Endorsement of Western Values in Elizabeth Gilbert's *Eat Pray Love*

Abstract

This study unravels the representation of India and Indonesia in the memoir Eat Pray Love *(2006) by Elizabeth Gilbert. In order to seek the answers to some of the questions uses Mary Louise Pratt's* Imperial Eye: Travel Writing and Transculturation *and Edward Said's* Orientalism. *In general, the genre of memoir tends to celebrate the life of Other, marginalized, and non-western people and gives voice to voiceless. However, after the rigorous study of primary text, along with the tools used to seek out the answers, it is found that the memoir* Eat Pray Love *carries the legacy of imperial and colonial notion of the past. Contrary to what a memoir is expected to carry out, Gilbert seems to involve in Othering the Eastern culture, society, and people.*

Keywords: Travel, Exoticism, Othering, Western Supremacy

The topic of this research demands to examine the portrayal of India and Indonesia from the perspective of western traveler. Through deep reading of memoir *Eat Pray Love: One Woman's Search for Everything Across Italy, India and Indonesia* by Elizabeth Gilbert, this research focuses on the way East, India and Indonesia, are depicted in the memoir and argue that western tourism is driven by the notion of creating 'domestic subject' of western imperialism. *Eat Pray Love* implicitly continues the legacy of colonial history where it aims to defying the East as exotic, an object of imperial gaze.

The memoir chronicles the Gilbert's trip around the world after her divorce. At the age of thirty-one, despite a fairly successful career as a writer, she found herself stuck in an unhappy marriage, struggling with acute depression. Much to her frustration, she cannot stop thinking, '' I don't want to be married anymore. I don't

want to live in this big house. I don't want to have a baby'' (10). After suffering through a nasty divorce and a subsequent love affair that ended badly, she sells a book idea to her publishers: she will spend a year travelling around the globe with the intent to write a book about her experiences. She explains, '' I wanted to explore the art of pleasure in Italy, the art of devotion in India and, in Indonesia, the art of balancing the two. It was only later, after admitting this dream, that I noticed the happy coincidence that all these countries begin with the letter I. A fairly auspicious sign, it seemed, on a voyage of self-discovery'' (30). Thus, she begins a yearlong quest to bridge the gulf between body, mind, and spirit as she eats her way through Italy, prays and meditates in an ashram in India, and learns to love again in Bali, Indonesia. She spent four months in Italy; eating and enjoying life–Eat. She spent three months in India, finding her spirituality–Pray. She ended the year in Bali, Indonesia, looking for balance of the two and fell in love with a Brazilian businessman–Love.

According to Voeltz, "*Eat Pray Love* presents an orientalist, rose-hued picture of a vibrant India and a fragrant Indonesia as lands full of enlightened souls–the ideal place for a thirty-two-year-old woman to find her balance" (7). Voeltz further writes:

> When Liz does come across the unfortunate impoverished of India through a taxi window, she remains engrossed on her own emotional poverty. While Orientalism does not have to be overtly insulting, the naivety of such depictions does not do justice to these multi-faceted cultures. (7)

Gilbert, when she first encounters the topography of Bali, says that "the island is world's only true utopia (247) and a 'perfect Eden'. As she has a glance at Bali's natural beauty, she says "it is my Eden" (246), and the first touch of natural things for her becomes like "Baby's First Handshake" (246). She further pictures excessive beauty of Indonesia as unnecessary as she mentions "the unnecessary and superfluous

volume of pure beauty around here is not to be believed"(246).The caste system similarly is pictured as ‘brutal’. Gilbert, on the same way, advocates Bali culture as ‘constant cycle of offering and rituals’ where women spend one-third of their times in ceremonies and cleaning up after the ceremony. Gilbert addresses God as ‘He’ throughout the text and she admits “I should also confess that I generally refer to God as Him” (14). Gilbert as she goes to Ashram in India, she talks with her friend, Sean who describes India and Ashram in term of “spiritual discoveries in the exotic East” (162). In such way, Gilbert seems to describe the Eastern world, specially India and Bali as the world she has never seen, and describes all the things she encounters from the standpoint of western perspective.

This idea recalls the concept of 'Orientalism' defined by Edward Said and 'Imperial Eye' by Marry L. Pratt. Said defines the Orientalism as "a western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the orient" (25). Similarly, Pratt argues–in term of travel writing whether it be an autobiography or memoir or any genre of life writing–that this genre emerges in the West "with The Travels of Marco Polo in 1271, which inaugurated, over the next four centuries, a plethora of narratives of voyages to exotic destinations. Europeans adventures and explorers returned home with tales of hardship and survival, of dangerous transit and wonders encounters" (20). The memoir does not only unveil story of Gilbert, instead it reveals something about the world and countries that are less developed than the United States of America. In the memoir, the readers are invited to visit with Gilbert to three places: Italy, India and Indonesia to do different tasks as the title suggests, to eat in Italy, to pray in India and to balance the two and to love in Indonesia. Since nineteenth century and even before it, Orientalist ideas about a mysterious, mystical, and alluring East can be seen to be rooted in western art, literature and in political discourses. The

description of Ashram in India, the marriage system, the words used by a young girl Tulsi, the landscape of Bali and its natural beauty, the Indonesian women in a way that she has never seen and as the land of new planet seems strange in the text. However, India and Bali as Hindu society has multiple gods and goddesses, her imposition of God only as superior male–'He'–is problematic.

In general, memoir tends to depict the personal events or moments in someone's life. The memorable events having some significant aspects are usually pictured in the memoir. Nancy K Millar defines memoir as "postmodern genre" (43). As postmodern genre it tends to celebrate the life of 'Other', marginalized, and non-western people. It pictures the life of people as it is and gives voice to voiceless people.

Contrary to what a memoir is expected to carry out, Gilbert seems to involve in Othering the eastern culture, society, and people whose culture and way of life was not in main stream before. This gap between what a memoir is expected to inculcate and what actually the memoir carried out, obviously raises the questions in the mind of reader/scholar. These questions pave the way for this research to reach resolution by solving the conflict pose out by this gap. In the memoir, Gilbert presents nature, culture and people of India and Indonesia as if they are the first observed by the westerners. Why does she call the land and topography of Indonesia as 'utopia', 'perfect Eden' and so on? Why does she call the first touch in the nature and land of Bali as 'Baby's First Handshake'? What made her to call the eastern part of the world– India and Indonesia–as 'exotic east'? In spite of three hundred and thirty million God and Goddesses–where animals, land, mountain, vegetation, sky, water etc. including both male and female are also regarded as god– why does she show her androgynous notion towards God? Onward this, this research attempts to seek out the

answer of these questions with the help of theoretical idea, the idea of different scholars and the critics.

This research hypothesizes that Gilbert–the western traveler–creates binary between west and east. Gilbert, as a tourist, is driven by the notion of objectifying others as a commodity or means of satisfaction. First touch to land of East as 'Baby's First Handshake' is influenced from the western imperialist notion which seems an attempt in establishing, in the words of Pratt, "celebratory narratives of European superiority" (xi). The nature, which the people of India and Bali regard as divine becomes object to consume and satisfy the desire for Gilbert. As a western traveler, she tries to reinforce western values on the God and Goddesses as she refers it as 'Him' only which is influenced from the androgynous notion on God which is western. Further, she generalizes everything she encounters as such caste as brutal, women as poor and so on is influenced from essentialist notion of looking at people and culture. As a whole, the memoir involves in stereotyping the culture, nature and people of East.

The memoir *Eat Pray Love* has been critiqued among wide circle of critics throughout the globe. As the memoir consists the plot of a radical women who divorces her husband in order to heal depression and seek pleasure, it earned wide range of popularity. Many literary journals have, thus, published reviews and critiques on it.

Mia Mask in his review claims that the memoir by Gilbert has involved in stereotyping and othering the east. He writes, "Her journey may in fact have been life-changing, the story the memoir […] filled with stereotypes about the East" (3). He does not exactly say about the way the memoir is othering the East. The memoir

involves in imposing western- values and seeing the things from western eyes which he does not explore.

Similarly, Anita Manuer in her article argues that the works of 'avowed feminist' are likely to produce the stereotype on people of race, color and particular topography. In this regard, she argues in the name of gender solidarity they are "ostensibly cross[ing] lines of age, race and class, might also produce familiar Orientalist orthodoxies that continue to marginalize communities of color, particularly women of color" (27). Anita Manuer looks at memoir from the feminist perspective and analyzes how feminist travel writings are creating sense of rest of the world as 'other'. However, she does not look at the people, culture and tradition of east which are being stereotyped.

On the same way, David Durand on his article *Feminizing and Exoticizing India and Bali in American Best-Seller* writes that the special thing that draws the attention of critic about the memoir is "perhaps the portrayal of its Asian characters and regions; focusing intensely on negative in fact, imaginary aspects only" (3). He mentions the instance where Liz, the main character in the memoir, manages to make an Indian friend but their relationships is notone of equals. Tulsi, an endearing teen with cracked glasses, confesses within second of meeting Liz that she's being forced into an unwanted marriage by her family. It is the custom, she explains. "From that point on, Tulsi only exists as the symbol of an impending arranged marriage"(3).Durand further argues

> In Indonesia we meet Ketut, a Balinese fortune teller, and Wayan, a healer. Neither are equal to Liz: Ketutis utterly one-dimensional and Wayan is again an imperiled brown female who Liz helps to save. In the memoir, Bali is like an exotic escort: blatantly promoted as a sexual tourism destination. Virtually

> all the rest of the Balinese are colorful cultural props: anonymous women carrying fruit on their heads, merchants, a couple of men with their roosters...suggesting Bali as feminized and pre-modern place, a magical, and timeless wonderland. (4)

Gilbert, even though it may be unintentional, she belittles and discriminates Indonesian people in her memoir, no matter the discrimination may be based on either class, race sexuality, age or gender.We can observe in Gilbert's narrative some aspects of discrimination for instance; she describes Ketut as small, merry-eyed man, russet colored old guy with a mostly toothless mouth. Not only Ketut, but Wayan, a medicine woman is treated differently; for instance, when we read the passage where she and her Brazilian boyfriend come to conclusion that Wayanis lying to them about an amount of money Gilbert has given her as a donation to buy a house. For Gilbert, Wayan's procrastination is only an excuse for not using the money properly, when according to Gilbert's narrative, the procrastination is the way Balinese people deal with money, buying and selling.

The other scholar Mark Lewis Tylor in his review essay *"Oriental Monk as Popular Icon: On the Power of U.S. Orientalism"*(2011)focuses on 'oriental monk'. He explore the manner in which impressions of the Asian sage as such Ketut, the monk of Bali whom Gilbert follows in order to heal her depression, is created such old stereotyping of rental monk as mysterious, however there are other aspects too which Gilbert employs to create the impression of east.

However, Gilbert, as pleasure seeking tourist, commodifies the East–other– as an object and things to be consumed. The nature which stands as divine for people of Bali and India becomes mere source of satisfaction for Gilbert and this aspect is yet to be explored. Gilbert describes eastern part as primitive old and mysterious that is

influenced from the western imperialist notion. She in such way is establishing 'celebratory narratives of European superiority'.

Gilbert, as the representative of western world, pictures eastern countries as exotic, barbaric, mysterious and so on. In order to explore the Orientalist perspective on memoir, this research will rely on text for the evidences. This research will use the *Eat Pray Love*, the memoir by Gilbert as its primary source and different reviews and critiques as the secondary source of data. In other words, the research will more rely on textual analysis to prove the claim. Furthermore, this research will use the theory of *Orientalism* by Edward W. Said and *Imperial Eyes* by Mary Louise Pratt as its theoretical framework to support the claim of this research.

In the West, tourism imaginaries are heavily influenced by the Christian tradition in which this world is understood to be, as Tylor writes, "fallen from grace" (6). Travel is perceived to be a means of returning to a pristine, prelapsarian state –the state before fallen–where the traveler can be in closer contact with the " really real " (7). As a result, according to Fabian, some words, such as "primitive" peoples and "Oriental Others" play an important role in the Western tourism imaginary. Although coeval with our society, these peoples are seen as "all temporal" (3), belonging to an earlier time period in human evolution, untouched by materialism, living in harmony with the environment, and closer than the Westerners to the Divine. Imperialist nostalgia, which Renato Rosaldo in his work *Culture and Truth: the Remaking of Social Analysis* defines as nostalgia on the part of the colonizers for what colonialism has destroyed, also features in Western tourism imaginaries.

This research work primarily aims at finding how Orientalist ethos is pictured in new way from the perspective of western traveler. Traditionally, westerners used to make political discourses about the eastern world. Medias, on the same way, pictures

eastern world as the source of potential terrorism. However, here the western perspective is drawn from the perspective of traveler in this memoir and its objective is to explore how the Orientalist notion is established. This research–find out how westerners in order to demonize the east, create the binary between West and East–will use the Orientalist theory of Said.

Edward Said famously argued in his introduction to *Orientalism* (1979) that "the Orient was almost a European invention" (1); that is, representation of the East is less about presenting the truth concerning the East to the West than about constructing a version of the East that repeats the discourse of its domination by the Imperialist West. Edward Said further defines Orientalism as

> the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient–dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (3)

Here, Said's claim is that Western world regards Easter, particularly India till the end of ninetieth century, as Orient which biblically means the Bible lands. Bible land in Christianity is the the land in the remote, far from the metropolitan pollutions, the virgin land yet to be discovered, touched, and having authority over it. What happens when one see the new land, obviously he/she begins to name it. So the first touch of Bali is like baby's first hand shake for Gilbert.

Similarly, she reacts at the first glance at Indian at 3 in the morning as if she has never seen the women with such skeleton, hair, face and thinness. Said claims that in order to maintain its discursive dominance, the Occident deliberately homogenizes, misrepresents, and devalues the Orient.He gives the example of Michel Foucault's notion of discourse:

> My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage–and even produce–the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively. In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. This is not to say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, but that it is the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on any occasion when that peculiar entity the Orient is in question. (3)

Said, here, argues that European or the West involved in producing Oriental discourse in different forms: political, sociological, military, ideological and imaginative. