



Research Paper

A Study on Empathetic Perception of Amitav Ghosh as a Diasporic Writer

ABHIJIT NAHA

Assistant Professor of English
Dr. N.S.A.M. First Grade College
Bengaluru-89

ABSTRACT:

Amitav Ghosh is an empathetic diasporic writer. He has addressed the sensitive issues of diaspora very empathetically through the different characters he has created in his different novels. In every one of his novels, we find that he has very sensibly handled the pain, agony, alienation, displacement, existential rootlessness, nostalgia, quest of identity of the migrants who are compelled to leave their own lands and are forced to live in some other parts of the world for survival. Diasporic literature also addresses issues related to amalgamation or disintegration of culture. The immigrants, whatever may be the reasons for their migration, have shared some common feelings. The grief of being separated from their home, the memories of their motherland, and the misery and anguish of leaving everything behind are what migrants experience the most. Additionally, the diasporic Indians maintain their ties to their ancestral homeland. There is a continuous effort to look for their roots. History is a significant element in the novels of Amitav Ghosh. His unique style of narrating history throughout his novels produces vivid pictures of the past time in the minds of the readers. His art of creating different characters becomes alive through his mastery in dealing with history. The main element of diasporic literature in India is based both on the theme of colonial India and on the partition of India. The tragic consequences that resulted from the partition of India have been mostly depicted within Amitav Ghosh's books by means of creation of different characters. Here, we also find a strong bond between history and diasporic literature. The writing of the diaspora or immigrants holds a significant position between the nation and the culture. Identity, family, and marital connections searches, as well as erasing or integrating the heterogeneous surroundings, are among the most crucial aspects of diasporic writing. English-language writers from India, including Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Ghosh, Anjana Appachana, and Sunetra Gupta. In the Indian diaspora literature tradition, Anita Nair, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni have achieved prominence as authors. Through his works, Ghosh illuminates how people who leave their own countries and the problems they encounter along the way are perceived as belonging to the diaspora. The Circle of Reason by Amitav Ghosh covers the adventurous sides of the book's protagonist, Alu, and explains his challenges as he moves from one place to another. Like Alu, every character in the several novels encounters numerous difficulties throughout their lives as a result of solitude. This novel explores the diasporic themes of homelessness, rootlessness, isolation, and migration. Similar topics were mentioned in *The Glass Palace*, another book by Amitav Ghosh. Characters in Amitav Ghosh's writings who, despite challenging circumstances, are always willing to show humanity.

KEY WORDS: HISTORY, MIGRATION, DIASPORA, ALIENATION, DISPLACEMENT, NOSTALGIA, PARTITION, HUMANITY.

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Amitav Ghosh has got a special place among the critiques and readers because of his empathetic outlook towards the people who are compelled to leave their homeland due to some adverse circumstances. For those people, leaving their homelands and settle some other places was not easy because physically they were away from their homelands but mentally, they were very close to the land where they were born and spent a significant time of their lives in that land. They enjoyed every drop of water, every breathing, every bit of food they consumed. The land, air, water, the open sky, jungle everything of that land in their memories haunt them

