

# CONCEPTS AND ISSUES IN POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE - I

## Part I

### Unit Structure:

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Colonialism
- 1.2 Postcolonialism
- 1.3 The Historical and Ideological Moorings behind Commonwealth Literature
- 1.4 Summing up
- 1.5 Important Questions
- 1.6 References

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### 1.0 OBJECTIVES

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Dear learner, this chapter will familiarise you with concepts such as Colonialism and Postcolonialism. Also, the chapter will deal with The Historical and Ideological Moorings behind Commonwealth Literature. You will develop a basic understanding of Colonialism and Postcolonialism. The chapter will also acquaint you with some of the major and minor concepts in Postcolonialism. Besides, you will develop an understanding of terms like "Exotic Other" and "Demonic Other, History, Nation Race, Gender Black Feminism etc.

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### 1.1 COLONIALISM

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Colonialism is the practise of one country acquiring complete or partial political control over another and settling there with settlers in order to exploit that country's resources and economy. It might be challenging to differentiate colonialism from imperialism because both involve the political and economic dominance of a dominating country over a weaker territory. From the dawn of time until the beginning of the 20th century, strong nations fought openly for control of new territories through colonialism. By the time World War I broke out in 1914, nearly every continent had been colonised by European nations. Although colonialism is not as actively implemented as it once was, there is evidence that it still has influence in the modern world. Let us take a look at the following points to understand Colonialism in a better way.

- The process of a nation acquiring whole or partial governmental authority over a dependent nation, territory, or population is known as colonialism.
- When people from one nation move to another in order to take advantage of their population and natural resources, this is known as colonialism.
- The indigenous populations of the nations that colonise are often subjected to attempts by colonial powers to impose their own languages and traditions on them.
- Both imperialism and colonialism include the use of force and authority to dominate over another nation or people.
- By 1914, Europeans had colonised the vast majority of the world's nations.

So, from the above words, we can define colonialism as an act of political and economic supremacy in which settlers from a foreign power take control of a nation and its people. Most colonial nations strive to profit by exploiting the people and resources of the nations they have conquered. During this process, colonisers attempt to impose their political, religious, and cultural views on the native population, occasionally employing force. While most people have an unfavourable opinion of colonisation because of its often terrible history and resemblance to imperialism, some nations have profited from it. Singapore, which was a British colony from 1826 until 1965, for example, attributes its exceptional economic growth to "valuable components of colonial legacy." Colonization frequently offered poor or emerging countries with immediate access to Europe's bloated trading market. During the industrial revolution, the demand for natural resources in the major European countries increased significantly, and colonial powers were able to export them for great profits.

The benefits were substantial, especially for many European, African, and Asian nations affected by British colonisation. Along with lucrative trade deals, English institutions such as common law, private property rights, and formal banking and lending processes provided the colonies with a firm foundation for economic growth, leading to their independence. However, colonialism's detrimental repercussions frequently exceeded its beneficial ones. The governments of the invading nations regularly imposed harsh new rules and fees on indigenous people. It was normal practise to confiscate and destroy native lands and cultures. As a result of the combined effects of colonialism and imperialism, many indigenous people were sold into slavery, slaughtered, or died of disease and starvation. Many others were evicted from their homes and scattered over the world. Many African-Americans, for example, may trace their history back to the so-called "Scramble for Africa," an unparalleled period of imperialism and colonialism that occurred between 1880 and 1900 and ended in European nations occupying the bulk of the African continent. Today, only Ethiopia and Liberia are believed to have avoided European

colonialism. Now let's try to understand Colonialism and Imperialism together.

Although the phrases colonialism and imperialism are frequently used interchangeably, they have slightly different connotations. Imperialism is the political ideology that motivates colonialism, which is the physical act of occupying another nation. To put it another way, colonialism might be seen as an instrument of imperialism. Both colonialism and imperialism involve the subjugation of one nation by another. Similar to colonialism, imperialism is a means by which the aggressor nations seek to make money and gain a military edge in the area. Imperialism, on the other hand, refers to the direct or indirect political and financial dominance of another country, either with or without the need for a physical presence. This is in contrast to colonialism, which always entails the direct establishment of physical settlements in another country. Countries that engage in colonialism typically do so in order to gain economically from the exploitation of the colonised country's priceless natural and human resources. As opposed to this, nations pursue imperialism in an effort to expand their political, economic, and military hegemony over vast territories, if not entire continents.

America, Australia, New Zealand, Algeria, and Brazil are a few examples of nations whose history are usually seen as having been impacted by colonialism. These nations came under the rule of numerous settlers from European powers. Examples of typical situations of imperialism, in which foreign rule is established without any meaningful settlement, are European dominance of the majority of African nations in the late 1800s and American dominance of the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Hope you understand the difference between Colonialism and Imperialism. Now, let us take a look at the history of Colonialism.

Around 1550 BCE, the ancient civilizations of Greece, Rome, Egypt, and Phoenicia started expanding their dominion over neighbouring and non-contiguous lands. This is when colonialism first emerged. These prehistoric civilizations built colonies using their greater military power, utilising the knowledge and resources of the people they conquered to grow their empires. During the Age of Exploration in the 15th century, the first stage of modern colonialism got underway. The longest-lasting of the contemporary European colonial empires, the Portuguese took control of the North African nation of Ceuta in 1419 in search of new trade routes and civilizations outside of Europe.

Spain opted to embark on exploration after Portugal expanded its empire by colonising the populated islands of Madeira and Cape Verde in the central Atlantic. Christopher Columbus, a Spanish explorer, set sail in 1492 in pursuit of a western sea passage to China and India. Instead, the start of Spanish colonialism was signaled by his landing in the Bahamas. Spain and Portugal continued to acquire and exercise power over indigenous countries in the Americas, India, Africa, and Asia as they competed with one another for new areas to exploit. The establishment of the French and Dutch overseas empires, as well as the English overseas

possessions, notably the colonial United States, which would later grow into the vast British Empire, contributed to the flourishing of colonialism during the 17th century.

The first period of decolonization, during which the majority of the European colonies in the Americas attained their independence, began with the end of the American Revolution in 1783. The loss of their New World territories irrevocably damaged both Spain and Portugal. The Old-World nations of South Africa, India, and Southeast Asia were the focus of colonial endeavours by Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany. European colonialism was described as "New Imperialism" during the period from the opening of the Suez Canal and the Second Industrial Revolution in the late 1870s until the outbreak of World War I in 1914. The learners are advised to read these concepts in detail for the deeper understanding of the same. Now, let us take a glance over Postcolonialism.

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## 1.2 POSTCOLONIALISM

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Postcolonialism is a critical examination of Third World nations' histories, cultures, literature, and discourse in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean Islands, and South America. It is concerned in the study of colonisation, which dates back to the Renaissance, decolonization (the process of reclaiming and recreating indigenous cultures), and the neocolonizing process (the result of postmodernism and late capitalism, in which multinational businesses rule the world). By concentrating on the continual power struggles between cultures and the junction of cultures, postcolonialism analyses the metaphysical, ethical, and political problems surrounding cultural identity, gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, subjectivity, language, and power.

Postcolonial literary criticism, which draws inspiration from poststructuralist and postmodern ideas of decentering, challenges the universalist claims of literature, identifies colonial sympathies in the canon, and replaces colonial metanarratives with counter-narratives of racialization through tactics such as separatism, nativism, cultural syncretism, hybridity, mimicry, active participation, and assimilation. It criticises cultural hierarchy and modernity's Eurocentrism, both of which are backed by an anti-essentialist view of identity and culture. The *Wretched of the Earth* (1961) by Franz Fanon, *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, *In Other Worlds* (1987) by Gayatri Spivak, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989) by Bill Ashcroft et al, *Nation and Narrative* (1990) by Homi K. Bhabha, and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) by Edward Said are some of the major theoretical works in postcolonial theory. Indigenous peoples from previously colonised and marginalised nations are increasingly discovering their voices in literature and attempting to establish their own claims about their visions, stories, and histories.

In order to highlight the modalities of representation through which Europeans built Indians in politically biased ways, postcolonial criticism tries to expose literary personalities, themes, and spokespersons who have

supported imperial ideology, colonial supremacy, and ongoing Western hegemony. It investigates its racial, gendered, and colonial assumptions beyond the outwardly universal, aesthetic, and humanist themes. Postcolonial critics reinterpret and analyse the features of literary works by focusing on the circumstances surrounding their creation, exposing any hidden colonial ideals. This technique can be seen in Chinua Achebe's rereading of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Edward Said's rereading of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Sara Suleri's rereading of Kipling's *Kim*, and Rereading of E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* by Homi K. Bhabha. Now, let us take a look at the major key concepts in Postcolonialism.

The "**Exotic Other**" and the "**Demonic Other**" are two concepts related to othering. The Demonic Other is portrayed as inferior, negative, savage, and wicked in books like *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*, whereas the Exotic Other expresses a fascination with the innate dignity and beauty of the primitive/undeveloped other, as expressed in Yeats' Byzantium poetry.

**Diaspora:** The term "diaspora" refers to people who have been uprooted or dispersed from their native lands and who possess and share a collective memory and myth. The nostalgic memory of "home" or an inherited ideology of "home" becomes a personal identity as well as a collective identity of members of a particular community. They have no real roots anywhere and exist only in their "Imagined homelands" in their minds. They compromise between their culture and the host country's at the new place. For instance, numerous authors, including Bharati Mukherjee, Meena Alexander, Menon Marath, Dom Moraes, Farrukh Dhondy, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, and others, have thoroughly studied the Indian diasporic experience. Despite the possibility of visiting the location that is perceived as the place of origin, diasporic theorists Avtar Brah and Robin Cohen suggest the idea of a home as a mythical one, a place of longing in the diasporic imagination, and a place to which there can be no return.

**History:** writing the writers of the Third World countries are becoming more interested and eager to write about their native histories, problems with colonisation, and anti-colonial resistance in the wake of decolonization, after long years of imperial suppression and effacement of identity. They have written case studies of cultural colonisation, native identity, and anti-colonial resistance. Thus, the culturalist nationalist strain of anti-colonial writing is prevalent in the first phase, and it is embodied in movements like **Negritude**, **Africanite**, and **African Aesthetic**. These battles were an attempt to free themselves from colonial attitudes and ways of thinking on both an individual and a colonial level. The postcolonial obsession with history, which is closely related to the overarching objective of decolonization, examines topics like questioning the effects of colonialism, particularly in terms of cultural alienation; the anti-colonial struggles of the Third World and the rise of nationalism; the creation of mimic men in the colonial culture; the appropriation of history by the colonial master; and attempts to retrieve and rewrite their own histories by the former colonisers. A postcolonial culture's search for its past is almost always accompanied by a keen realisation that it is

impossible to recover native history free of colonial influence. Underneath the layers of colonial historiography, the Subaltern Studies project looks for the local resistance to colonialism.

**Nation:** Postcolonial authors are aware of their part in establishing nations. By rejecting and resisting Western constructions of the "other" as being primitive, savage, demonic, etc. and by attempting to locate a pre-colonial past that would aid in the redefinition of a nation and the projection of a destiny and future, the nation-building project in postcolonial literature seeks to erase the colonial past.

**Race:** According to Michael Banton, the idea of race has served as the foundation for prejudice and disempowerment. In social, political, and cultural theory, race has grown to be a crucial term. Critical race studies, which covers ethnicity studies, minority literature studies, and studies of particular traditions in literature and philosophy, directly confronts issues of race and racial prejudice. Race and ethnicity issues have greater political and social relevance because they give rise to collective, communal identities. Cultural studies, media studies, black british studies, Asian American studies, etc. have all benefited greatly from the political reading and critical practise of racial studies.

**Gender:** In postcolonial gender discourse, it is discussed how patriarchy and imperialism both colonised women on two different levels. In the latter half of the 20th century, gender and sexuality emerged as major themes in postcolonial writing. Anita Desai, Ama Ata Aidoo, Suniti Namjoshi, Buchi Emecheta, and Nawal El Saadawi have all written about gender and the place of women in postcolonial societies. Native Canadian and African-American women like Gloria Anzaldua and Maria Campbell have written a lot of autobiographical pieces about the relationship between gender and racial/ethnic identities. The state of women in Third World nations is examined in postcolonial gender studies in relation to how class, caste, the economy, political empowerment, and literacy have impacted this situation. The influence of "First World Feminism" on Third World writers while investigating the potential of Third World Feminism is another fascinating field of study.

**Black Feminism:** The dominant roles of black males in the civil rights movement and white women in feminist propaganda forced the emergence of Black Feminism, which emphasised the close relationship between sexism and racism. The marginalised, intersectional condition of Black women is discussed in Kimberle Crenshaw's Identity Politics, Women, Race and Class by Angela Davis, and Womanism by Alice Walker. Combahee River Collective, a Black feminist lesbian organisation founded by activists like Barbara Smith, is fundamentally distinct from "white feminism."

**Neocolonialism:** is the term used to describe the European imperial powers' ongoing economic hegemony over and exploitation of the Third World's "politically free" nations. Neocolonialism is most frequently accomplished through a network of politicians, bankers, generals, and



chief executive officers rather than just state control by Euro-American forces. International aid and development programmes frequently coincide with economic policy directives that cripple the economy of Third World nations. Therefore, a more hazardous kind of colonialism is neocolonialism.

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### 1.3 THE HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL MOORINGS BEHIND COMMONWEALTH LITERATURE

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The writings of "members" of the former British Empire are sometimes referred to as Commonwealth Literature, Post-Colonial Literature in English, New Literature in English, or World Writing in English. The quantity of titles, however, indicates the expanding significance of these writings on a global scale, as demonstrated this month at the London Festival of Commonwealth Literature, which featured authors from all over the world. They may include Michael Ondaatje, a Sri Lankan-Canadian author of "The English Patient," the book that served as the basis for the Oscar-winning motion picture. The Commonwealth Foundation, the University of London, and other sponsors will support a nine-day festival to commemorate the Year of the Commonwealth in Britain and the 10th anniversary of the Commonwealth Writers Prize.

Salman Rushdie, an Indian-born author of the *Satanic Verses* and *Midnight's Children*, once argued that "Commonwealth Literature Does Not Exist," and numerous writers have concurred with him in this assertion *"Isn't this the very oddest of beasts... a school of literature whose supposed members deny vehemently that they belong to it? Worse, these denials are simply disregarded! It seems the creature has taken on a life of its own,"* Rushdie has written. In his opinion, the closest definition of Commonwealth literature was "that body of writing written in the English language, by persons who are not themselves white Britons, Irish, or citizens of the United States of America," which came off as patronising. Rushdie explained that certain so-called Commonwealth authors have more in common with Latin American authors' "magical realism" than with writers from other former British colonies, and that the formation of this "phantom category hid what was really going on and worth talking about."

But even if there is no Commonwealth Literature, there is undoubtedly a Commonwealth. The (British) Commonwealth of Nations, as it was originally known, is a group of states made up of the United Kingdom and its former colonies, as well as any dependent countries. Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand were part of the original alliance when it was formed in 1931; despite their self-government, they swore allegiance to the British Crown. In 1949, when participants decided to do away with both the term "British" and the idea of allegiance, the group was enlarged and reorganised. The Commonwealth is a loose association of 53 nations with a total of over a billion people today.

Thus, the term "Commonwealth Literature" is used to describe literary creations from nations that were formerly a part of the British Empire. However, it often does not include novels from the United Kingdom unless they are written by residents who are natives of a former colony. The greatest irony, however, is that a significant portion of the best literature to come out of Britain in recent years was written by authors from or with roots in colonies. These authors include the late Jean Rhys, Timothy Mo, V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, and Ben Okri from Dominica, Hong Kong, Trinidad, India and Nigeria respectively. Their success has resulted in publications like books and articles under the title "The Empire Writes Back."

The terms "post-colonial literatures" and "Commonwealth Literature" are sometimes used synonymously, but the latter term may also refer to works in French or Portuguese. According to a recent analysis, the majority of critics concur that the term "post-colonial" in the English context encompasses the literatures of South Pacific Island nations, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, the Caribbean, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, and Sri Lanka. A similar list of countries would go under the heading "Commonwealth." Although some proponents of post-colonial theory would also include the United States in their category, proponents of the term Commonwealth would unquestionably leave out the United States while including nations like South Africa for "reasons of completeness." Despite leaving the Commonwealth in 1961, South Africa returned in 1994.

The term "Commonwealth Literature" is merely an academic designation that has no meaning to the general public. Asking someone to name five well-known Commonwealth authors will undoubtedly result in a blank expression. Does Jamaica Kincaid, who was born in Antigua but has spent a lot of time here, fall under this description? What about Indian writer Bharati Mukherjee, who chose American citizenship and calls herself an "American"? The fact that so-called Commonwealth literature is authored in one location by authors from another location may be a significant part of it. A large number of modern authors have chosen to reside in Canada or the United States, as opposed to an earlier generation of writers who decided to live in Britain. Along with the Indian/Asian diaspora, a sizeable portion of the West Indian, or Caribbean, diaspora—which is a subset of the African diaspora—has settled in Canada. To name just a few, worldwide authors with Canadian connections include Rohinton Mistry, Cyril Dabydeen, Michael Ondaatje, Olive Senior, and Neil Bissoondath. Many of these authors' parents were also descended from settlers who came from different colonies. As a result, displacement is a literary style element for them. English is perhaps the single element that all Commonwealth literature has in common, yet it is English with a twist. For instance, in a Caribbean short story, the narration might be in "Queen's English" while the dialogue might be in Creole. The use of native language without translation is the same in both Indian and African literature. The fact that many authors in Commonwealth nations have opted not to write in English, either to make a political statement or to reach readers who do not speak the language, complicates matters.



The title "Commonwealth Literature" may ultimately serve solely to highlight the literature of those who might not otherwise be given notice. Prizes for writers from the four regions of Africa, the Caribbean/Canada, Eurasia, and Southeast Asia/South Pacific will be given out as part of the Festival in London. It is a solid bet that no author, whether Indian, Caribbean, British, or African, will argue about the phrase when he or she receives the check because the award is called the "Commonwealth Writers Prize."

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## 1.4 SUMMING UP

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Dear learner, let us sum up what we have learned in this chapter. We discussed concepts such as Colonialism and Postcolonialism. We have arrived at a basic understanding of the Historical and Ideological Moorings behind Commonwealth Literature. The chapter also discussed some of the major and minor concepts in Postcolonialism. We then took a cursory look at terms like Exotic Other" and "Demonic Other, History, Nation Race, Gender Black Feminism etc. with illustrations.

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## 1.5 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

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Consider working on the following concepts with the help of notes and the references given at the end of the chapter.

- The role of Colonialism in the history of colonized nations.
- Write a detailed note on the impact of Colonialism on the contemporary literature.
- What is the essence of Post-Colonialism? Explain with suitable literary examples.
- Comment on the emergence and growth of decolonization.
- Write an essay on "the Historical and Ideological Moorings behind Commonwealth Literature".
- Write a detailed note on the post-colonial concepts such as Exotic Other" and "Demonic Other, History, Nation Race, Gender Black Feminism.

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## CONCEPTS AND ISSUES IN POSTCOLONIAL LITERATURE-II

### Part II

#### Unit Structure:

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Orientalism
- 2.2 Neo-Colonialism
- 2.3 Cultural Hybridity
- 2.4 Summing up
- 2.5 Important Questions
- 2.6 References

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### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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Dear learner, this chapter will familiarise you with concepts such as Orientalism, Neo-Colonialism and Cultural Hybridity. You will develop a basic understanding of its origin and development. The chapter will also acquaint you with some of the important thinkers and their views on the above terms. Besides, you will develop an understanding of the relation or interconnections of Orientalism, Neo-Colonialism and Cultural Hybridity. And its impact on current popular culture.

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### 2.1 ORIENTALISM

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Orientalism is a method of viewing and hence categorising Middle Eastern and Asian cultures as inferior, backward, strange, or in need of Western rescue. Though not expressed directly, it is a prevalent or inherent motivation behind stereotypes, advertising, latent bias, appropriation, and attempts to "respect" such cultures. Most people don't notice when a Western corporation starts an ad campaign using a lady costumed as a geisha. When many people hear the name of a Japanese film, they immediately think of ninjas and shoguns, exquisite courtesans and honour-driven carnage.

