

**Tribhuvan University**

**Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason*: A Study in Diaspora**

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This thesis entitled "Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason: A Study in Diaspora*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Dipak Bahadur Bista has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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### **Abstract**

*The Circle of Reason* is a story of three irrepressible people trying to find order in an anarchic world. The story centres on Alu, an orphan enlisted by his foster father as a soldier in his crusade against the forces of myth and unreason. When a terrorist bomb blast ravages their village, Alu flees, pursued by a misguided police officer through Calcutta to Goa and on to a trawler that runs illegal aliens to Africa. So, it is an effort to disclose the problems resulting from diasporic situation. The people migrated from one country to another, though they are also a part of the society, have to face several problems due to various reasons. The problems they confront in foreign lands compel them to recollect a memory or to make a vision or myth about their original homeland. Finally, they believe that the ancestral home is a place of eventual return when the time is right. So, this research endeavours to depict the struggle of diasporic identity and the people for their stable desire for their homeland.

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## **I. Introduction : Ghosh and *The Circle of Reason***

The acclaimed Indian writer, Amitav Ghosh, has shown how the people are compelled to migrate from one place to another when the country itself is in great turmoil, political instability and economic ruin. The writer shows the commencement of migration of the protagonist, Alu, an orphan of eight who goes to live in Lalpukur, a fictional town in west Bengal with his uncle Balaram. This first set of migration occurred in the aftermath of the partition of 1947 and later the protagonist, Alu, is again forced to desert his own land to the oil-rich middle east. This shows the effect during the Bangladesh war of 1971. That's how the novel, *The Circle of Reason*, opens with a description of how the people are forced to migrate from one place to another and from one country to foreign land. It also shows that the people are affected when the country itself is in great war and in political instability. Same thing happens when the protagonist, Alu, comes to live with his uncle Balaram in Lalpurar, which was already settled by refugees from East Pakistan after the formation of Bangladesh in 1971. So, any kinds of activities occurring there would be watched actively by the local government. So, due to the extraordinary activities shown by his uncle, Balaram, innocent Alu was branded as most wanted terrorist and chased away to foreign land. His uncle and Aunt are trapped inside the burning home and they lost their lives.

Next, Alu can't live in India and is compelled to flee away to foreign land illegally in a ship called Mariamme. As he approaches to Al-Ghazira, he works as a labourer and resumes his craft of weaving, but he is accidentally buried alive when a new concrete building in which he is working as a labourer collapses. So, the writer has once more shown the miserable condition of the protagonist in foreign land where most of the characters there in Al-Ghazira have been spending painful life. They can't

escape from there. For example, Mast Ram, Professor Samuel, Kulfi and Abusa who lost their jobs due to different problems such as : language problem, misunderstanding, caught by police administration for illegal settlement etc. As a result, they create within themselves a memory, myth, vision about their original homeland; they remember the roti which was sufficient for them to eat with cold water of their own homeland, of their own Megana river. The writer has created such condition due to which they can't remove the vistas and imagination of their motherland. The writer makes them recollect the warm lap of their own mother. Not only the lap but also the slap of one's own mother was affectionate to them. That's why for them, home remains a site of indelible present and impossible return. Whatever they do in foreign land, how much they earn there, is not important. They know that the ancestral home is a place of eventual return, when the time is right. Such condition has been shown in *The Circle of Reason* by Amitav-Ghosh.

Then, Zindi (a migrated woman), who is running a boarding house there in Al-Ghazira is tired of seeing the condition of the labourers who refuge under her roof. She muses, "But where does the money come from ?" (219). They face some obstacles even there. That's why once again they migrate to Algeria where they meet a helpful Indian woman, Dr. Vurma, who is in search of an Indian girl to act in a play Chitragada. She meets Kulfi as her heroine of dream. But in the course of performing the play, Kulfi died due to heart attack. After this incident, all the characters know the reality of life and they are even forced to increase their desires of home for eventual return. In this way the writer has proved that the diasporic people are living their lives in longing for a place and only through fragments of memory they can create imaginary homelands.

Finally, it can be seen that Ghosh has mainly shown the sorrowful lives of the migrant people from India and other countries in Al-Ghazira. They are suffering from double consciousness. They are left only with some vistas of their homeland with the fragment of memory of their birth place. So, what is more significant about this novel is that Alu, the protagonist, and most of the characters in the novel, are exiled as refugees and as labours from the very beginning of the novel. They are trapped in multi-cultural society and cannot escape from the everyday pain of survival. So, they dwell in memory of their motherland which haunts them time and again.

Ghosh's works draw heavily upon the character, tradition and dichotomies of his native land. Yet his protagonists and themes often extend beyond India's actual boundaries, most notably toward the middle east and Great Britain. Through this discourse the works expose the cross-cultural ties between India and her former colonial ruler as well as with her kindred neighbours. Ghosh, who has travelled abroad extensively and received a Ph.D. from Oxford University, has been hailed by critics as one of a new generation of cosmopolitan Indian intellectuals writing in English who are forging a contemporary literary metier. His first two novels have been compared to the work of fellow Indian expatriate writer Salman Rushdie, while other scholars have commented on the similarities between Ghosh's narrative style and Indian and Arabic Folk tales.

Ghosh's writing reflects the recent concern of anthropologists with the porosity of cultural boundaries. In contrast with the classic view, which posits culture as a self-contained whole made up of coherent patterns, culture can arguably be conceived as a more porous array of intersections where distinct processes cross from within and beyond its borders. The characters in Ghosh's novels do not occupy discrete culture, but dwell and travel in cultural spaces that flow across borders. Yet, like Edward

Said's *Orientalism*, these novels also remain bound up in the notion of a universal humanity, they postulate a global theory of the colonial subject. Ghosh's ethnography *In an Antique Land* follows this trajectory. Influenced by his association with the Subaltern studies scholars, Ghosh returns to a rigorous mode of empirical research to recover the historically situated subjectivities of a network of traders and their slaves operating between North Africa and South-West India during middle age. This cultural space is a vast, borderless region with its own hybrid languages and practices which circulate without national or religious boundaries. It means that the subaltern consciousness remains a trace rather than a presence.

In 1986 Amitav Ghosh published *The Circle of Reason* and staked his claim as a major voice in postcolonial letters. Here he introduced his readers not just to the picaresque adventures of the potato-shape-headed protagonists, Alu, but to a hybrid storytelling style that mystifyingly wraps the time of history and space of everyday reality in and around subjective experiences. Ghosh won France's prestigious Prix Medici Etranger for *The Circle of Reason*, then penned the beautifully wrought, *The Shadow Lines* (1988), he lived in Delhi at the time when Indira Gandhi was assassinated and Sikhs were slaughtered into a story of a Bengali family ripped apart during the India/Pakistan partition. Here, Ghosh writes outside the box, mixing a gritty realism with a surrealist flair to map the brutal consequences of cultural and political structures that restrict identity and the imagination. As he simultaneously moves his readers through twelfth century Egyptian deserts and a contemporary Britain in *In an Antique Land* (1994), the double-helix narrative effect crisscrosses borders to open up new cartographies of post-colonial identity and imaginings.

