There is also the description of issue of partition of India and Pakistan. Stephanie further shows the issue of migration and Ghosh's

use of polylingualism in *The Circle of Reason* which is a feature of postcolonial writer.

Stephanie writes:

Like Rushdie, this collapsing of a clear sense of the indigenous into histories of migration is more fully and overtly worked through a heightened sense of language and the tracing of the migrant origins of words themselves.

However, this does not so much lead Ghosh to ever-expanding stories of the migrant roots and re-routing of all peoples; rather it concentrates him into ever-stranger stories of forced journeys, illegal border crossings and permanently impermanent settlements. Unlike Rushdie's precipitate implosion of the binary structures of the language into a universalizing conundrum, Ghosh's text enacts a crucially slower and more obscure devolution of the language into its own history of polylingualism . (434-35)

Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Circle of Reason* begins with the arrival of an orphan, Alu. Alu has potato shaped extraordinary lumpy head. And the novel describes about other extraordinary and strange characters. In the novel characters which are unique and strange are employed such as one-eyed Arab strong men, tongueless chinamen, wack-eyed visionary egg-sellers, the outrageously fat, the unbelievably skinny, the emphatic physicality of loss, the outcast, the unrecognized people without visas .These unique characters in Ghosh's novel are helping tools to prove the technique of magic realism, a necessary technique that postcolonial writers use. As Anthony Burgess writes in his book review, "A deformed Protagonist is to be expected in some brands of magic realism" (6).

Balaram who is obsessed with the science seems to bear out the accusation of his friend Gopal "Dumping ground for the West" (Ghosh 97) though the novel seems sympathetic to Balaram's attraction to science that apparent reason out the relationship between the inner life and external world. Balaram's careful measurement and calculation of

Alu's skull and the proportions of loom exactly correspond with the boy's phenomenal talent as weaver. Lending this pseudo-science the reason of mathematics, the narrative resists any easy distinction between notions of traditions of Western reason and mystic Eastern tradition. "Man at the loom is the finest example of mechanical man; a creature who makes his own world as no other can, with his mind" (Gosh 59) this can be strong evidence to prove Ghosh as a postcolonial writer.

In *The Circle of Reason* weaving is more than a vocation and more than a metaphor for storytelling. Narrator in the novel states that "Weaving is Reason" (62) by this he means that the mechanics of weaving are the oldest and most fundamental manifestation of the reasoning mind. But he also means that cloth is the reason. It explains histories the making and breaking of empires, the movements of people why people are, where they are and how they are. If the novel is about any one thing, it is about cloth-and more particularly the language of cloth and cloth as a language, the narrator explains:

Everywhere it went people had trouble thinking of it .only the oldest of the Indo-Europeans language could think of it as a thing in itself and even then the thought was so difficult that across continents people hardly dared differ. In Sanskrit it was *karpasia* in Persian its *kirpas*. In Greek it was *carbassos* and in Latin *carbassus*. They gave Hebrew its *kirpas* ... even the English were handed down their word, like so much else that raised them to civilization, by the Arabs,from their *kutn* ... But the Arabs took their own word from the Akkadin *kittinu*. And there they had lost the battle already, for that word came from *kitu*, in the same language which meant nothing but dreary flax. (60)

The three languages Alu speaks while explaining the parts of machine are languages of Bangladesh, now the language of diasporic village Lalpukur. Moving from local, Ancestral-now traveling obscurely diasporic languages- to the more overtly global resonance

of English Shombhu elides the languages in-between and words loaded with more explicit of national belonging. He indicates that to strive for an understanding of cloth-and thereby, in the logic of the text, of the largest and most intense knowledge of history and people. Novel's setting in Algerian town and attempt to caste Rabindranath Tagore's *Chitrangada* and attempt of proper funeral of Kulfi who was one of Alu's traveling companion in the third part celebrate the resourcefulness, creativity and willing hybridity of the migrant, wanting to make themselves and their culture present and understood in Diaspora . This is also another point to enrich Amitav Ghosh as a postcolonial writer.

Amitav Ghosh's another novel *The Shadow Lines* is also a famous postcolonial novel and novel winning the Sahitya Akademi Award which is India's most prestigious literary award. In this novel we can find the sadness, melancholy and confusion of postcolonial condition in which every character's dreams are failed, their imagination did not work. There are multiple sadness in *The Shadow Lines* ,the sadness of inaction, of desire of material failure, of unfulfilment of love and above all, the inimitable *tristesse* in the search for identity, of both unrequited love (Illa and the narrator) and unfulfilled love (Tordip and May) do not merely serve to produce a certain atmosphere, to color the pages with certain ton but also works as metaphor for the themes of loss incommunicability and solipsism which supplies it's Proustian inadequacies in the text "I knew that a part of my life as human being had ceased : that I no longer existed, but as a chronicle" (112). The sadness and melancholy is the epitomizing theme of the novel which Ghosh has brought in the key function of central thread which bind all others together. Ian Almond from Istanbul Turkey in his essay explains sadness and melancholy in *The Shadow Lines*:

Ghosh colorades sadness in desire. Both in the figures of the narrator and his beautiful cousin Ila, a very Lackanian form of 'lack' reigns- the need for something which does not belong to their world in Ila's case the blonde-haired,

Anglo-saxon assurance of her unfaithful husband's love, in the narrator's case the inaccessible beauty of Ila herself. (92)

Almond here analyzes the novel in which no one seems to get what they want filled with characters forever running after things that elude them. Not imply Ila's infatuation with infatuation with Nick or the narrator's equally hopeless yearning for Ila but even Nick's desire for material success, which results in one failed venture after another; or the grandmother's trip back to Bangladesh to look Dhaka that no longer exists. if neither May, who losses a lover nor Robi, who loses a brother, seem to achieve any satisfaction, then the strange death of Tardib at the end of the novel –his suicidal plunge into the Muslim mob that surrounds his uncle – seems to conform the subtle yet astonishing pessimism running throughout the text: the self annihilation of a character who chooses to die rather than persist in world of broken illusions.

Story of *The Shadow Lines* is the narrative of defeat of imagination, loss of belief in the power of imagination and about loss of life, of places, of memories and identities. It is about the demise of colonial identity-along with author's skepticism towards those nationalists, post-imperialist identities constructed in its place –may well account for a very specific form of post-colonial melancholy in Ghosh's novel, existing more or less independently of any romantic sadness at the inadequacy of imagination. In this novel it seems that artifice of identity through imagination has eluded characters. In fact Ghosh's characters do seem to have separated into the enlightened –those who have understood that if we don't try to create worlds for ourselves, we will “never be free of other people's invention” (31). In *The Shadow Lines* we can see "the war between oneself and one's image in the mirror" (200). *The Shadow Lines* could be read as a postcolonial work. The subversive potential of the novel comes from its interest in challenging received notion of normalcy and nationhood at works in writers such as Kipling and Conrad. Ghosh's Narrator traverses

borders ease and reinvents him with all the liberating energy implied by the postcolonial, a condition that allows for and acknowledged dissonance rather than coherence. If we consider the scene under the large oak dining table where Ila and the narrator play houses and where Nick is first introduced as the narrator's shadowy double, his blonde alter ego, always a head taller, always closer to Ila. We can raise many questions, what is the significance of the childhood game of house being used to introduce the major issues of racism in Britain? What can this scene tell us of the importance of memory and narrative? In what ways is this scene repeated later in England and how is that moment different from this one? Once Nick has been cast as the narrator's double how does the novel ask us to read his desires for travel and adventure as opposes to those of the narrator? The answers of these question necessarily leads novel to the postcolonial dimension.

We can find in Ghosh's novel dynamics of what might be called "Production of history" in a nostalgic mode. All too common structural affinity of such nostalgia with discourse of purity and authenticity is challenged in Ghosh's narrative, where cultural, racial, and economic hybridity, mixture and exchange appear as privileged terms. Writing of nostalgia is as much about the forgetting as the remembrances of the past means nostalgia which is one of the features of postcolonial writers. Ghosh rewrites story of himself in *In an Antique Land* of his visit of Egypt in 1988. On his way to Cairo, he decides to visit tomb of Saint sidi Abu-Hasira A Jew from Maghreb who come Egypt and converted to Islam. He was recognized by the people as a man of extraordinary benevolent powers, a good man, endowed with blessing of *baraka*. Recognizing Ghosh as a foreigner one of the armed police officer demands an explanation for his visit to tomb which for him was a matter of suspicion. Ghosh is neither an Israeli devotee on a pilgrimage nor a follower of any of the monotheistic religions with which he is familiar "Neither Jewish, nor Muslim, nor Muslim nor Christian – there had to be something odd afoot" (334-35). He was taken by the police for interrogation

and asked "you are Indian- what connection could you have with the tomb of a holy Jewish man here in Egypt? His answer can be found in his novel in *In an Antique Land*.