that they are living in a foreign land. They find themselves unwelcomed people who might have caused inconvenience to the native people. They feel that a kind of annoyance is there may be hatred. The components of diaspora writing include topics like dislocation, nostalgia, discrimination, survival, cultural transformation, and identity. Writing from the diaspora holds a special position in the world of nations and cultures. A group or an individual's physical and mental journey is referred to as a diaspora. It is a trip taken in quest of one's self. These elements were utilised by Amitav Ghosh, a novelist with a remarkable sense of place and history, in his writings, which represent the author's profound understanding and sense through the various characters he created in his books. Amitav Ghosh exhibits a deep interest in recounting the life of the diaspora. Being a writer from the diaspora, Amitav Ghosh has conducted a thorough investigation into the Indian diaspora. Empathetic perception serves as the central theme of Amitav Ghosh's books. His writings demonstrate his intense desire to comprehend human life. He has created several characters in various works by using history and location to describe his narrative. Even though the novels are diverse and the characters are distinct, the subject of empathy runs throughout all of them. The writings of Ghosh are the only ones in the current Indian literary scene that accurately show an Indian truth. He performs a range of duties in the literary ground. He works as a teacher, author, essayist, travel writer, anthropologist, sociologist, and ambassador for promoting world peace. He has made a name for himself alongside other well-known post-colonial and postmodern writers. He has addressed the fundamental social and cultural problems that exist in colonised nations like India. All his major works have received a great deal of literary criticism and scholarly interest from all over the world. His entire body of work exhibits a great degree of self-awareness that keeps describing the global issues that are of social, philosophical, and cultural importance. Having just made his debut in 1986 with *The Circle of Reason*, he has continued to write landmark novels that have, via sombre discourses, told the story of humanity. For many young academics and scholars, his books have emerged as their top choices for scholarly investigation. The way Amitav Ghosh conveyed his diasporic sensibility, which refers to a person's diasporic experience and feelings, shows his empathy. We are aware that diasporic texts touch on topics like dislocation, melancholy, prejudice, survival, and identity crisis. Migrants' sense of self, psychological health, and existential position are all impacted by their estrangement from their new surroundings as a result of moving from one area to another. Individuals who leave a familiar neighbourhood and relocate suffer dislocation, which brings back memories, and they compare their new residence to their old one. They can live in their new country while still having their hearts and thoughts in their previous one. In this way they usually go back and spend time in their former places. They are under intense mental pressure, which makes them nostalgic. In this sense, migratory communities that have been compelled to travel about are referred to be "diasporas." Only when a writer has a thorough comprehension of the situation can they faithfully capture in words the sentiments of all those defenceless people. By in-depth comprehension and an empathic point of view, a writer may reach the level of writing where he or she can let the readers feel the anguish of those helpless people. This is not conceivable if a writer solely writes for aesthetic reasons. Due to his own way of life, Amitav Ghosh, who has found enormous success, is aware of the misery of these displaced individuals. Amitav Ghosh has been personally impacted by these circumstances. He personalised this through the fictional characters in his writing. His intention is to evoke a sense of diasporic sensibilities in his readers through his writings. The results of his realisations are reflected in his works. His debut novel, *"The Circle of Reason,"* detailed the life of a little child named Alu. He was compelled to leave his native India because of challenging circumstances, and he travelled to the Middle East. He battled obstacles and felt the hurt of estrangement and dislocation. The novel's primary concerns are themes of homelessness and loneliness. In the book *"The Shadow Lines,"* the author used the character of Jethamoshai, who remained in Dhaka and refused to emigrate to another country, to describe his sad emotions. He advised his kids to leave Dhaka, but he was unwilling to leave his homeland, where he was born and raised. After East Pakistan was liberated from the rioters, he did not consider escaping to India in order to preserve his life in the horrible condition. This demonstrates Jethamoshai's sentimental ties to his motherland. In the book *"The Glass Palace,"* the character Rajkumar's dire state is depicted. Rajkumar established a business after moving to Burma from India. He was lonely and yearned to go back to India. Rajkumar's persona paints a picture of the diasporic impact, and this story once more explores the themes of migration and alienation.

HISTORY AND MIGRATION IN AMITAV GHOSH'S NOVELS:

A detailed examination of modern fiction exposes writers' fascination with our country's past and readers' unrelenting interest in it. There are certain historical books that focus on important national events with broad ramifications. The historical theme is prominent in all of Ghosh's literature. *The Glass Palace* depicts history as a communal memory that synthesises everything that happened in the past with everything that is happening now. His use of history in combination with his narrative approach makes subtle links between many occurrences so that no event becomes insignificant. As a result, history can move easily between the past and the present, producing a respectable smooth pattern of historical time. Ghosh's awareness of times gone by undoubtedly keeps the age of it, a triumph that many great authors have failed to achieve. According to historian E.H. Carr, history serves to both help people comprehend the past and improve their control over the present. He