In 1996 Ghosh made several best-seller lists and picked up the Arthur C. Clarke Award for his science-fiction thriller, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, a novel that

takes readers through labyrinths of time and place to unravel a mystery of purloined identity. In Ghosh's most ambitious novel to date, *The Glass Palace* (2000), he employs his trademark helical, quasi-historical/cultural voice to sink the reader deeply into the recreated cultural memory of twentieth-century Burma. Here, a diverse cast of characters – royal, working-class, and bourgeois Indians, Bengalis, and Burmese – struggle to come to terms with new ways of living and identifying in a world violently shaken by grand historical drama like that of the British and Japanese invasions.

Ghosh's novels blur boundaries between genres – fiction and archival fieldwork – to complicate postcolonial identity. To this end, he also sidesteps inventing postcolonial characters cut from a victim-cookie-cutter mold, exploring the complex shading between the good and bad. He breathes life even into figures whom other writers might discard as abominable. In *The Glass Palace*, for example, he delves deeply into the complex psychology of those characters who, like their factual counterparts such as Ghosh's own father, fought for the British army to violently suppress their own and neighbouring south Asian peoples. Ghosh's fiction meshes time, space, and storytelling style to chart the vast spectrum of human experience and its various pathways of survival and self preservation.

### **Critics on *The Circle of Reason***

The themes of Amitav Ghosh's novels are generally the role of the individual in the broad sweep of political events, the dubious nature of borders, whether between nations and peoples or between one literary genre and another, the role of memory in one's recovery of identity in the march of time, the role of the artist in society, and the importance of narrative in shaping history. Due to this, his works including *The Circle of Reason* began to attract the attention of many critics. This novel has been both respected and berated in numerous essays and reviews. Critics have tried to analyze

the novel from different perspectives. Several critical interpretations range from the issues of riots and nationalism to the relationship between the countries and his characters. Since it is impossible to include all the responses to the novel in such a small research, an attempt will be made to present some representative responses selected from the huge pile of criticism.

The portrayal of the imperialists' simplistic interpretation of disease as 'an evil', an enemy, a challenge that could only be overcome by brute force has a resonance for the reader of *The Circle of Reason*. In the novel, Balaram attempts to eradicate disease from his village by the application of scientific reason. However, his laudable Pasteurian aim of disinfecting the village with carbolic acid becomes subsumed in his irrational hatred for his employer. Carbolic acid becomes a weapon of self-interest in the violent power struggle between the two men, just as tropical medicine - despite its importance as a propaganda tool in the rhetoric of the 'civilizing mission' was in practice designed with the health of colonial administrators and soldiers in mind.

Mobilizing the theories of Michael Foucault, these scholars - who include David Arnold, Deepak Kumar and Ashis Nandy - seek to situate reason in a particular time and place. Foucault, for example, writes:

What reason perceives as its necessity, or rather, what different forms of rationality offer as their necessary being, can perfectly well be shown to have a history [...] which is not to say, however, that these forms of rationality were irrational. It means that they reside on a base of human practice and human history, and that since these things have been made, they can be unmade. (qtd. In Khair 37)

In addition, Foucault's writing frequently contends that discourses, including the discourse of a supposedly 'universal' form of reason, are not accessible to all. He argues that only certain members of privileged groups, such as the western male bourgeoisie, are given the right to use these discourses: "the property of discourse is in fact confined [...] to a particular group of individuals" (68).

Gayatri Spivak's reminder of the inevitability of representation - "there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself, the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation" (qtd. In Singh 10).

However, Amitav Ghosh's novel *The Circle of Reason* is taken different critics, Shyam Agarwalla takes this novel as "Magic Realism" (177). G.J.V. Prasad takes it as "the unfolding of a Raga" (101). Frank Schulze - Engler takes the book as "literature in the Global Ecumene of Modernity" (373). Yumna Siddiqui takes it as "police and postcolonial Rationality" (175) and Sujala Singh takes it as "knowledge and power" (6). But, I am interested to research in unexplored area of the book. So I found the novel as a site of indelible present and impossible return when someone is out of one's own border where they can create their imaginary homeland through fragments of memory. They are condemned to live with double consciousness.

The present research work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of the present study, an introduction to Amitav Ghosh, a brief outline of *The Circle of Reason* and critical review of literature. The second chapter presents Diaspora as literary tool to interpret the text. Third chapter will analyze the text at a considerable length. It will sort out some of the extracts from the text as an evidence to prove the hypothesis of the study. The fourth chapter is the conclusion of this research.

## II. Diaspora

Originally applied to the condition of the Jewish people living outside Palestine, 'diaspora', with the development of postcolonial theory, has been extended to cover a range of different cultural and ethnic groups held together by shared cultural or religious commitments and having some sense of 'exile' from a place or state of origin and belonging. Within cultural studies, the term is used to describe a dynamic network of communities without the stabilizing allusion to an original homeland or essential identity. Diaspora has been used in the studies of race and ethnicity to describe a range of cultural affiliations connecting the groups dispersed – voluntarily or involuntarily – across national borders. To live in diaspora is to experience the trauma of exile, migration, displacement, rootlessness and the life in minority group haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back. Rushdie, in this regard, argues, "I've been in minority group all my life – a member of an Indian Muslim family in Bombay, then of a 'mohajir' – migrant – family in Pakistan and now as a British Asian" (4). Creating an "imaginary homelands" that he belongs to, through writing, he hopes to build bridges of understanding by articulating a grievance.

According to Radhakrishnan, "In the diaspora, immigrants suppress their ethnicity in the name of pragmatism and opportunism, initially, then assimilate actively hiding their distinct ethnicity to be successful in the New World and lastly seeks the hyphenated integration of ethnic identity with national identity – such as Asian American – under conditions that do not privilege the 'national' at the expense of the ethnic" (208). However, the question is raised about the efficacy of the politically correct term like 'Asian American'/'African American' to cover the identification of person – South Asian of Hindu heritage born in Trinidad, raised in

Trinidad and living in England like Naipaul. So, invention of such identity through language is never meant to be a culmination rather only a movement toward transformative change.

People in the diaspora have been forced by cultural displacement to accept the provisional nature of all truths. Their identities are at once plural and partial. According to Radhakrishna, "The diaspora has created rich possibilities of understanding different histories. And these histories have taught us that identities, selves, traditions and natures do change with travels" (210). So, the proposition can be drawn that identities, perspectives and definitions change when people move. Diaspora is not infertile space to occupy in spite of the people's feeling of being torn apart between root culture and adopted culture and the around to be shifting and ambiguous. As Stuart Hall argues:

The diaspora experience [...] is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (119-20)

Thus, the notion of a 'diasporic identity' has been adopted by many writers as a positive affirmation of their hybridity.