Finding himself at a narrative impasse at the moment of the officer's questioning; Ghosh nevertheless shares with the reader his own sense of excitement at the survival of a popular religious syncretism of the past in *In an Antique Land* " It seemed uncanny that I had never known all those years that defiance of the enforcers of History, a small remnant Bomma's world had survived, not far from where I was living" (342) explaining this part of novel Gaurav Desai in his essay says:

This is in fact an echo of an earlier moment in the text when Ghosh has visited. This time in vicinity of mangalore, a Hindu temple built by the Magavira community. He has arrived in pursuit of a *Bhuta* shrine of a spirit deity Bobbariya, legendary name after Muslim mariner and trader who died at sea. But just as Ghosh is surprised to find that the *Bhuta* shrine in this community has in fact been placed in a Hindu temple that is a testament to the Sanskrit form of religion. The main deity is Vishnu a Brahmanical god, and the Bobbariya –bhutta is placed in subordinated position. (129)

The Bhutta itself has been stripped of its traditional iconography and is now represented as a Hindu god. Remarking on the ironies of such a representation Ghosh writes: "The past had revenged itself on the present: it had slipped spirit of an Arab Muslim trader past the watchful eyes of Hindu Zealots and installed it within the Sanskrit tradition." (274)

It is the nostalgic impulse in Ghosh that chooses to read the survival of earlier religious syncretism as potential spaces of modern "defiance" and "revenge" such a reading politically appealing as it is nevertheless depends on a dismissal of the religious self-fashioning of the communities themselves . At one point during his visit to temple, Ghosh notes, "it was not really a Bhuta-shrine any more they explained proudly it had become a real



Hindu temple and the main place in it was now reserved for Vishnu, the most Brahmanical of Gods" (273-274). The incorporation of the *Bhuta* into the temple is experienced by the community, then not that this historically lower-caste community has appropriated for itself the symbols of high Brahmanical tradition in an attempt at upward mobility and the fact that the temple prominently displays posters of a fundamentalists Hindu organization "notorious for its anti-Muslim rhetoric" (273) suggests that Muslim trader here has been disciplined, tamed, and co-opted into resolutely Hindu cosmology. Likewise, in the case of the shrine of Abu-Hasira Ghosh's representation of the police officers as ultimately blind to the richness of popular religion and its history may well betray certain overzealousness on behalf of the political possibilities of the religious syncretism.

The police officers are meant to represent the repressive apparatus of the modern nation-state. It is in defiance of these state actors, enforcers of History, that the shrine as a testimony to popular will. In this account is the shrine itself that does the resisting, Much in the case of statue of the *Bhuta* in the temple, it is the spirits of the past-whether those of Abu-Hasira or Bobbariya- that "revenge" themselves on the present. The nostalgic axiomatic of popular religiosity puts under erasure the agency of contemporary worshipper.

The extra security at the tomb that Ghosh experienced about ten years before these protests is better understood as both response to and further provocation of the struggle between an increasingly Islamicized populace and a decreasingly credible state . Indeed Ghosh's own presentation earlier in the narrative of the rise of an Islamist modernity that youth driven and often university based suggests that the state is here putting in check actors very much like the character of Ustav Sabry in Ghosh's narrative . Sabry's version of modernity may not appeal to those of us who style ourselves secular intellectuals yet, yet it seems to be able to account for it and to recognize that "Popular" may not always generate forms of resistance that are palatable to a secular disposition, Just as the state state may not

always be an agent of repressive but can also be the upholder of a multireligious, non communitarian. Ultimately .then, to idolize the popular and to be unwilling to acknowledge its participation in the enforcement of history is to sacrifice the analytic power of the social scientist in order to live the insistently secular vision of the humanist.

Telling the story of Slaves Bomma as the lowest of the low and Ashu in the time of Ben Yiju , Gosh is retelling nostalgically the story of a Indian slave "safi" and his protestation about the fate of young Indian slave girl abandoned by her master on the coast of Somalia. Safi was the business agent and legal slave of the head of the Jewish high council in Egypt. As such he would have commanded a certain amount of authority by virtue of his connection with his masters. This nostalgic mode of his expression leads his writing leads his writings to postcolonial writing and him to a postcolonial writer.

There may raise a question in the mind of reader that what is the work that nostalgic impulse does in the post colonial imagination? To answer this I have cited the parts of the essay of Gaurav Desai who refers Svetlana Boym who makes distinction between what she calls "restorative" and "reflective" nostalgia

Restorative nostalgia she means stresses *nostros* and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in *algia* the longing itself and delays the homecoming –wistfully, ironically desperately. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalence of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradiction of modernity. Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubts. (141-142)

Reflective nostalgia of *In an Antique Land* works contrapuntally, moving back and forth between the modern and the medieval while pointing out their contradiction as Boym

according Desai Puts "Wistfully, ironically, desperately," (142). This sense of nostalgia is also a strong evidence to prove Amitav Ghosh as a postcolonial writer.

Ghosh, to complicate postcolonial identity blurs boundaries between fictional and archival works .To this end he also sidesteps inventing postcolonial characters cut from victim –cookie cutter mold, exploring the complex shading between good and bad; he breaths life even into figures other writes might discard as offensive. In an interview with Frederich Luis Aldama English professor of University of Colorado in Boulder he says:

I know that the institutional structure of our world presses us to think of fiction and non-fiction as being absolutely separate. And in some scene they are, I mean with the nonfiction there is a domain of fact to which you have to refer and by which you are necessarily constrained. But I think the technique one brings to bear upon non fiction, essentially come from my fiction. You know what I mean? In the end it's about people's lives, it's about people's history; it's about people's destinies. When I write non-fiction, I am really writing about characters and people, and when I am writing fiction, I am doing same thing. So that shift isn't as great as it might seem to be. (86)

In conclusion, from above analyzed novels, applied technique of writing and features themes deserved in his writing such as technique of polylingualism and magical realism, themes of emigration, exile, cultural displacement, hybridity, sense of loss, ambivalence, search for identity, Diaspora, technique of nostalgia, postcolonial melancholy sadness, examination of postcolonial rationality and blurring boundaries between fiction and non fiction and many more are sufficient evidences to prove Amitav Ghosh as a postcolonial writer.

## **Chapter 2: Postcolonial Rationality**

### **2.1 Western Rationality: It's Meaning**

Western rationality means the concepts of Westerners and European colonizers and their way of thinking. In comparison to colonized culture westerners think their culture superior and apply them as universal rationality. Their culture, their education system, their system of governance, their religion and every aspects they think superior and try to apply it as having universal reasoning .claiming universal rationality everywhere they try to apply their so-called superior culture to every other culture . Western way of thinking includes in their culture as rational if the nations follow their model as universal model and it excludes other nations leveling them as irrational cultures if they do not follow their model. In colonial period there was the invasion of colonized culture, religion, educational system, system of governance and so on. Westerners invade the cultures of colonizers in the name of civilizing mission or in pretention of any kind which became the matter of atrocity for the colonizers. Colonizers made binaries of educated/ uneducated, civilized/barbaric, rational/irrational, and many more to dominate the colonized people and applied their culture forcefully.

The issue of western rationality is necessary to raise the discussion about the postcolonial rationality. It is necessary to trace out the western rationality and its manifestation in the British colonial practices of nineteenth and early twentieth century. in the colonial period Britain and India gave different names to the rationality. The British history refers it as the Indian mutiny of 1857 and Indian history calls it the first war of independence. The British colonial presence in India begins with the British East India Company's establishment of trading outpost in India in the early seventeenth century. This capitalist enterprise actually controls regions of India with its military presence. By the time of mutiny/war of independence, the company had 34000 European troops in that country

commanding a quarter of a million native soldiers. Rudrangshu Mukherjee describes the unpopular administration of the company:

The British had not only conquered India but had also, in the process of consolidating their power in the first half of the nineteenth century, violated all that was held sacred and dear by the people of India. Social reforms based on the principles of reason, land-revenue administration based on Ricardian theories of rent, a legal system imported from England.... the dispossession of kings, their successors and landed magnates, had together brought a major upheaval in north India. (128)

This quotation is significant to point out the invasion of Indian culture by western practices and institutions, founded in western rationality. Reason-based social reforms sought to change entrenched Indian practices (such as the ritual suicide of widows, which the British banned, and the caste system, which the Indian continually feared would be undermined by the British administration. The British legal system, is an institution is a system founded in Enlightenment rationality. This legal system has the intuitive with doctrines of Enlightenment rationality. This doctrine which is intuitive for British native is foreign to Indians. The word of modern Britain was not accessible to a person born in India. The British way of thinking is foreign, its policies are foreign, and its technology is foreign. Indians see many of the modernizing effort of East India Company with suspect. For example, they fear the railway, which begins running out of Bombay in 1850 as a demon.

This historical event presents the cultural grounding of western rationality in the context of British colonialism. It will support to examine colonialism through the lens of rationality- inscribed British modernity, a condition which the British, with the rest of the western world, felt entitled or required them to undertake a "civilizing mission [to non-western societies], which suggested that a temporary period of political dependence or

tutelage was necessary in order for 'uncivilized' societies to advance to the point where they were capable of sustaining liberal institution and self-government" (Kohn 232).

This is an attempt to critique modernist/colonialist view of rationality as monolithic and universal entity. This view sees rationality on the high end of a linear scale of progress and relegates anything beneath it on that to the realm of the pre-modern and irrational. Post-colonial theory has critiqued this view of rationality, arguing for a pluralist rather than monolithic model of rationality. This approach sees rationality not as a universal epistemology that privileges western thinking and is constituted by its separation from the realm of irrational, which is everything non-western, but instead argues that rationality is a production of culture and calls for a relative valuing for each culture's true claims.

Scott Lash in his book *Another Modernity, a Different Rationality* identifies the two main modes of scholarly characterization of rationality via its involvement with the production of modernity. The First mode of treating modernity/rationality is that of the social scientist, the positivist, whose concept of modernity is inscribed in and is a culmination of the process of the Enlightenment. He says that "sociology and social science more generally have consistently understood modernity in terms of rationality, in terms of rationality of Cartesian space and Newtonian time handed down from the Enlightenment : From the nineteenth-century sociology" (1). This entrenchment in nineteenth century thought is most especially an attachment to the work of Max Webber, whose thought on rationality still forms the most comprehensive and authoritative sociological works on the subject. This mode of thought attempts to apply the concepts and method born in the Enlightenment to the study of human society; literally to create a science of society. According to this science, the greater the development and implementation of rationality within a society, the more modern that society becomes. The second mode of treating modernity/rationality is that of cultural theory. This mode can be seen mainly as a critique of the sociological one just described. Scott Lash says:

Cultural theory has shown how the modernity of dominant social and human science is inscribed in a rationality of 'the same.' This rationality of the same is a logic of a constitutive and constituting inside, a constitutive constituting 'subject' which excludes, indeed extrudes, all otherness to the outside, where it is to be grasped and studied controlled as an object. (1)

This mode of thought sees as an exclusive category, one that imposes its own exclusionary boundaries, welcoming everything without those boundaries to the categories of pre-modern, irrational, and other (and worthy of being colonized) . This theoretical mode stance is an inherently deconstructive one in that it attempts to take apart this paradigm, which it treats as arbitrary at best and evil at worst. The postcolonial argument is one form of this critique of the sociological concept of rationality. Using this argument, postcolonial theory has attempted to deconstruct the systems and assumption that formed the foundational assumptions of colonialism by showing that its concept of modernity excluded and dehumanized those who did not fit within its own limits. Therefore we can see an important intersection between British colonialism, western rationality, and the concept of modernity.

## **2.2 Postcolonialism: Its Meaning and Rationality**

Postcolonialism begins from 1970's especially after the publication of *Orientalism* by Edward Said. Growing of the term 'postcolonialism' within the academy was consolidated by appearance of *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature* in 1989 by Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. Postcolonialism seeks to intervene to force its alternative knowledge into the power structures of the west as well as the non-west. it seeks to change the way people thinks, the way they behave, to produce a more just and equitable relation between the different peoples of the world. So, it is about changing world, a world that has been changed by struggle and which its practitioners intend to change further. As Leela Gandhi in *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* says:

Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to academic task of revisiting, remembering and crucially interrogating the colonial past. The process of returning to the colonial scene discloses a relationship of reciprocal antagonism and desire between colonizers and colonized. (4)

This view interprets and unfolds troublesome relationship between colonizers and colonized and it focuses on ambivalent postcolonial condition. It urges reader to recollect the invasion and seduction of colonial power. Postcolonialism narrates multiple stories of uncomfortable condition to participate with colonizer's culture. It is not only the reservoir of raw political experience that can be theorized from the enlightened perspectives of present. It is also the scene of intense discursive and conceptual activity described by the large amount of thought and writing about the cultural and political identities of colonized subjects. Postcolonialism defines itself as an area of study that is willing not only to make, but also to gain theoretical sense of the past.

At this intersection, postcolonial theory interrogates Western culture's assumption about the universality of its own rationality. Postcolonial theory deconstructs the model of western rationality as the culmination of a unilateral progress towards the modernity and sets up what Scott lash calls "anti-rationality of the other" (1). Postcolonial theory deconstructs this assumption of anti-rationality of other and claim of universality of rationality by westerners. In really all cultures, whether they are dominant or subservient, modern or pre-modern, have developed their own unique rationality. Insofar as this is true, anti-rationality is not a rejection of rationality, but a rejection of monolithic universal rationality of western modernity. Postcolonial rationality means the theory or assumptions of British rulers in the era of colonialism which they think as universal rationality which has come in the



postcolonial/ post independence countries (specially India) as colonial belatedness. This rationality in postcolonial era which is consciously or unconsciously there and functioning somehow. Postcolonial rationality is not only the rationality of the post independence countries but western rationality of colonial era has come as mixed which put the rule and governance of postcolonial countries in confusion and ambivalence situation . This rationality made postcolonial rule very complicated as hybrid rationality.

Swidler Ann, interprets Max Weber's work which explores and attempts to systematically categorize the presence of rationality in culture. He identifies religion as a major component of the process by which the peculiarity developed, most especially Protestantism. Weber's work is overall treatment of rationality. In his seminal work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Weber recognizes the presence of certain kinds of rationality in every culture, but makes the claim that western rationality is peculiar. To arrive at this thesis he starts with the immediately problematic question of "in western civilization only, cultural phenomena have appeared which (as we like to think) lie in a line of development having *universal* significance and value" (13). Although Weber does qualify himself by noting that this question will be asked by a "product of modern European civilization" (18) and inserting the parenthetical "as we like to think," his demarcation of the "peculiar" (26) rationality of the West from the rationality of all other culture in history does group him in Lash's first category of scholarly characterization of "high modernity" model, one that sees Western rationality as the impetus of movement upward on linear, hierarchical scale of progress.

Swidler describes Weber who employs several different terms to describe different types of rational processes. Rationalism which he defines as "an attitude of pragmatic orientation to the attainment of goals" (Swidler 35) is not the same as rationality. Weber grants that his more primitive thought process exists in all cultures, but maintains that

rationalism is not equal to true rationality, which exists only in the west. Swidler further writes:

What distinguishes this attitude from that associated with rationality is not a its purposive or goal-oriented character, but the larger, contexts of meaning in which meanings are embedded. What distinguishes rationality from rationalism is that rationalism is oriented to immediate goals, while rationality involves goals which are ordered, arranged, and even chosen in relation to some larger, conscious system of meanings, ideas, and values.  
(35-36)

What characterizes true rationality for Weber is its connection to a larger system in which the individual operates. Swidler interprets Weber to say that "the distinctive feature of rationality in whole societies, cultures, and institution is the degree of control of life by conscious ideas" (39). The individual's ability to act rationality is judged by the degree to which he is personally empowered with these conscious social ideas: "One of the most important aspects of the process of 'rationalization' of action is the substitution for the unthinking acceptance of ancient custom, of deliberate adaptation to situation in terms of self interest" (39).

In creating the categories he uses in his work, Weber invents a standard of rationality according to which only the west can be classed as truly rational. In doing so, he enforces the attitude that the West has advanced beyond other cultures. Scott, Lash says, "this attitude, typical of sociological thought, sees the West as the only culture that has achieved modernity, an achievement driven by the development of rationality" (1). This is the mode of cultural theory has sought to critique- this notion that the modern West is the only culture inside its own categories such as modernity and rationality, excluding all else to the realm of the outside, of the other. Those existing inside these categories see themselves as the thinking subject, while those outside are objectified and made eligible to be dominated by the inner

subject. This model played a role in colonial practice in that it created a hierarchy wherein the West was positioned to exploit non-western, pre-modern peoples sometimes justifying itself as conducting a "civilizing mission"(Kohn 232) and sometimes without attempt at justification. In what is ostensibly supposed to be an objective, descriptive study, Weber has created a model which cultural theory critiques as objective and ideological in the highest degree.

Classical humanism may be seen as a product of Enlightenment, a pre-cursor to the "high modernity" of sociological positivism. Part of the project of humanism was to rationally delineate a system of ethical/moral behavior in which the human being derived "certain inalienable rights" (Jefferson 1) from a rationally-derived set of universal truths. Immanuel Kant, for example argued that moral requirements are based on a standard of rationality he named the 'Categorical Imperative'. Immorality thus involves a violation of the CI and thereby irrational. Other philosopher, such as Locke and Hobbes, had also argued that moral requirement is based on standard of rationality. Humanism was thus a major cultural product of the Enlightenment's rationality. Its place in colonial practice is extremely problematic, for the simple reason that, as Dipesh Chakrabarty says, "the European colonizer of the nineteenth century both preached this Enlightenment humanism at the colonized and at the same time denied its practice" (4). This paradox is one of the reasons postcolonial thought has attacked western rationality for the role it played in colonialism. This inconsistency can easily be seen as rationality's self-refutation of its claim to universal human rights, gave way to modernism and its positivistic approach, which conflicted with humanism by constituting the modern, rational inside and objectifying everything on the outside. Western rationality produced both models.

Jay Martin describes Adorno and Horkheimer who see two foundational problem in modernity : number one, that "instrumental reason was closely related to the [capitalist]

exchange principle in which everything was reduced to an abstract equivalent of everything else in service of exchange", and number two "Instrumental reason's link with the domination of nature" (Jay 37). Their introduction seeks to identify "a positive notion enlightenment which will release it from entanglement in blind domination" (Adorno and Horkheimer xvi). They argue that this rationality in which originated modern, scientific progress has become entangled in these two problems, and "what men want to learn from nature is how to use it in order wholly to dominate it and other men. That is the only aim" (4). In making this claim Adorno and Horkheimer fall into Scott Lash's second category of responses to modernity, those who see Enlightenment as "the logic of a constitutive and constituting inside, a constitutive and constituting 'subject', which excludes, indeed extrudes all otherness to the outside, where it is to be grasped and studied and controlled as an object" (Lash 1).

The two problems of myth and domination combine to create what Horkheimer and Adorno see as the unfortunate state of Enlightenment progress. "Enlightenment has taken the basic principle of myth to be anthropomorphism, the projection onto nature of the subjective" (6). Yet Horkheimer and Adorno argue enlightenment has not escaped myth because myth and science are essentially the same, with science projecting its own subjective view onto nature, one in which everything becomes a tool for man's use and domination, so that looking at nature one may say like Oedipus "It is man" (7). The Enlightenment thus gives to this will to dominate: "men pay for the increase of their power with alienation from that over which they exercise power. Enlightenment behaves towards things as a dictator toward men. He knows them in so far as he can manipulate them" (9).