views the past as an ongoing conversation linking the present and the past (1973:55). The writing of Amitav Ghosh fits into "the numerous searches for a different facet of reality that might connect past and present" in this way (56). Ghosh pushes his creativity against the hardness of known lives," in the words of Mukul Kesavan (2002: 1). In order to give his own narrative impulses, form, and content, Amitav Ghosh explores historical events and constructs. This exploration paints a complicated picture of how various tales interact with one another to permeate people's lives. Ghosh claimed that *The Glass Palace* was comparable to an *Odyssey* at one end and was regarding a lot other than just the protagonists in it. Moreover, it discussed the unique and epic history of the Southeast Asian Diaspora. 88–89 (*World Literature Today* 2002). Ghosh is always exploring for new methods to depict history in conjunction with fiction. It is conducive to the acceptance of this idea of migration, hybridity, and diaspora and maintains a careful coordination between the remembrance a history and in the future because obsession of Ghosh with history and its spread in culture and society. He returns to his now recognisable style of historical fiction in *The Glass Palace*, which he had previously debuted with *The Shadow Lines* nonetheless, this time the scope is greater, the scope is stories are more epics are furthermore intimate but strangely broader. The made-up lives of Saya John, Ma Cho, Uma, Dinu, Neel and Manju, Arjun, and Kishan Singh. The lives of Rajkumar and Dolly. The *Glass Palace's* loose ends are tied together as best as Jaya Rajkumar's granddaughter who studies art and history make a nearly anticipated appearance towards the end of the novel. The book is, in some ways, a lament for diasporic people situation that is a by-product of history that abandons kingships and palaces in favour of an almost hopeless regeneration. It is not, however, the story of kings and queens; rather, they serve as the setting for Ghosh's sharp understanding of history and sensitivity. The plot stretches over a century in the background of the Subcontinent; characters form unforeseen ties with individuals from many nations and cultures; conflicts are waged; uprisings are put down; moral and political questions are discussed; and riches are created and lost. Ghosh accurately and thoughtfully reports every information, and his accuracy is supported by careful study. Ghosh provides a detailed explanation of military manoeuvres, automobile and aeroplane models, oil drilling, the lumber trade, food, and clothes, with each historical detail mentioned. He cites this, a modest wooden structure even, and provides vivid details regarding the timber trade that are extremely true. The characters in *Sea of Poppies* and *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh attempt to shape their "selves" in line with modern culture. The Sundarbans residents are trained through Piya's "self." She absorbs the "inner self" of her and takes ownership of her destructive behaviour. She kills her "inner self" in her obsession with moulding and moulding a fresh "identity" from the confusing cultural circumstances of America. As the narrator of *The Glass Palace* by Ghosh, Jaya develops her "personality" and researches the past of Aung San Suu Kye's "self." She researches the development of her uncle Dinu. Her uncle's and her grandparents' histories are juxtaposed with histories of partition and independence of India. The self-examination of Jaya, the Rajkumar grandchild, into the "self" of Aung San Suu Kyi, the most important Burmese freedom fighter, demonstrates that it is a sincere critique of the societal positions of women in the times before independence. (Yesapogu)

Deeti's attempts to build her "self" in opposition to her husband's brother Chandan Singh and uncle, as well as Bhyro Singh, her husband's uncle, depict the current circumstances under which women take advantage of and live their lives. Deeti attempts to write her own biography of her life by defying social orders in order to fall in love with and wed an untouchable Kalua. In her personal realm of unwavering love, she develops her "self." She falls victim to the perverse people and its dominance by creating her own sense of "self." Like this, all the female characters in *Sea of Poppies* are interested in establishing and marketing their "selves," such as Miss Paulette Lambert, who did so. She also develops her "own" through bucking the dominance and exploitation of men. Furthermore, the attempts made by each of these female characters to define, create, and promote their "selves" in the face of oppressive and unfair life circumstances provide a new interpretation of history that accepts the New Historicist tenets. All these protagonists' "selves" call for the "negotiation" and "circulation" ideas of the New Historicists. Without a doubt, the themes throughout Amitav Ghosh's books indicate his stance on "Revisit to History or the Rehabilitation of the Antecedent." The thematic representation of all these female protagonists in Amitav Ghosh's works can be used to reconstruct the unrecorded true history of the world. (Yesapogu)

Ghosh's fictional works outline the situations of people lives of whom are altered by historical factors beyond their manage. It is not surprising that Ghosh has made migration, displacement, and dislocation a central theme in his works, and that his concern about the characters' sense of rootlessness challenges the idea of a single identity. It should be noted that Ghosh's own nomadic lifestyle influences the way the concept of identity is consistently handled in his fictional works. Ghosh has emphasised numerous times how important migration and displacement are to his works. Characters' migration from their own countries to foreign locales as a result of historical events like colonialism, trade, and commerce, among others, pose problems for the sense of identity. It may be claimed, however, that Ghosh does not present an unsophisticated analysis of the subject of dislocation since completely aware of the variety of outcomes it is able to produce and because someone's social setting is closely related to any potential shift in attitude towards living in displacement. Ghosh depicts how some members of the most ordinary class boat across the Indian Ocean to Al-Ghazira in order to make a living

in his first book, *The Circle of Reason* (1986). One of the main themes of Ghosh's narrative work is the relocation and dislocation that alter characters' perception of who they are. This work aims to conduct a critical analysis of how the experiences of migration, displacement, dislocation, and diaspora affect personal identity in a worldwide society. (Sukanta Das)

Ghosh's characters, a motley crew of individuals from various socio-cultural backgrounds, are uprooted from their native nation and relocated to another location occasionally as a result of historical events and voluntarily. Cultural fragmentation occurs when people are forcibly removed from their familiar geo-cultural surroundings, and it also occurs when people move in search of better employment opportunities. Not surprisingly, the diverse cultural manifestations that Ghosh's characters exhibit cause them to engage frequently with strange sociocultural contexts. The most obvious effect of this kind of dislocation is the emergence of a movable, mixture society that participates in imaginative and cultural artefacts while crossing cultural boundaries. The scattering of people throughout the continent after European colonialism, the transport of Africans across the Atlantic, the indentured labour of Asians in colonial outposts, in addition to the deliberate resettlement of people due to the monetary opportunities provided by globalisation, all demonstrate the inadequacy of traditional ways of identifying ourselves. Regarding the development of identity, global migration has caused us to re-examine our long-standing ties. It is interesting to note how differently migrants build their older loyalties when they endure dislocation and displacement due to historical circumstances. Ghosh really demonstrates the migrants' wide spectrum of responses and reactions to their earlier identities, which were based on national, religious, or regional associations. In Amitav Ghosh's works, eviction is shown as the direct result of several historical events, such as European colonisation, the subcontinent's partition, World War II, the British attack of Burma, and so on. Individual relocation is typically a description in terms of imperatives, such as "drive" and "drag" causes. The socio-economic pressure that compels people to flee is typically regarded negatively as the push factor. This type of drive factor mainly relates to conflict, genocides, riots, brutality, scarcity, and so on that compels persons to leave their homes and settle in foreign locations. This type of migration causes a terrible feeling of displacement, and the migrants are unable to accustom into the other country. (Sukanta Das)

EMPATHETIC ELEMENTS IN AMITAV GHOSH'S NOVELS:

"The novels demonstrate how persons undergo numerous changes as a result of their suffering. The main character Deeti Singh in the book *Sea of Poppies* illustrates the theme of perseverance in the face of adversity. She marries a man who is a physically and financially unfit husband due to his opium addiction. She also worries about her brother-in-law because he gets her pregnant on the night of her wedding. Ghosh provides background information about Deeti's traumatic experiences at her in-laws' home. He argues that she can endure this severe condition because of her peculiar grey eyes, the poor health of her family, and the planetary configurations in her horoscope." (Shanthi)

"Deeti lives with a disabled man and puts up with the harsh conditions in her surroundings, but she begins to approach the situation differently after learning about the injustice done to her gender. She renounces the dogmatic Indian social beliefs and bravely welcomes Kalua, the ox-cart driver from a low caste who had protected her, and marries him. Deeti's volition is shown by Ghosh to have power beyond what is necessary for existence. Her ethical decisions, honesty, and compassionate demeanour are glimmers of humanity. Intimacy is displayed across all of Ghosh's works as characters come to understand one another's suffering and come to care about one another. The relationships between Deeti and Kalua, Paulette and Jodu's mother, Serang Ali and Zachery Reid, Neel and Ah Fatt, Bahram and Zadig Bey, Mr. Burnham and Zachary, and Deeti and the women in the *Ibis*; the Modis' support of the Mistries and the Mistries' acceptance of the boy as their son-in-law; and Fitcher's assistance to Paulette, Ah Fatt, and Neel. The relationships between Bahram and the Mistries, Zadig, and Chi Mei in the book *River of Smoke* and between Kesari and Captain Mee and Gulabi in the book *Flood of Fire* are all empathic ones that grew out of pain for the ladies involved. (Shanthi)

The same as Anita Desai, grounds her philosophical views in literature, Ghosh clarifies his motivation for wanting to comprehend the importance of authenticity in making decisions. Another group of his characters, Deeti, Kalua, Shireen, Paulette, Kesari, and Zachary, live contented lives, although Bahram Modi and Mr. and Mrs. Burnham go through existential crises. Due to their existential pain, when they try to value their life and realise how pointless it is, they are faced with a conundrum. Because of his honourable decisions, Deeti and the other members of their clan consider Kalua to be a hero. Paulette, a young girl who appears as a character in the book *Sea of Poppies* by Paulette Ghosh, is stubborn even at an early age. (Shanthi)

"Ghosh shows hints of how humanity has transformed into a cold, impersonal attitude. Because they disobeyed the cosmic order, old epic heroes were sad figures. But, some of the people in Ghosh's book are tragic because they do not believe in such an order. His characters try to live life to the fullest and appreciate their instincts. The universe, which was supported by the notion of God and bowed before him, bore the suffering and anxiety of existence with awe. The situation has transformed, and the individual perspective that prioritises the freedom to discover meaning in a ridiculous world has both positive and harmful effects. (Shanthi)

“Story of Ghosh, which focuses on human misery, raises existential reflection, which is how people attempt to give their lives purpose. When a situation calls for a transformation so that fresh meaning can be derived from it, existential thought pushes people to come out with a better perspective. Due to the freedom that the human mind perceives in letting go of traditional culture, religion, and the substance of the past, this idea in both the scientific and moral spheres. The ideals that the human brain develops are the product of that awareness, and the results are mostly their responsibility. The misunderstanding of this idea in the current, technological society is reflected in Ghosh's novels. His books demonstrate how the autonomy and responsibility that come with human freedom are replaced by self-interest and greediness. (Shanthi)

II. CONCLUSION:

Empathy is a quality connected to underlying altruistic ideas that are inspired by the plight of humans. Also, it stands for the affection and sympathy that people have for one another. Empathy, as opposed to pure justice, demonstrates a higher level of kindness towards individuals who are a part of humanity. 1. All people; people, humans collectively. 2. A quality or state of being human; the human condition. 3. The quality of having compassion, kindness, or altruism.

Intricately woven tales of families, political events, and regional folklore weave back and forth in time and place in Ghosh's fictional works. In his writings, he explores the relevance of India for humanity as well as issues such as socio-political violence, freedom and authority, tradition and progress, the individual and the family, preservation and eradication, which are present in the twentieth century. Ghosh appears to concur that, in addition to the onerous burden of ongoing poverty, India's challenges are essentially very similar to those of the other recently constituted "post-colonial nations." He sees the Indian continent in relation to of slavery, social group, poverty, and religious antiquity, and he admires the poor people's unflinching bravery. on the contrary, he hails the persistence of enduring principles, as if India were superior living example of a timeless principle that values accommodation, hospitality, and tolerance. Ghosh is deeply interested in the past that is not now represented, and his literary works serve as a voice for that demonstration. He is a "journey" writer with a postcolonial background. Ghosh presents himself as a limitless author in his works of art and deals with issues and characters that are not geographically set.

Both in Indian institutions and outside, there has been increase in the Ghosh's literary study. The numerous processes and narrative structure of Ghosh's fictions have been theorised by several critics using geographical and metaphorical comparisons. Important subjects like legend and olden times, politics and imagination, the ebb and movement of populations over generations and continents, beyond colonialism, and search and breakthrough all find a home in the novelist's writing. His fictional characters are frequently projected in a critical reading to illustrate the deception of national boundaries and of literary foundations with fresh understanding.

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