Identity is much debated when it is in crisis. The home country and the adopted country could become merely 'ghostly' locations, and the result can only be a double depoliticization. Appropriate example is Mr. Mahendra Chaudhary in Fiji. Though, he has been living in Fiji as a citizen for a long time and was elected as prime-minister, he could not be accepted for that post by the host country because of

his Indianness. It is the miserable condition of the diasporic people outside their homeland. They are torn between two identities.

James Clifford mentions, "Diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment" (4). But he adds, "the term that once described Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest workers, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community" (5). This is the domain of shared and discrepant meanings, adjacent maps and histories, that we need to sort out and specify as we work our way into a comparative, intercultural studies.

It is now widely understood that the old localizing strategies-by bounded community, by organic culture, by region, by centre and periphery-may obscure as much as they reveal. Diaspora makes separate places effectively a single community through the continuous circulation of people, money, goods, and information, though it (diaspora) usually presupposes longer distances and a separation more like exile. Diasporas also connect multiple communities of a dispersed population. Systematic border crossings may be part of this interconnection, but multi-local diaspora cultures are not necessarily defined by a specific geopolitical boundary. Then, diasporic forms of longing, memory, and (dis) identification are shared by a broad spectrum of minority and migrant population. And dispersed peoples, once separated from homelands by vast oceans and political barriers, increasingly find themselves in border relationship with the old country.

Clifford again discusses a variety of collective experiences in terms of their similarity and difference from a defining model. He defines diasporas as follows:

Expatriate minority communities that are dispersed from an original "center" to at least two "peripheral" places, that maintain a memory,

vision, or myth about their original homeland, that believe they are not and perhaps can not be fully accepted by their host country, that see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right, that are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland, and of which the groups consciousness and solidarity are "importantly defined" by this continuing relationship with the homeland. (83-84)

In terms of this definition we can conclude the features of diasporas : a history of dispersal, myths/memories of the homeland, alienation in the host (bad host) country, desire for eventual return, ongoing support of the homeland, and a collective identity importantly defined by this relationship.

Diaspora is different from travel (though it works through travel practices) in that it is not temporary. It involves dwelling maintaining communities, having collective home away from home. Diaspora discourse articulates, or bends together, both roots and routes to construct what Gilroy describes as alternate public sphere, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference. Diaspora cultures are not separatist though they may have separatist or irredentist moments. The history of Jewish diaspora communities shows selective accommodation with the political, cultural, commercial, and everyday life forms of "host" societies. The black diaspora cultures currently being articulated in postcolonial Britain is concerned to struggle for different ways to be "British" – ways to stay and be different, to be British and something else complexly related to Africa and the Americas, to shared histories of enslavement, racist subordination, cultural survival, hybridization, resistance, and political rebellion. Thus the term diaspora is a signifier, not simply of Transnationality and movement but of political struggles to define the local as distinctive community,

in historical contexts of displacement. The simultaneous strategies of community maintenance and interaction combine the discourses and skills of what Vijaya Mishara has termed Diasporas of Exclusivism and Diasporas of the Border. Whatever being argued about diaspora, the concept diaspora is aptly used to describe dispersed intellectuals, expatriates or exiles, in postcoloniality.

### **Indian Diaspora**

The Indian diaspora is a generic term to describe the people who migrated from territories that are currently within the borders of the republic of India. It also refers to their descendents. The diaspora is currently estimated to number approximately twenty million composed of "NRIS" (Indian Citizens Not Residing in India) and "PIOS" (Person of Indian Origin who have acquired the citizenship of some other country), the diaspora covers practically every part of the world. It numbers more than a million each in eleven countries while as many as twenty two countries have concentration of at least a hundred thousands ethnic Indians. The diaspora is very special to India. Residing in distant lands, its members have succeeded spectacularly in their chosen profession by dint of their single minded dedication and hard work. What is more, they have retained their cultural, emotional and spiritual links with the country of their origins.

The Indian diaspora today constitutes an important and in some respects, unique force in world culture. The origins of the modern Indian diaspora lie mainly in the subjugation of Indian by the British and its incorporation into the British Empire. Indians were taken over as indentured labour to far flung parts of the empire in the nineteenth-century. So, the modern Indian population of Fiji, Mauritius, Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam, Malaysia, South Africa, Srilanka and other places attest in their own peculiar ways. Over two million Indian men fought on behalf of the empire in

numerous wars, including the Boer war and the two world wars and some remained behind to claim the land on which they had fought as their own. As if in emulation of their ancestors, many Gujarati traders once again left east Africa in large numbers in the early part of the twentieth century. Finally in the post world war II period, the dispersal of Indian labour and professionals has been a nearly world wide phenomenon.

From the sixteenth century in Iran, Afghanistan, central Asia, and Russia existed a large diaspora of Indian merchants in the large cities and even in the rural areas of these countries. The diaspora numbered as many as thirty-five thousand individuals. Most were agents of Indian firms. So many of these firms were based in the city of Multan, in modern Pakistan, that they were widely referred to as "Multani" before the nineteenth century, when many firms relocated to Shikarpur in Sind, and their agents began to be described as "Shikarpuri". Agents received extensive training in commercial techniques in their home town before being given advances of goods and cash and sent off to one of the many diaspora communities. Normally, their families stayed behind, providing a sort of informal surety for their good behaviour.

In the host countries, the merchants normally lived with other Indian merchants, often in special Indian caravanserais. David Christian argues, "It was their clear cultural separation that helped them maintain their distinctive financial and commercial role in the host societies and negotiate effectively with local rulers" (qtd. In James 1). The huge volume of trade in India and the extensive Indian experience in handling rural credit explains why they were so successful in their host countries, playing a crucial role not only as traders but also as suppliers of credit in both urban and rural areas. The important financial services they supplied are one more reason why they were usually well protected by local rulers. David argues, "The key to

Indian trading success was the monetization of the Indian economy, a process accelerated by invasions from the North and the creation of mainly Muslim governments determined to exact tax revenues, as much as possible, in cash" (qtd. In James 4).

The Indian population has had a global migration history. Since 1834, Indians have migrated to widespread places in the world. The British, during their colonial rule in India, had also taken Indians to their African colonies, where they formed part of an indenture system. This form of servitude which occurred during colonial times has been considered to be another name for slavery. Although "in India, crossing the seas was prohibited by the sacred Hindu scriptures, "in spite of this restriction, mass migration resulted in "nearly twenty million people settled among seventy countries. The colonization of India opened the doors for new migration opportunities and Indians availed themselves. Some, like Dadabhai Naoroji even became a member of parliament in 1892, while the British Indian Army fought in Britain's imperial wars- Forty Victoria crosses were awarded to its soldiers between 1912 and 1947.