This summary of Horkheimer and Adorno's work shows one of the critiques that has been leveled at Enlightenment rationality, and serves in this introduction to lay the groundwork for my ensuing examination of colonial period rationality as well as postcolonial rationality. Jean- Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*

examines rational concepts in the modern world and argues against the view of rationality as an unimpeachable epistemology. Starting with the premise that rational tools such as science and learning exists as hierarchical subsets to knowledge, Lyotard argues that knowledge itself is circumscribed in social and cultural processes. Science is such a process that produces a certain limited type of denotative knowledge. However, knowledge was not invented in the Enlightenment with the birth of science. Knowledge has been produced in other broader and less exclusive forms through out the history of civilization. The broader type of knowledge is circumscribed in cultural values, such as efficiency, justice, happiness, or beauty and it is transmitted through narrative. Lyotard describes this process of transmission like this:

Another characteristic meriting special attention is the relation between this kind of knowledge and custom. What is a 'good' performance in denotative or technical matters? They are all judged to be 'good' because they conform to the relevant criteria accepted in the social circle of the knower's interlocutors. The early philosophers called this mode of legitimating statement opinion. The consensus that permits such knowledge to be circumscribed and makes it possible to distinguish one who knows from one who does not (the foreigner, the child) is what constitutes the culture of a people. (19)

Lyotard makes the case for an impassible distinction between scientific, rational knowledge and traditional, narrative knowledge, but also notes the similarities between the way both types of knowledge are developed and transmitted (note the way the quote above can be seen define either a scientific circle or a traditional one). The distinction between rational knowledge and the traditional form of knowledge and the privileging of the scientific over the traditional is the condition that created the concept of unimpeachable rational epistemology.

Rationality is an invisible undergirding of every person's and every culture's value system, morality, economy, material practice, pragmatic habits. It is a process and a practice that informs almost everything any culture or member thereof thinks or does, although the rational system itself is not often reflected upon, because of its invisibility. The intersection of two cultures, however, does make the rational structure of each culture visible; these structures are exposed by contrast. The issue of rationality on Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, Making the workings of rationality in the colonial structure he portrays more visible. Specific element in Achebe's book that I use to draw out position of the conflicting rationalities are the native court, the road the British build, and the context of indirect rule in which those two institution are administered.

To understand the hubris of the British colonizers in their subjugation of their colonial subjects," it is useful to explore the assumptions behind the Enlightenment. One Justification of the colonial administration was the premise that the colonial subjects were inferior to their Western colonizers" (Brooker 135). The way they define the nature of that inferiority ranged from race, to religion, to rationality, and often was a construct in which all three of those characteristics were linked. The premise of inferiority as a function of race and religion are familiar enough. The premise of inferiority as a function of rationality was couched in rhetoric which used words such as backward to describe the cultural and mental condition of the colonial subjects, a term that survived in unofficial political usage into mid-nineteenth century. The primitive condition of the colonized existed in the minds of the colonizers, as a binary opposite to their own condition of modern progress, a condition founded on scientific progress, which was in turn founded upon the principles of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason, which had established a logical vehicle that facilitated the West's departure from its own primitive condition on Dark Ages. The western view of its own Enlightenment- based progress was of a movement upward on a linear, hierarchical scale. The irony in these two

categories of colonial disapproval however is evident in the replacement of "humanist episteme with the 'mechanic episteme' in the West that occurred when humanism was replaced by modernism" (Lash 7). In essence the British object to their colonial subjects on the grounds of the subjects lack in two incompatible areas.

Max Weber's work creates the categories which of course, include west and exclude all other cultures. Weber's categories, and those of colleagues in social science, have been used further to inscribe the limits of modernity, of what condition a society must be to be "modern" (Lash1). Weber's differentiation between rationalism and true rationality is relevant. All societies have developed forms of rational behavior, behavior designed to accomplish a certain end. Such behavior is what Weber calls rationalism. Weber argues that this type of behavior is different from the peculiar type of rationality found in western culture. Weber's categorization and systemization of rationality toward larger conscious system of meanings ideas and values, denies the validity of non-western cultures and relegates to the realm of irrational and pre-modern which the post-colonial theorists reject.

The rise of modernist episteme contributes to both the paradoxical role of humanism in colonialism and to the justification of colonialism on the ground of the lack existing in the colonized. According to Eurocentric model of history only the west has true rationality and progress that is universally desirable. Dipesh chakrabarty, whose project was to "Provincialize Europe" (4) notes the recent passing of the construction of European history as "Universal human history" that sees the history and progress of humanity and the history of Europe, or the West as equivalent. Hawthorn referring Chakrabarty writes:

[I]nsofar as the academic discourse of history is concerned 'Europe' remains the sovereign theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call 'Indian', 'Chinese', 'Kenyan', and so on. There is a peculiar way in which all

these other histories tend to become variations on a master narrative that could be called 'the history of Europe. (Hawthorn108).

This tendency for Europeans/Westerners to place themselves at the center is a practice linked to the humanist definition of "human" as the "settler colonial White man."(108)

Above described western rationality is the subject of rejection for postcolonial writers. Western rationality in postcolonial era became the matter of failure and postcolonial rationality became the theory to write back to the notion and thinking of westerners that they think their rationality was universally desirable. Postcolonial writers treat the rationality of colonial era which is now consciously or unconsciously there in postcolonial age is the disturbing obstacle on the way to progress of non- western people. Western rational structure of colonial era is also disturbing and confusing the non-western people is the issue postcolonial writers raise. Postcolonial writers like Amitav Ghosh claim that blame lies not in the non-western's inability to adopt foreign institution but rather on the assumption that those so called institution of rationality belong in non-western countries.

Amitav Ghosh as a postcolonial writer deals with the rationality in postcolonial India. This rationality and rational structure in postcolonial India is not the pure structure of post independence India but it is mixed and hybrid with colonial rationality which was very deeply grounded on the period of colonialism. This deeply rooted rationality which westerners called universal rationality is Amitav Ghosh's subject of rejection. However he rejects and shows the failure of western model of rationality, there are so many aspects in the novel which keep post independence people in confusion and ambivalence position while applying rationality. He shows the relation between Enlightenment rationality and state power. He also shows that the Postcolonial state is recipient to the anxieties about order and controls that are characteristic of colonial regime. He shows the rationalities of the state being unsuccessful in maintaining peace and order and to promote happiness and public good. His



novel *The Circle of Reason* which will be explored in next chapter raises questions about the character of modernity in India; India having shared history and culture. Next chapter will explore how in postcolonial nation the so called 'Universally desirable rationality' functions. I will explore whether rationality theory in postcolonial nation is favorable to the progress of people or it is disturbing obstacle on the way of maintaining order and people's happiness.

Postcolonial theory portrays western rationality as negative legacy of colonialism. The universal rationality of westerners in most of the writings of postcolonial writers seems to be a barrier in the people's progress and their projects. Amitav Ghosh shows the failure of rationalities of state because the base of rationality in postcolonial India is the structure of colonial rationality. This inheritory rationality consciously or unconsciously made post independent Indian confused. Their utopian projects became failure because of hybrid rationality in postcolonial India. Therefore postcolonial rationality as a theory is used by postcolonial writer treating the postcolonial Indians and other civilians in confused mode or showing failure of their utopian project. They use this theory also by showing the failure of state rationalities to maintain order and the negative effect of their exercise of power.

### **Chapter 3: Postcolonial Rationality in Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason***

*The Circle of Reason* is a postcolonial novel by Amitav Ghosh Published in 1986. As I have explored in previous chapter the rationality of colonial period and its effect and functioning in postcolonial era, I will explore the postcolonial rationality in this chapter which is the core chapter of my thesis. In this chapter I explore the ambivalence of postcolonial modernity by the close reading of *The Circle of Reason*. Appraising the character of modernity in India, Ghosh emphasizes the relation between Enlightenment rationality and police. As I have described in chapter two about the western rationality which is the assumption of west as universal reasoning. Ghosh in this novel questions that kind of reasoning through the mouth of various characters and tries to give reasoning to the rationalities of non west. He tries to show that there is also the reasoning in other rationalities except western rationalities in the colonial period and afterward.

Ghosh through the character of Balaram in this novel says, "Be quite, Gopal. Don't say anymore. You don't know what you are saying. Science doesn't belong to countries. Reason doesn't belong to any nation. They belong to the history-to the world.... You're wrong, I will show you" (57). What Ghosh wants to show is western rationality is not only the universal reasoning. Rationalities of other countries have also reasoning. Progress and science as west claims does not belong only to them. It belongs to history and world means it belongs to other countries except western countries. Ghosh underscores the repressive aspect of colonial rationality that hangs around in the structure of postcolonial government. He suggests that postcolonial state is heir to the anxieties about order and control that are characteristics of colonial regimes, and full force of postcolonial rationality is seen in the state's response to insurgency and subaltern migrancy. At the same time Ghosh's novel stages a succession of utopian projects that bear the imprint of Enlightenment reason. It points to the

liberatory dimension of reason and valorizes the character's pursuit of these Enlightenment projects.

My attempt in this thesis is to search the answers of various questions which Ghosh in *The Circle of Reason* raises. Is there necessary complicity between Enlightenment discourse of reason and apparatuses of police in postcolonial context? Does the advance of reason authorize and rest upon a grater rationalization of police? Are the discourses and apparatuses of police inherited from the colonial state restrained by the postcolonial nation? The second set of questions has to do with the ambiguous status of Enlightenment reason in postcolonial India. Ghosh suggests that reason in its postcolonial appearance is both coercive and emancipatory. Are there multiple forms of reason? And can these be disentangled from the logic of police? Can an alternative, nonrepressive rule of reason be imagined in a postcolonial world?

*The Circle of Reason* which is enormously popular in India is less enthusiastically received in the west, where it soon went out of print for a time. *The Circle of Reason* points to the state rationalities that shape postcolonial experience. Its conceptual focus on reason makes it a particularly suitable text through which to explore the ambiguous legacy of Enlightenment rationality in postcolonial India.

