**Ghosh’s Journey in Prose Pieces**

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**Abstract**:

As a true researcher, Ghosh studies and searches humanity and for humanity he dreams the unity and equality of human race. He, throughout his writings, has given this philosophy for the benevolence of humanity. The egoless or innocent characters are his main characters in his literary works. As a traveller and as an anthropologist, Ghosh brings the new ideas of unturned pages of the past history to his writings. He always takes the reader on a trip in search of something in past and in future. His flights of imaginations are with reality and common sense. The flash-back technique and narration of the present event are seen in the works as real one. He shows reader that experiences of individual’s life are united together. Here one can easily see the freelance wandering reading the essays.

**Keywords**: Testimony, mesmerizes, Ghat, Ghosts, Fundamentalist, Ethnography, Petrofiction

The Imam and the Indian (Prose Pieces) shows Amitav Ghosh as a champion for picturesque and realistic portrayal of places. In all his essays reader learns that the writer echoes voice of nation. As a research scholar, Amitav Ghosh with theories and influences upon him maintained his works unique and thus he became a pioneer writer. One sees V. S. Naipaul’s influence on Ghosh in some of his essays.

A translation of Rabindranath Tagore’s short story, “KshudhitaPashan” named “The Hunger of stones” by Ghosh was published in 1995, New Delhi. It is well known classic piece of prose translation which mesmerizes Ghosh many times.“The Ghat of the only World: Agha Shahid Ali in Brooklyn”, an essay came in 2002. Agha Shahid Ali, one of his Friends, influenced Ghosh and news of his death also shook him. On the memory of friend he has written this essay, “The Ghat of the Only World: Agha Shahid Ali in Brooklyn”. “The Imam and the Indian” is written in 1985. Ghosh has written this essay in between his journey of writing the initial novels, The Circle of Reason and The Shadow Lines.

The piece itself beckoned the development of idea over time of his third book--In an Antique Land. “Tibetan Dinner” and “The Four Corners” are come in the meantime of The Shadow Lines and In an Antique Land in 1988. The fifth representatively piece--“The Ghosts of Mrs. Gandhi” was written in the meantime of the novels--The Calcutta Chromosome and The Glass Palace. “An Egyptian in Baghdad”, Ghosh wrote the essay in 1990 when he was working on his very different project--In an Antique Land.

In these essays of Ghosh, “The Human Comedy in Cairo”, “Petrofiction: The Oil Encounter and the Novel,” and “Empire and soul: a review of the Baburnama,” have his views about some different people and Places. “The Relations of Envy in an Egyptian village”, “Categories of Labour and the Orientation of the Fellah Economy” and “The Slave of M.S. H.6” were written for publication in learned journals. These articles were written when Ghosh was doing his research work in the institution. “The Relation of Envy” and “Categories of Labour” are based on chapters of the thesis for which Ghosh was awarded by D. Phil. [Ph.D.] in Social Anthropology by Oxford University in 1982.

Ghosh says these articles were written in Trivandrum at the Centre for Development Studies, where he also wrote the first draft of Circle of Reason. “The Slave of M. S. H. 6” has biographical information written in 1992, in Kolkata where in that article Abraham Ben Yiju is described as a slave.

Essays by Amitav Ghosh, “The Diaspora in Indian Culture” appeared in 1990, “The Global Reservation: Notes toward an Ethnography of International Peace Keeping” was plenary address of Ghosh at Annual Meeting of the society for Cultural Anthropology in Washington in 1993. “The Fundamentalist Challenge”, Ghosh firstly delivered at a seminar of writers and religion in Washington, 1994. It was then published in a journal, Wilson Quarterly in 1995.

Ghosh delivered a lecture as “The March of the Novel through History: the Testimony of my Grandfather’s book case” at University of Iowa in 1996. Later it was published in U.K. in A Journal of Post-Colonial Writing. The article was awarded a ‘Pushcart Price’ in 1999. “The Greatest Sorrow: Times of Joy Recalled in Wretchedness” was also a lecture which he delivered in 2001.

All these varied collections of pieces are gathered together in the book--The Imam and the Indian, prose pieces by Amitav Ghosh, 2002. In this book, Amitav Ghosh explains his views: Reader can get idea as he has arranged the essays in accordance with circumstances of their writing. Information of the Prose Pieces is given as essays on many themes such as fundamentalism, history of the novel, Egyptian culture and, literature. His writings appear in Newspaper and magazines in India and abroad.”

In The Iman and the Indian: prose pieces, there are some essays with journey theme. In ‘The March of the Novel through history: The Testimony of my Grandfather’s Bookcase’, the essayist has shown his journey in home and in the world. ‘The Ghat of the only World: Agha shahid Ali in Brooklyn’ is a memory of Ghosh. Here he says that identity is depending upon the place that is homeland. Here in the essay Agha Shahid Ali attacks on the west. “The Hunger of Stones” a translation of “KshudhitaPashan” by Rabindranath Tagore, is an allegory of colonial condition. It is a journey into past life and comes into present. In ‘Empire and Soul: a review of The Baburnama’, Ghosh describes Babur’s venture to come to India from Kabul for establishing his empire. Journey Motif in prose pieces makes us aware of the essay by Ghosh as diaspora.

Ghosh views to focus the themes in the essays--journey into past life, the importance of homeland when one is away from his land, the description of war, history of invasion of Mughal Empire in India and political scenario of India.

“Some of his essays have similarity with the texts of Hegel”, said Salman Rushdie in respect to the themes--travel mystery, discovery and issues like displacement and migration. Ghosh’s brilliance and style of writing can be seen in prose as well as other genre.

An exhaustive study has been made on journey motif in the preceding essay. Author gives good examples through his works. Through his essays, reader travels in his homeland and in the world along with author. Characters represent anxiety and desire to move toward knowledge in his essays.

In all these comprehensible essays, journey is to attain higher and noble values. Journey surely ends at a particular destination. But before the end it is rewarding and satisfying.

**References:**

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