Mainstream economic migration of Indians to the United Kingdom started taking place during the 1950s. The new states of India and Pakistan were then suffering from fragile economies and man-power exports were beneficial to them. On the other hand, Britain was desperate to receive manpower from its former colonies for its own development. Over the decades many migrant groups settled in Britain. However, the Indian migrant group became one of the most important non-European groups to settle in Britain. First, they were highly developed culturally and satisfied the needs of their community. Secondly, they made important contributions to Britain economically. Thirdly, the Indians migrants have also made significant monetary

contributions to the economy of India. Although mainly economical reasons, they were instrumental in embedding Indian migrants within British society.

Diasporas from various regions settled in the Western countries have become very important groups due to their levels of development. These levels of development are judged in three ways. First, this can emanate from the composition of the group and the extent of their labour and self-sufficiency. The division of labour relates to how much they can satisfy the needs of their communities-as they want it. From this perspective one can categorize their level of developments as "high" or "low". Second, if the level of development is high, then such diasporas will have more access and influence within their Country of Migration (COM). If the diaspora cannot exercise any influence in the COM, this represents a low development of the diaspora itself. Third, if the level of development is high, diasporas can also attract the attention of the governments of the Country of Origins (COO). Therefore they become helpful in achieving the agenda of their COO.

According to the above criteria of diaspora developments, the Indian diaspora which had begun to migrate from India after 1947 to Britain did not at first bring about real achievements. The situation changed during the 1980s. There was reason for this. The Indian diaspora was comprised mainly of villages and individuals working as labourers in industrial factories and other low-paid areas of employment. During the 1970s, Indians also arrived from the former African colonies of Britain. They were not poverty-ridden but well-educated, middle-class Hindu (as well as Muslim and Sikh) professionals and businessmen from Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and Malawi. They were second-generation migrants-the first generation having migrated from India to Africa. They had worked with the British colonial authorities, and established their trustworthiness with them but had not identified with the African

population at all. During the post-independence period, the Africanization policies of the new African states resented the Indian presence because of their high level of economic development and the social distance which existed between the two groups.

The Indian population in Britain, according to the statistics of 1999-2000, is more than 492000. Approximately 40 percent of the population lives around London. Other segments of the population are settled in the East Midlands and Manchester. The predominant group of the second migration were mainly Hindu Gujaratis who settled in the urban areas of Britain particularly in Leicester and north London. They came as whole family units, often sending a single member first to establish a base and make links with extended family members already in residence. Once settled they began to reproduce organizations and practices familiar to them from their time in Africa.

The second migration brought a major change in the development of Hinduism in Britain along with experience and skills relevant to community development and the format of religious institutions. This led to the establishment of many Hindu temples, community organizations, and charitable trusts to safeguard their religion and culture. Many of these organizations, like the Confederation of Gujarati Organizations, Maharashtra Manda, Punjabi Unity Forum, and the Hindu Cultural Society were generally known as community organizations. However, the Indian migrants should not be considered a monolithic community as there were many "divergent trends" among them. Their different histories of migration and different ethnicities separated them even within their settlement in Britain. For example, a number of Hindus of Gujarati origins were settled in the area Balham and Tooting, a significant number of Hindu Punjabis were settled in Southall. Each one had a different history. Furthermore, among the Gujaratis in Balham, community refers to a

linguistic commonality among those in that geographic area. For the Punjabis in Southall, linguistic commonality combines with residential concentration and shared religious activities so that community is truly evident socially and geographically. But it must be said that whatever their difference, they did have one thing in common: they were proud of their COO-India.

As time progressed, and as their economic conditions improved, their social networks expanded. They were quick to learn how to use the resources of the public service facilities such as town halls and other public premises for their festivals. While some of these organizations were opened privately by various groups, the Indian High Commission also supported the spread of Indian culture in Britain by opening the Nehru Centre. The centre provided a venue for talks, exhibitions, cultural evenings and a number of other activities to create to raise the image and awareness of India. On an individual level the achievements of the Indians themselves are commendable. In Britain there were approximately thirty Indian professors in various universities engaged in disciplines such as computer science, engineering, biochemistry, aerospace, and numerous medical doctors and nurses.

### **III. *The Circle of Reason: A Study in Diaspora***

*The Circle of Reason* is the complex tale of a young Indian boy and his adventures both in India and abroad. Ghosh divides the work into three sections, comprising the three main phases of the protagonist's life. Each of these phases also parallels a trio of concepts: reason, passion, and death, characteristic of ancient Indian literature and philosophy. The novel begins as the orphaned Alu, who possesses an extraordinary large and misshapen head, begins a new life with his aunt and uncle in the town of Lalpukur. Ghosh weaves into the narrative the uncle's eccentricities and fascination with scientific experimentation as well as the minor transgressions of other inhabitants of Alu's new village. The boy becomes an apprentice weaver, a device which also mirrors the extravagant storytelling within the work. Ghosh embarks upon secondary storylines which are developed and later woven back into the main plot.

*The Circle of Reason* is a huge, ambitious novel with a crowd of characters and themes, set in a number of countries: India, Yemen, Egypt, and Algeria. It is like an immense pot into which scores of more or less random ingredients have been thrown. Some of those ingredients are those that make good books. There is the conflict between reason and superstition, mind and feeling, criminality and the law, the collective and the individual.

War and refugees from East Pakistan transform the tenor of village life. While Balaram, inspired by Pasteur, attempts to ward off germs by dousing the village in carbolic acid. Bhudeb Roy, the rich landlord in the village sells bits of the plane that falls from the sky for commercial gain. Against social and class expectations, Alu trains to be a weaver under Shombhu Debnath, a talented, alcoholic weaver. Balaram sets up the Pasteur School of Reason with two departments, the Department of Pure

Reason (elementary reading, writing, arithmetic and lectures in science and technology) and the Department of Practical Reason (weaving and tailoring). Bhudeb Roy sees this as threatening the established and feudal norms of the village, brands Balaram a terrorist and the school is burnt down. After the eccentric and passionate idealism of the first section, homeless and orphaned twice over, Alu becomes not only an immigrant but also a 'wanted terrorist' and is pursued by the Assistant superintendent of police, Jyoti Das, as he travels from Calcutta to Kerala to the fictional town of Al-Ghazira in the Middle East, to Algeria. The rest of the novel is about the people he encounters and the shifting, provisional communities of migrants to which he belongs.

*The Circle of Reason* traces the journeys of destitute migrant within the subcontinent and then onwards, not to the multicultural capitals of the west, but to the oil-rich Middle East. The first set of migrants we hear about arrive in Lalpukar, where the eight-year-old, newly orphaned, Alu, arrives to live with his uncle Balaram and aunt Mayadevi. These migrations are precipitated by a double displacement, the first in the aftermath of the partition of 1947, and the second during the Bangladesh war of 1971.

Vomited out of their native soil years ago in another carnage, and dumped hundreds of miles away, they had no anger left. Their only passion was memory, a longing for a land where the green was greener, the rice whiter, the fish bigger than boats; where the rivers' names sang like Megh Malhar on a rainy day the Meghna, the Doleshshori, the Kirtinosh, the Shitolokhkha, the majestic Arialkha, wider than the horizon [ . . . ] Lalpukar could fight no war because it was damned to a hell of longing. (59)

This memory that traverses boundaries and dwells in nostalgia is a memory of "their native soil" which has "vomited" them out; it is a longing for a place that could have been home. This all happens when they migrate to Lalpukar after the partition of Bangladesh in 1971. Later, the intensity of this yearning is accentuated by a depiction of the horrors of the material conditions which the incoming refugees encounter:

He saw people eating surrounded by their children's shit; the tin roofs were black with flies, in the lanes rats wouldn't yield to human feet, there were no drains and no clean water, and the air was stagnant with germs, pregnant with every known disease. (61)

This is the miserable condition of the refugees settled in Lalpukar. It is their compulsion that is prevailing with the remembrance of their native land, they can neither go back nor can spend happy life their in foreign land. Most of them belonged originally to the remote district of Noakhali, in the far east of Bengal close to Burma. They had emigrated to India in a slow steady trickle in the years after east Bengal became East Pakistan.

Balaram himself is a diasporic person because he was born in Dhaka, then the capital of East Bengal, now of Bangladesh, an inhabitant of Lalpukar at present. When he (Balaram) decides to make the young Alu a weaver, he tells him a history of the technology of weaving that evokes cultural instability and borrowings across borders. According to Balaram, "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 the world together" (55). When there is cultural instability and borrowings across borders, that shows the beginning of diaspora. The loom alone can not travel the world, because this new technology needs

someone to spread it all over post-colonial world. Balaram develops the idea that culture is a process of circulation that has nothing to do with national borders:

Indian cloth was found in the graves of the Pharaohs. Indian soil is strewn with cloth from China. The whole of the ancient world hummed with the cloth trade. The silk Route from China, running through central Asia and Persia to the ports of the Mediterranean and from there to the markets of Africa and Europe, bound continents together for more centuries than we can count .... All through those centuries cloth, in its richness, and variety, bound the Mediterranean to Asia, India to Africa, the Arab world to Europe in equal, bountiful trade.  
(55-6)

The history of weaving, then, has no single national root, it follows complex international routes. It is not a 'traditional' craft opposed in a binary sense to western science, but another part of Diaspora that unravels the distinction between orient and occident.

Yet Ghosh's understanding of these routes is also resistant to the framework of postmodern inter-cultural studies in which James Clifford attempts to place it. Clifford's border crossings run the risk of decontextualizing specific local instance. The passengers in his transit lounge of culture are caught up in a seemingly universal postmodern condition that is innocent of specific economic determinants. Ghosh, by contrast, understands that the routes of international trade are over determined by economic forces, that they tell a history of imperial exploitation. Balaram continues his lecture on the history of the loom by placing it in the context of British imperial trade:

Lancashire poured out its waterfalls of cloth, and [the] once [. . .] peaceful Englishmen [. . .] of Calcutta [. . .] turned their trade into a garotte to make every continent safe for the cloth of Lancashire, strangling the very weavers and techniques they had crossed oceans to discover. (57)

As the image of the garotte suggests, the trade routes may cut across national borders, but they are infected by blood and over determined by the asymmetries of economic and military power.

Another character, Shombhu Debnath, is appointed to teach weaving to Alu who opens his mouth with so many words while teaching weaving. "Tangali words, stewed with Noakhali words, salted with Naboganj words, boiled up with English (picked up who knows where in his years of wandering). Words, words, this village teems with words, yet too few to speak of the world and the machine" (73). This mobile character symbolizes a diasporic person over there in Lalpukar. He has full experiences of different places from where he could succeed to learn so many languages. So, this can be provided that he is a migrant person who has still vistas of his bygone days in foreign land.

After the destruction of the village, Alu himself is forced to leave the safe enclosure of his uncle and aunt's home in Lalpukar and embark on a journey of migration and escape aboard a ship called Mariamma with a motley crew and passengers. Regarding this devastation, it can be read as an allegory about the destruction of traditional village life by the modernizing influx of western culture and the subsequent displacement of non-European peoples by imperialism. This is the main cause of the commencement of diaspora. In this world of globalization, the people challenge the idea of territorially bound nation states. So they are crossing the

borders in search of money, commodities, ceaselessly chasing each other around the world.

Karthamma, a woman in labour aboard the *Mariamamma* refuses to give birth unless the adequate 'form' is signed which she assumes will guarantee a better life for her unborn son by providing him access to legal rights and citizenship and thus an escape from her debilitating poverty. Kulfi, a fellow-traveler, imagines the social space Karthamma comes from and wonders at her aspirations,

What I can't understand is how she got these ideas. Kahan se? she's so uneducated she does not even know when a baby's been stuck inside her, but she still wants to sign forms. It's not like she's from Bangalore or some big city or something. You can tell as soon as you see her that she does eight-anna jobs in ricefields and things like that. And here she is, convinced that if she signs a form her baby will get cars and houses and all that. Where do these villagers get these ideas? (177)

For Karthamma, the power of the written word provides a legal guarantee for legitimacy. But legality is not shown as phantasmatic merely for a poor illiterate immigrant woman who wants a better life for her son. The "intelligence" that Jyoti Das, the Assistant commissioner of police and representative of the state, has compiled on Alu's alleged terrorism looks like this:

There appeared to be no rational grounds to substantiate the principal source's belief that a retired schoolmaster in his village was being used by a foreign-trained agent of some kind, disguised as a weaver to run a network of extremists. (126-27)

This dossier becomes the prime justification for Jyoti Das to compile a case against Alu and his terrorist network and chase him halfway across the world. So legality,

whether in the chase for a made-up terrorist or in the desire of a poor immigrant women who wants a better life for her son, is shown as phantasmatic. What sets them apart is their relationship to power and representation. Jyoti Das is not an evil enforcer of the law or a character who occupies his position of privilege comfortably. Yet he follows the dictates of an administrative machinery which operates through excess, dependent on an intricate system of internal codes knowable only to itself, marked by greed, vanity and small-mindedness. In his mission to protect the interests of the nation state, he becomes an agent in a bureaucratic machine responsible for the deaths of several innocent people. So, the social force of representation is not necessarily proportional to [its] truth value. Karthamma's desire on the other hand, to sign her son into visibility becomes a means of seeking redress from the invisible state apparatuses in whose scripts she has not yet been legitimated/made legible.

Jyoti Das's quest for Alu, the suspect, also makes him a global traveler. On his first 'posting' abroad, sitting next to a motor mechanic from Gujarat who worries about medical benefits, accommodation and security, Das muses: "Foreign places are all alike in that they are not home" (266). Yet a spurious identification of "not home" experiences is hardly identical for Jyoti Das and the motor mechanic. Both, however, can be seen as constituting the deterritorialized, diasporic "mobile populations" who challenge the idea of territorially bound national states according to Arjun Appadurai: "It is in the fertile ground of deterritorialization, in which money, commodities, and persons are involved in ceaselessly chasing each other around the world" (qtd. In Singh 15). In this ceaselessly chasing universe of money, commodities, and persons, where viewers and images are in simultaneous circulation, Appadurai rarely pauses to examine the differences between labour and capital flows. In the heady whirls of

movement that he records, Appadurai's methodology relies almost breathlessly on the compiling of list:

One major fact that accounts for strains in the union of nation and state is that the nationalist genie, never perfectly contained in the bottle of the territorial state, is now itself diasporic. Carried in the repertoire of increasingly mobile populations of refugees, tourists, guest workers, trans-national intellectuals, scientists and illegal aliens, it is increasingly unrestrained by ideas of spatial boundary and territorial sovereignty. (qtd. In Singh 161)

It is not that Appadurai indulges in some simplistic celebration of the imaginative potential of immigrants and diasporas or suggests that the conditions of existence of people in the heterogeneous list he compiles are identical-but the list-making exercise itself refuses to go into the differences of legality or illegality, wealth or poverty that immigrants have to face.

Rather than Appadurai's bustling movers traveling between various "scapes", for the immigrants in *The Circle of Reason*, mobility is more often the result of forced uprooting rather than voluntary movement, the mobile individual is more often superfluous rather than autonomous. Not just the process of travel, but the conditions of travel are foregrounded as the novel narrates multiple precarious subaltern itineraries. Aware of their status as scapegoats in a global economy, immigrants in the novel are realists who bond not merely with surrogate familial ties but through a pragmatic realization of mutual economic needs. In Zindi's boarding-house where different nationalities coexist, a cohesive imagined community can function only as a viable economic unit. The novel also depicts the tenuousness and fragility of immigrant communities, marred as they are by death, violence, disappearance and

everyday acts of jealousy. Such example is Mast Ram who slips out with the passport and documents of Abusa straight to the police and tells them how Abusa's work permit has lapsed a year ago. The police catches Abusa next morning, on this way to the sheikh's garden, where he was employed. Because of this exposition of his life, Abusa is snatched away from his work and kept in jail. So, there, in Boarding house, "Everyone's mind was full of Abusa's goodness and Mast Ram's treachery" (211).

Part two of *The Circle of Reason* is set in al-Ghazira on the Persian Gulf. Alu there resumes his craft of weaving, but is accidentally buried alive when a new concrete building in which he is working as a labourer collapses. The collapse of this building can be read as an allegory about the effect of postmodernity on the traditional societies of the Middle East. But again, Ghosh's writing is too nuanced for such facile binary oppositions.

The collapsed building, called The Star, is contrasted with the traditional market place, the Souq: "the old bazaar's honeycomb of passageways was a live thing, coiling through the tunnels, obscuring every traces of the world outside [. . .] Nor did any but the most alert in the Souq feel the soil of al-Ghazira tremble when the star fell" (194). But the Souq does not represent a discrete culture rooted in one nation. Rather it is part of network of trade routes, confirming Balaram's argument that weaving produces not one world, but many. Alu has begun weaving again at the loom of his Egyptian neighbor, Hajj Fahmy, who abandoned his traditional craft for the more profitable construction business. As part of his revival of weaving, Alu must now learn Arabic as he had earlier learned English. His landlady, an Egyptian brothel owner named Zindi, plans to install Alu as her manager when she buys the Durban Tailoring House from another diasporic Indian, Jeevanbhai Patel. Patel is a Gujarati Hindu from Durban in South Africa, who has come to al-Ghazira after a marriage of

which his parents disapproved. His movements evoke the flow of the Indian ocean trade. "The Indian merchants along the coast pulled [the couple] northwards like a bucket from a well. First they went to Mozambique, then Dar es Salaam, then Zanzibar, Djibouti, Perim and Aden" (221). Zindi's house is full of migrant labourers whom she hopes to divert from the construct industry to the now declining cloth trade:

Al-Ghazira was small then, an intimate little place, half market-town perched on the edge of the great hungry desert beyond, half pearling port fattening on the lustrous Jeevan pearls in its bay. It was a merchant's paradise, right in the center of the world, conceived and nourished by the flow of centuries of trade. Persian, Iraqis, Zanzibari Arabs, Omanis, and Indians fattened upon it and grew rich. (221)

Like the village of Lalpukar, the Souq of al-Ghazira does not represent a stable authentic culture, but a network of trade, centuries old, that unfurls like a cloth through a vast, borderless region.

When Alu is buried in the Star, Ghosh contrasts this mobile trading culture with the modern oil economy that threatens to subsume it. Alu's friends, Rakesh and Isma'il, go inside the ruins to search for him. They find themselves lost in the postmodern space of a collapsed glass and concrete dome: "It was like the handiwork of a madman immense steel girders leaning crazily, whole sections of the glass dome scattered about like eggshells and all over, everywhere, thousands of decaying plants" (232). The "voice" heard by the rescuers in the chapter "A Voice in the Ruins" turns out to be a transistor radio accidentally switched on during the collapse of the building, which echoes through the ruins. The "voice" concisely evokes the aesthetics of postmodernism:

The loss of affect, the de-centering of the bourgeois subject, the loss of interiority and the relentless commodification of culture. Alu, the Indian weaver, is trapped inside postmodernity like Jonah inside the whale, and when the rescuers reach him, they find him lying beneath a slab of concrete that is kept from crushing him by two antique sewing machines. (260)

The episode is an allegory about the cultural logic of global capitalism destroying the ancient trading cultures of the middle East. Then, when his house was demolished with fire, he (Alu) was saved by those antique sewing machines given by his aunt, Toru-Devi. Once again he is saved by the two antique machines which kept from crushing him away. So, this symbolizes his memory of his land that haunts him time and again about his victimized family and beats him more to return back.

Ghosh's symbolism therefore complicates Clifford's too-easy application of the label postmodern to the inhabitants of the Egyptian village, for the collapse of the Star is connected to a more specific genealogy of British colonialism in al-Ghazira. "Since the beginning of time, al-Ghazira has been home to anyone who chooses to call it such" (261). But when the British discovered the oil deposits, they broke with the past by using military force to persuade the elderly Malik to sign a treaty: "al-Ghazira was just a speck of sand floating on a sea of oil. So the British ... sent a resident to al-Ghazira, to make the Malik sign a treaty which would let them dig for oil .... The Resident arrived, in a battleship" (248-9). As Shyam S. Agarwall, observes, "all of us inhabit an interdependent late twentieth century world marked by borrowings and lending across porous national and cultural boundaries" (260), but we do not do so on equal terms. Those boundaries are saturated with inequality, power and domination.