A Middle Eastern palace inspires images of soft sofas, harems of seductively naked women, and bejewelled emperors worshipped by nameless throngs. An Asian army is frequently compared to a faceless "horde," such as the Mongols, who won only on the strength of their numbers. While not everyone allows such preconceptions or ideas to

penetrate their minds, such pictures and definitions are ubiquitous in the Western world and are both direct and indirect outcomes of Orientalism.

Edward Said used the term Orientalism in 1978 when he published his seminal book of the same name on the subject. Edward Said, an Arab-Palestinian residing in Western countries, was intensely aware of the cultural view of the East and examined how it manifested in politics and culture. His disputed book gave the world a formal explanation for something that has been going on for at least two thousand years. The epic conflicts between the Greeks and Persians may have been the source of such psychological and physical hostility—a major clash of the western and eastern worlds—but the fight has evolved and grown more sophisticated through the years.

This early exposure of the "civilised, heroic, virile, and honourable" Western man to the "barbaric, primitive, strange, and feeble" Eastern fighters lay the groundwork for prejudice against "the East's" people, ideas, and influences. Exaggerated claims and implausible tales are intertwined with myth, tradition, magic, and folklore in the earliest Western history books and portrayals of the Middle East and Asia. Once the Silk Road was created in the 13th and 14th centuries, grandiose myths returned, often spiced up with dramatic embellishments to emphasise the unusual and exotic nature of this "Other" country.

Given the limited travel between these two vast regions of the world over generations and centuries, some of these notions got ingrained in Western perceptions of Eastern culture. When the period of colonialism began, Western empires felt empowered by their claimed superiority, believing it was a sacred mission to bring civilization to such savages, to "save" them from themselves. To this day, the West's imperialism in the East continues, with perpetual oil wars and Middle Eastern interventions, as well as the constant export of Western products and pop culture ideas.

Orientalism is derived from the term Orient, which was coined to designate the East, as opposed to the Occident, which represents the West. The Occident was viewed as a normal part of the world, as well as the centre of importance, with civilization and the assistance of a single god. The Orient, on the other hand, was "Other," aberrant from civilised society norms, where several gods were commonly worshipped. The Occidental men were strong individuals, heroic and noble, virile and sexual, but also godly, moral, and truthful. Western women were god-fearing and hard-working, chaste and faithful to their husbands.

In the East, males were thought to be immoral and weak, faceless and physically inferior, and hideous in appearance or behaviour, making them easy to equate to animals or non-humans. Orientalism portrayed Eastern women as highly sexualized, immoral, and disloyal, yearning for the virility of Western males. Orientalism has incorrectly defined the East as everything the West is not, or at least everything the West aspires not to be, over the years. In the past, this Otherness has made it simple to dehumanise Middle Eastern and Asian communities, as evidenced by the

statistical reporting of losses in Vietnam and Cambodia, Russia, and Serbia, and the two decades of conflict in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, and Syria. This artificial physiological distinction enabled Japanese citizens to be interned in America, horrible brutality against Asian-American men and women to this day, and possibly even the nuclear devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the sole military application of atomic weapons in history.

Some people wonder if Orientalism is racist because it is abstract and nebulous—a philosophy, a state of mind, a Western impulse, a horrible explanation. While this centuries-old perspective of the West towards the East is not intrinsically racist, it is intentionally ignorant, and can often lead to more tangibly racist behaviours and aberrant conduct towards persons considered as part of this "Other".

Humans may appear to be technologically evolved and sophisticated in our belief structures, but tribalism has always been and will always be a component of how we interact with other members of the species. Oriental vs. Occidental is an obsolete and harmful tribal definition binary, one that appears increasingly irrelevant in a globalised world of mixed-population states, but it is still very much alive.

Humans recognise the concept of "Other" immediately after developing a feeling of "self," but in Orientalism, the "Other" represents more than half of the world's population. Orientalism is a pernicious and still prevalent mentality that holds the East to be inferior or diametrically opposed to the West in all aspects.

Knowing this notion and being aware of the various ways it might manifest itself can help you walk through the world as a free individual of the globe, free of tribal bias or apprehension about the unknown. With this, let us now take a glance at Neo-Colonialism.

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## 2.2 NEO-COLONIALISM

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The concept "Neocolonialism" primarily refers to the activities and consequences of some colonial-era remains and agencies in a given society. Post-colonial studies have thoroughly demonstrated that, despite obtaining independence, the influences of colonialism and its agents are still very much evident in the lives of the majority of former colonies. Almost every area of ex-colonized society retains colonial influences. Neocolonialism is concerned with these influences, their agents, and their consequences.

The word neocolonialism was originally used in Jean Paul Sartre's *Colonialism and Neocolonialism* (1964). The phrase has become a key concept in African philosophy, particularly in African political philosophy. Sartre argued in the book for the immediate disengagement of France's grasp on its ex-colonies, as well as total freedom from the persistent influence of French policy on those colonies, particularly Algeria. However, the phrase was originally used in Africa at one of the "All African People's Conferences" (AAPC), a movement of political

groupings from colonial-ruled African countries that conducted conferences in Accra, Ghana, in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The term "neocolonialism" received its first official definition in the AAPC's "1961 Resolution against Neocolonialism.". It was defined as the deliberate and continuing existence of the colonial power in self-governing African states by making these states victims of political, mental, economic, social, military, and technological forms of dominance carried out through oblique and clever means that did not include aggressive force. The word neocolonialism first appeared in print in 1965, with the publication of Kwame Nkrumah's *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. Since then, neocolonialism has become an issue in African philosophy, spawning a body of literature that has been published and discussed by scholars in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond. As a subject of African philosophy, representation of the term neocolonialism necessitates a critical examination of Africa's current socioeconomic and political state following the end of colonial rule, as well as the persistence of the ex-colonizers' socioeconomic and political ideologies in Africa.

Former colonial rulers' subtle dissemination of socioeconomic and political activities aimed at sustaining capitalism, neoliberal globalisation, and cultural subordination of their former colonies is known as neo-colonialism. Former colonial masters guarantee that newly independent colonies remain economically and politically dependent on them in a neocolonial state. The colonial masters' home governments benefit economically, politically, ideologically, culturally, and militarily from the dependency and exploitation of the now independent colonies' socioeconomic and political existence. This is typically accomplished through indirect management of newly independent states' economic and political practises, rather than outright military control, as was the case during the colonial era.

The concept of neocolonialism may be traced back to Karl Marx's (1818-1883) seminal critique of capitalism as a stage in the socioeconomic development of human society. The importance of Marxist socioeconomic philosophy in modern times cannot be questioned. The socio-economic theory continues to be heavily influenced by Marx's model of society as being composed of an economic foundation, legal and political frameworks, and a specific type of social consciousness, which was articulated in both *The Capital* (1972) and the *Preface to the Critique of Political Economy* (1977). Marx proposes hypotheses that explain a certain type of evil under capitalism. Today, capitalism has developed multinational businesses capable of amassing far more effective intelligence behind their often-sinister objectives than any nation's government can amass in order to keep multinationals at bay. As things currently stand in the capitalist system, there is evidence that some of Marx's predictions were correct. The world appears to continue to accept the wealthy 1%'s overwhelming control of economic and political resources. Marx's predictions have undoubtedly been validated in more ways than have been disproved.



In a nutshell, neocolonialism is a catch-all term for any policies, infrastructures, and people actively contributing to society who indirectly contribute to perpetuating colonial practises. The essence of neocolonialism is that, while the state appears to be independent and in complete control of its affairs, it is actually influenced by outside economic and political forces (Nkrumah 1965, 7). The loss of authority of state machinery to neocolonialists is at the heart of Nkrumah's argument.

In a neocolonial situation, imperialists typically maintain their control in as many areas of the former colony as possible, reducing it to the status of a neocolony rather than an independent state. To that purpose, the state looks up to its imperialists in politics, economy, religion, and even education, rather than improving on its own indigenous culture and practises. The more technologically advanced nations ensure their connection with low-income nations through neocolonialism, such that this relationship effectively eliminates the possibility for the development of the smaller states while contributing to the capital gain of the technologically advanced nations.

Achille Mbembe investigates the nature of neocolonialism in Africa further in *On the Postcolony*, claiming that the underlying philosophy on which neocolonialism is based consists of bald assertions with no tenable arguments to support them. Evidently, once colonialism ended in Africa, the West did not believe that Africans were capable of organising themselves socially, economically, and politically, in his opinion. According to Mbembe, the rationale for holding such notions and propagating them is simply because the African is thought to be cognitively weak and prone to irrationality. According to him, Africans' ability to rationally organise themselves is "perceived through a negative perspective" (Mbembe 2001, 1). This view depicts the African as never having traits and characteristics that are legitimately part of human nature, or rather, those things and attributes are normally of lesser value, importance, and quality (Mbembe 2001, 1). In other words, because Africans and other people who are different from the West in terms of race, language, and culture lack the power, rigour, quality, and intellectual analytical abilities that characterise Western philosophical and political traditions (Mbembe 2001 2), it is difficult to believe that they would have the rational capacity to organise themselves socially, economically, and politically. Mbembe retorts to this blatant declaration and negative interpretation, claiming that the West has always had insurmountable difficulty embracing an African theory on the "experience of the Other," or on the question of the "I" of others, which the West appears to perceive as foreign to it. To put it another way, the conventional Western tradition has always denied the existence of any "self" other than one's own. It has always disputed the concept of a shared human nature, claiming that "a humanity shared with others has long posed, and continues to pose, a dilemma for Western consciousness" (Mbembe 2001, 2).

Essentially, this deception is not unique to the neocolonial period. Its history can be traced back to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonisation. V. Y. Mudimbe claims in his book, *The Invention of Africa*,

that three strategies are emblematic of the colonial structure in Africa: the dominance of physical space, mind reformation of natives, and integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective. This structure represents three complementing dimensions of colonial organisation, encompassing the physical, human, and spiritual aspects of the colonising process (Mudimbe 1988, 2). This colonial system emphasises a historicity that encourages discourses on African primitivism, which is used to rationalise why the continent needed to be conquered and colonised in the first place (Mudimbe 1988, 20).

Based on this different reality of each culture, William Abraham addresses the problems and challenges that face post-colonial Africa in relation to the continent's contact with Europe in *The Mind of Africa*. Abraham recognises the existence of neocolonialism in Africa, but offers an integrative type of culture in which certain beneficial features of Western culture might be combined with African culture to build a single tie (Abraham 1962, 83). Despite the ongoing social, economic, and political transformation in Africa as a result of neocolonialism, Abraham emphasises that Africa's culture must be protected from being degraded by Western influence and civilization, or what he refers to as "the externality of an outsider" (Abraham 1962, iv).

The foregoing analysis of the nature of neocolonialism and its various manifestations minimally elaborates on the themes of subjection and the perceived imposition of a hegemonic economic, political, and social order by imperialists, primarily through trade relations or development assistance disbursements. The conclusion of this is that post-colonial African states appear to have failed to apply themselves to the difficulties of self-sufficiency.

The history of neocolonialism is an examination of the origins of neocolonialism in Africa. This analysis illustrates how the concept of neocolonialism was fostered before most African republics gained independence. Without a doubt, the term neocolonialism is related to other themes. This explains why the terms colonialism, imperialism, decolonization, and globalisation are critical to comprehending neocolonialism. This suggests that neocolonial aspects may remain a part of Africa's socioeconomic, cultural, and political existence. However, some of the social and political philosophical problems that Africans may continue to have include: Can neocolonialism be abolished in Africa? In terms of the effects on the African economy, can the virtues of neocolonialism exceed the negatives or vice versa? Will Africa ever be fully free? And the same applies to all the colonies. Think about India and study critically the traits of neocolonialism in Indian culture.

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## 2.3 CULTURAL HYBRIDITY

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**Hybridity/Syncretism:** These terms refer to the schizophrenic state that migrant experiences while trying to meld their native culture with that of their new home without giving up either. The negotiation of two identities, or the split consciousness of being both but not entirely, numerous

identities or solidarities, or in extreme situations, the reassertion of native cultural identity as evident in cultural fundamentalism, is the main theme of postcolonial diasporic literature. The work of political theorists like Will Kymlicka, who advocates for "multicultural citizenship" in a globalised society, has had an impact on hybridity in postcolonial studies. In order to move beyond the "constructed" limits of both, this results in the emergence of new identities where the original identity, historical experiences, and memories are not abandoned but are instead constructively merged with the host culture. This helps forge solidarity against fundamental racial oppression. Stuart Hall and other cultural theorists have pushed for "new ethnicities" that reject notions of a fundamental black or white identity in favour of a "genuine variety of interests and identities."

Two-fold consciousness **Double consciousness** is a key idea developed by W.E.B. Du Bois that parallels Frantz Fanon's claim in *Black Skin, White Masks* that the black constantly sees himself through the eyes of the white. Du Bois defined double consciousness as "two souls, two thoughts[...] in one dark body," but Meena Alexander later changed it to "many souls, many thoughts [...] in one dark body," referring to the migrant's experience in multiple subject positions, which is a recurring theme in the writings of Ben Okri, Amitav Ghosh, Derek Walcott, Salman Rushdie, Caryl Phillips, and others.

In her book *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, Gayatri Spivak popularised the word "subaltern," which was first used by Antonio Gramsci to describe the working class. Spivak raises questions regarding the subaltern's voice in resistance to the coloniser and the subaltern's voice's validity, asking whether the subaltern speaks or is spoken for. As a result, Spivak mocks the hypocrisy of postcolonial discourses, which ostensibly strive to provide previously unheard voices with a platform while actually perpetuating the marginalisation and subalternity of the downtrodden. In her essay, Spivak criticised the work of the Subaltern Studies collective, which also included Dipesh Chakrabarty, Shahid Amin, and Ranajit Guha.

In postcolonial and cultural studies, the concept of 'cultural hybridity' is examined from a variety of theoretical and disciplinary viewpoints. It is also considered in light of globalization's cultural encounters, interferences, and exchanges. The old connotations of inferiority, impurity, and miscegenation linked with the term "hybrid" have been eliminated, and it is now used as a very useful phrase for comprehending cross-cultural exchanges. The phrase 'Cultural Hybridity' refers to the various cultural intermixes. Many attempts to define the term "hybridity" have been undertaken in the context of postcolonial literature. However, as Robert Young correctly states, "there is no one or true definition of hybridity: it changes as it repeats, but it also changes as it repeats" (CD 25). It is difficult to cover the topic from all theoretical and critical angles because it is debated from so many. However, hybridity theorists share some ground and highlight certain comparable characteristics of the term. Postcolonial thought used the concept of hybridity at the initiative of Homi Bhabha, and later in the writings of Paul Gilroy, Stuart Hall, and

James Clifford, to denote the trans-cultural forms that came from linguistic, political, or ethnic intermixing. The concept of hybridity and its adoption, with all of its beneficial consequences, challenged established binaries and symmetries such as East/West, black/white, colonizer/colonized, majority/minority, self/other, interior/exterior, and so on.

Thus, hybridity contradicts the notion of racial and cultural authenticity, of permanent and essentialist identity. It supports the composite, the impure, the heterogeneous, and the eclectic by embracing blending, combining, and syncretism. It promotes itself as an alternative discourse that subverts the entire concept of a dominant culture and establishes a distinct canon that invites a re-examination of power relations. The goal for the cultural purity of a nation is unattainable, and such a desire might lead to cultural fundamentalism. The concept of cultural purity can lead to the horrors of segregation and ethnic cleansing, which can result in murder and carnage. In the current climate of globalisation, greater international solidarity is essential, which can be achieved by accepting the concept of cultural hybridity. Furthermore, in the name of globalisation, Western cultures are attempting to enslave the world to a distinct economic hegemony. The development of cultural hybridity can aid in the management of the West's desire to homogenise global cultures. Racial and cultural discrimination has become more prevalent in so-called cosmopolitan cultures.

Thus, multiculturalism has fostered the perception of ethnic groups' intrinsic purity. Culturally hybridised cultures can provide an appropriate response to the scourge of discrimination. We must rise above the cultural walls that separate the West and the East (Other), and such a constructive approach can lead us to accept the condition of hybridity, pluralism, and diaspora, as well as the concept of International Culture.

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## 2.4 SUMMING UP

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Dear learner, let us sum up what we have learned in this chapter. We discussed concepts such as Orientalism, Neocolonialism and Cultural Hybridity. We have arrived at a basic understanding of its history, its origin and development. The chapter also discussed some of the important thinkers and their perspectives on these terms. We then took a cursory look at the relation of east and west and how the discussed terms help western culture for its base in the world. And lastly, we studied the importance of impact of cultural hybridity and the impact of multiculturalism.

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## 2.5 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

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Consider working on the following concepts with the help of notes and the references given at the end of the chapter.

- The role of historical texts in the history of east.
- Write a detailed note on the characteristics of Orientalism.

- What is the essence of Neocolonialism and how it works?
- Comment on the emergence and growth of cultural hybridity or multiculturalism.
- Write an essay on “cultural hybridity”.
- Write a short note on Orientalism.
- Write a short note on Neocolonialism.

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## **CRITICAL STUDY OF HARIKUNZRU'S THE IMPRESSIONIST**

### **Unit structure :**

#### **3.0 Objective**

#### **3.1 Kunzru, Hari- The Impressionist**

##### **3.1.1 Introduction to Hari Kunzru**

##### **3.1.2 Plot**

##### **3.1.3 Summary of 'The Impressionist'**

##### **3.1.4 Analysis of 'The Impressionist'**

##### **3.1.5 Major characters in 'The Impressionist'**

##### **3.1.6 Critical review of the Central Character**

##### **3.1.7 Conclusion**

#### **3.2 Let's Sum up**

#### **3.3 Important Questions**

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### **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

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- To open up avenues of research in postcolonial studies by acquainting learners with the complexities and diversity in the studies of location and culture.
- To encourage learners to interrogate rigid frameworks of the literary canon while sensitizing them to the increasing marginalization of the literature of nation states with a history of colonial rule.
- To familiarize the learners with socio-cultural and political expressions in literary narratives from a postcolonial perspective.
- To orient the learners towards the concepts of postcolonial literature and introduce them to various schools of thought evident in academic deliberations.

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### **3.1 KUNZRU HARI- THE IMPRESSIONIST**

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#### **3.1.1 Introduction to Hari Kunzru**

Hari Mohan Nath Kunzru born on 1969 is a British novelist and journalist from London. He is born to a Kashmiri Pandit father, and a British mother. In the year 1997, Hari Kunzru began his career as a journalist for the

Wired UK and later worked for various acclaimed and well-known media houses such as The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, Time Out, and Sky TV. Other than his career as a journalist, Kunzru also worked for Wallpaper Magazine as a music editor and he was also a regular contributor to the British online magazine named Mute.

In 2003, Hari Kunzru published his first novel titled 'The Impressionist'. For his novel 'The Impressionist' he received a substantial and considerable advance of £1 million. Thereafter, the British author and journalist Kunzru has published eight novels, out of which most have been international bestsellers. In his remarkable and esteemed career, Hari Kunzru has received a number of literary awards, including the Betty Trask Award for his first novel 'The Impressionist' and the New York Times Notable Book of the Year for 'Transmission'. Kunzru's last book titled 'Red Pill', was published in the year 2020, which also become one of The New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2020.

Hari Kunzru is one of the most eminent and renowned authors of the post-colonial period. His works are known to scrutinize the darker shades of the colonial era, and their impact and effect on the lives of the global diaspora. Some of the considerable facets of his works are the pluralities of ethnicities, caste, class, and gender, and how colonialism, for the most part British imperialism, shaped these diverse individual identities. Hari Kunzru's novels also delves into the post-modern chaos within these multi-dimensional identities, additionally establishing him as a notable and distinguished post-colonial writer. Furthermore, Hari Kunzru is known to have a strong and robust political awareness, which can also be seen in his literary works. One such instance was Kunzru's refusal to accept the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize for his debut novel, 'The Impressionist', because he opined and observed that the sponsor, Mail on Sunday and its associate daily, the Daily Mail, insulted, demeaned and aggrieved refugees and those who seek asylum from foreign countries.

### 3.1.2 Plot

The novel 'The Impressionist' by Hari Kunzru concerns and solicitudes Pran Nath, who is also known throughout the book by several other names. Pran Nath Razdan is the child of a one-time affair between an English father and an Indian mother. His life from birth to roughly the age of twenty-two, as he travels from India to England to Africa during the time colonialism begins to come to a close. As the story progress, Pran Nath takes on distinct personalities-- some of which were given to him by others, while some willingly and readily picked up to his advantage—as he seeks a permanent and enduring identity.