The novel covers the middle decades of the twentieth century, the period of decolonization, and it concludes in the 1980s. Much of *The Circle of Reason* is set against the backdrop of Bangladeshi war of independence in 1971. Its roundabout narrative tracks the misadventure of Alu, an orphan, who becomes entangled in a feud between his foster father and the village strong man, also a police informant. Consequently, the police falsely identify him a dangerous insurgent and set a special agent on his trail. When Alu flees to a Gulf Kingdom, Assistant Superintendent of police Jyoti Das, the police detective is assigned to pursue him. Jyoti Das eventually joins him and his companions in flights. Flawlessly

interweaving description of character and events, the three parts of *The Circle of Reason* chronicle Alu's idealistic misadventure in India, Al-Ghazira and finally Algeria. The reader's sympathies lie largely with Alu, who is an entirely innocent fugitive from the police, but they also extend to Das, who has been inducted into the police force only reluctantly. He is far more interested in observing and drawing rare birds than in tracking him quarry. By the end of the novel Das abandons his pursuit, and indeed his job, altogether.

In addressing the place of police in postcolonial state, the novel raises about character of modernity in India. In liberal discourse as Partha Chatterjee says that "modern nations are broadly imagined in two ways: as political communities that are universally governed by a rule of law, assuring the duties and privileges of citizenship to all; and as "ethnic" communities that have a sense of shared history and culture" (56). In both kinds of images, the repressive aspects of the nation tend to be obscured. The nation-state form is energetically vested in newly decolonized countries with the promise of liberation from oppressive rule. It holds out the assurance of true equality and true fraternity. Yet, the newly liberated nation inherits the repressive apparatuses of the colonial state, apparatuses that are freshly deployed against the free citizenry. As Chatterjee puts it with reference to the independent India:

the new state chose to retain in a virtually unaltered from the basic structure of the civil service, the police administration, the judicial system, including the codes of civil and criminal law, and the armed forces as they existed in the colonial period. As far as the normal executive functions of the state were concerned, the new state operated within a framework of universal rationality, whose principals were seen as having been contained (even if they were misapplied) in the preceding state structure. (57-58)

One could make the argument that given their colonial derivation these institutional embodiments of Enlightenment rationality were all the more coercive. After all the

implication of Enlightenment principles such as "reason" can not be assumed identical for the West and the European colonies. Gayatri Spivak identifies logic of colonial domination operating at the very heart of the discourse of Enlightenment thought. In *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* Spivak argues:

the end of the 'German' eighteenth century (if one can speak of 'Germany' as a unified proper name on that era) Provides material for a narrative of crisis management, the 'Scientific' fabrication of new representations of self and world that would provide alibis for the domination, exploitation, and epistemic violation entailed by the establishment of colony and empire. (7)

As Spivak argues the western rationality of colonial period came in postcolonial period in every sector of state which I will explore differently. Ghosh in this novel indirectly shows that the reason of their own not only in the western claim.

### **Rationality in Religion**

Ghosh, in this novel *The Circle of Reason* rejects the British claim that reason only lies in their religion. He, through the mouth of various characters shows the blemish of western religion and valorizes the Hindu religion and claims that reason lies in Hindu religion in the religion of Hindustan. When Alu goes to Balaram's house and in Toru-devi's room he sees "Ma Kali, Ma Durga and Ma Saraswoti piled high on the trunks (you had to be an athlete to pray in that room, Balaram used to say) " (8). It shows how much emphasize Ghosh has given Hindu religion to reject and shadow the western claim of universality of their religion. Several evidences are there in the novel that Ghosh trying to prove Hindu religion has reason as western claim that their religion and culture only have reason.

Hindu religion in the novel is given more emphasis. In the time of school festival which Bhubdev Roy organizes Balaram does not believe in spirituality of Bhubdev he organizes the Saraswati Puja, "the school- would hold an exceptionally lavish Saraswati Puja

that year. What could be a more appropriate festival for a school than that of the Goddess of Learning?" (31). In this way Ghosh emphasizes the reason of Hindu religion. He further describes:

A six-foot image of Ma Saraswati, with spinning electric lights behind the eyes and a silver-foil halo, was commissioned in Naboganj, the nearest town .... Two goats and a pondful of fish were fattened for the feast. A large multi-colored tent, with a low platform for the image was erected in the schoolyard, and the most learned pandit in Naboganj was hired to preside over ceremony. (32)

This passage shows reason in their own religion, Indian religion, Hindu religion and non-western religion which is excluded by west from their universal religion which they claim has universal reasoning and universal rationality. Ghosh by the conflict and discussion among various characters tries to emphasize the rationality of Hindu religion and its importance to them which west is not ready to accept. He further describes the occasion: "Ma Saraswati, usually so serenely beautiful, seated on her white swan, with her eight-stringed veena in one hand and a book in other .... But no one dared say anything" (32). From this we can clearly see his highlights in the power of Hindu religion and rejection of claim of universal rationality in religion by west. He shows the power in the "Mantra" (33) of "pandit" (33) and their preaching. Ghosh has shown the tussle between Bhubdev roy and Balaram in this novel in every matters means he shows the tussle between British claimed rationality and Indian rationality in every matter. When Bhubdev Roy denies paying for special insulation and stops pandit in "mid-mantra.... In the crackling silence everybody turned and followed his pointing fingers to Ma Saraswati's head, brightly lit from the inside. There was no denying that she looked distinctly migrained" (33). Though Ghosh emphasizes in Hindu religion rather than western religion he seems to focus on practical reason which can transform the life of

people. At this time Ghosh makes his character Balaram shouts and says "This is not Learning, Knocking the clay with his knuckles. This is vanity" (33).

When Balaram, Gopal and other friends were studying in the presidency college, they organize a group of rationalists. Balaram and Gopal often debate about science religion and reason. Their aim through this society is application of rational principles to everything around them, "to their own lives, to religion to history" (49). It is for the turning of society. Through their society they begin to search the proof in every ancient rational ideas misrepresented by priest and Brahmins. Their motto is to "make known to the masses of Hindustan how they were daily deceived and cheated by the self-styled purveyors of religion" (50). They define the distortion of Hindu idea of god by pandits and Brahmins into thousands of deities and idols as quicker money making medium. Gopal interprets Brahma applying science. He says it is nothing but an "Atom" (50). He further interprets, "universal egg of Hindu mythology is nothing but a kind of cosmic neutron" (50). He purposes to pray for the cosmic Atom which is renamed by the name of Cosmic Boson.

Gopal begins exhorting "*Hail Cosmic Boson*" (51) instead of the sacred syllable *Om*. In their meetings they begin rational explanation of various magical events, objects and creatures in Hindu mythology. They interpreted "Sudarshan Chakra" (51) as an ancient fireworks and "Jatayu" (51) of *Ramayana* as last surviving pterodactyls.

Balaram is not satisfied with the rational interpretation of rationalists. He debates and argues that nothing matters to the life of normal citizen only through rational interpretation of religion and other ideas. One should apply practical reasoning to everything that can improve the life of citizen. Ghosh through the mouth of Balaram in this novel says:

What does it matter ... I mean what does it matter what the Brahmins and the rishis say and the myth say? What does it have to do with science or reason or the masses of Hindoostan? What good will it do anyone if the masses starts saying

*Hail, Cosmic Boson* instead of *He Bhagoban*? Will it cure them of disease?

Will it fill their stomachs? Will it get the British out of here? (52)

Balaram enforces practical reasoning and passion which can move the life of people to prosperity. Ghosh here emphasizes passion and practical reasoning than talk of reason and universal atom. Ghosh through his character Balaram raises Luis Pasteur and his deed. When Pasteur did for the welfare of people "world laugh and said: Pasteur is mad, bitten by his dogs" (53). Therefore there can be so many difficulties while doing beneficial things to the people which can prosper the life of people and impoverished society can improve. For the cause of practical reasoning one should not be guided not by reason and universal atom but by passion which can make people great, "A passion for the future, not for the past. It was that which made him the greatest man of his time, for it is that passion which makes men great" (53). The mundane things that happen in everyday and real life can move the people means practical things have the reason not in universal atom. If anyone wants to do something he should start from mundane and real everyday life. Balaram says, "we have to start here in Presidency College, in the Hindu Hostel, with our fellow students. If we can't make *them* change their lives, if we can't make *them* see Reason, what can we ever have to say to the masses of Hindoostan?" (53).

The last part of *The Circle of Reason* focuses on the place of religion in postcolonial societies, societies that have emerged out of a negotiation with European modernity. It also considers the character of socialism, but this time as it is championed by members of the bourgeoisie, and once again, it exposes the experience of diasporic migration. Its setting is in a small town in Algeria, Ei Oued, where Zindi, Boss, Alu and Kulfi have come pursued by Jyoti Das . An Indian doctor Mrs Verma recruits refugee to act in a play by Rabindranath Tagore, *Chitarngada*, at the local hospital. She wants to present the play rather than endure a repeat of a public speech by her colleague Dr. Mishra whose socialist rhetoric is hollow and



self-promoting. Unknown to Zindi and her friends, Jyoti Das has also recruited to act in the play. Jyoti Das becomes infatuated at the first sight. Kulfi dies of heart attack in the middle of rehearsal. Mrs Verma arranges the last rites and a cremation. In the final passages of the novel the policeman travels with Alu, Zindi and baby Boss to Tangier. Jyoti Das intends to migrate to Dusseldorf, while Zindi and Alu wearily but hopefully turn their steps back toward the Indian subcontinents.

In performance of *Chitrangada* the centerpieces of this part of the novel Ghosh shows how national identity is staged in bourgeois diasporic communities through public displays of cultural patrimony. The play is based on a legend in the Mahabharata, in which the noble but plain Chitra is able to seduce Arjuna with the beauty she is granted for a year, but ultimately wins his heart and retains his love even when her beauty fades. The renegade policeman Das, who is to play Arjuna is smitten with lust for Kulfi, who is to be Chitra. Das's visceral desire departs noticeably from the ideal of love that inspired by beauty, develops in *Chitrangada* into a regard that survives the loss of physical beauty. In the play, Chitra although she initially enchants Arjuna with assumed beauty is renowned for her high ethical character and wins him with her inner grace. Kulfi, who has in the past been forced to work as a prostitute by her husband, attempts a charm Das with her decidedly erotic charm.