In part two "Rajas: Passion", the miserable condition of the migrant people in al-Ghazira can be seen when Mast Ram , a migrant labor, lay on the path outside squirming like a wounded rat, with blood pouring from his head. He (Mast Ram) is actually from some remote part of the north Indian hills. He was tricked into the plain area, where a relative put him into the hands of a labor contractor. Then, Mast Ram found himself with only a third part of the wage that for the contractor took all the rest. One night he found something to drink and his rage grew too large for him to hold. In front of all the others he flew at the contractor's throat. That was how he found himself with his skull split half open, without a job, without a place to stay, and blood all over his clothes. All he could think of then was certain houses his relative had told him about. So somehow he wrapped Pajama around his head and dragged himself across al-Ghazira to the severed Head, trailing blood, and crawled into the house, blood, wounds, injustices and all. This is the condition of migrant people in al-Ghazira. They could only remember their homeland but cannot return. So, only through fragments of memory they can create "imaginary homeland", because of the condemnation to live with double consciousness.

Same thing happens to Kulfi when she was employed in a rich Ghaziri's house as a cook. The pay was good, the work was simple, and the whole house was air-conditioned. It was a small family and they liked Kulfi. But there was a daughter in the family and that was where the trouble started, for she was fat and very ugly. Her parents had done everything they could to marry her off, but nothing worked. Then one day they heard of a boy. His family was poor, but he'd worked hard, got a scholarship, gone to America and come back with a suitcaseful of degrees. Now he wanted to go into business and he needed capital. Of that the girl's father had plenty. So they came to an understanding, and it was decided that the boy would come to

their house to meet the girl. There was great preparation. Everything was available there but there was a question regarding cook. The boy's grand mother accused that Indian woman spat into the food to produce flavor. Kulfi was an Indian woman. She was called and asked about it. Kulfi was already nervous, she did not know Arabic, she had language problem. So, whatever she was called to do, she did it because she saw the woman bending over the pot, spitting and gesturing. So, she thought to herself that there was something new and as helpfully as she could, she made a sign to the woman to wait and finally she spat into it. So, she was chased away within a minute. There are so many examples of the migrant people which prove their miserable condition there in the land of other, that forced them to remember their own country. It's their compulsion because they couldn't return empty-handed, instead they lived penniless facing various turmoils, ups and downs in their lives.

Another character "Hajj Fahmy", whose family was said to have been founded, several generations ago, by a weaver called Musa, who had fled his village in the far south of Egypt after a blood feud. He escaped to Sudan and the Red Sea Coast with his child bride, and there, penniless and starving, he and his bride had entered into servitude. His adventurous life can be seen here, however, he proved that men can be destroyed but not defeated because he strove hard enough:

After innumerable adventures in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Yemeni coast, Musa had found his way some how to al-Ghaira with his no-longer-young wife and many children. The Malik of the time took them into his service, and Musa and his still growing family lived in the old fort and wove their cloth in peace. Eventually Musa and his family came to be known as the Malik's dependents, his Mawali. His

descendants were known forever afterwards by that name, even when they depended on no one but themselves. (281)

It's a very good example of diasporic people in foreign land. Whatever they do there, mainly the good works, their identity will be somehow branded with the name of country of Migration. The example can be given of the third richest personality of the world "Laxmi Mittal" known as British but actually he was from India. Here also, all the identity is given to Musa and his family by the name of Malik or Mawali, even his descendants are known forever afterwards by that name. But after the old Malik died and Musa died, then the Mawali found themselves not quite as welcome in the fort as they had been in the past. So they moved, not into the town, because the townspeople still looked on them with suspicion as strangers of uncertain provenance. But they are living there like the life of crow having peacock's feathers. Crow wished to decorate itself with the feather of peacock but after having it, it looks stranger in both (Crow and Peacock) sides. So, it can't create its existence. Something happened to Musa's family, they have identity crisis, they can neither fit in the country of Migration nor in their birthplace. That's why it can be seen that one day this question (regarding identity) will be raised for the diasporic people. So, it can be proved that migrant people are living futile life there in foreign land, from there it can be shown that they see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return, when the time is right.

On the other hand, Zindi, who is running a boarding house there in al-Ghazira is in tension because all the members in boarding house, Mast Ram and Abusa, Professor Samuel and Kulfi are losing their jobs. Almost all of their income was cut off. She muses:

But where does the money come from? It doesn't come from the house, it comes from the outside. It's not like having land. It's taken me all

these years really to understand that. I knew it, but I didn't understand it. While everything is all right outside, things seem fine in the house-money keeps coming in and I can manage. But there's nothing I can do: Why? Because I can give them food, I can give them a roof, but I can't give them work. (219)

So, it can be understood that all the foreign lands are same, they are not like home. If anything is committed mistakenly, that will be a great issue. Such things occurred to Kulfi, Professor Samuel and Abusa. The migrant people are always undermined in some ways. They have no alternatives besides bickering the past and recalling the houses.

When Alu is trapped, that becomes enough to give him a vision. A new vision which totally follows his uncle, Balaram's path. That will give a new formation to the society. And he makes a will speech, "a Khichri of words, couscous, rice, dal and onions, all stirred together, stamped and boiled, Arabic with Hindi, Hindi swallowing Bengali, English doing a dance, tongues unraveled and woven together" (279). Out of this meal of words Alu explains the necessity of establishing an unoppressive, communalistic, cooperative society, free of germs, rationally organized, and purged of the worst germ of all, Money Alu would rather be the Pasteur of political society, like his surrogate father Balaram, he would cleanse the world of impurities. The vision takes hold, and everyone in the neighborhood starts to cooperate. Pimps and exploiters are driven out. Everything is distributed according to need, money is abolished. People come from miles to join in Zindi, much loved and relied upon, falls into despair upon discovering that capitalists, however benign, are not as invaluable as they think they are. Alu's people are beginning to do things for themselves, which is always dangerous. It shows the competition within the migrant people to organize

themselves in foreign land. So, Zindi betrays her friend Alu, to the misguided police officer, Jyoti Das, who follows them across the middle east, only to find that while in pursuit of these dangerous subversives his boss has installed a relative in his job.

Echoing the conflagration in which he had destroyed Balaram's world, Jyoti Das and the local magistrate bring down the power of the law on a gathering of those who subscribe to Alu's communist doctrine. Many are killed in the fire, just as many had been in Balaram's: Hajj Fahmoy, Rakesh, and Karthamma. So, there in foreign land, as he (Alu) follows the way of his uncle or gets rebirth with the idea of cleaning the world, he finds someone obstructing the way he runs as his uncle was blocked. So, it seems as if the past is haunting him that he can't remove it from his mind. The vistas are raising within his mind which caused him turmoil in his life though he is not wrong.