### 3.1.3 Summary of 'The Impressionist'

From Victorian India to Edwardian London this remarkable and memorable novel 'The Impressionist' by Hari Kunzru amaze readers with its artistry and it also challenges what it means to be Indian or English, black or white, and every degree that lies between them.

Fathered, through circuitous prospects, by an Englishman, Pran Nath Razdan, the boy who will become the Impressionist, was passed off by his Indian mother as the child of her husband, an affluent man of high caste. He was grown up as a spoiled child, in a life full of luxury and comfort, just down river from the Taj Mahal. At the age of fifteen the news of Pran Nath's true parentage is disclosed to his father and he is tossed and thrown out into the street just because he was a social outcast. Hence, in this manner an extraordinary, near-mythical journey of a young man began who thought, he must reinvent himself to survive in the social where they were seen as a pariah an outcaste, not once, but many times. Pran Nath was imprisoned by a brothel and dressed in women's clothes, and his sensuous and voluptuous beauty is exploited and abused as he is made to become Rukhsana, a pawn, a chump in a game between colony and empire. To a corrupt and immoral British Major, he becomes Clive (i.e. cliff or slope), an object of desire and lust taught to be a model English schoolboy. After escaping to Bombay, Pran Nath begins a double life as Robert, dutiful and obedient foster child to a Scottish missionary couple and his identity as Pretty Bobby, he is seen as an errand boy and sometime procurer to the tawdry women of the city's most flagrant and blatant district.

However, as the political disturbance begins to stir, Pran Nath finds himself in the company of a hopeless and ill-fated young Englishman, an orphan named Jonathan Bridgeman. With all the experiences in life he has learned quickly that perception is a ready replacement and substitute for reality. Pran Nath in a very short period of time finds himself on a boat bound for Southampton where, with Bridgeman's passport, he will begin his journey again. Hence, first in London, then at Oxford, the Impressionist whets his chameleon and opportunist-like skills, making himself whoever and whatever he needs and desires in life should be obtained in any manner.

### 3.1.4 Analysis of 'The Impressionist'

The British novelist and journalist Hari Kunzru's novel 'The Impressionist' follows the experiences of the chameleon-like protagonist named, Pran Nath, who, in finding himself in distinct social and often colonial situations, modifies his identity and character conducive to remain undetected and unfound, frequently occupying the position of an invisible historical charlatan and deceiver. Pran Nath is the child of an Indian mother and English father, conceived under extraordinary and circumstantial prospects. The protagonist Pran Nath also resembles Virginia Woolf's novel Orlando, passing through disparate phases of colonial and postcolonial Indian history in the passage of the novel, together with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and political intrigues and conspiracies in the Nawab's court at Fatehpur. Pran Nath participates in middle-class British society, attending a renowned and esteemed boarding school and Oxford University, and hence, accentuates to whimsical social discriminations and injustice that permit him, as a white-passing colonial, to integrate and merge into society, but not his Jewish communist roommate named, Gertler. Pran Nath thereafter, contributes to the field of

anthropological research, carelessly and negligently encouraging the propagation and dissemination of Professor Chapel's beliefs of white supremacy with regard to the apocryphal Fotse tribe. It is at this moment, having experienced angst and restlessness concerning his position as a colonial subject who has passed for white, that Pran Nath faces the reality that his processes of shape-shifting have forfeited and lost his right to a true personal identity.

Hari Kunzru establishes Pran Nath's status as at once an insider and yet an outsider all through the novel, as with the strong and influential scene of his entrance into Amritsar. Having escaped Fatehpur, after being fetishised for being white-passing, Pran Nath uses this knowledge and expertise to his advantage conducive to navigate colonial India and seize and carve out a space where he can exercise his autonomy. In the novel 'The Impressionist' by Hari Kunzru, the city has recently experienced the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919, when hundreds of Indian civilians were shot, demolished, devastated and killed by British military and armed forces under martial law. Pran Nath enters the town which is just like a ghost town, and the town is guarded and vigilant by British soldiers whom he circumvents by feigning a British accent, and then proceeds to the train station where white colonials are waiting to be evacuated. The British novelist Hari Kunzru portrays Pran Nath's entrance as 'Walking into whiteness' (p. 187), indicating and implying the firmness and absoluteness of 'whiteness' as an almost perceptible space disparate from the spaces inhabited and occupied by others. This palpability enlarges to an individual's body odour, where 'the stench of sweat hits [Pran] like a fist' (p. 187). Pran Nath responds and reacts by invoking the rhyme 'Fee-fi-fo-fum' from the fairy-tale 'Jack and the Beanstalk', which postulates a complex and intricate association between an Englishman and his scent 'be he alive or be he dead' (p. 187). Howbeit, Hari Kunzru upturns the rhyme's meaning so that it serves as a reminder to Pran Nath of his own exposure and susceptibility in the face of 'the mob, the ogre' (p. 187), the crowd of white colonials crowded in the station. Pran alert and cognizant that he does not possess the 'smell of Englishmen' (p. 187) and will ultimately, in the course of time, be caught out as he advances through the packed station. Regardless of this sense of foreboding, '[n]o one questions him as he passes by' (p. 187) because his light-skinned appearance and existence allows him to pass as white. This incident is one of the novel's most dramatic picture and instance of what it means to pass racially.

The discrepancy between Pran Nath's inner self-consciousness and his outer appearance is seemingly captured and impounded in his relationship with Astarte Chapel. Pran cannot comprehend why she would forgo the privileges of a white middle-class British woman to be with a black man, citing 'European degeneration' (p. 358). Pran Nath is also bewildered and perplexed when Astarte rebukes Jonathan for being 'so English' (p. 407). In this manner Hari Kunzru puts forward a subtle and exquisite commentary on what and how it is to be an immigrant in the UK today. In spite of the fact, Pran Nath for years effortlessly believes and considers the identity of Jonathan Bridgeman, he nevertheless feels like a charlatan in

his own body. In the Amritsar train station, Pran Nath is also purported and described as 'a trespasser, a black cuckoo in the nest' (p. 188). Pran Nath being a person of mixed race, he is portrayed as vulnerable and susceptible, and yet a threat to 'real English boys' despite they look quite similar (p. 188). Pran Nath's appearance and very existence obscure the lines between coloniser and colonised; his presence disturbs the order of hierarchy which places the white coloniser as superior by suggesting its artificiality.

### 3.1.5 Major characters in 'The Impressionist'

- **Pran Nath Razdan**

Pran Nath, the novel's protagonist pretends and assumes several identities throughout the plot. These identities include Rukhsana, this was the name given to Pran Nath during his time spent with court eunuchs (bedroom guard), Pretty Bobby, the name by which he was called in Bombay, and Jonathan Bridgeman, his name in England, which he is able to assume through the identification papers of a British man who dies in his presence.

- **Reverend Andrew Macfarlane**

Reverend Andrew Macfarlane is another character in Hari Kunzru's novel 'The Impressionist'. Reverend and his wife are humble beings. He is a religious man and is working in Bombay. Andrew loves phrenology since childhood and hence pursues phrenology as a hobby, and he employs Bobby in measuring skulls and photographing living subjects.

- **Elsbeth Macfarlane**

Elsbeth Macfarlane is also one of the major characters in the novel. Despite the fact she is married to Andrew, she does not interact with her husband. She avoids and forgoes Christianity in favour of Theosophy as the only means to communicate with her sons, who both died in World War I.

- **Astarte Chapel**

Astarte Chapel is another character in the novel. Astarte is referred to as Star after Bridgemen meets her by the end of the novel. Astarte Chapel is the daughter of an Oxford professor who teaches Anthropology. Pran Nath, as Jonathan, meets Astarte at one of the parties and eventually the two enter into a relationship.

- **Roland Forrester**

Roland Forrester is the biological father of Pran Nath. Roland is a British forest official. He is an adventure lover, and often travels around in the wilderness. Not much can be observed and noticed about Ronald in the novel, besides the fact that he was cold enough to leave the girl alone in a cave who saved his life hours before.

- **Amrita**

Amrita is the daughter of an affluent moneylender and she is the mother of Pran Nath. She is a brave and courageous young woman, though addicted and accustomed to opium from a very young age. She is aware of the fact that her body is not her property but it is of the one who will marry her, hence, she decides to scrutinize her sexuality as much as she can, and therefore, encounters with Roland. Amrita dies immediately after giving birth to Pran Nath.

- **Jonathan Bridgeman**

Jonathan Bridgeman is a drunk stupid and foolish man, with a considerable amount of wealth and property to his name. His stupidity, foolishness and drunkenness cost him his ticket to his homeland, i.e. London, his property documents, and also his very identity.

- **Lily Parry**

Pran Nath falls in love with Lily Parry but sadly, she doesn't accept him. Lily, an Anglo Indian herself, rejects Pran Nath because he isn't a pureblood British.

### **3.1.6 Critical review of the Central Character**

- **From Arrogance to Humility**

Pran Nath's character has a greatly and intensely wide arc, beginning as the imperious defiled brat, and ending as a wanderer with a caravan of camels. This journey not only exhibits the literary prowess of the writer, but also the psychological aspects of human nature.

- **A desperation to Fit in**

As the protagonist Pran Nath realizes that he is of English descent, he begins trying to become a true Englishman, just to fit in the world. Rejection from Lily Parry to whom he loves, in addition augment this quest, which eventually leads him to commit crimes such as robbing Jonathan Steal of his identity and property. Pran Nath's endeavour to adjust with the different and strange climate and culture of England depicts his reckless and outrageous behaviour, implying what it means to be pureblood to him.

- **Opportunist to the Core**

- All through the novel, Pran Nath proves to be a true opportunist, right from the beginning it can be seen, when he tries to fulfill his carnal yearnings by exploiting the daughter of the housemaid Anjali. His stint as Pretty Bobby proves that Pran Nath will not leave any opportunity and chance to earn a quick buck, even at the cost it is meant to act and behave like a gofer or even work as a pimp. Pran Nath's height of opportunistic can be seen when he tricks and chits Jonathan Bridgeman and escapes to London stealing his identity.



- **Internal Conflict and Self-Realization through Love**

Throughout the novel it can be seen that Pran Nath has two love interests, first being, Lily Parry, and second being, Astarte Chapel. After the encounter with Lily Parry, Pran Nath's conflict begins as he wants to shed and discard his half-blood identity and become a true Englishman, barring the values of humanity along the way. Nevertheless, the rejection from Astarte Chapel makes him understand and become aware of, that colour doesn't matter, and what matters the most is your inner self which should be pure and which isn't quite white or black, to say the least. Hence, the spark and gleam of colour ablaze by his first love is certainly drowned and submerged by the self-realization due to the second one.

### **3.1.7 Conclusion**

Hari Kunzru's novel 'The Impressionist' is one of the most significant novels written since the turn of the century. The novel by Kunzru is not just a story about the protagonist, Pran Nath Razdan, it is, in fact, a historic document and record to experience and knowledge life during the colonial period. The novel also evidences the life of the Anglo-Indian community, a micro-community that has been at loggerheads with the society, and the predicament and the dilemma of those Anglo-Indian community continues even today.

The British novelist and journalist Hari Kunzru, is undoubtedly and unquestionably one of the admirable Anglo-Indian authors of all time, and therefore, his depiction of the community to which he belongs to adds more authenticity and credibility to the narration. The novel, thus, is a significant read for those interested in analysing and scrutinizing post-colonial literature from the prospect of this meager and sparse community, and get a new and fresh outlook and standpoint about British Imperialism.

Few other remarkable elements that are quite evident and obvious throughout the narrative are the portrayal of human life in the 20th century, and also Hari Kunzru's use of historic reference to take the narration forward and going. For example, his conversation and discussion about the Taj Mahal establishes the base for understanding the city where Pandit Amar Nath Razdan lives, and where Pran Nath Razdan is born.

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## **3.2 LET'S SUM UP**

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The unit extensively discusses about Hari Kunzru's novel 'The Impressionist'. An incredibly detailed, background-heavy tale about a mixed-race boy born in India at the turn of the 20th century. The Impressionist is a historical novel which follows the experiences of the chameleon-like protagonist named, Pran Nath, who, in finding himself in different social and often colonial situations, alters his persona in order to remain undetected and unfound, again and again occupying the position of an invisible historical imposter. An admirable and magnificent novel that is chaotic at times but suits the thinking and behaviour of the main character navigating chaos. clever and quite imaginative throughout and enjoyable.

### 3.3 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- Discuss in detail about the character of Pran Nath Razdan.
- Write a detailed summary of 'The Impressionist' by Hari Kunzru.
- In the end of the novel, what connections can be drawn between the Impressionist and his biological parents? What has he inherited from them?
- Write a detailed note on the major and minor characters of the novel 'The Impressionist' by Hari Kunzru.
- How would the main character's fate be different if the story were to take place in the twenty-first century?
- Does the protagonist of the novel choose to adopt each new guise, or do pressures of the political or social climate force him to find a new persona? When does he exhibit free will in his decision to change?
- Anjali's indictment of Pran Nath states how his presence in the household breaks the tenets of the orthodox Hindu religion and suggests that it has brought a curse on them all. What other symbols led Anjali to be wary of Pran Nath and his mother? What other cabalistic methods do characters employ to interpret life?
- Discuss the concept of pure blood versus mixed. How did the British imperialistic campaign, the Great War for Civilisation, contribute to the extreme opinions regarding race and culture? What parallels can be drawn between the climate in colonial India and Africa and other significant social conflicts?
- The duplicity of the Impressionist's skin could not create alternate identities on its own. Discuss the various attire worn by the Impressionist in his many incarnations. From schoolboy uniforms and silk saris to academic robes and adventurer's khakis, how did his clothing shape others' impressions?

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## **CRITICAL STUDY OF ARVIND ADIGA'S BETWEEN THE ASSASSINATIONS-I**

### **Part I**

#### **Unit Structure :**

#### 4.0 Objectives

#### 4.1 About the author

#### 4.2 Summary and Analysis of Between the Assassinations

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### **4.0 OBJECTIVES**

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1. To critically analyse and understand the core elements of the novel "Between the Assassinations" by Arvind Adiga.
2. To study the representation of class, caste and religious elements through various characters in the novel.
3. To justify Adiga as a postmodern and postcolonial writer.

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### **4.1 ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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Arvind Adiga is an Indian novelist, journalist, and writer. He is best known for his debut novel, "The White Tiger," which won the Man Booker Prize in 2008. The novel is a satirical take on India's class system and tells the story of a poor Indian driver who becomes a successful entrepreneur.

Adiga was born in Chennai, India, in 1974 and grew up in Mangalore, India. He received his undergraduate degree from Columbia University and his master's degree from Oxford University. Adiga began his career as a journalist, working for Time magazine and The Financial Times. He later transitioned to writing fiction and has published several novels, including "Between the Assassinations", "Last Man in Tower" and "Selection Day." Adiga's writing often explores themes of class, caste, and corruption in India.

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### **4.2 SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF BETWEEN THE ASSASSINATIONS**

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Between the Assassinations (2008) is a collection of inter-linked stories set in Kittur on the South western coast of India, between 1984 and 1991. The book is an authentic, objective chronicle of the political, economic and socio-cultural history of Indiabetween 1984 and 1991 from the perspectives and stories of various characters in the novel. Arvind Adiga presents Kittur, a small undistinguished town, as India in miniature. It is interesting to note how Adiga has succeeded in narrating the true story of

a nation and presenting the intricate intertwining of national and personal destinies in post-independence India.

Between the Assassinations is an entertaining, finely detailed “novel in stories”, presented as a travelogue and written in a warm, lively, colloquial style, with a cartographer’s precision and a novelist’s humanity. The stories revolve around different classes, castes and religions in India.

Adiga sets Kittur on India’s south-western coast, in between Goa and Calicut, bounded by the Arabian sea on the west and the Kalliyam river on the east. A town with a rich history, amazing scenic beauty and diverse religions, races, cultures and languages, Kittur is a ‘must-see’ place for tourists, especially during the “dry, cool” months of October, November and December.

Adiga’s book reads like a tourist brochure. The first page gives information on ‘How to Get to Kittur’. Then follow twelve (in certain editions, fourteen) short stories which are put down in the form of the jottings of a traveller’s diary from Day One to Day Seven. Sandwiched between the stories are informative sections like ‘How our Town is Laid Out’, ‘The History of Kittur’, ‘The Languages of Kittur’, ‘Kittur Total Population- caste and religious breakdown’. The book concludes with a chronological account of the major events in Kittur between October 1984 and May 1991. Adiga pretends to be a tourist guide, someone who has spent years in Kittur and knows the place in and out and is intimately explaining things to the reader.

The first story of the book is the story of a little boy, Ziauddin, a coolie, who rises above his poverty and the insults of the majority community, to turn down the attractive offer of becoming a terrorist. Adiga, through this story shows how our secularism is under threat and the indoctrination of impressionable minds. Those years when the story takes place, witnessed the anti-Sikh and Babri-Ayodhya riots that shook the very soul of a nation. Though riots had been occurring ever since Partition, 1984-1991 was the time during which religious fundamentalists whipped up religious passions and sentiments to a new frenzy and the secular fabric of the nation seemed to be in danger.

Adiga now describes the layout of the town. At the heart of Kittur is the adult film theatre Angel Talkies lying in the commercial district of Umbrella Street. To its north is the Catholic area of Valencia and Bajpe forest. To the south lies the sea-port and Tipu Sultan’s fort.

The second story of Abbasi, a factory-owner who fights corruption, risking his livelihood, shows how the corrupt system and red-tapism suffocates a country. Every patriotic Indian will ask himself the question Abbasi puts to his own self: “Is there nothing we can do to fight back?”

There is the story of a Dalit bookseller, Xerox Ramakrishna, who takes pride in selling illegally photocopied books at low rates. His father’s profession was cleaning the toilets of rich landlords with his loincloth that he did not want to do. But, when he is caught selling Rushdie’s ‘Satanic Verses’, the upper caste Inspector takes pleasure in breaking his legs, though Ramakrishna pleads ignorance of the ban on the book. Once out of

the hospital, Xerox openly defies the police and plans to sell only one book "banned throughout the Republic of India"- 'Satanic Verses'. For the policeman and the lawyer who torture him, Xerox is not just a petty thief but a symbol of the oppressed who have begun to assert themselves and challenge the powerful. Xerox's open rebellion shows that the lower caste members will no longer take insults lying down. His act of defiance challenges the Indian State which has failed to establish true equality. Adiga underlines the fact that unless social attitudes change, no amount of quotas will lend dignity to the downtrodden. The conditions in jail and the corruption of the police force reflect the sorry state of the criminal justice system in India.

Another story deals with a college student, Shankara Kinni who bursts a bomb in class to avenge those who humiliate him for being a half-caste. As he tells himself, "I have burst a bomb to end the 5,000 year old caste system that still operates in our country...to show that a man should not be judged, as I have been, merely by the accident of his birth." Adiga projects the intense longing of an older generation to find security in caste and of an educated young generation to be "free" of this "repulsive" creation of their ancestors. It has been made clear that, on the eve of the 21st century, no religion in India is free from this system. The frustration and discontent that ripened in that era, have resulted today in Naxalism and terrorism. Shankara's act of exploding a bomb sounds so familiar in this age.

The fifth and sixth stories are about two men, D'Mello and Kamath, confronted with change, with the truth of the moral and political degeneration of a country. Mr. D'Mello, the strict, orthodox, highly idealistic teacher at St. Alfonso's School, is bitterly disillusioned by the corruption in post-independence India and the immorality of the young generation. When, his favourite pupil and sole comfort, Girish too shows a desire to see pornographic pictures, he dies of a heart attack. The old-fashioned D'Mello versus the rest of the school symbolizes the fall of orthodoxy and the changing morality of a nation during the era when western ideas were being increasingly imitated. The shadow of the Emergency lies heavily over the story as does the question whether coercion is to be allowed in a democracy and to what extent the State can control the private lives of citizens, questions that echo even today. D'Mello strongly feels that India has a "beast" inside her and only Mrs. Gandhi knew how to control it.

Adiga now quotes a Jesuit scholar and narrates the history of Kittur, which turns out to be a history of India in miniature, ruled by invaders and colonizers. An ancient town famous for the Kittamma Devi Temple, it became home to Arab merchants, Muslim dervishes, The Vijaynagar empire, Jesuits, Portugese, British and finally the freedom struggle in 1921.