When Dr. Verma Purposes to erect a pyre and perform last Brahmanical rites at the abrupt death of Kulfi, Dr. Mishra Scoffs at her religiosity. He does not take seriously the process of last rites. He argues that the religious last right is inappropriate with modern, secular outlook and that it becomes absurd when tap water is substituted for Ganges water and broken furniture suffices for funeral pyre. Dr.Verma comments on the place of religion in modern india. She insists that it is the spirit rather than the letter of religious doctrine that matters. She focuses of funeral procession according to religious tradition. She says that such traditions are directly linked with people's deeply felt sentiments. She comments on Dr.

Mishra that his narrowly doctrinal understanding of religion and excessive valorization of irrationalism allows no room for such deeply felt sentiments of people. Ghosh here focuses on irreducibility and importance of the religious consciousness in postcolonial India.

### **Rationality in Science and Educational System**

As I have explored in chapter two, Intellectual culture of postcolonial India is the culture furthered by British hegemony. In spite of an emphasis on reason and useful knowledge, there was lack in the university curriculum of scientific experimentation. The emphasis was on the humanities and social philosophy, subjects that molded attitudes about society. Education system was on fever of values, opinions and tastes of rulers. This system limited on the critical application of reason. Colonial exploitation was greater than the cast oppression. Colonial regime emphasized English and humanistic learning in the curricular changes. They did not give emphasis on science and technology. In the view of Dipesh Chakrabarty, the promise of Enlightenment, with its utopian rhythm, is seductive. "This promise is freedom from material hardship, from political tyranny, and from superstition and ignorance through knowledge of man and nature" (751). As Dipesh Chakrabarty points out, "while critiques of Enlightenment rationality may be valid, Enlightenment rationality so powerfully informs modern India's desires that it can not be dismissed as an external colonizing force" (751). The power of the discourse of Enlightenment rationality has permanently marked Indians own imagination of their nation. In *The Circle of Reason* bureaucratic examination and regulation of the character is not the only legacy of Enlightenment rationality. As Keya Ganguly points out "Interwoven with the narrative of Alu's run from the police is the story of his recruitment in various utopian schemes" (186). While the narrative whorls and doubles back too much to permit straightforward schematization; the three parts of the novel loosely centre upon three different idealistic projects. Each of these projects is an attempt at purification of one sort or another. Be it a

campaign against germs, a war upon the sullyng effects of money, or ritual purification of dead body, each of these projects becomes an occasion for dramatizing an Enlightenment discourse.

The first part of *The Circle of Reason* concerns the Balaram's effort to introduce a rational program of hygiene in his village to support his motto: "I should have stood my ground. I know that now, and next time. I shall stand my ground, for reason has nothing to fear" (97). This means his view is "Reason rescues Man from Barbarity" (49). He induces his classmates to follow Pasteur's principles of hygiene and wage a campaign against dirty underwear. Balaram almost succeeds in his campaign but his campaign is brought to an abrupt close at the college proposed at the meeting to inspect his underwear, he jumped off a railing and broke his leg which is one among several occasions in the novel that brutish might overcomes the forces of reason. Many Indians of late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries embraced the ideals put forward by Enlightenment thinkers. In using the word "reason" (57) in the title of his novel Ghosh invokes one of the key values of nineteenth-century Bengali culture, Tapan Raychaudhuri writes:

Rational assessment of current needs and received tradition, both indigenous and alien, became the hallmark of Bengali thought in the nineteenth century. Arguably, this development marked a total discontinuity in the history of the religion. A product of the colonial encounter, it was a development with explosive potentialities which acquired a measure of autonomy. (47)

This quote shows influence of the European Enlightenment in India, the influence which was mediated by colonialism. During this time writers and social reformers urged their compatriots to order their lives along rational lines. Rammohun Roy, founder of the Brahmo Samaj and a central figure of co-called Bengal Renaissance, sought to unite the best of Hindu, Muslim and European culture using the principles of "reason" (57) and social comfort

and campaigned for the abolition of sati, the acceptance of widow marriage scientific and English education. An employ of the East India Company, he by no means challenged the efficacy of colonial rule although he was a critic of British administration on various fronts. Rammohun's embrace of Enlightenment values went hand in hand with an acceptance of British hegemony albeit with criticisms of administrative policy.

In *The Circle of Reason*, Balaram's obsession with both phrenology and hygiene points to hybrid legacy. Recruited to teach at a village school close to the border of East Bengal, Balaram had channeled his quest for order and intelligibility into phrenology, which he alighted upon as the key to the scientific interpretation of character. When Alu, the protagonist comes to live with him he immediately subjects the boy to a phrenological examination and charts the peculiar bumps on Alu's head. Balaram's enthusiasm for phrenology suggests not only the hegemonic appeal of the Enlightenment rationality but also its colonial belatedness, in . Balaram is unable to recognize that the phrenology has long since been debunked as has the criminal anthropology of Lombroso that he also champions.

The path of reason is not only skewed by a belated temporality, it is also delayed by the operation of base interest. Balaram's pseudoscientific line of investigation brings him into conflict with the school's headmaster, Bhubdeb Roy, a dishonest profiteer. At a school festival put on by Bhubdev Roy, to which public officials and a priest have been invited, Balaram notices a growing cranial lump on a displayed figurine of Saraswoti, the Goddess of Learning (caused by the heat of the lights inside the image's head), and loudly declares it to signify not learning but vanity. In this episode, different rationalities, those of science, the sacred and profane come into deformed religious icons exposes Bhubdev Roy's entirely worldly ambitions. It also earns him Bhubdev Roy's enmity, which becomes increasingly violent: Bhubdev Roy poisons Balaram's fishponds and he threatens Balaram's maid Maya. Coercive forces again begin to rally against Balaram's campaign to advance reason.

Undeterred by Bhubdeb Roy's threaten, if not encouraged on by them, Balaram initiates an even more ambitious struggle for the rationalist cause. The story of Balaram's present tactics as he again conducts a battle against germs-he "douse[s] the villages in waves of antiseptic" (89) and at one point squirts Bhubdeb Roy as well- is interwoven with that of his past campaign as president of the Rationalists. This second war against germs fought with carbolic acid is later with saving many lives in Lalpukur.

Balaram's confidence in the power of scientific rationality is not merely idiosyncratic, but rather he has the colonial genealogy I have sketched in previous chapters. It is the confidence shared by nationalist thinkers in the colonial world. Jawaharlal Nehru, first prime minister of India, is one forceful exponent in India of this faith in science. In *The Discovery of India* he writes

I am convinced that the methods and approach of science have revolutionized human life more than anything else in the long course of history, and have opened door and avenues of further and even more radical change, leading up to the very portals of what has long been considered the unknown.(17)

Nehru sees in science the potential to transform India where "a rationalist spirit ...is replaced by irrationalism and a blind idolatry of the past " (17). His vision led directly to the setting up of the Department of science and Science and Technology in independent India, under which scientific and technological research and education were made national priorities. Balaram's promotion of science and its offshoots in the novel echoes the vision of postcolonial development set forth by Nehru. Ghosh clearly patterns Balaram's character upon historical figures such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Rammohun Roy who attempts to forward a progressive rational program of social transformation. After Bhubded Roy closes the school where Balaram teaches, Balaram decides to set up the pasture school of reason in which students can learn practical skills as well as more conventional subjects. The money for it comes from

sale of the material that Alu has learned to weave. This endeavor is peak of Balaram's ambition as a rationalist:

The school would have two departments. After much careful thought Balaram had decided to name one Department of pure Reason and other the Department of Practical Reason: abstract reason and concrete reason, a meeting of the two great forms of human thought. Every student would have to attend classes in both departments. In the Department of Pure Reason they would be taught elementary reading, writing and arithmetic, and they would be given lectures in the history of science and technology.... In the Department of Practical Reason the students would be taught weaving or tailoring. (116)

From this passage reader can totally find that through the way of character Balaram, Ghosh is parodying the Enlightenment rationality. That is his reinterpretation of Enlightenment rationality to serve the need of impoverished postcolonial society. From the profit Balaram inaugurates the Department of March of Reason which symbolizes "Reason Militant" (127), which is for the purpose of disinfecting the village from germs:

A School, like Reason itself, must have a purpose. Without a purpose Reason decays into a mere trick, forever reflecting itself like mirror at a fair. It is that sense of purpose which third department will restore to our school. It will help us to remember that we can not limit the benefits of our education and our learning to ourselves-that is our duty to use it for the benefit of everybody around us. That is why I have decided to name the new department the Department of the March of Reason. It will remind us that our school has another aspect: Reason Militant. (126-127)

Here we see the Balaram saying that reason can undergo infinite regression, "forever reflecting itself like mirrors at a fair" (126). Balaram purposes to fashion the educational system of Pasteur School of Reason in such a way that reason advances material well-being. Ultimately the text is equivocal about the potential of reason. It playfully mocks the more bizarre manifestation of doctrines of reason in its treatment of Balaram's obsession with phrenology and with hygiene and his use of carbolic acid to free the entire village of germs. Balaram had earlier discovered Alu's natural propensity for weaving and, when Alu has refused to go to school, has apprenticed him to a local weaver who has a stolen knowledge of mysteries of Jamdani technique. Alu's extraordinary ability epitomizes the potentialities of reason:

Man at the loom is the finest example of Mechanical man: a creature that makes his world as no other can, with his mind. The machine is man's curse and his salvation, and no machine has created man as much as the loom. It has created not separate worlds but one, for it has never permitted the division of the world. The loom recognizes no continents and no countries. It has tied with its bloody ironies from the beginning of human time ... it has never permitted the division of reason. (59)

Weaving is presented here as a complex figure of human experience. The passage emphasizes the ambiguities of human agency working in the loom. It is presented as transformative power for the world for better and the worse. Human figure denies a number of division: those of body and mind, of continents and countries, of history, of reason itself. The narrator propounding a vision of praxis through this figure of weaving is fully aware of the history of imperial exploitation that inheres in its form-as is clear from the brief excursus in the novel on slavery, colonialism and weaving. "It is a gory history in parts; a story of greed and destruction. Every scrap of cloth is stained by a bloody past" (61). However the novel

imagines the possibility of reconstituting these forms for liberatory ends- hence the repeated valorization of weaving."But it is the only history we have and history is hope as well as despair. And so weaving, too is hope; a living belief that having once made the world one and blessed it with its diversity it must do again ....Weaving is Reason, which makes the world mad and makes it human" (61-62). In positing human experience, equated here with both weaving and reason, as universal, heterogeneous, and interwoven, the narrator rejects the Eurocentrism of Enlightenment discourse of reason. In this view, weaving/reason can be rescued from the determinations of colonial domination and take new, emancipatory forms. The figure of the circle also works against the linear logic of modernity and of Enlightenment rationality. Circling is invoked in three ways: In the title, in the forms of the narrative and in terms of travel. It is contrasted with the straight lines that have the quality of a fetish for Bhubdeb Roy:

The time has come, he said, his tears drying on his cheeks, for straight lines. The trouble with this village is that there aren't enough straight lines. Look at Europe, Look at America, Look at Tokyo: Straight lines that are the secret. Everything is in the straight lines. The roads are straight, the houses are straight, the cars are straight (Except for the wheels). They even walk straight. That's what we need: straight lines. There is a time and an age for everything, and is the age of the straight line. (107)

Linearity here is linked with the modern and the prosperous Europe, America, Tokyo. Development is concerned in the image of "the straight line" (107). The village, by contrast is a place with "unprepared cycles" (6) resting against a banyan tree, "the rickety shed of the pharmacy," (6) "ponds mildewed with water- hyacinth and darkened by leaning coconut palms" (6) a place of disorderedly rural beauty. This sense of disorderliness is enhanced by the circling, perambulatory quality of the narrative, which moves between past and present,



the city and the country and from character to character in a highly associative way. As the story develops, Alu, himself moves, again without any clear purpose or sense of direction. The novel's format and thematic disruptions of linearity are another way of refuting the neat closure of the narrative and the corresponding logics of domination.

*The Circle of Reason* circles around the concept of reason, exploring its various meanings through philosophical categories and metaphorical figures. Pure Reason, Practical Reason, Reason Militant, the Circle of Reason and reason as weaving. We find rejection of reason as an unworldly abstraction. Rather reason is prescribed a secular role, a role that involves the creative use of the intellect in the practices of everyday life.

### **Rationality in Politics and Governing System**

Postcolonial government is portrayed in Ghosh's novel unconcerned with the well being of the populace. The government's interventions are by and large represented unfavorably. Balaram's attempt to introduce a suitably reformulated program of reason, one that has practically beneficial applications, fail both when he is at presidency college and years later in the village of Lalpukur. In both instances, the strong armed forces of unreason overpower him. Reason, it turns out can not be protected from the base operation of interest. Balaram's opponent in Lalpukur Bhubdeb Roy has successfully represented the doings of Balaram and his household to the police as an insurgent plot. Balaram barricades himself against Bhubdeb Roy and police behind barrels of carbolic acid, the medium through which he has crusaded to introduce hygiene. Balaram's weapon is ineffectual, but without his knowledge another member of the household, Rakhal has homemade bombs in which he traffics, which do the job. When tensions come to a head, the police aim a warning flare at the house; unwittingly send it up in flames. Only Alu, who is away, survives. The episode brings home the point that an interest in profit, backed by force, easily overpowers individual effort to bring about enlightenment and social improvement. Moreover through this episode

the novel depicts the state and its forces of police as an obstruction to the efficient exercise of reason. It is not the first instance in the novel in which an ameliorative venture is defeated by the intervention of police, a pessimistic view of the state- both as an embodiment of rationality and as an institution-is strikingly evident in chapter on "signs of new times" (94). The villagers of Lalpukur experience a windfall of war – a plane literally drops down out of the sky. This incident makes more of an impression upon the people of the village than the events of the war, the creation of a new nation, or the dispersal of refugees. They speculate about the significance of the crash:

After crash things took a new turn. The numerologist assumed the leadership of the end of the world signaled camp and heaped scorn on palmist and their theory of Signs of New Times. Whose palm do you read an air crash on? The astrologers warily neutral for once took the conservative view that meant nothing at all: crashes and tempests and earthquakes were normal in Kalliyug. What else could you expect in the age of evil? ...it has a meaning, but the meaning must be read rationally-not with the hocus pocus of these Stone Age magicians. (94-95)

The plane becomes the source of profit for Bhubdev Roy, who is quick to take possession of it. He proceeds to sell parts of the plane to the villagers, the metal sheets of the fuselage to convert into a roof, the wings to make bridges; and glass rubber, and nuts and bolts. Multiple meanings of modernity are implied in this episode –a war machine, emblem of modern technological development, is transformed into modern technological materials for the village. The villagers of Lalpukur pay for the even scraps of the modern that fall upon them out of sky. And which they incorporate bricoleur fashion into their everyday life. ASP Jyoti Das is introduced in the novel at this point as a police detective. He is reluctantly induced in police because he is naturally interested in drawing and painting birds. His reluctance does

distance reader from the enterprise of policing. The police do not stop with the destruction of school of reason but he is mobilized in pursuit of Alu a falsely accused insurgent. The state's power and self-serving paronia is evident in the way its agent attempts to track down Alu. They draw on informants, produce intelligence reports and ultimately authorize an international search. This logic of diminution inherent in western Enlightenment version of nationhood has been emphasized by Partha Chattarjee, "nationalism is so entangled in the logic of Enlightenment rationality, and it has a colonial logic inherent to it" (14). Chattarjee, in his book describes rational knowledge:

The rational knowledge of human society comes to be organized around concepts such as wealth, productive efficiency, progress etc all of which are defined in terms of the promotion of some social "Interest." Yet Interests in society are necessarily diverse: indeed they are stratified in terms of relations of power. Consequently, the subject-object relation between man and nature which is central to the new conception of the sciences of nature is now subtly transferred, through the rational conception of society, to relation between man and man. Thus, the sciences of society become the knowledge of the Self and of the Other. Constructed in terms of rationality, it necessarily also becomes the means to the power of the Self over the other. In short, Knowledge becomes the means to the domination of the world. (14-15)

This passage is significant to point out Ghosh showing repressive dimension of the nation and its apparatuses in his novel. Alu, after his home and family is destroyed flees Lalpukur and travels to the south of India, from where he eventually departs by sea for Al-Ghazira. On the boat that Alu takes is a very pregnant woman who, much to the consternation of her companions refuses to deliver her baby, unless she is given forms to sign. One of the passengers' professors Samuel, discovers that the woman is convinced that her child's

birthright to future prosperity is in danger. That is why she says that she will keep the child in as long as she has to because she knows the child won't be given house or a car anything at all if she does not sign the forms. It will sent back to India, she says and she would rather kill the baby than allow it to born. Alu took out the copy of *The Life of Pasteur* that Gopal had given him and very carefully tore off a page. Professor taking a pen from out of jacket drew a straight line at the bottom of the page, beside it he wrote "Signed" (200). The woman trustingly doodles her name upon the page, and then goes into labor. It embodied heroic potential of science. In this episode this testament to the possibility of scientific reason literally doubles as a form for the inscription of a state rationality that affords the newly born infant a legitimate identity. The novel lampoons this subjection of reason to the rationality of the postcolonial state. Alu is depicted as something of a misfit, with his strange cranial bumps, his solitary nature and his passion for weaving. Yet the narrative respects his difference, rather than making him an object of knowledge to be apprehended an explained. Alu is hard to pin down not only to the reader, but also to the police who attempts to pin him down. The novel counter poses to the workings of the police apparatus a shadowy network of chalias , Weavers from Kerala, who embrace Alu and help him evade the police at the cost of being taken in by the police themselves. Ghosh in making us privy to Das's police files, presents Alu to us as an object of pursuit, but also allows him to remain in the shadows.

The second part of novel concerns the flight of Alu to Gulf state Al-Ghazira where he becomes part of a community of migrants. Jyoti Das pursues him. In boat Alu meets Zindi Karthamma and her new born baby Boss, Kulfi, Chunni, the Professor Samuel, and Rakesh. In Al-Ghazira , all these migrants join Zindi's household, paying a moderate rent and finding work with her assistance. Alu once again narrowly escapes from a catastrophe; he is presumed dead when a building in which he is working collapses but his voice is heard in the rubble and he is pulled out two days later alive and unhurt. Zindi meanwhile is trying to buy a

tailoring shop run by Forid Mia and owned by Jeevanbhai Patel, who also lives in Zindi's house. Forid Mia betrays his employer Jeevanbhai's meeting with the malik; Police seizes Jeevanbhai then he hangs himself. The rest of Zindi's household proceeds on a planned shopping expedition, but they are abused by uniformed men. Zindi who has anticipated something of the sort, shepherds the survivors, including Alu, onto a boat and they flee. Amitav Ghosh idealizes the circumstances of economic and political marginality in which the characters in Zindi's household live. These characters are displaced in one or another way. As Salman Rushdie in *Shame* characterizes the condition of migrants well: "All migrants leave their past behind, although some try to pack it into boundless and boxes-but on the journey something seeps out of the treasures mementos and photographs until even their owner fail to recognize them, because it is the fate of migrants to be stripped of history" (78). Alu and his companions have, like the migrants Rushdie describes, traveled light. They say little about the places and people they have left behind and make do with odd jobs and moments of fellowship that happen their way. Liberated from the repressive structure and narrative of the nation, they are stripped of its protection and comfort.