Once again, a migration occurs, Zindi lead Alu, kulfi, the baby boss, Abu Fahl, and Zaghoul to her native village. But instead of finding refuge there, her family rejects them even though it had been her money over the years that had built homes for her brothers and their wives. It is known that she had been abandoned long ago by her husband in Alexandria, when it was discovered that she was barren. So, now, Zindi and company head further west to Algeria. All along their trip, though they are dogged by Jyoti Das (who is in search of Alu to arrest as terrorist) still in pursuit. So, migration after migration occurring in their lives, they forward themselves somewhere else to Algeria where their luck lead them. It can be seen that their lives totally depend on zigzag future, and their "home" is a matter of some debate. So, they create all sorts of connections with a real and imagined world outside of the ones they live in.

In part three, 'Tamas: Death', another migration to Algeria starts again, the rest members of the boarding house: Zindi, Kulfi, Alu and Baby Boss involve in this journey followed by inspector, Das. After a long journey when they reach to Algeria with exhausted body, at the moment Kulfi and Baby Boss are sick and lying difficultly in a hospital's bench. Suddenly, their rays of aspiration twinkle within them when they see a woman with orange sari coming towards them. This is the memorable scene that reminds them their home. They create a kind of feeling, ownness when they spot the woman but she may not treat them positively, they did not care the consequences but they totally attached with her. It seems as if they have reached their home and they have met their mother. So, it can be said that it is the foreign land whenever and wherever people see a person from their homeland they closely behave them. Same thing happened to them. The woman with an orange sari was a microbiologist, Dr. Uma Verma, from India who relatively help them and give them shelter.

Alu rediscovers Dantu's copy inscribed by Balaram in the Algerian Sahara with his daughter Uma Verma, the micro-biologist, who tells him, "My father told me that microbiology was Pasteur's heritage and that I was to keep it alive" (395). So the revered spirit of Pasteur is reiterated through the novel. It does not just highlight a link with Balaram's memory but reinforces and reinstates the relevance of Pasteur for the contemporary world of poor migrants. The example of Pasteur, or at least the version of his life delineated by Vallery-Radot performs several functions in the novel. It provides a site of intense emotive bonding between uncle and nephew when first introduced in the novel:

The boy did not respond. Suddenly Balaram felt himself strangely touched by the boy's wide-eyed silence. He felt his throat constrict, and

in embarrassment he reached for the copy of Vallery-Radot's life of Pasteur which always lay beside his chair, and began to read him the chapter about that turning-point in the history of the world ... 6 July 1885 when Louis Pasteur took his courage in his hands and at the risk of his reputation and his whole professional life (for he had never lacked for enemies) filled a Pravoz syringe and inoculated poor, hopeless ten-year-old Joseph Meister, only that day savaged by a rabid dog, with his still untested vaccine. When he stopped and put the book down he saw tears in Alu's eyes. (28)

This was the moment when he was first time, read the book by his uncle. Incidentally, in that desert when he found the same book, that was miracle in his life, which he preferred and could not go beyond preserving, hugging it and tearing once more because it has risen in his mind the figure of his deceased uncle. "Mrs. Verma, Alu said, this book is the only real brother I ever had. I'd lost him and now I've found him again-here in the desert, of all places, and in your house" (395).

There, in Algeria, was also a group of migrant people from India including Dr. Uma Verma, her husband, Dr. Mishra, his wife and other friends. They have been annually performing a cultural program there in Algeria. It was the turn of Dr. Uma Verma to perform the show, she was in search of an Indian girl who can be fitted to play the role of "Chitrangada". Luckily she found Kulfi who was her heroine of dream. It can be seen here that they are maintaining their norms, customs and values in foreign land as well. On the course of performing the play when Kulfi died due to heart attack they are planning to follow a proper Hindu cremation. Finally, they cremate her according to Hindu religion though they are in foreign land. This moment forces Zindi who has spent about whole of her life in foreign land, to remember her

condition because she was getting older and older out of her motherland. She remembered her arrival to al-Ghazira with Alu and other friends in a ship, Mariamma. She said:

I'm old, Alu, Zindi said, and every day I get older and older. I won't last much longer, I've only got a few years left now. And today, when you people took Kulfi's body - God have mercy on her away, I wondered, I wondered what would happen to me if I died in a desert in a foreign land, without a house or friends to help me. I don't think I would find a Mrs. Verma, Alu not everyone is as lucky as Kulfi. (420)

Eventually, she (Zindi) understood the reality, that was not a proper place to spend whole life. It can be seen that it was a right time for Zindi and others to return the ancestral home. All the people, here, keep the continuing relationship with the homeland. So, Zindi is really serious regarding herself and her homeland. She, Alu with Boss have already settled down to wait for Virat Singh and the ship that was to carry them home but on the other hand Jyoti Das prepared to step into a new world. So, it can be understood that they (Zindi and Alu) have not spoiled their hope yet and hope will be beginning for them and also understood that migration is a continual process that is going on.

#### IV. Conclusion

In *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh has shown the sorrowful condition of the migrant people from India and other countries, in Al-Ghazira who are suffering from double consciousness. For example, Zindi, a former prostitute who has established a Boarding house in Al-Ghazira, is torn, at the same time, between two identities, that is, Egyptian and Algerian. Then, Kulfi is from India but she is living in Algeria. She has gone there illegally in search of good job but her job is snatched away due to misunderstanding. Mast Ram and Professor Samuel are also spending similar life status and they are also jobless, therefore, they can't return home. This type of ups and downs and problems make them jobless; they are in the space of 'betweenness'. So, they can neither go home nor create their identity in Al-Ghazira. They have been left only with some memories of their homeland. Then Abu Fahl, Rakesh and Jeevanbhai have been living there for long time with the fragmented memory of their birthplace. As a result, all the characters, in Al-Ghazira, are forced to live as diaspora and they are experiencing the bruise of exile, migration, displacement, rootlessness and the life in minority group.

The protagonist, Alu, is displaced when he goes to live with his uncle in the beginning, is the first migrant. His sufferings show the aftermath of the partition of India and Pakistan. It brings psychological problems to Alu. Next, he himself is suffering heavily by being trapped in the demolished building, the Star, and being chased continuously by Jyoti Das, the police Inspector, as a branded terrorist even in Al-Ghazira. That's why he is perpetually being haunted by some sense of loss because he lost many things in his life. He has some urge to reclaim and to look back with double consciousness.

So, the problem raised in foreign land makes them to believe that the ancestral home is a place of eventual return, when the time is right. It also makes them to be committed to the maintenance or restoration of the homeland. So, they make a memory, vision or myth about their original homeland. These all behaviours naturally appear when they are treated with bias over there in foreign land. These very difficulties have been traced out in this novel with an interesting craft. People with diasporic identity struggle for independence and freedom. Thus this novel has presented the people's quest for the lost cultural root and their desire for their homeland.

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