Gururaj Kamath, committed and famous journalist, one day realizes that freedom of the press is a myth. He realizes that it is the "fate of every journalist..in this whole world" to walk on a "false earth" where innocents are punished and guilty are free, for his paper is owned by the corrupt politicians and rich men he tries to fight. His effort to write a true history

of Kittur is deemed as madness and he loses his job. It was during this era that newspapers and media were increasingly becoming the fiefdom of politicians and business-houses. The Emergency curbed freedom of the press and the late 80s and early 90s saw the media reduced to a handmaiden of the elite, a process that has reached its culmination today. As the Editor tells Kamath, "You and I and people in our press pretend that there is freedom of press in India but we know the truth." Ignorance seems to be bliss for knowledge leads to a frustrating death. As Arundhati Roy states in her essay "Peace is War", neoliberal capitalists control democracies by reducing the press, parliament and judiciary to commodities that are available to the highest bidder. (17) The incredible extent of corruption in public life, even in the judiciary came to the fore in the 1990s. Aravind Adiga poignantly delineates the psychological crisis of a changing nation as the common man finds himself helpless in the face of the corrupt and mighty State and System.

Even as Adiga gives a brief description of the languages of Kittur, readers shall realize that it is a portrait of India, a nation that has retained its multicultural, multilingual identity inspite of the onslaughts of globalization. Several dialects of Kannada, Tulu, Konkani, Malayalam, Tamil, Urdu and English are spoken by people ranging from Brahmins to Bunts and Hoykas, Roman Catholics to Muslims, Migrant workers to affluent middle classes.

The next three stories present a moving picture of poverty and the ever-increasing gap between rich and poor as India enters the era of liberalization and privatization. Adiga's stories reveal the total failure to implement the Directive Principles. The story of rural migration to cities and the life in slums is seen through the eyes of the little children of a construction labourer, Soumya and Raju, who beg to buy drugs for their father. The two stories of two servants, Jayamma a Brahmin cook and George D'Souza a catholic drive, show the subtle yet formidable barriers that separate master and servant, rich and poor. Adiga explores the psychology of the master-servant relationship revealing how poverty becomes a great leveler, uniting people of all castes and creeds.

Meanwhile, Adiga provides a caste and religious breakdown of the 1981 census of Kittur, where 89 people out of more than one lakh declare themselves free of religion and caste.

The tale of Ratnakara Shetty, a struggling lower middle-class salesman who helps a young man to fight AIDS, reflects the power of one man's compassion against the backdrop of the enormous social stigma and ignorance attached to the disease, at a time when India came to terms with the AIDS epidemic. This episode takes place against the larger backdrop of moral, social and political degradation in the country. A man represents the fatalism of Indians when he says, "Everything's been falling apart in this country since Mrs. Gandhi got shot... We're not meant to be masters of our own fate.." Ratnakara Shetty believes in destiny but will not give up without a fight. The fate of an individual and a nation become inextricably intertwined.



Next, we are shown how the beautiful forest of Bajpe, the 'lungs' of Kittur is mercilessly destroyed, symbolic of the massive deforestation unleashed in the 80s and 90s by greedy multi-national corporations and land developers, creating the monster of pollution and a spiritual wasteland.

Finally, the story of a disillusioned old Communist, Comrade Murali, is the story of how Marxism, idealism and all other political ideologies have failed to uplift the less privileged in India, as these systems are either hopelessly outdated and impractical or completely corrupt.

The continuing colonial legacy is frequently reflected in the stories, whether it is in the references to British rule or the disillusionment with post-independence India. The divide and rule policy continued by politicians to spark riots that serve vested interests or the memorials of freedom fighters that are shown only to those who speak English or dress well. The conflict between tradition and modernity which pervades several stories is also the result of a unique interaction with the West. Neo-colonialism continues as the elite join hands with western powers to set up empires in India and even gag or buy the media. The propaganda machine in the West asserts that the West is aiding the poor East, while in fact looting it(18) There is even an English lady who earns a living teaching Yoga to Indians. Each story has discontented poor like Xerox Ramakrishna or George D'Souza or Soumya and Raju who thirst for the power of education and money. The stories of Xerox, Shankara and Jayamma show individuals hopelessly trapped in an absurd caste system that curbs the full flowering of the human being. Infact, caste itself is a colonial construct. It was the British who solidified the caste system by introducing caste based census. Imperialists asserted that caste-rivalry was an essential part of the Indian identity and thus justified colonial rule. (19)

The chronology of events in Kittur at the end of the book proves that Kittur is a mirror image of India between 1984 and 1991. On 31st October 1984 Kittur gets news of Indira's assassination and shuts down but there is greater interest in knowing the political destiny of the nation even as thousands of TV sets are bought to watch the PM's funeral. In the November 1984 elections, just like Rajiv Gandhi, the Congress candidate rides a sympathy wave, defeating his political rival by a huge margin. 1985 sees a surge in stock trading and private business. 1986 sees politicians leading Backward Class agitations. 1987 brings in a craze for cricket, communal riots, RSS rallies, urbanization, deforestation and slums. 1988-89 ushers in the Maruti car and the rise of the BJP. 1990 is a happening year- bomb blasts, computers, economic crisis due to Gulf war. All these are indicative of changes in India which is equally affected by international events and Rajiv's IT plans. But on 21st May 1991, Kittur again shuts down after the PM's assassination and once again a nation's destiny changes course.



## **CRITICAL STUDY OF ARVIND ADIGA'S BETWEEN THE ASSASSINATIONS-II**

### **Part II**

#### **Unit Structure :**

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Structure of the novel
- 5.2 Social and Cultural Conflict in the Novel
- 5.3 Representation of Caste and Class in the Novel
- 5.4 Conclusion
- 5.5 References

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### **5.0 OBJECTIVES**

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1. To critically analyse and understand the core elements of the novel "Between the Assassinations" by Arvind Adiga.
  2. To study the representation of class, caste and religious elements through various characters in the novel.
  3. To justify Adiga as a postmodern and postcolonial writer.
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### **5.1 STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL**

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Adiga's structures his collection of short stories as a day by day guide for a visitor coming to Kittur. The first short story, "Day One: The Railway Station," details the life of a Muslim boy named Ziauddin. The boy comes to Kittur to find a job. He is adamant about his heritage as a "Pathan," which causes him to work for a foreigner who is planning an attack on Indian soldiers. By the end of the story, Ziauddin is disgusted by the foreigner and goes back to working as a coolie.

"Day One (Afternoon): The Bunder" follows the life of a textile factory employee who is immersed in a world of corruption and bribes. He feels guilty about his workers losing their eyesight and the realization haunts him until the end of his story.

In "Day Two: Lighthouse Hill," a poor man nicknamed "Xerox" sells illegally copied books to students who walk down Lighthouse Hill. He is constantly being arrested but he is never deterred, even when he is beaten for selling one of India's banned books.

A young boy named Shankara in "Day Two Afternoon: St. Alfonso's Boys' High School and Junior College" sets off a bomb in order to rewrite

5,000 years of wrongs. He wrestles with his status as an outsider in both of the castes he belongs to, hating both of them for the things they do to each other.

"Day Two (Evening): Lighthouse Hill (The Foot of the Hill)" details the life of a teacher who, despite all of his efforts, has discovered that there is no innocence left in school boys and that corruption is at the heart of Kittur.

Keshava is a vibrant boy in "Day Two (Evening): Markey and Maidan" who becomes enamored with the world of the buses. He becomes a small celebrity in Kittur and subtly changes the world around him while losing himself.

"Day Three: Angel Talkies" is a riveting story of a journalist who discovers the truth that lies in the dark alleys of Kittur and seeks to rewrite it for all to see.

"Day Four: Umbrella Street" follows a man named Chenayya who knows he is slowly working himself to death. He desperately tries to crawl out of the walls of poverty, only to realize that he and the poor like him, have made that feat impossible.

Soumya, the young girl in "Day Four (Afternoon): The Cool Water Well Junction," is sent on a mission by her father to procure drugs. Her journey takes her across the treacherous streets of Kittur and illustrates the lengths a person will go to for the love of their family.

"Day Five: Valencia (To the First Crossroad)" is the tale about a old Brahmin woman obsessed with the caste structure, religion and her nephew. She is tired of working for households with spoiled children but her obsession with caste does not allow her to move within the society.

A poor man secures a steady job for a rich lady in "Day Five (Evening): The Cathedral of Our Lady of Valencia." He and his sister become permanent fixtures in her household until the day he makes a mistake that is unforgivable and irreversible.

"Day Six: The Sultan's Battery" follows the life of Ratna, a man who sells counterfeit pills to men who have venereal diseases. In a dark twist, the boy he picks for his daughter to marry is infected with the same type of disease, and even though Ratna calls the marriage off, he feels a duty to help the unfortunate boy.

"Day Six (Evening): Bajpe" is the story of a couple who still practice the traditional art of Brahmin courtesy. However, their dinner parties have a taboo subject, which causes much speculation about how their relationship works.

The last story in Adiga's collection, "Day Seven: Salt Market Village," tells the story of an older Communist man who becomes obsessed with a younger woman. The idealism of his youth and the Communist party drive him to help the woman and her mother. However, when they rebuke him,

readers are able to see the man turn to the corruption and old traditions of India to help him get what he wants.

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## 5.2 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONFLICT IN THE NOVEL

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Adiga's *Between the Assassinations* depicts power relations of the poor dominant class over the rich lower class but a brilliant exploration of subordinate class' resistance. He tries to explore the different types of power structures that operate in the society and shows how it influences human life. He focuses the interrelated expressions of power such as political power, economic power, physical force, religious power and ideological power which keep the people in unjust and unequal positions. The main purpose of the study is to explore and analyse the power relations in his novels. The novel describes truth because it is relative to discourse and it is the product of power. Truth is relative to social and learned discourses. Truth is produced by power relations. In the novel Gurkha narrates an accident to Gururaj where he talks about the richest man in this town, who own the press Gururaj works for and who is also a political leader. Though it is known to all about his crime and wrong doings, he cannot be arrested. The power cannot be punished, the government always protects high-class people and richest people. In this bureaucratic world, the truth is the first casualty as it is discovered by the upright journalist Gururaj Kamath. He is fed up with the bureaucratic corruption, injustice and politics around him. It has beautifully brought out how truth has been suppressed by the power in today's world through the character of Gururaj, a journalist who is on a mission to find the truth.

Mr Engineer is involved in an accident but the truth is undiscovered by the power of money. Gururaj got the news from the Gurkha, a local watchman that Mr Engineer himself hit a man on his way back home, the police reports were changed in favour of Mr Engineer. The tycoon gets one of the employees in his factory to say that he was driving the car when the accident happened. The employee gives the police a sworn affidavit. It has pointed out that how the tycoon with the power of money and influence can cover up both the police and the judicial system "A man might have been sent to jail for no good reason; a guilty man might be walking free. And all you can say is, let's drop the matter. Gururaj looks at the editor-in-chief with new eyes. The old man has a nimbus around him, of all the things he had learned over the length of his career and could never publish." (BA 125) The fact that the newspaper is owned by a businessman who serves only capitalist interest. "This is the fate of every journalist in this town and in this state and in this country and maybe in this whole world ... It is a false earth I am walking on. An innocent man is behind bars, and a guilty man walks free. Everyone knows that this is so and no one has the courage to change it" (BA 129)

Adiga has highlighted how religious system and economical states exploited the society by some evil people in our country through the character of Ziauddin. Ziauddin, a twelve-year-old, sixth of the eleventh children of a poor family works in a tea stall. Working at a tender age, he

develops a sense of isolation from the society. Left to fend for him, he has to struggle to survive like an adult. In the town of Kittur, Muslims are discriminated against and are not part of the mainstream society.

The marginalization of the Muslims extends to employment opportunities as well. The shopkeepers near the railway station never hire a Muslim worker but Ramanna Shetty employs Ziauddin due to his innocence. After a stay for four months with his parents, the boy returns completely transformed, losing his innocence. He develops a sense of pride in his religion and yearns to know his ancestral roots. The honest boy metamorphoses into a thief stealing small things. This leads to his removal from one work after another. While fighting, he always affirms his identity as a Pathan, slapping his chest, He shouts, "From the land of the Pathans, Far off the north, where there are mountains full of snow! I'm not a Hindu! I don't do hanky-panky!" I am a Pathan... We came here and built the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort in Delhi." (BA1)

The religious pride and a sense of separation spread poison in the mind of the young boy. A feeling of insecurity and mistrust makes him hate the Hindus with whom he has spent many happy moments of life. He has been brainwashed by some religious extremists and this makes the young boy hate the others. Ziauddin's quest for identity increases when he comes in contact with a north Indian Muslim, Pathan with whom he develops a sense of belonging. The stranger's expensive clothes, handsome face and his perfume make him take a pride in his acquaintance. He feels "This man is a countryman of mine" (BA15).

The stranger tempts Ziauddin to count the number of trains with Indian soldiers which leads to some terrorist activity. Appealing to his Muslim Pathan identity, the stranger tries to get the work done. Ziauddin realizes that he is being used by the self-centered terrorist and escapes from his clutches and leads a normal life as a coolie at the railway station. The novel through Ziauddin's story tries to probe into the causes of terrorism and how innocent people are used as pawns by the real perpetrators of terrorism.

Next Adiga, has captured caste system through the case of Shankara, a child born from the union of a Brahmin father and a low caste Hoyka woman. He is not secure about his identity and tries to take revenge against the caste biased society by exploding a bomb in his school. He thinks he has "burst a bomb to end the 5,000-year-old caste system that still operates in our country. I have burst a bomb to show that a man should not be judged, as I have been merely by the accident of his birth" (BA 59)

Shankara is under the false impression that his teachers at the school must be mocking him behind his back. Exploding a crude bomb in his school is his way of hitting back at the caste discrimination he faces. After the bomb explosion, he dreams that he will be treated differently in jail. He also thinks that the Hoyka self-advancement committee would take out marches for him and the police will not dare touch him. When he is

released, great crowds would wave for him and he would be launched on a political career. Shankara is always treated as someone special among his Hoyka relatives as he is a half-Brahmin and hence much higher than them in the caste scale.

He is also rich and hence much higher than them on the class scale. His father, a Brahmin plastic surgeon in the Gulf has married his Hoyka mother to the dismay of Brahmins. Shankara, as a result, gets a very challenging identity in the society- neither a Brahmin nor a Hoyka. He feels that he has the worst of both the castes in his blood. The anxiety of fear about the Brahmin and the propensity to act without thinking of Hoyka. Social disconnect and his ignorance make the boy more violent. The Brahmin relatives see him as the product of a daring adventure on the part of his father and consider him as a mixture of started feeling that his father belonged to no caste or race. Such people lived for themselves. His mother feels inferior in the company of the Brahmin relatives. "She did not want to meet the Brahmin woman alone. Her sole claim to acceptance, to respectability, was the production of a male child, an heir and if he wasn't in the house, then she had nothing to show. She was just a Hoyka trespassing into a Brahmin's household" (BA 61). Shankara thinks that it is her own fault if she feels distressed in the Brahmin relative's presence. Repeatedly he tells his mother to ignore the Brahmin relatives. Through the dilemma of Shankara raises a question whether caste or class is worst in society. Shankara though rich is not given recognition by the upper caste. Although he is the son of a Brahmin, he is never considered a Brahmin. His driver who belongs to upper caste is poor. The old Brahmin who shows sympathy to him cannot afford a car for travelling. But Shankara has ample wealth. He contemplates, "He is of a caste higher than me, but he is poor. What does this mean, caste? Is it just said to yourself? Caste is a fiction, would it vanish like smoke; if you said, 'I am free', would you realize you had always been free?" (BA 69)

Religion is one of the major factor that pervades the Indian life. Towards communal relations Adiga's attitude is firmly modern, favouring peace and harmony. Though he does not portray extremist Hindus or Muslims but he does refer to communal riots which are reported by a section of the press with bias. It is truthful reporting that can identify real culprits and thus prevent the recurrence of such riots. Such a correct picture of a riot is presented by a brave and truthful journalist Gururaj to whom a Muslim thankfully says, "If more people did what you do, there won't be any more riots in the town" (BA 117)

Communal riots are also sometimes used as a cover by land-sharks to grab land thereby masquerading real estate transaction as a riot. Another evil deeply entrenched is that of corruption upon portraying the pathetic fate of complete blindness imposed upon several poor old women made to stitch minute and complicated designs in semidarkness. The merchant Abbasi flourishes on fine spun cloth of corruption and bribing. Sometimes threatening the government officers, especially of Income Tax Department. He is supported by his friends, mostly Muslims, outwardly condemning corruption who are themselves property-sharks making



millions under the veil of communal riots or lending money at the killing interest rate of 3% compounded every month, making the lives of the poor needy borrowers miserable, leading some of them to suicide.

In such a situation, people can depend on only two institutions for the remedy – the judiciary and the Press. He has made no reference to the first, though the cancer of corruption has also allegedly entered. In such a situation, people can depend only on the Fourth Estate, the Press, for checking corruption and also for preventing communal riots. But the press too for its very survival depends on money which it can get only from rich companies, other private parties and its owners. It has sometimes in its own interest to misrepresent the truth like that of the traffic accidents, in which the driver takes the blame of the master riots etc.

An honest journalist, Gururaj in the story is dismissed for telling the truth and is made literally to eat his copy of the paper by a young and ambitious journalist. A sick physician like the press can hardly cure the deep-rooted and widespread malady of corruption. Only a token upholder of the truth is successful on a minor matter that of selling copies of Salman Rushdie's banned novel, *The Satanic Verses*. This only emphasizes that the problem of the corrupt press remains.

Social relations highlight the caste-system which has split the society into two main groups the Brahmins and the Hoykas with their distinctive language Tulu. Their ill-treatment by the Brahmins results in a feeling of rebellion expressed in the story, our school by the bursting of a bomb in a classroom by Shankara who is considered a monstrosity because of his being a half-Brahmin and half-Hoyka. He is rejected by both.

*Between the Assassinations* presents a society that cuts across castes, religions, differences of wealth, power and moral or political beliefs and values. It is capable of being the seedbed of many novels of light and darkness which is present explicitly in a few of its stories.

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### 5.3 REPRESENTATION OF CASTE AND CLASS IN THE NOVEL

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*Between the Assassinations* (2008) showcases the most beloved aspects of Adiga's writing to brilliant effect: the class struggle rendered personal and the fury of the underdog. Adiga has aptly captured the reality of our society in a kaleidoscopic manner in his novel, *Between the Assassinations*. He has captured the various malpractices that are rampant in our society such as corruption, child labour, social discrimination on the grounds of caste, religion, class and gender through a story of 'everyman' of 'everytown' of the period of transition between the assassinations of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi viz. 1984 to 1991. Adiga seems to suggest that for our country to move on the path of progress we have to tackle these burning issues.

In the novel, the novelist has through Ziauddin's story tried to probe into the causes behind terrorism and how innocent people are used as pawns by

the real perpetrators of terrorism. In this bureaucratic world, truth is the first casualty as is discovered by the upright journalist Gururaj Kamath. He is fed up of the bureaucratic corruption, injustice and politics around him. (Nikam, 2011: p. 143) Adiga has beautifully brought out how truth has been suppressed in today's world through the character of Gururaj, a journalist who is on a mission to discover the truth. Adiga has shown how several layers of pretension are peeled away from his eyes before he recognizes the fact that newspapers are a means of doing business and nothing more than that.

Adiga has pointed out that how the tycoon with the power of money and influence is able to manipulate both the police and the judicial system. It is important to note that Mr Engineer gives the police four or five thousand and gets the car changed as it was a new Maruti Suzuki; giving the police another thousand to change the identity of the killer car to a Fiat, and Mr. Engineer has his car and drives around the town again. The police are aware of the truth. When Gururaj, a man of principles learns the truth he wants to print the truth and reinvestigate the matter but his editor tries to bury the matter. Gururaj bursts with anger, "A man might have been sent to jail for no good reason; a guilty man might be walking free. And all you can say is, let's drop the matter"(p.125). Gururaj looks at the editor-in-chief with new eyes. "The old man has a nimbus around him, of all the things he had learned over the length of his career and could never publish." (p.125) The fact of the matter is that the newspaper is owned by a businessman who serves only capitalist interest: "This is the fate of every journalist in this town and in this state and in this country and maybe in this whole world ... It is a false earth I am walking on. An innocent man is behind bars, and a guilty man walks free. Everyone knows that this is so and not one has the courage to change it" (p.129).

In the novel, Adiga has focused on how venereal disease is a taboo in our society. Although many people suffer from it, they do not go to the hospital for fear of censure in society and resort to treatment from quacks and suffer in the process. A case in point is Ratnakar Shetty, a father of three daughters, who toils day and night to save money for their dowry in this materialistic world. He has adopted the profession of a fake sexologist to fulfill the needs of his family. While coming home in the bus, he sells books and pens among other things. Although, he has saved dowry for his first daughter, he is worried for the next two.

When he has fixed the match of his eldest daughter, he discovers to his horror that the groom suffers from a sexually transmitted disease, which he picked up from a prostitute. Strangely enough the same boy approaches Shetty for a cure. Though Shetty advises him to go a doctor, the boy refuses for fear of social discrimination. Ratnakar brings him to the real sexologist who diagnoses that the boy is suffering from kidney failure.

In India class differences die hard. Although discrimination on the basis of caste is banished by the constitution but in reality it is a part and parcel of everyday Indian life. Even if a poor man works hard and wants to rise up in life it does not mean that he will be accepted by the upper class society

as an equal. George, the mosquito man who spreads the pesticides tries to establish a relationship with a rich lady, Mrs. Gomes but fails in the end. As a poor man George realizes, "the biggest difference is, between being rich and being like us? The rich can make mistakes again and again. We make only one mistake, and that's it for us" (p.186). George slowly wins her confidence and becomes her part-time gardener, and then driver.

He also manages to bring his sister, Maria, as a cook. It is his mistaken perception that Mrs. Gomes is different from other rich people. However, she feels that he is slowly trying to take over her household. The cook who is dismissed to make way for George's sister Maria says: "I know what you are trying to do with her! I told her you'll destroy her name and reputation! But she's fallen under your spell" (p.205).

Due to bitterness, poverty and shame George had put off the thought of his marriage so long but "the regret still gnawed at him, created by his contact with this rich woman, that he could have done so much more with his life" (p.207). His delusion is soon shattered. He is instructed by her to spread the pesticides in the gutter in the same manner in the past but now he is aggrieved to know that she still treats him like a servant. Previously, he would move mountains for her but now he has extraordinary hopes from her to be treated with nobility and dignity. He understands, "Oh, these rich people are the same ... We're just trash to them. They'll just use us and throw us out. A rich woman can never see a poor man as a man. Just as a servant" (p.208). Knowing that her reputation is at stake, Mrs. Gomes removes him and his sister from work.

Another point Adiga rises is that in India, the caste in which one is born leaves a permanent imprint on the person. These ideas are deeply embedded in our psyche and are resistant to change. Adiga has captured this through the case of Shankara, a child born from the union of a Brahmin father and a low caste Hoyka woman. He is not secure about his identity and tries to take revenge against the caste biased society by exploding a bomb in his school. He thinks he has "burst a bomb to end the 5,000 year-old caste system that still operates in our country. I have burst a bomb to show that a man should not be judged, as I have been merely by the accident of his birth" (p.59).

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## 5.4 CONCLUSION

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"Between the Assassinations" by Aravind Adiga is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that delves into the complexities and contradictions of life in a small Indian town in the 1980s. The author masterfully portrays the lives of the town's inhabitants, who are caught between the forces of tradition and change, poverty and wealth, and hope and despair.

The book is a powerful commentary on the social and political realities of India during this period, and highlights the struggles of the marginalized and oppressed. Adiga's writing is evocative and poignant, and he brings

the characters and their stories to life in a way that is both relatable and deeply moving.

One of the most striking aspects of the novel is the way it portrays the complexity of human nature, and the ways in which individuals can be both good and bad, kind and cruel, and capable of great love and great hate. The author does not shy away from tackling difficult and controversial issues, and this makes for a novel that is both challenging and rewarding.

Overall, "Between the Assassinations" is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that is both a commentary on the social and political realities of India in the 1980s and a profound exploration of the human condition. It is a must-read for anyone interested in Indian literature and the complexities of life in modern India.

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## **ESSAY: EDWARD SAID'S “ORIENTALISM”**

### **Unit Structure:**

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction of Edward Said
- 6.2 Analysis of Edward Said's Orientalism
- 6.3 Conclusion
- 6.4 Questions
- 6.5 References

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### **6.0 OBJECTIVES**

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This unit discusses Edward Said's work Orientalism. It deals with a short introduction of Edward Said and critical analysis of his work, Orientalism.

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### **6.1 INTRODUCTION OF EDWARD SAID**

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Edward Said, in full Edward Wadie (William) Said, was born on November 1, 1935 in Jerusalem. He was a Palestinian-Christian scholar, a controversial literary critic, and a bold political activist. An Arab Christian in America, Said raised his voice for the social and political rights of the Palestinian people. He also advocated for the creation of an independent Palestinian state. Said was, indeed, a North Star for Palestinians and subaltern communities across racial, religious and geographic lines. He was for many years America's foremost spokesman for the Palestinian cause. His writings have been translated into 26 languages, including his most influential book, *Orientalism* (1978), an examination of the way the West perceives the Islamic world. Much of his writing beyond literary and cultural criticism is inspired by his passionate advocacy of the Palestinian cause, including *The Question of Palestine*, (1979), *Covering Islam* (1981), *After the Last Sky* (1986) and *Blaming the Victims* (1988). He went to a New England boarding school, undergraduate years at Princeton and graduate study at Harvard." (from the Columbia University website) Edward Said is one of the foremost thinkers writing today. His work as a literary and cultural critic, a political commentator, and the champion of the cause of Palestinian rights has given him a unique position in western intellectual life.

## 6.2 ANALYSIS OF EDWARD SAID'S ORIENTALISM

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Edward Said is a cultural critic of the late twentieth century and founder of postcolonial studies. He was born in Jerusalem in 1935 and then moved to Cairo after 1948's Arab-Israel war. He did his Ph.D. in English Literature at Harvard University and remained in the US until his death in 2003. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) focuses on Western representations of the "Orient", East and Middle East, and their cultures which were presented as uncivilized and savage by the European countries. Said argues how Western countries define East and Middle East as other, completely opposite to them. He highlights the real and constructed Western image of the Orient. He states how colonizers dominate politically and financially a country. He attacks colonial mind set which believes the West is superior to the East. He challenges Western prejudices about colonized countries. He analyses how the West manipulates and dominates the East by using *Orientalism*. He believes that Islam has been fundamentally misinterpreted in the West (272).

Said emphasizes that the colonizers exploited the colonized people's resources and labour under the pretext that they are helping them to be modern and civilized like Europe. He presents how colonizers successfully convinced them by constantly insulting their cultures. He also underlines how after decolonization, the colonizers continue to dominate the East. His book *Orientalism* underlines the connection between politics and colonialism which helps West to justify their self-imposed status as a superior culture. Said reveals how strategically the western academia joins hands with political power to produce view of the Orient. He discusses his own experiences of inferior treatment given to him as an Arab in the US. He states,

My own experiences of these matters are in part what made me write this book ... the life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America, is disheartening. The web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism,\* [and] dehumanizing ideology holding in the Arab or the Muslim is very strong indeed. (Said Edward, *Orientalism*)

Said's views about orientalism are more vivid and stronger as compared to Franz Fanon's views presented in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) as Fanon actually lived under colonial rule while he publishing his views, on the contrary, Edward Said published his ideas in postcolonial world. Said triggers the argument that how the West continues to control indirectly after decolonization. He tells the how as migrants, he and his friends were forced to use only English. He considers this forceful act as an attempt to wipe out their Arabian culture considering it as an inferior one. He also argues though they were forced to accept Western culture, at the same time, they were made to feel like outsiders: non-Europeans "others". Hence, throughout the book, Said projects his understanding of how the West looked at the Orient and its impact on Oriental life.



Edward Said refers the French philosopher, Michel Foucault who clarifies how power is used by regulating what can be said, how it can be said, and who can say it. Said's Orientalism claims that the European political power and its academic discourse produced a concept of the "Orient". He calls European Orientalist as Foucault's "discourse" which creates and fabricate the East as inferior through its Western representation. Said's ideas are also influenced by Antonio Gramsci, Italian Marxist's concept of hegemony in which Gramsci describes how one group dominates the other. Said clarifies how after the industrialization Europe got power by force and through system. He presents how the West convinces the East through education not only to accept inferior status of Orient but also to get controlled by Europeans. He talks about the psychological and political influence of colonialism.

Edward Said focuses on how Orientalism as a tool of European colonialism in nineteenth and twentieth century to shape social, culture, economic and political structures globally. He discusses an ideology and real system of European colonialism through which orientalism has its roots. He considers Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire's anti-colonial and critical theory based on political gap between the colonizers and colonized. He depicts how colonizers aimed to change the social system and beliefs of colonized country. He emphasizes that though the colonialism has been ended but scholars still have colonial mindset.

Said brings to light the bias representation of the Western about the East. He pinpoints how the West not just described the East but created it by presenting it as Orient. He uses Michel Foucault's "discourse" as Foucault claims that discourse not informs but creates the things it describes. He is a founder of postcolonial studies which uses interconnectivity of cultural studies, history, and philosophy to study the influence colonizers on colonized vice versa. He refers the description of the Middle East in nineteenth-century books, articles and travelogues which bring to his notice Europeans' view as Orientals. He focuses on the West ideology and system of ideas behind the study of the East. He explores how the ideas of orientalism developed and managed to continue till today. He brings to light how the West's description of the East made it subservient.

Said refers the cultural texts written during the colonial and post-colonial period to understand how oriental ideas still managed to sustain after the decolonization. He believes that orientalism has divided the world in the two groups—the first one is the familiar, Europe or the West and another one is the orient, the East. He underlines the unshakable belief of the West that it understood the world completely and all its ideas about the East are correct. He clarifies that the ideas expressed by the scholars about the Middle East express their own views and influenced the views of others. Foucault traces that the scholars sets the boundary for the others when they express their ideas in discourse. Said emphasizes Derrida and Foucault's view that the discourse controls the way we see the world and it is controlled by the power.

Said refers anti-imperial writings of the French of 1950s and 60s. He analyses Frantz Fanon's books, *Black Skins, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon as a psychiatrist explains the psychological damage caused by colonialism to the colonized people. He highlights how the colonized people started to believe that they are racially inferior. He also suggests that the colonizer's language and discourse of colonialism is strong enough to control the political system and individual psychology. Edward Said's *Orientalism* is based on the views from writers from Africa, Middle East to South Asia. Albert Memmi, Tunisian Jew writer in his book, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* and Aimé Césaire's *Discourse on Colonialism* exposes how colonialism works as a system of domination.

Said highlights the views of the scholars who studied the history of Orientalist thought. He talks about the French-Egyptian political thinker Anouar Abdel-Malek as a Marxist traces European need of colonies shaped according to European view for its economic benefits. Said discusses how the writers like Maxime Rodinson, Marxist historian, A. L. Tibawi, the English medievalist and R. W. Southern presented the European ideas about Middle East. Said gives more importance to Ibrahim Abu-Lughod who explains the dominance of European ideas on Arab culture. Abu-Lughod also traces how Arab scholars criticize these European ideas which dominate the Arab culture under the rubric of cultural development. He writes "counter-hegemonic" view of Middle East which rejects European ideas and challenges the European idea of passive colonies. Said further adds more to the idea of Abu-Lughod and explains the impact of European ideas on colonies.

Said's *Orientalism* compares how cultures represent the East which is totally contrast to the depiction of Europe. He tells how the Western view presents the East as "ignored but complex". He tells the description of the East as the Orient by the West reveals its own internal logic, learning, consciousness. He investigates how "system of representations" create a strange, unchanging and inferior "Orient" (the East/colony) which is totally contrast to a modern and superior "Occident" (the West). He underlines how Europeans' description of the East—the Middle East and South, Central and South-East Asia as inferior helps it to take political, economic, social and even psychological control its colonies.

Said divides his text, *Orientalism* in three parts—"The Scope of Orientalism", 'Orientalist Structures and Restructures' and "Orientalism Now". In the first section of the book, Said talks about scope of orientalism in various countries/colonies and periods of time. In the second section, "Orientalist Structures and Restructures" he highlights how the orientalist scholars collect the information about the European views about the East through the literature, arts and history. In third section, "Orientalism Now", he mentions the impact of World War I on Orientalist thinking. He mentions Cold War and explains how during Cold War Europeans present Islam as backward, unchanging, mysterious and not interested in progress. *Orientalism*, the text also reveals the oppressive treatment given by the West. He proves how the Orientalist, past and

present is a myth-making ideology of transforming the identity for the selfish benefits like politics.

Essay: Edward Said's  
"Orientalism"

Said's Orientalism is based on the fancy thought of the West that the West as superior and the East as inferior. It justifies the dominance of the West on the East. He mainly focuses on the cultural and academic representations of the East as inferior by the West. He claims that for getting the political, economic and social control, Europeans damaged the colonized psychologically by describing and creating their image as Orientals. He highlights how "Orient" is an imaginary idea of the West which describes the way of life which thoroughly opposite to the West. He majorly underlines the Western cultural and academic works constructed the "Orient" identity of the East. He writes,

My thesis is that the essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and praxis (from which present day Orientalism derives) can be understood, not as a sudden access of objective knowledge about the Orient, but as a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and re-formed by such disciplines as philosophy, which in turn were naturalized (and) modernized.

Said argues that the Oriental identity is constructed by the West to make their colonies feel that they are "less evolved" hence, deserved to be controlled by the civilized West. He points out how the West made the colonies to feel inferior and believe that only with the Western help, they could develop. This view is known as "Latent Orientalism" which represents the belief that the West is superior, civilized, developed and modern. It justifies Western presence and control in the colonies. "Manifest Orientalism" is a physical presence of this idea in the institutions like university, academic writings and cultural works. He says latent orientalism does not change much but manifest orientalism changes as per the political and economic situations. While considering the roots of Orientalism, he considers how the West comes in contact with the East because it will give clear idea about what made the West to represent the East as an Orient. He focuses on how eighteenth century onwards there is cultural shift as scientific spirit starts giving more importance to the reasons than religion and expansion, historical confrontation, sympathy and classification became the pillars of modern Orientalism in 18<sup>th</sup> century. He clarifies this modern European thinking motivated the West to expand and gave license to civilize and develop the Orient.

Said proves how Orientalists justify the need of Western help to the East. He explains that how orientalism helped the West to gain political and economic power in the East as it was presented as passive object which needed to be colonized. He uses very simple and easy academic language deliberately to explicate how orientalism is a political move of Europeans to alienate and control the East in order to get economic boost.

Said blends the Philological and anthropological resources to understand Oriental identity of the East fabricated by the West. He refers the historical, linguistic and cultural references as evidences. He quotes T. E.

Lawrence who traces how the British use the Orient as a stage to display their heroism. He writes how Orientals were ready to accept any identity forced to them. He says,

The Orientals was linked to elements in Western society (delinquents, the insane, women, the poor) having in common an identity best described as lamentably alien . . . Orientals were . . . analyzed not citizens, or even people, but as problems to be solved or confined or . . . taken over.

Said reveals how Orient is a product of European social anxieties after industrial capitalism. He quotes Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) which describes the East as scientifically backward. He also claims that Orientalist writers' writings are erotic and seductive in tone. He supports his ideas with French novelist, Gustave Flaubert's views about the Orient. Flaubert associates Orient with sex. He feels the Orientalist "hero" is so weak and passive that he transforms his sexual desire into enlightenment. He feels Orient needs help and care from the West to be strong. He exemplifies how Orient is weak and feminine in the matter of writings as well.

Said's text, *Orientalism* centers around academic representation of colonialism and postcolonial studies. He argues how Orientalism divided the world in the different colonial categories—. Orientalism puts light upon the relationship and conflict between the West and the East. He helps to understand the anti-Islamic feeling raised in the Western Europe and US. He brings to attention the international events like 9/11 atomic attack on the Twin Towers of US and 1979's Iranian Revolution. He shows how these international events signify the attention given by the academics and general public to Orientalism. After the economic crisis faced by the colonies, Said's *Orientalism* encourages the re-examination of the process of decolonization.

Said's *Orientalism* focuses majorly on the recent European colonialism. Many scholars criticize Said for his use of Michel Foucault's concepts of discursive formation in which the written, spoken and performed communication forms the basis of analysis. As Said relates this concept with the Western scholars fabrication and description about the East as Orient—passive and uncivilized. Said also refers Foucault's concept of disciplinary power which underlines the way dominant group uses its authority over a dominated group. He marks how the Western academics represent the East through their scholarly academic and cultural writings. He talks about how the East is created than presented by the West as Orient. Critics find that Foucault's idea of discourse does not fully exemplify Said's *Orientalism*. Foucault thinks that discourses cannot be avoided or changed by any one writer but Said refers to few individual authors as representatives of all Orientalist thinkers and these representatives change Orientalism as a discipline. When Said realizes this limitation of his text, he writes,

*Orientalism* is a partisan book, not a theoretical machine ... The interest I took in Orientalism as a cultural phenomenon ... derives from its

variability and unpredictability ... What I tried to preserve in my analysis of Orientalism was its combination of consistency and inconsistency, its play, so to speak.

Said highlights Joseph Conrad's representation of South Africans as savages and cannibals. He marks Conrad's representation of African for highlighting the crisis of European sense of self and anxieties in industrialized world and their ideas about others. Every critic according to his own views about politics and ethnicity reacts to Orientalism. Orientalism criticizes the Western academic. Critics point out that Said has only considered East and South Asia. Hence, they argue that his views are not fully correct as they are based on the incomplete facts and material. They also feel that Said has completely ignored German, Dutch and Russian Orientalists' ideas. Said in his text, *Orientalism* considers the "Near East" and British and French scholars. They find Said's view of Western Studies of Orientalism incorrect as he calls Western Studies of Orientalism too rigid and less accurate.

Bernard Lewis, Professor emeritus of Islamic history at Princeton University and Western scholar of the Middle East reviewed *Orientalism* and published it in the New York Review of Books. He accused Said for politicizing Orientalism in "Letters to the Editor", a section of the magazine. He claimed that Said deliberately and forcefully tried to make his views and criticism related to his views, facts and methods politically important. Lewis criticized the way Said connects Orientalism and European empire. Said responded to the critics who criticized his point about the relationship between Orientalism and colonialism by stating that Orientalism not just focuses on the content of Orientalist writing but it also considers the way the content is expressed. He states the unwillingness of the scholars like Lewis to accept the political dimension of their scholarship and writings. He exemplifies his point with Napoleon's journey to Egypt in 1798. He states that Western move into the Orient under the pretext of research and exploration but in reality they prepare their way for political and economic colonization.

Sir Richard Burton praises Said's work but he criticizes that by saying, 'we are never directly given the Orient' (196). But it is hard to believe as the Orient cannot itself speak, it depends on the external representation. Said twice quotes Marx epigraph from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, 'they cannot represent themselves; they must be represented (xiii. 21, 293). Said argues that there can be 'no such thing as delivered presence, but a re-presence, or a representation.' As Derrida believes that non-written language cannot represent the spoken language as it is, in the same way, the West cannot represent the East the way it was and it is. He also says that the colonizers misinterpreted the East as in order to define themselves superior. He traces as Derrida talks about the relations of the opposition that how one is used to define other. But it does not mean that the other is inferior it is just the way through which the powerful presents itself superior. Said highlights how the West presents East inferior so it can present itself superior. He says there is thin line between representation and misrepresentation. He puts forth through his text,



Orientalism that what is commonly circulated by culture is not truth but representations.

Some critics oppose Said by mentioning that the West study the Islamic world long before than modern age as Said in his text, Orientalism gives the references are from eighteenth century. They connect Said's Orientalist view with Samuel Huntington's view that in future global conflicts due to the cultural differences, Islam can be considered opposite to Western civilization. Gayatri Spivak, Indian philosopher criticized Orientalism for not considering gender and class issues. She defines colonies which are considered and projected as inferior by the West as colonial "subaltern". Homi Bhabha underlines hybridity to argue that the cultural mix means both colonizers and colonized are not wholly part of one group or another, hence, social and cultural misunderstandings is a key feature of colonialism.

Some critics agree with Said's opinion about the presentation of Orient by Western scholars. Critics like James Clifford, anthropologist feel Said has misinterpreted Occident (the countries of the West) and the Orient (the East) as different and separate which in reality they feel were part of a continuous sequence and were not different. Said replied strongly to such criticism by saying that he saw how the East was described and constructed by Orientalists as per their geographical and cultural understanding. Said gets the opposition for his orientalism but afterward he added an epilogue to his book and expressed regret over how Arab and Muslim groups used his work to justify their aggressive and rigid nationalism. He pointed out that the academic scholars also focus more on the linguistic than the historical importance of the text.

Said's Orientalism focuses on how Western academic has been politicized. In his text he tries to highlight this relation between politics and academic. He suggests by observing how the other societies are represented if focus will be given on it this problem can be solved. He supports his view with Michel Foucault's discourse approach which is integral part of postcolonial studies. Frederick Cooper highlights the advanced scholars who study the colonialism and colonial representations of their colonies in *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. He says:

The most thought-provoking dimension of the 'new' scholarship on colonial situations, in relation to the 'old', is the way it calls into terms of social biases but in terms of the ways in which forms of knowledge and conceptions of change are themselves shaped by a history of which imperialism is a central development.

Said's Orientalism criticizes colonial rule which through a particular language and concept gives the authority to the West to organize and understand knowledge from its point of view and control others.

Said's Orientalism questions decolonization which could not cut off past. He argues how after independence Europe continues to dominate. He underlines how colonial control continues through modern global activities. His text helps to understand the power dynamics that



colonialism left behind through which it can control and dominate its colonies. He majorly focuses on how colonialism gave rise to modern Western postcolonial studies. He also talks about sub-alternity, hybridity, transnationalism, gender and sexual studies. E focuses on what was produced culturally by European elite. He criticizes how the European elites support the colonial role. He considers how certain false assumptions of European scholars have impacted the colonies today. He exemplifies it by giving Nicholas Dirks reference who considers castes system in India is not rigid. He highlights the wrong understanding and misinterpretation of the West through their writings. His argument touches the points made by Ann Laura Stoler who talks about colonizer's control on sexual reinforcement and idea of difference. He tells how mixed-race couple and children were considered a danger to social stability.

Edward Said's book, *Orientalism* still continues to influence the people. After Iraq and Afghanistan wars and 9/11 attack the text became more irrelevant for highlighting the post-colonial condition of the colonized people and their description given by the West. Said traces how Western countries financially dominate and Eastern countries only provide the services. This global economic situation can be understood from Said's quote:

What I should like also to have contributed here is a better understanding of the way cultural domination has operated. If this stimulates a new kind of dealing with the Orient, indeed if it eliminates the 'Orient' and the 'Occident' altogether, then we shall have advanced a little in the process of what Raymond Williams has called the 'unlearning' of the inherent dominative mode.

Said appeals the scholars to separate themselves from the politics and the bias projection of the East as his *Orientalism* focuses on the facts and truth. Gayatri Spivak replied to the appeal by saying, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" The Iranian-American scholar, Hamid Dabashi points out how the West categorizes people for convince. He calls it as "disposable knowledge" which no longer useful after the shift in political system. Timothy Mitchell applies Said's ideas of *Orientalism* to the international development. He says that the other cultures need the help the West.

Said focuses on the political and historical context in the academic writings. He explains how the both reflects and also actively produces the political conditions in which the text is written. He projects how scholars and culture reflects the contemporary political ideas. Scholars like, Ammiel Alcalay, Paul Gilroy and Moira Ferguson underlines the modern world and its roots in colonialism. They separate modernization from westernization. Edward Said's *Orientalism* continues to help to understand the postcolonial power and culture discourse as *Orientalism* deals with the changing political context. The historian Frederick Cooper wrote:

Said's influence has been profound and limited to literary studies . . . His approach opened up analysis of a wide array of cultural productions and their representations of difference, power, and progress.

Cooper focuses on the political involvement as well which helps the West to dominate after the decolonization. Said says that Orientalism did not and will not end in future as well.

Many scholars depend on Said's work to analyzing and classifying the population. They also refer Said for understanding the gender and sexuality from history and Orientalist contexts. Ann Laura Stoler highlights how the West has imposed the idea of ideal family or sexuality. Puar Jasbir criticizes how the West has presented the East inferior. Puar scholars put forth how the Western ideas are used as barometer of modernity. She calls this attitude as "homonationalism".

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## 6.3 CONCLUSION

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In short, Edward Said's Orientalism influenced the study of humanities and scholars point of views about colonialism and post-colonialism. It gives the opportunity to the colonized countries to voice their unrest being presented in humiliating manners. It tries to bring forth the political knowledge of the knowledge. It tells how the image of the East is cultural, historical, locational and representational by the West. He says, "A line is drawn between two continents. Europe is powerful and articulate: Asia is defeated and distant. Aeschylus represents Asia, makes her speak in the person of the aged Persian queen, Xerxes' mother. It is Europe that articulates the Orient(57)."

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## 6.4 QUESTIONS

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1. What is Edward Said's main thesis and idea in "Orientalism"? Is he against the West's subordinate view of the East?
2. Explicate Orientalism with suitable literary examples.
3. Critically analyze Edward Said's work, Orientalism.

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## **ESSAY: ARJUN APPADURAI'S ESSAY, “DISJUNCTURE AND DIFFERENCE IN THE GLOBAL CULTURAL ECONOMY”**

### **Unit Structure:**

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction of Arjun Appadurai
- 7.2 Analysis of Arjun Appadurai's "Disjuncture and Difference in the global Cultural Economy"
- 7.3 Conclusion
- 7.4 Questions
- 7.5 References

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### **7.0 OBJECTIVES**

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This unit discusses Arjun Appadurai's essay, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy". It deals with a short introduction of Arjun Appadurai and critical analysis of his work, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy".

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### **7.1 INTRODUCTION OF ARJUN APPADURAI**

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Arjun Appadurai is the Goddard Professor in Media, Culture and Communication at New York University, where he is also Senior Fellow at the Institute for Public Knowledge. He serves as Honorary Professor in the Department of Media and Communication, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Tata Chair Professor at The Tata Institute for Social Sciences, Mumbai and as a Senior Research Partner at the Max-Planck Institute for Religious and Ethnic Diversity, Gottingen. He was previously Senior Advisor for Global Initiatives at The New School in New York City, where he also held a Distinguished Professorship as the John Dewey Distinguished Professor in the Social Sciences. Arjun Appadurai was the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at The New School from 2004-2006. He was formerly the William K. Lanman Jr. Professor of International Studies, Professor of Anthropology, and Director of the Center on Cities and Globalization at Yale University. Appadurai is the founder and now the President of PUKAR (Partners for Urban Knowledge Action and Research), a non-profit organization based in and oriented to the city of Mumbai (India). He has also served as a consultant or advisor to a wide range of public and private organizations, including many major foundations (Ford, MacArthur, and Rockefeller); UNESCO; UNDP; the World Bank; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the National

Science Foundation; and the Infosys Foundation. He currently serves on the Advisory Board for the Asian Art Initiative at the Solomon Guggenheim Museum and on the Scientific Advisory Board of the Forum D'Avignon in Paris.

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Professor Appadurai was born and educated in Bombay. He graduated from St. Xavier's High School and took his Intermediate Arts degree from Elphinstone College before coming to the United States. He earned his B.A. from Brandeis University in 1967, and his M.A. (1973) and Ph.D. (1976) from The Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago.

During his academic career, he has also held professorial chairs at Yale University, the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania, and has held visiting appointments at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris), the University of Delhi, the University of Michigan, the University of Amsterdam, the University of Iowa, Columbia University and New York University. He has authored numerous books and scholarly articles, including *Fear of Small Numbers: An Essay on the Geography of Anger* (Duke 2006) and *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minnesota 1996; Oxford India 1997). Appadurai's latest book, *The Future as a Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition* was published by Verso in 2013. His books have been translated into French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese and Italian.

## Part II

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### 7.2 ANALYSIS OF ARJUN APPADURAI'S "DISJUNCTURE AND DIFFERENCE IN THE GLOBAL CULTURAL ECONOMY"

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Arjun Appadurai essay, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Economy"(1990) focuses on the cultural homogenization and heterogenization. He says, "One man's imagined community is another man's political prison." He pinpoints how media brings various cultures together rapidly. He articulates that the music, life style, laws and traditions get transferred from one culture to another. He not only underlines the positive impacts of the transformations but also highlights how these transformations can be threat to the indigenous culture for example, Japanization of Koreans, Vietnamization of Cambodians or Indianization of Sri Lankans. He draws the attention towards the resultant political issues which can be occurred as a result of cultural transformation.

Appadurai defines the central problem of modern day globalization as the tension between homogenization and heterogenization. He states how homogenization caused by globalization often relates to claims about commodification or Americanization, and often the two are linked together. He claims that what such theories do not take into account is that various cultural element which under globalization reach new societies are

often indigenized to the local culture. Furthermore, Appadurai argues that fear of cultural invasion is not limited only to Americanization but rather to every situation in which elements from one culture penetrate another. He talks about the global manifestation of the cultural fractal spread through media. He exemplifies the modern marketing of media not only spreads the culture but also promotes the products. He believes that the media dismisses the geographical distance between nations and cultures. He tells how all the theories and concepts are inadequate due to certain fundamental disjunctures between economy, culture and politics which the theorists might not have considered.

Appadurai formulates a mental model for the disjuncture between different sorts of global flows by creating terms—ethnoscapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes that serve as an elementary framework which serves to analyze the complex relationships of these flows in five dimensions. Each term represents a particular dimension of global flows which are at the same time dis-junctive, interdependent and interrelated. For example, if there is no ethnoscape then there will be no change in the culture. it will be same in the case of technoscapes and finanscapes. The mutability of these concepts is inherent to the very use of the term “Scape” by Appadurai, as it serves him to describe the ever changing shape of global flows rather than to describe the static conditions of inter-relations between nation-states. He uses this suffix ‘scape’ to show how all the disjunctures are connected by historical, linguistic and political situatedness such as nation-states, multinationals, diaspora and sub-national groupings and movements like religions, political and economic. He says the individual with his/her experience of these built block to which Benedict Anderson called as imagined worlds, multiple worlds which are produced by historical imaginations of the person and groups. Today also many people in the world continue to live in such imagined world and imagined communities. He justifies that the suffix ‘scape’ facilitates to point to the fluid, irregular shapes of these landscape. He tells how these shapes characterize international capital as deeply as they do international clothing styles.

In short, Appadurai introduces the concept of ‘scapes’ to provide a new framework for analyzing the cultural dimensions of globalization. Ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes serve as his central categories, the “building-blocks” of culture. (In *Crossing and Dwelling*, Thomas Tweed suggests that we also think about “sacroscares,” or trans-locative religious flows.) Unlike old-fashioned center-periphery models, Appadurai argues, the word, scapes suggests an alternative spatial rendering. Scapes are amorphous, of variant sizes, and flow in multiple directions. They serve as images of cultural processes—snapshots of cultural distributions, flows, and integrations at any given time. Appadurai hastens to add that the relationship between these scapes is “deeply disjunctive and profoundly unpredictable.” Scapes are intrinsically fluid. This marks a departure, for example, from more traditional Marxian analyses of culture that might privilege the “financescape” as the most powerful locus demanding the orbit of other dimensions.



Appadurai links globalization with major changes in the global cultural economy. While cultural contact and exchange have always occurred to some degree, he thinks that these processes have profoundly intensified in recent years with the advent of rapid mass media technologies and increased migration. What we are seeing now, he argues is something entirely and qualitatively new. diaspora and diffusion, not stability, are the rule for new cultural formations. He sees "the configuration of cultural forms in today's world as fundamentally fractal, that is, as possessing no Euclidian boundaries, structures, or regularities" (20). In this new world, it makes no sense to try to understand cultures as holistic, coherent, or autonomous. Culture is no longer limited to specific nation or to a geographical territory. The new global cultural economy, on the contrary, is complex, disjunctive, and overlapping. He writes about "Global flows," not autonomous nations, characterize cultures and their interrelationships.

According to Appadurai, the characteristic of the modern world is something in which the cultural objects are fractals as they replicate and spread. This characteristics of the modern world depends on the boundaries is flawed and unable to grasp the complete cultural phenomena. He highlights how we think the cultural objects are confined to the single territory and have a pure form and they do not interact with the other cultural objects. Then, he explains how such analysis will be flawed. For example, if we will consider one of the cultural markers like food. If we travel to different parts of the world, the same food we find in different taste or the use of the ingredients will be different for example, the Chinese food if we taste specific Chinese dish in China and the same food item if we will try in India then the taste, the ingredients and cooking style everything will be different. In short, we cannot claim a particular food type as Indian food or Chinese food is a pure form of pure cultural object untouched by other cultural influence. He claims that no pure form of the cultural objects exists.

Appadurai explains a disjuncture, separation or disconnection in the global cultural economy. He says these separations, disconnections and disjuncture are between economy, culture and politics which create the problems for the global economy. For example, if we will consider Saudi Arabia and sharia law in Muslim countries, it can be a cultural form of religion and politics. Here, we can observe the multiculturalism which is more difficult to ensure that political system is integrated to economic and cultural systems. As Muslim law of marriage is different than the other laws in the world, then it becomes confusing to the non-Muslim to follow which law. Appadurai underlines this disconnection between politics and culture.

Appaduari considers what are building blocks of today's imagined worlds and how they are distinct and related to each other. He refers Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities". According to Anderson, we belong to a common communities, heritage and destiny. He tells how our imagination is connected with the print form—printed books, newspapers, novels in the same language dealing with the same issues. He tells that whatever information we get from various mediums, it blurs the line

between the reality and fiction. As a result, we construct our imaginary world or block accordingly. Further, he tells how modern world has become highly interactive, deterritorialized and fractal. He traces how they think and imagine ethno-scape-movement of people, technoscape-movement of technologies, finance-scape- movement of capital, media-scape-movement of technology based information. He pinpoints how there is no barrier of language and there can be multiple explanations. He also mentions ideoscape which relates with transformation of ideology with no physical boundaries. He traces that in today's technology based world it is impossible to consider as a fix block or permanent information or fact because the rapid media constantly shaping and reshaping our facts, imagination and reality.

Further, Appadurai explains how the common model of understanding of the global economy does not fit with the ever expanding and changing cultural mixing in this current era. The previous thoughts of separate "center-periphery models" and "push and pull (in terms of migration theory)" do not correspond to the "movements," as he calls them, of cultural expression. He uses a suffix, *scape* to explain the disjunction. He uses 'scape' as a suffix which is generally used to understand irregular shapes of the landscape. His use of the suffix "scape" is meant to illustrate that these are cultural vistas which depend on the position of a given spectator, and that they are constantly changing. He claims that the complexity of the global market is connected with the disjunction of economy, culture and politics. Here, he uses it to trace the cultural, economic and political disjunction promoted by the media. He shares certain reasons which are responsible to the disjunction. He underlines the disjunctions through five conceptual dimensions, "scapes", of the global culture: ethnoscape, mediascape, technoscape, finanscape and ideoscape. The first is, 'ethnoscape' which represents the people who geographically shift from one place to another like tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest-workers and other moving people or groups. He states that these groups or people also influence the global culture and politics. He states how this migration from village to city or from one country to another impacts not only culture, politics, production but also policies.

Appadurai refers "ethnoscape" to underline the growing movement of people into one another due to immigration which changes the global dynamics. In "technoscape", Appadurai addresses the growing spread of technology. Mediascapes are narrative or visual representations of parts of reality which shape the perception of the other, fantasies and ambitions. He underlines how media creates the image of the world. Media blurs the line between the reality and the imagination. Mediascapes mix the world of commodities, news, politics and ethnoscapes. Ideoscape relates to the ideological dimension of states and other agencies. Notions like "freedom" or "democracy" need to be translated when crossing the borders of other cultures. Mediascapes is image-centred. It presents information which transfers the people to an imagined world which has a characters and plot.

According to Appadurai 'ethnoscape' means the landscape of people who constantly move from place to place. He includes tourists, immigrants,

refugees, exiles, guestworkers and other people who constantly move in world and influence world culture, politics and economy. He talks about the desire of the stable people who wish and fantasies to travel the world. He tells how in reality people move from one part of the world to the other part. And as these people travel, there is a shift in international capital it means the place, nation gets changed and accordingly their needs, technology, the production of that place, that nation's policies will be adjusted. He underlines how these people cannot reside at one place form long time. In this way, they keep on move and change the nations and policies worldwide.

Appadurai through 'technoscape' represents rapid flow of the information through technology. Appadurai points out how the information is spread through media without any geographical restrictions and boundaries. As a result of it, number of countries has rapidly become multicultural. He points out how it affects to the global economy. He highlights how the migrants move from one place to the other and from one nation to the other and get settled there for a while as per their needs and wish. But in their stay, they purchase new house or their basic needs like house for which they take loans from the bank which in return, helps the economy to grow. Hence, Appadurai talks about 'finanscapes' as the global capital is now more mysterious, rapid and difficult landscape to follow. He includes current markets, national stock exchange and commodity speculations in finanscapes which is very vast and fast. He says that the global relationship between ethnoscaples, technoscapes and finanscapes is very disjunctive and unpredictable due to its own constraints and incentives. Thus, he refers to consider human movement, technological flow and financial transfers which are interconnected and can be influenced with political, informational and techno-environmental changes.

Appadurai pinpoints how technoscapes is influenced with the complex relationships between information among the increasing numbers of other mediums like newspapers, magazines, television stations and films. He states how the images of the world or the information provided by the media depends on the various factors like the mode (documentary or entertainment), their audiences (local, national or transnational) and the interests of those who own and control them. He marks how the uneven distribution of technologies affects the financial and political status of country. He underlines how the technology or media creates the image of the world.

Appadurai highlights how ideoscapes and mediascapes are closely connected. Mediascapes refers to distribution of electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information through the media such as newspapers, magazines, television stations and films. Appadurai underlines how today the media is responsible to create the image of the world. He explains that these images created by media involve many complicated factors like the mode of the media, purpose (entertainment/education), target audience. He traces the mediascapes like television, film and cassette as media tools to provide large and complex range of images,

narratives and ethnoscapas which the profound mix of news and politics. Mediascapes blurs the line between the real and imagined world.

Ideoscapes are also the chain of the images but they directly deal with the political power and ideologies of states or the counter-ideologies which influence people to get the power. These ideoscapes include the terms and images such as freedom, welfare, rights, sovereignty, representation and democracy. This type of vocabulary targets the specific populations which moves from place to place, ethnoscapas and sometimes, mediascapes create problems for ideoscapes with which they are presented. Ideoscapes are dependent on conventions and the paradigmatic framework of cultures in order to be given their meaning in every culture. Flexibility is complicated in particular diaspora. Appadurai explains it through the example of the meaning of democracy. He says how democracy can be interpreted differently under the ruling ideoscapes or different parts of the world.

Appadurai claims that the global movement of these various scapes helps under a growing disjunction between them. The movement of people, technology, funds, media and ideas exists in varying and colliding forms. One of the characteristics of this phenomenon according to Appadurai is the state of deterritorialization with cultural groups living apart from their territory (such as immigrant groups), changing the scapes which adapt themselves to the new situation and creating the tension between openness to global processes and the will to retain a cultural identity. He exemplifies it with Saudis acceptance of the guestworkers and creating labor diaspora—Turk, Italian and South Asian. Some labor groups like Turks maintain constant contact with their home-nations but some migrants desire to live in Saudi which creates the problem of deterritorialization.

Appadurai says deterritorialization brings labor into lower class sectors of rich societies. Deterritorialization presents senses of criticism or attachment to politics in the home-state. He says how deterritorialization develops when money, commodities and persons are involved and chase each other around the world. He connects them with mediascapes and ideoscapes. He says the ideas and images produced by mass media are only partial guides to the goods and experiences that deterritorialized populations transfer to one another.

Further, Appadurai's vision of a flowing, borderless world strikes as somewhat premature. He shares the example of Mexican migrants who 'flow' by the tens of thousands each year into Arizona and other parts of the southwestern United States and the US-Mexico border and continue to be highly militarized. He tells how state borders have been fortified—not compromised, walls have been erected and racism and xenophobia increased. This is just a way of saying that borders in response to global flows are resilient. A Mexican migrant would agree with Appadurai that today's world maintains no "boundaries, structures, or regularities" (20).

Appadurai describes heterogeneous, context-dependent, and radically impermanent world that runs the risk of losing its theoretical usefulness. His analogies drawn from fractal geometry and chaos theory are exciting, but do not exactly lend analytical precision. He says that cultural formations are wholly random and contingent. Appadurai is equivocal. "This does not mean that the causal-historical relationship between these various flows is random or meaninglessly contingent, but that our current theories of cultural 'chaos' are insufficiently developed to be even parsimonious models, at this point, much less to be predictive theories, the golden fleeces of one kind of social science" (21).

Appadurai's new framework is not without shortcomings. Appadurai, like Thomas Tweed in *Crossing and Dwelling* underestimates the realities of power in controlling and directing global flows. Appadurai's essay does not completely answers the question whether the world is really in a state of complete disjuncture. Total disjuncture, it seems woefully unhelpful frame for understanding global inequalities. One not need be an ideological Marxist to see how the global flow of financial capital continues to be a directive though perhaps not the determinant—power, capable of upsetting other flows. Hollywood, after all, is far from bankrupt and continues to dominate global mediascapes. Global technoscapes remain fueled by the billions and billions of dollars poured into the bloated defense budget of the United States. Ethnoscapes are aggressively politicized and policed in many parts of the world, and function to keep poorer classes out of richer countries. Appadurai states how flow of capital indeed remains an incisive power, perhaps he would be unable to reach such sanguine conclusions about the potential of imagination and agency.

Appadurai considers deterritorialization as the central force of the modern world as it provides laboring population into the lower class sectors and spaces of relatively wealthy societies by creating exaggerated and intensified senses of criticism or attachment to politics in the home-state. He exemplifies it by giving Hindu's overseas movement is exploited y within and outside India to create a network of finances and religious identifications. He traces how it creates cultural problems for Hindus in abroad and the involvement of the politics of Hindu fundamentalism at home. He also talks about how deterritorialization creates new market for film, art and tourism. He focuses on how this provides the material for new ideoscapes in which ethnic conflicts can start. He provides the example of Khalistan, an invented homeland of the deterritorialized Sikh population of US, England and Canada. This also exemplifies threat of internal colonialisms. He proves how deterritorialization new feature of global cultural politics. He states how the disjunctive relationships between the various landscapes creates a problems at states and nations level. In both, nation and state, there is a conflict of imagination control one another for example Tamils in Sri Lanka proven as threat to the traditional diaspora which initiated the micro politics of a nation-state.

Further, Appadurai gives examples of transnational movement of martial-arts from Asia to Hollywood and Hong Kong films. He explicates how this transmission of culture makes the culture of violence and masculinity



popular and a result, its fuel to increase the violence at national and international levels. He traces how images of violence linked with aspiration for community in some imagined world.

Appadurai talks about paradox of ethnic politics which has introduced primordial of language, skin color or neighborhood worldwide. It influences the sentiments at great force. It impacts sentiments, identities and political ideas. Appadurai also highlights how this has the capacity to hold together the constantly migrating people, ethnoscape through the sophisticated media by creating traditional and retrospective affiliations. He states that the impact of primordial product can be disturbed by disjunctive and changing commerce, media, national policies and consumer fantasies. He traces that the relationship between cultural and economic of global disjunctures vicissitude of international flows of technology, labor and finance creates a problem of uneven development. He pinpoints the fetishism of the consumer which indicates the transformation of the consumers through mediascapes especially, advertisements. He specifies that global advertising is the key technology for the worldwide dissemination of creative and culturally chosen ideas of consumer agency.

Appadurai traces that globalization of culture is different than homogenization but links globalization uses multiple elements of homogenization like armaments, advertising techniques, language, clothes and styles. He states how homogenization influences the local political and cultural economies. He articulates how too much freedom to global flows and nation-state can create problem of revolt. He also highlights that the export of the designs and commodities of difference gives birth to internal politics of majoritarianism and homogenization which can be witnessed in debates over heritage. He points out the core objective of global culture is the politics of mutual effort of sameness and difference to cannibalize one another to control the universe.

Appadurai connects deterritorialization with money, finance, market and investments. He shows how this type of deterritorization gives birth to money conflict. He exemplifies it through the examples of Japanese properties in Los Angeles and dominance of Arabs from Gulf State in Bombay, India. He also considers though there are conflicts in them but still there is a commodities transfer between the countries which change consumer taste which in return affect to the market and business, at the same time, there is a threat off smuggling which gives birth to grey market. He also brings to the light the dark and dirty fact of sex or flesh market which takes place at international level which is also a product of ethnoscares, finanscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes and ideoscapes. The West Bank, Namibia and Eritrea are the platforms to negotiate between existing nation-states and deterritorialized groups. He tells mass media guides the goods and experiences that the deterritorialized population transfers to one another. He talks about cultural politics of deterritorialization which is connected with global economy.



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## 7.3 CONCLUSION

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Essay: Arjun Appadurai's  
Essay, "Disjuncture and  
Difference in the Global  
Cultural Economy"

In short, Appadurai suggests underlying patterns. Yet in the midst of what, at this early stage, appears to be chaos, we simply have not yet been able to identify or articulate such patterns using our current social scientific toolkits. Appadurai's essay presents provocative implications a work on landscape. Specifically, his discussion of deterritorialization radically disturbs what anthropologists and historians think of as a "site." A site can no longer be one physical location, for flows can only be glimpsed in their mobility. We cannot only look at a local region; we must look at Tweed's sacrospheres.

Appadurai means we ought not to be interested any longer in territories and 'flow' require to abandon 'place'. He misses the fact that flows can actually help create and transform geographic spaces. Places are not static—they are made and remade depending on the movements, actions, and ideas of their successive inhabitants. In other words, it is not only deterritorialization that occurs with globalization, but also reterritorialization. Old spaces may be left behind by one group, only to be newly inhabited and newly remade. The desert outside Tucson, for example, has become one such reterritorialized landscape, recently repopulated with border patrol guards, various humanitarian aid workers, and teams of clandestine crossing migrants. Novel arrangements of law, nongovernmental organizations, black markets, and religious practices have arisen in this reterritorialized chunk of earth.

In conclusion, Appadurai's model mentioned in "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy" serves a reflective, multidimensional view on the macroscopic processes of a globalized society. Appadurai analyses these complex relationships on a fundamental level. He exemplifies the strong interdependencies between the formulated spheres and points out both the procedural and disjunctive nature of the topic. He puts forth his perspectives on the global flow of people, technology, finance, information and ideologies through this essay.

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## 7.4 QUESTIONS

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1. Critically analyze Arjun Appadurai's essay, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy".
2. Explain Appadurai's mental model for the disjuncture between different sorts of global flows mentioned in his essay, "Disjunction and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy".

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## CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED POEMS OF IMTIAZ DHARKER-I

### Part I

#### Unit Structure :

8.0 Objectives

8.1 About Imtiaz Dharker

8.2 Analysis of Dharker's Poems

### 8.0 OBJECTIVES

1. To study prescribed poems of Imtiaz Dharker
2. To trace his contributions to Indian poetry

### 8.1 ABOUT IMTIAZ DHARKER

Born in Lahore in 1954, Imtiaz Dharker is a poet, artist, and documentary filmmaker of Pakistani-Scottish descent. She moved to Scotland when she was very young and was brought up in Glasgow. She presently lives in London and Mumbai and sees herself as a "Scottish Muslim Calvinist," having been adopted by India and married into the Welsh family. For her English poetry, she was awarded the Queen's Gold Medal and Meritorious achievement in poetry.

### 8.2 ANALYSIS OF DHARKER'S POEMS

Imtiaz Dharker has published six collections of poems, works among other things as a documentary maker in India and has shown her drawings in solo exhibitions in India, London, New York and Hong Kong. In her poetry she takes on topics such as homeland, freedom and travel in an imaginative and questioning way and points to cultural and geographical conflicts within society and gender politics, which has brought her the 2014 Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry and the Cholmondeley Award.

Imtiaz Dharker's poem '*Living Space*' expresses a physical manifestation of poverty in the form of a dilapidated, poorly constructed home. She does not simply elucidate the structural integrity of the home in question but uses that rundown home as an impetus to comment on lives shrouded in poverty. The poem highlights the financial circumstance through the home by commenting on people rather than things, both their present states and their future possibilities. "Living Space" describes the slums of Mumbai and is a snapshot of a home that lacks straight lines, solid walls, or secure ceilings. Instead, this "structure leans dangerously," highlighting fragility—but it leans "towards the miraculous," too. It speaks of a "rough frame" into which "someone has squeezed/a living space." Ceiling beams are balanced precariously, and nails protrude from the walls. Yet, even

while on the surface this is a dangerous living situation, there's also something "miraculous" about it.

Running through the poem is a sense that *all* life is fragile, and that its existence in any shape or form is a kind of miracle. Despite having very little to their name, the occupants of this house make a life for themselves. The poet thus suggests that the life thus made is but bound to be celebrated. The resourcefulness of the person who lives in this space is then symbolized by the "eggs in a wire basket." These, too, represent life and are, of course, extremely fragile. Like the house itself, it would not take much to break these eggs. But they *are not* broken, and instead are waiting there to be used in cooking, to play a part in the occupant's existence. The scope of the poem thus shifts from a particular occupant or even just Mumbai slums to the entirety of humanity. Crowded onto planet Earth, the human population itself is "hung out over the dark edge / of a slanted universe." For all its technological advancement, complexity of thought, and instinctive resourcefulness, humanity too is like a bunch of eggs suspended in a precarious situation. *All* life, then, is perched on a structure both dangerous and miraculous. Finally, the poem ends with faith.

Nothing is flat

(...)

thrust off the vertical.

In these lines of '*Living Space*', the focus remains at first on the structure being the blame rather than the residents of the home. Dharker solidifies the helplessness that the occupants of the living space experience by considering that the root of their issues lies within the structural integrity or the lack thereof. She then begins describing the details of the home which she eases the readers into. She begins this transformation by still building on the notion of structure—things that would be done to combat the poor structure, like "*Beams balanced crookedly*". It is a step-by-step process, and now that she has discussed what might be the most visible means of fighting that structural battle, she introduces the more trivial parts of the home.

"*Nails clutch at open seams.*" The people living in the home are desperately holding to the idea that things will improve, that they are *grasping desperately at the* potential of a future that is better than where they currently stand. In the midst of this disarray, there is hope.

That concept is reflected again in the last two lines of the arrangement since the setup "*leans dangerously towards the miraculous.*" Figuratively, the statement reflects the notion that something brighter can happen in the days to come, but it takes that notion a step further. Literally, the line could be interpreted as sarcastic awe as to how the building still holds ground. The poor state of the home is not just something that can be overcome with ease. It is also something that can be used as inspiration to aspire for more. This idea is evident in the verb choice for "*leans*" since that verb reveals the "*whole structure*" is pointing at "*something*

*miraculous.*” The current state “*leans...towards*” the future, as in the situation can provide the motivation to overcome and strive for something better.

Lines 10-22

Into this rough frame,

(...)

the bright, thin walls of faith.

All of this information is presented in one sentence hints that whatever the topic of this sentence is, it is exciting enough to Dharker to be presented in a rushed format, as she can hardly get the words out quickly enough. Whatever is presented in this series of lines then is the culmination of ‘*Living Space*’.

Beyond the children’s reaction, the final lines of the poem make their search for goodness seem as though it concerns more than their own dreams and happiness. The final words of the poem are “*as if they were the bright, thin walls of faith.*” The article choice of “*the*” in that statement is vastly important since it shows that this is a specific title given to specific people. They are not being described as just any of the “*walls,*” but rather “*the...walls.*” Out of all of the people in the home or neighbourhood, these have somehow earned that title, and if they alone are the keepers of this name, they alone are the ones who can carry this “*faith.*” Even the adjectives listed before the noun, “*walls,*” matter because they almost disagree with one another. These children are “*bright,*” which is positive. In the darkness, they can shine. But they are also “*thin,*” and that idea can be taken to mean that they are fragile, that they could break. The entire situation is unstable, like the house, but the possibilities for a better future will always exist in the midst of that darkness, so long as the “*bright, thin walls of faith*” still shine and look for better things.

This overall message could be taken as a statement toward poverty in general as well. People in these states could be in hardships, but possibilities can still prevail against the dimness.

With that in mind, Dharker has created a poem that uses such simplicity of wording and circumstance to offer commentary on something much larger than one broken-down home. ‘*Living Space*’ is about bigger ideas, like life and hope. “*Living Space,*” then, is really about the remarkable ability and resilience of humanity to create homes in all places and conditions—and breathe life into these homes.

In “*At the Lahore Karhai*” vocalises Dharker’s experiences of family tour that she calls ‘a pilgrimage across the city’ where they enjoy food but do not consume beer as they are Muslim. The religious rigors do not allow them to consume alcohol. Further she elaborates the roadside dhaba where the truck-drivers halt for food. Dharker considers herself as ‘we’re

truckers of another kind' that are moving on the way of life looking for the food of their home. Similarly, she observes how a Sindhi refugee with his beautiful wife who prays each day to Krishna, the keeper of her kitchen and her life. On this Lahore runaway she also observes an English young man with confident English girls who represent Western free culture. Being a Muslim she has experienced the pangs of Partition wherein she says 'This winter we have learnt to wear our past like summer clothes.' Further, the poet enumerates delicacies like 'tarka dal', 'karhaighosht' and 'gajjar halwa' with the warm 'naan'. These food items highlight the culture and ethnicity of the family. While eating she remembers Kartar, Rohini, Robert, Ayesha, Sangam and herself enjoying food in the past. The political decision has divided them as she says, 'bound together by the bread we break, sharing out our continent.' It is the food and memories that binds them in past and in present too. The concluding lines comically underline the multi-culti of the modern generation where Dharker says, 'Other days, we may prefer Chinese.'

The poem begins on a happy note as the group of six friends get into a car and set off for lunch at the 'Lahore Karhai', a restaurant in Wembley, London. The poet immediately underscores the sanctity of the visit by addressing it as a 'pilgrimage': a journey undertaken to connect with a higher being or their inner selves.

They reach the restaurant just as lunch has begun to be served. Note the line: 'No beer, we're Muslim.' Their request for beer is turned down by the staff but they are happy with the morning sun and the old classic film-song playing in the background. The song 'Yaadnajaaye', is from a popular Hindi film, sung by Mohammad Rafi in 1963, roughly translated, mean 'memories refuse to leave.' The significance cannot be missed as the memory of their homeland, the longing for Indian/ Pakistani food and music that brings the group to this restaurant. The music echoes their sentiments.

The ambience of the restaurant reminds the speaker of the dhabas that dot the Grand Trunk Road – an ancient route that starts in Bangladesh and runs east-west through India and into Pakistan – and are the lifeline of truck drivers and travellers. The poet dwells on the common historical inheritance of these countries in the Asian subcontinent. Away from home, they are hungry and tired, seeking the taste of home-cooked food. Observe how the poet uses a word implying strong physical desire to describe their hunger: 'full of lust for real food/ just like home.' The comparison is carried over into the next paragraph; if the restaurant has morphed into a dhaba then this group of friends are like the truckers: miles away from home, rootless and restless, separated by both distance and time:

The poet then identifies her friends by nationality. The 'Lahore runaway' is a reference to herself. Imtiaz Dharker was born in Lahore but spent most of her life in Britain and India. Then there is the Sindhi refugee and his wife, and two young girls from Bombay, India. The group has a cosmopolitan composition and also includes a young Englishman. It is not a homogenous group like that of the Indian audience in 'Indian Movie,



New Jersey.’ The boundaries between nations become blurred, and it seems the poet is conscious of the South Asian, regional identity of this group. The group comprises both Hindus and Muslims; as well as a British national; truly indicative of a unified global culture. It is indicative of a certain degree of cultural assimilation with the host country that there is an Englishman in the midst of the other immigrants. He is ‘too young to be flavoured by the Raj’, suggests that he is untouched by any form of racial prejudice. He does not relate to his friends as a colonizer as he was born after the end of British rule in 1947.

Though dislocated from their homeland, the immigrants are on their way to becoming truly global citizens; embracing new cultures while retaining an ethnic identity. The summer clothes are a metaphor for the home and culture they have left behind. The poet shifts her attention to the food on the table that acts as a metaphor for familial ties. As explained earlier, the poet uses food as an implicit extended metaphor for her ethnic roots. In the following lines, she uses specific Indian / Pakistani dishes to affectionately remember her relatives:

*Yes, a great day.  
A feast! We swoop  
on a whole family of dishes.  
The tarka dal is Auntie Hameeda  
the karhaighosht is Khala Ameena  
the gajjar halva is Appa Rasheeda.  
The warm naan is you.*

Within this stanza, Imtiaz Dharker has used no less than five metaphors. The dishes are perhaps those which their aunts cooked for them, back home in Pakistan; food that was an expression of love, a vector for reinforcing interpersonal relations. Families in the Indian subcontinent maintain ties with almost every member of their extended family; cousins, uncles and aunts. This distinct cultural practice is evoked in the fond remembrance of relatives back home. As the poet says:

*bound together by the bread we break,  
sharing out our continent.  
These  
are ways of remembering.*

Food is not only a way to stay connected to home; it also forges relationships in the present. When the light falls on the people in the restaurant it makes the poet realize that they are ‘bound together’ by the food they eat, sharing a common culinary legacy. The last stanza comes as something of a surprise :

*Other days, we may prefer  
Chinese.*

There is no sense of conflict with the host society and these Asian immigrants have learnt to enjoy other, foreign cultures existing in Britain; one of the most multi-cultural societies in the world. They seem to have learnt to effortlessly make the transition from one cultural ethos to another

as though their nostalgia assimilates together. Unlike the Indian community in ‘Indian Movie, New Jersey’, who share a deep anxiety and a sense of failure to integrate with the host society; the immigrants in ‘At the Lahore Karhai’ have come to terms with life in a foreign land and embraced multiculturalism. At the same time, there is perhaps a subtle suggestion that for the immigrant, her/his culture has been reduced to the same status as other exotic cuisines, such as Chinese, which they consume as a break from their everyday monotony. The lived culture they left behind is now experienced through rose coloured glasses on an occasional weekend outing. The taste of food, lovingly cooked by mothers/ aunts each day is now sought in restaurants or is replaced easily altogether by food from other cultures.

‘The Choice’ is a poem about the choices of parents and family members in making a child grow with a specific identity. The compulsions, fixities and restrictions of family, gender, space, community and religion make a child grow wherein the instructors pass away before the child learns to think and choose for themselves. The poet satirizes the cultural nuances of manmade and spoon-fed choices. The second part of the poem paints a picture of the mother sharing her kitten-like child’s growing pains, wherein within the blink of an eye the child grows up to alienate the lap that they once found comfort in. While once the mother feared her own strength could harm the child “for love leers close to violence”, the mother now hurts at the idea of the child physically and emotionally outgrowing the once familiar confines of the mother’s lap. The mother, hence, warns the child to flee her lap until they’re both safe.

The third part of the poem highlights not only the anxiety an overbearing parenthood bestows upon a child but also the sudden realization of broken “shackles”. Where the poet once cowered under the fear of her mother’s watchful eye, when she broke free of the same, the magnitude of freedom that followed her since seemed to burden her similarly. Thus, when moving through continents when the poet comes upon a lonesome, darkened window panes, she sees in herself her mother, burdened similarly by freedom.

The poem “Minority” is an eight stanza poem that gives another perspective to the word “minority” – contrary to popular belief. The author uses the literary techniques of imagery, structure, and tone to create a criticism of what people generalize to be a foreigner. A sense of belonging is a fundamental human need. But what is it like to never feel that you truly belong, to feel like nothing more than a stranger, outcast or even an alien? These words are used in this poem by Imtiaz Dharker to portray someone who feels like “a foreigner everywhere”.

Symbolically, the poem highlights the minority status of the poet who moves from place to place but finds no “home”. She remains a minority, an alien, in every space, even those once familiar to her now ring hollow. The poet thus chronicles her emotions:

“the reception of an image  
not quite tuned, ghost-outlined,

that signals, in their midst,  
an alien.”

She then finds comfort in her pen continuously scratching over paper for “A page doesn’t fight back,” thus outlining the universal and all-encompassing reach that venting emotions on a piece of papers has. The poet confesses that through these scratches she hopes to etch these emotions of alienation into the readers’ mind albeit through multiple familiar scenarios warring for acknowledgement in hopes that some day when the reader comes across a stranger, they may notice the human in them instead of a minority.

The poem “They’ll say she must be from another country,” by Imtiaz Dharker explores the challenges of expectations in the day-to-day life of a non-native from the natives. It highlights the identity crises of a diaspora subject in an international space. Throughout the poem, the poet explores scenarios and cues where her methods and approaches lead to her being alienated as a non-native in whichever country she goes to. She finds herself being alienated over the way she speaks with the stresses on her syllables misplaced, the way she dresses and the things that amuse her in her native country as well as diasporic space. Her choices and nature are constantly pointed and singled out as though being different were the bane of her existence.

In the final stanzas of the poem, the poet wishfully speaks of a country where she could be allowed to embrace the things that make her different: a space that she could share with people similarly isolated and deemed “freaks” by society. The space that she speaks of, thus, isn’t a country at all but is rather a space wherein borders between countries crack and cultures and influences mix happily. Herein, the poet says, that with an atmosphere of mutual respect, she would happily claim that she is from another country.

An anguished god surveys a world stricken by fundamentalism in this powerful poem – “Postcards from God (1)” - by a writer whose cultural experience spans three countries: Pakistan, the country of her birth, and Britain and India, her countries of adoption. The speaker of the poem, God, sets up anonymously for a verse that highlights the same confusion and loneliness as would befall a traveller who revisits his home eons after he last saw it. The speaker says that He does not speak often, if at all simply to ask for directions to which He gets a jumble of words wherein one has to read into what has not been said to interpret what was said. The speaker claims not to find any familiar landmarks that He once knew of rendering the place strange.

However, as He finds himself a postcard, the speaker though begins to write cannot think of a recipient, or an address that He might not have misplaced. Yet, as He begins to write He realises that he needs not to write for the recipient but for Himself, as a proof and reassurance to Himself that He, God, was here.



## **CRITICAL STUDY OF THE PRESCRIBED POEMS OF IMTIAZ DHARKER-II**

### **Part II**

#### **Unit Structure:**

#### 9.0 Objectives

#### 9.1 About Meena Kandasamy

#### 9.2 Analysis of Kandasamy's Poems

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### **9.0 OBJECTIVES**

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1. To study prescribed poems of Meena Kandasamy
  2. To trace her contributions to Indian poetry
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### **9.1 MEENA KANDASAMY**

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Meena Kandasamy was born in 1984 in a Tamil family. Both her parents are university professors, they named their child as Illavenil. She adopted the name Meena for her writings. She is a fiction writer and activist, her works are centred always on demanding for female's equal position in the society just as men, and she even works as the anti – caste, annihilation movement of the contemporary Indian milieu. Her poetry is about a female's own self and her body in ways which is not allowed in mainstream politics.

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### **9.2 ANALYSIS OF KANDASAMY'S POEMS**

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Her work has been published in anthologies and journals that include Anthology of Contemporary Indian Poetry, The Little Magazine, Kavya Bharati, Indian Literature, Poetry International Web, Muse India, Quarterly Literary Review, Outlook, Tehelka and The New Indian Express. She was also invited to participate in the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa in 2009.. Two years later, Meena was made the Charles Wallace India Trust Fellow at the University of Kent.[12] She was a featured poet at the City of Asylum Jazz Poetry Concert held in Pittsburgh, the 14th Poetry Africa International Festival (2010), Durban and the DSC Jaipur Literature Festival (2011). She co-authored AYYANKALI: A Dalit leader of Organic Protest, a biography of Ayyankali, a dalit leader in Kerala. Meena was shortlisted among 21 short fiction women writers aged less than 40 from South Asia for an anthology published by Zubaan, New Delhi. In 2014, she published a novel about the Kilvenmani massacre titled The Gypsy Goddess, influenced by the figure of Kurathi Amman, her

"ancestral goddess". From January 2013, she began working on a book titled *Caste and the City of Nine Gates*, her first non-fiction work.

Critical Study of The  
Prescribed Poems of Imtiaz  
Dharker-II

Awards: Hermann Kesten Prize (2022) by PEN Centre Germany. She represented India at the University of Iowa's International Writing Program and was a Charles Wallace India Trust Fellow at the University of Kent, Canterbury, United Kingdom. She writes columns for platforms like Outlook India] and The Hindu.

In a harrowing account, Meena Kandasamy through her poem "Apologies for Living" highlights the subaltern identities and struggle of women who are branded and colonised indifferently by men. Being born in a Dalit family, Kandasamy experiences double marginalisation in her own country. The poem speaks of the manner in which the world ruthlessly treats not just women but mere girls who expect the security of a womb from a society full of "bottom-patting-and-breast-pinching"

This society not only robs the speaker of her security but also from her ability to think as she locks herself away like a princess awaiting death. The speaker thus highlights the systemic muting of women at a psychological level. The speaker thus dares not dream of freedom but instead yearns for solitude and darkness where nothing holds her back, not even her own memories. In the hopes of this solitude and the freedom within, the speaker finds herself running into the arms of the night, where a light shone at the end of the tunnel, instead, she finds that the once comforting moon is no different than the brutal world. Kandasamy thus evokes the helplessness of a woman as she fails to outrun her fate.

It is interesting to note that Meena Kandasamy's poetry is not limited to female experiences but rather she speaks for the entire community that has been cornered by the dominant sections of the society. The poems in *Touch*, not only highlight the pathetic plight of the dalits caught in the web of caste but also questions the meaningless distinction between the touchables and untouchables as it becomes evident in one of her powerful poems, "*Advaita: The Ultimate Question*". The sacred scriptures and preaching of the Brahmans cannot answer her sarcastic question. Therefore, she dares to leave the question unanswered to underline the fact that despite the talks about Atman, Brahman and Advaita, the practice of untouchability exists and persists even to this day. When Atman and Brahman are equal and same, the distinction between Upper castes and outcastes sounds absurd.

The structure of the poem is a testament to the genius of Kandasamy. The gap between the two words that persists through all of the lines except the last evokes the image of the rift between a once whole. The structure also stands as an ode to the dual standards of the present structure of the society wherein it might seem like the distance between the uppercastes and the outcastes is unbridgeable and yet, one question:

Can My Untouchable Atman And Your Brahmin Atman Ever Be One ?

challenges the entire system

Kandasamy's "Inheritance" vocalises the inheritance of loss and debates the legitimacy of the very concept of "dharma" as is taken at face value. The poem shines light not simply over the plight of the dalits but instead spells out their predicament where they are promised the world but are denied even the most basic forms of justice. To exemplify this, Kandasamy narrates of a settlement that was promised all sorts of facilities only for them to be given naught but disappointment. No unsettled in a resettlement, the settlers are alienated not only physically but also financially.

To this, Kandasamy then brings up the ideology of "dharma": a term defined by few and understood by fewer yet. She exemplifies that even with the concept being beyond the understanding of most, it is used as a scapegoat for all the ills that one encounters in life. She questions the legitimacy of this dharma:

"All your life, you blame things you don't understand on the word no one has ever understood.

You realize he is a bastard, an illegitimate son. Justice is Dharma. Dharma is a bastard. So you know Justice is. . ."

Thus, Kandasamy re-establishes the concept of "dharma" in a much less virtuous light claiming it to be blotted and blemished, marred with scandals. To a certain extent, Kandasamy resembles the poetics of NamdevDhasal, a celebrated Marathi poet who expresses his anger against the social system.

Though titled after a rather modern nomenclature of a part of eye-cosmetics, "Mascara" chronicles the experiences of an entire sect of marginalised and alienated women under the title of "devdasis". Although their name suggests a direct link between the gods and these women, Kandasamy retells their plight as feeling forsaken by society and the gods alike. The subject of the poem, although not a devdasi, identifies with their plight as she dons mascara, the black colour of which is the same as the dreams of a life she has long buried.

The subject of the poem feels equal parts soiled and powerful where on one hand she has to sacrifice a part of her independence and consent for her body, on the other hand she shares a cosmetic, a war paint as so many of the women she identifies with. While superficialities associated with her are hard to get rid of, she dons the same mascara as Kali – the destructive aspect of the otherwise nurturing and motherly Shakti. The poem thus brings forth a discourse about the exploitation of women under religious pretexts by the patriarchal society. Kandasamy thus also sheds light on the matriarchal links often found between devdasis where in the absence of a man, the women support each other and often become their own safe havens:

"Somewhere Long Ago in an untraceable mangled matrilineal family tree of temple prostitutes, her solace was sought."



In “Touch” Meena Kandasamy begins her poem by questioning upper caste that if they ever tried meditation to keep their mind literally blank while meditating and says that the first hindrance that you came across in this procedure was from your own touch. In the second stanza she again says about how upper caste people try to transcend from bodily levels to the spiritual level to experience a different realm by awakening your kundalini, she again contradicts by saying that that one which hindered you from doing was your own sensual touch. In the third and fourth stanza she describes the basicity of touch, how touch is so basic that it taste could be described as touch (as we feel the taste of food when our taste buds touch the food we eat). She again channelises touch as something which can turn a hopeless person filled with enormous amount of hope a lonely person filled with joy and make you a person which you were never before. She adds that feeling your skin was perhaps the first thing that you sensed when you were born. In the fifth stanza she ends by saying that touch which transcends to experience a different realm when mixed with caste caters undeserving hate for the lower caste section of our society. In “Touch” Meena Kandasamy focuses on the sufferings, frustration, humiliation, suppression, anguish and revolt of the ill-fated marginalized sections of our society. Even gods and sages divide human beings into the rich and the poor, upper caste and untouchables, and spread hatred among human beings.

Kandasamy, thus, highlights the inevitability of touch as the first language of human beings. She centralizes senses as a universal tongue, experiencing, translating and acknowledging which is next to impossible. Hence, in an effort to nullify the borders, physical, social or psychological, that divide humanity, she advises “touch” to be the perfect medium, directly challenging and contesting the very concept of “untouchability.”



## **CRITICAL STUDY OF NICHOLAS VAN HEAR'S ESSAY "MOVING OUT, COMING IN, GOING BACK, MOVING ON, STAYING PUT" (NEO-DIASPORA)**

### **Unit Structure:**

#### 10.0 Objectives

#### 10.1 Study of Nicholas Van Hear's Essay "Moving out, Coming in, Going back, Moving on, Staying put" (Neo-Diaspora)

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### **10.0 OBJECTIVES**

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1. To study the essay of Nicholas Van Hear
2. To understand the concept of Neo-Diaspora through his essay

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### **10.1 STUDY OF NICHOLAS VAN HEAR'S ESSAY "MOVING OUT, COMING IN, GOING BACK, MOVING ON, STAYING PUT" (NEO-DIASPORA)**

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Diaspora narrative unfolds ground for socio-cultural tenets of Indian Diaspora communities which provide space for important socio-cultural studies. The proposed study aims to analyze several issues and problems related to Indian Diaspora; especially with the problems of culture, space and identity. Also, it will bring to the light how the different female Diaspora writers epitomize their experiences and existence in Diaspora community. It illustrates how Diaspora struggles to carve out an identity of its own both in hostland and homeland.

The word 'Diaspora' comes from the ancient Greek word 'diaspeirein' meaning dispersing or scattering of seeds at the time of sowing. Etymologically, the word with its political connotative weight, drawn from Greek meaning 'to disperse', signifies a forcible, induced or voluntary movement of the people or ethnic population from their traditional ethnic homelands into the other parts of the world. The second and widely known expression of Diaspora is associated with the Jews, who were forced into exile to Babylonia. The word also denotes the movement of the Jews away from their homeland to live and work in other countries. In 1993 edition of *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*, the word Diaspora refers to persons living outside their traditional homeland. Human civilization records number of huge mass migrations of the same ethnic communities. In this context, David Pendery in his essay, "Identity Development and Cultural Production in the Chinese Diaspora to the United States, 1850-2004: New Perspectives" (2008) states:

The Chinese can be termed as 'Sojourners', the Jewish as 'displaced people' and the Blacks as 'bondsmen'. Their home land identities can be taken as nationalistic-mythic, autochthonous and mythic respectively. The initial newland identity of the Chinese is that of aliens, of the Jewish, as strangers and of the Black as subalterns. (Pendery 203)

Critical Study of Nicholas Van Hear's Essay "Moving Out, Coming In, Going Back, Moving On, Staying Put" (Neo-Diaspora)

The scattering of people from their home country to the rest of the world is generally termed as Diaspora. Initially, Diaspora was confined to forced exile. In the age of technological advancements, the term 'Diaspora' has lost its original connotation, yet simultaneously it has also emerged in another form wider than the former. Presently, scientific advancements, industrialization, globalization and advanced means of transportation have facilitated human migration in search of better lifestyle and sophistication.

Diaspora is an emotional and psychological state of strutting between two geographical, political, physical, social, ethnic and cultural states. It deals mainly with the cultural, linguistic and ethnic struggle of Diaspora subjects between regression and progression, dislocation and relocation. Every expatriate looks towards the host country of his/ her settlement for acceptance and simultaneously yearns for his/her imaginary homeland which he/ she develops by his/ her physical visits or/ and virtual transgression. Diaspora brings forth many difficulties for the expatriate in a new land of his/ her hope. These problems do not occur randomly and instantly. Immigrant goes through the following stages:

Stage-I	Rejection by the host community, cultural conflict, discrimination
Stage-II	rethinking of homeland, nostalgia, memories of the past and of the homeland, home sickness, alienation, ghettoism, feeling of insecurity, ethnoscape, sense of unbelonging and dislocation
Stage- III	cultural assimilation, hybridity, cultural conflict, attempts of reconciliation between home and exile
Stage-IV	identity crisis, dilemma, in betweenness, alienation, nowhere, quest for identity, loss of homeland

The aforementioned predicaments that expatriate suffers are not discrete but uphold a 'cause and effect' rapport. For instance, rejection by the host community becomes the cause for nostalgia, rethinking of homeland, and alienation, while identity crisis, dilemma, hybridity, split personality serve as the result of cultural assimilation. Subsequently, there is a galaxy of writers who have contributed towards the Diaspora Studies. To name a few Stuart Hall, Avtar Brah, Homi K. Bhabha, Safran Williams, Salman Rushdie, Robin Cohen, Jana Evans Braziel, and many more scholars have elaborated the concept of Diaspora literature.

The concept of Neo Diaspora exemplifies the consideration of new and emerging circumstances created by globalization, imperialism and

neoliberalism that generate cultural, political, social and economic adversities for the people and gradually initiate their migration or dispersion from their homeland to another country. Neo Diaspora too retains the same driving forces of traditional Diaspora, for instance cultural, political, social and economic causes, which put migration of people into effect. It also accounts semigrants' self-consciousness, rethinking of homeland, attempts of reconciliation and assimilation with the host culture. Neo Diaspora significantly deviates from the traditional notion of Diaspora in terms of circumstances that create inadequacies or adversities for the people in the homeland and further necessitate their migration to other countries. Neo Diaspora scholars not only examine the aftermaths of Diaspora but also critically investigate the structure of migration.

Nicholas Van Hear examines the notion of Diaspora in the postmodern context and claims to define its nature accordingly. He concentrates on the fundamental units of Diaspora that are migration and emigrants. For Van Hear, the traditional concept of Diaspora specifies limited types of emigrants for instance, expellees, indentured labourers, traders, refugees and few more. The causes and purposes of their dislocation determine the types of emigrants here. However, in the postmodern era of globalization, the necessities of migration have turned out, thereby, he believes to redefine the notion of migration according to the emerging opportunities for the emigrants at large. Apart from the afore-said migrants, globalization and technological developments in the era have introduced many other reasons for migrants to migrate. In his scholarly essay "Moving out, coming in, going back, moving on, staying put", Nicholas Van Hear states, "The term migrant encompasses diverse types of transient people – among them permanent emigrants and settlers, temporary contract workers, professionals, business and trader migrants, students, refugees and asylum-seekers, and cross border commuters." (Van Hear 40-41) Van Hear while reframing the concept of Diaspora observes only two kinds of movement namely outward movement, a movement of transient people from their homeland to other places, and return movement, a movement back to their homelands after a residence of certain period of time in a foreign land, evident in traditional notion of Diaspora. Scholars and thinkers too have only concentrated on these types of movements in their studies. In his essay, Van Hear disaggregates migration into five types of movements namely, 'outward movement', 'inward movement', 'return movement', 'onward movement' and 'stagnant movement' taking into account the situations of choice and compulsion before the emigrants. He elaborates these movements as:

A simple disaggregation of migratory movements might come up with five essential components. All migrations involve some kind of *outward* movement, from a place of origin or residence to some other place. This movement necessarily involves some kind of *inward* movement as a concomitant – people leaving a place must arrive at some other place, even if only temporarily. Subsequently there might be a *return* to the place of origin or previous residence; this likewise involves *inward* movement as a concomitant. Alternatively, following an *outward* movement, there

might be *onward* movement to some other place; this must also involve *inward* movement. In addition to these four essential components of movement, account must be taken of another component—non-movement, or *staying put*—for almost all migrations involve leaving behind a portion of the community or population. (Van Hear 41)

Critical Study of Nicholas Van Hear's Essay "Moving Out, Coming In, Going Back, Moving on, Staying Put" (Neo-Diaspora)

The title of Van Hear's essay states the five diverse movements anticipated in the act of migration. According to him, alongside outward and return movement, emigrant take two other types of movements which are advisable to be studied to understand the trajectory of migration. Inward movement denotes emigrant's arrival into the land of settlement which can be either hostile and or home land. If it is hostile and, inward movement determines the settlement in the adopted land, onward movement or return movement of the immigrant. Onward movement is a movement undertaken by the emigrant for a better or safer place to settle down. It covers the third country resettlement or Diaspora formation. The last component of migration namely, 'staying put' that Van Hear introduces in the essay is not an active movement and precisely does not refer to emigrant. The staying put significantly deals with emigrant's household members who do not migrate due to several reasons but assist their counterpart, who moves outward, significantly during the initial phase of his/her stay in the foreign land. Thus, though they do not migrate, they support the process of migration.

Gradually, Nicholas Van Hear proposes that migrations are not entirely voluntary or involuntary; however there are at least some sorts of choices in involuntary migration while few compulsions behind every voluntary migration. Van Hear, thus, considers them overlapping and puts forth a new framework of diverse types of movements of the emigrants into international spaces. In order to reconstruct the new framework of migration, he adopts Richmond's concepts of 'proactive migrant' and 'reactive migrant'. The proactive migrant is a person who is endowed with all kinds of choices to determine and design his/her migration while reactive migrant is one who is constrained by the situation and has absolutely little or sometime fewer choices in the account to determine the migration. These are the two extreme states of choices and coercion in migration that emigrant comes around. However, Richmond observes, in some cases, choices partially available to emigrant. Richmond in his book *Global Apartheid: Refugees, Racism, and the New World Order* (1994) states:

Between the two extreme of proactive and reactive migrants are a large proportion of people crossing state boundaries who combine characteristics, responding to economic, social and political pressures over which they have little control, but exercising a limited degree of choice of the selection of destinations and the timing of their movements. (Richmond 61)

Thus, Van Hear recasts the conventional model of voluntary and involuntary migrations' in to new framework of emigrant embracing more choices, less/ fewer choices and little choices, simultaneously taking

into consideration the five kinds of movements. The following table exclusively gives access to the Nicholas Van Hear’s new framework of migration. Hestates:

**Force and choice in five components of migration**

	voluntary migration more choice more options	less choice fewer options	involuntary migration little choice few options
<div><div></div><div></div></div>			
Proactive migrants		reactive migrants	
Outward	Touristsvisitors students professional transients business travellers	economic/ labour migrantsrural- urban migrantsantipa tory refugees people induced to move	Refugees expellees internally displaced people development displacement disaster displacement
Inward	primary migrant new comers family reunion/ formation	visitors, students or tourists whose ekasylum	Asylum seekers refuge seekers
Return	Returning migrants and refugees voluntary repatriates voluntary returne esrepatriates long-settled abroad	Returning migrants and refugees mixture of compulsion, inducement and choice	deported or expelled migrants refugees subject to refolement forced returnees repatriates long- settled abroad
Onward	Resettlement is persal by strategy	Third country resettlement of refugees	Scattering forced dispersal
stayingput	Stayers by choice Household dispersal strategy	people confined to safehavens safe countries, safeareas	Stayers of necessity containment



Thus, Nicholas Van Hear in this essay explicates the concept of Diaspora at micro level by tracing each minute act of the Diaspora subjects in the host nation. Instead of just following the concepts as they are set by the earlier critics, Nicholas Van Hear dissects it and opens the avenues for critics, writers, researchers and students to evaluate the movements of a Diaspora subject at micro level.

Critical Study of Nicholas Van Hear's Essay "Moving Out, Coming In, Going Back, Moving on, Staying Put" (Neo-Diaspora)

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