In this novel, Zindi's household contravenes the ideology of domesticity that prevailed in modern Europe and was recast nationalist ends in India in a separation of "home" (457) and "the World" (57). In the latter view the chaste middle class Indian woman was the guardian of national authenticity. This representation of woman as at once bearing the standard of cultural authenticity and being at home in the modern world is equally pronounced in diasporic immigrant communities in the twentieth century. The figure of Zindi, A large-bodied, rough-tongued, tough Egyptian migrant, could not be further removed from this ideal of the demure, respectable, chaste homemaker. Zindi, whose name is alive in Urdu, is the heart of the household –not as the modest, unblemished bearer of tradition but as

the big-hearted den mother, who bellies, cajoles wheels and deals to keep her family intact and afloat.

In *The Circle of Reason* the public business of contractual relationship and economic transaction is brought into the loosely familial private domain of Zindi's household, where there are continual references to labor and money. For example when neighbors gather, Zindi is quick to make a profit from the sale of tea. Zindi can not sustain her family from within, however and faced with their gnawing economic insecurity, she tries to buy a tailoring shop to run as a family business. Zindi refuses to betray the familial ties that the communal sharing of bread has created. When Jeevanbhai asks Zindi to provide information about Alu, she responds, "Police, I Suppose? No I can't You Know that's one thing I couldn't do them. Whatever happens in the future, in the past they all ate my bread and salt. They've become part of my flesh" (328).

Even as Zindi negotiates for the tailoring shop, the subaltern migrants who make up her household attempt to establish a utopian community that is far more transgressive than Zindi's ultimately compromises if reconstructed family. Trapped in the ruins of a shopping complex built of contaminated cement that has crumbled –an event that symbolizes the collapse of capital because of its rotten foundation, Alu has an epiphany. As he later explains to his companions Pasture's struggle against germs was spurred by a quest for purity, but this quest was frustrated because pasture was failed to discover the breeding ground of germs- Which according to Alu, is money , Alu then purposes, "We will drive money from the Ras, and without it we shall be happier, richer, more prosperous than ever before" (303). Inspired like Balaram by Pasteur, Alu is as zealous as his foster father had been in his mission to rid his community of germs. Inhabitants of Ras are to pool their earnings and jointly buy goods and services from the Souq through a designated agent and put an end to profit-making commerce in the Ras.

However police put the forcible end to a revolutionary project, when Alu and his companions leave the Ras and enter the town to spend their pooled earnings, uniformed men with guns and ambush them. The composite, diasporic community that migrants have forged beyond the repressive structures of postcolonial nations proves to be helpless to forces of capital and of police, forces that are global in scope. The presence of these forces is felt at this point as narrative attention shifts to the police, from whose perspective the reader learns Alu's inspiration and the planned shopping trip. The men who ambush Alu and his companions are employed by new regime that is now exploiting Al- Ghazira. With its newly discovered reserves of oil, Al Ghazira is exemplary of the workings of neocolonialism: We learn in one of then many peripheral stories that oil men from abroad have imprisoned the malik and have installed his American-educated brother as oil minister of public works.

When Alu and his friends challenge in even a mild way the economic terms of this arrangement by banding together as workers and consumers, the regime responds with a show of force. The fact that a crisis is precipitated by their shopping trip is itself telling –the residents of the Ras want to enter the market on their own terms, and that of course is not acceptable to the neocolonial ruler of Al-Ghazira. In their encounter with the police Alu's Friends are killed and the survivors are rounded up and deported. Alu himself escapes with Zindi, Kulfi and Boss, but is forced once again into migratory flight.

Dr. Mishra opposes Dr. Verma's plan to stage *Chitragada* not only on rationalist grounds, but also because he wishes to repeat the rousing socialist speech he has delivered on a similar occasion the year before, on the subjects of justice and equality. When he proposes to do the same once again, Dr. Verma challenges his political commitment and recalls past left political battles. She recalls Mishra's Father's comfortably self-serving left positions and suggests that Mishra's rhetoric is hollow. Her own father has lived by and suffered for his socialism. Ghosh here quarries the political stances of a comfortably well-off leftist

bourgeoisie. Mishra's socialist bombast contrasts with practical, loved socialism that Alu and his companions have adopted.

The divergence between bourgeois and subaltern articulation of the same projects or phenomenon is seen in finally in the representation of migration. With reference to Jyoti Das, who is an amateur ornithologist, is preoccupied with the migration of birds we can see the theme of migration explicitly raised. Alu has been forced to migrate to Al-Ghazira to get away from the police. Although Jyoti Das becomes increasingly alienated from his colleagues and ultimately abandons his pursuit and for a time travels with Alu and Zindi, his experience of migration is clearly represented as different from theirs. When the failed policeman runs out of funds in Al-Ghazira, he is able to obtain money by wire from an uncle in Dusseldorf. In the last pages of the novel, Jyoti Das buys a ticket with the intention of migrating to Germany. As he waves good-bye to Zindi and Alu, he exults in his freedom and prospect before him.

The pleasure of migration is conveyed in Das's perception of the landscape "dolphin racing along with the ferry, leaping, dancing, and standing on their tails...tranquil sky, the soaring birds, the sunlight, the sharpness of the clean sea, breeze and the sight of the huge rock growing in the distance" (457). This passage describes the possibilities open to the bourgeois migrant in euphoric terms. This sense of euphoria is contrasted to his feeling for his past "home" (457) signified as "Mockingly gray smudge hanging on the horizon" (457). He is able to turn back on the continents of defeat that he has left behind.

The subaltern migrants are much more defenseless and desperate. When they arrive in EI Oued, for example, Boss has a fever that has been untreated for ten days. On the way, they have passed through Egypt and have returned to Zindi's village, but she has been taunted and driven away. In the last passage of the novel, Alu, Zindi, and Boss, who comprises an



unlikely holy family of surviving subaltern migrants, experience a sense of resignation rather than exultation. They turn away from the Mediterranean panorama toward which Das faces:

But Boss was looking the other way, toward the Atlantic, and soon they were looking there, too, scanning the water. They saw nothing except sleepy, crawling oil-tankers. So, drowsily, warmed by the clear sunlight, they settled down to wait for Virat Singh and the ship that was to carry them home. (457)

This description shows a sense of lethargy and immobility that is the very opposite of the ebullience of Das's vision. Although the novel ends with "Hope is the beginning" (457) the reader is left with the strong sense that the bulk of hope lies with bourgeois migrants.

## Chapter 4: Conclusion

### Failure of Postcolonial Nation to Maintain Order and Prosperous Life of Citizen

Amitav Ghosh in this novel, *The Circle of Reason* presents the alternative transformative/utopian projects through characters and highlights the obstacles on the way of their projects. He explores the adverse effects of postcolonial rationality. Ghosh raises questions on the legacy of Enlightenment rationality in a postcolonial context. This novel critiques the repressive aspect of postcolonial government with a hopefulness of possibilities of postcolonial modernity. It critiques at both philosophical and social levels and being together with emancipatory aspect of Enlightenment reason. Ghosh imagines the way of overruling repressive postcolonial modernity by the alternative transformative projects that can really change impoverished society. This possibility is conveyed by figure of weaving. Weaving figure which emphasizes the imbricatedness of people is presented as pragmatic and practical reason. This novel also presents explores the forceful migration. It presents the experience of an escapee for the repressive element of modern postcolonial rationalities and social forms.

This novel presents the harsher condition of subaltern migrants (such as of Alu, Zindi, Baby boss) and libratory dimension of bourgeois migrants (ASP Jyoti Das). Ghosh presenting complicity between discourse of reason and the apparatus of police in postcolonial India proves repressive aspect of postcolonial rationality has no principled and pragmatic value. This rationality gives suffering to the people. Ghosh depicts the unsuccessful attempts by subaltern people to attain the domain of civil-society. The victims are state's rationalities are unwillingly stimulated, who have no interest in maintaining order in the society. From the presentation of ASP Jyoti Das whom Ghosh presents as bourgeoisie migrants, reader can know the unwillingness. The transformative projects of people are destroyed from the repressive force of police. Balaram's attempt to transform impoverished village with the

establishment of a school having department of pure reason and abstract reason is destroyed by the brutal force. Innocent people like Alu are suffered being falsely accused as terrorist and compelled to be a fugitive. Ghosh in this novel presents the hybrid and confused status of postcolonial people in post-independent India in which colonial regimes are deeply rooted in culture, religion education and other state rationalities. Ghosh makes believe reader in a statement that it takes long time for the remedy of cultural invasion. Postcolonial people in post-independent India want to do things for the improvement of society but previous British furthered culture and structure and structures in their mind come as barrier and confusing forces on their projects. From the various characters of novel he shows that post-independent people think them powerful and independent but power is somewhere in the other place which they are unable to know. Even being independent they are not free. They are unable to know their status and their ability is not clear.

Society can not be improved from postcolonial rationalities, people are suffering more, people's transformative projects do not get any assistance rather obstructions come on the way, innocent people like Alu are falsely accused as terrorist, they are compelled to be fugitive, postcolonial rationality has no sense, no reason, no principled and pragmatic value and what takes postcolonial rationalities of India into this condition is British furthered structures and rationalities of colonial period.

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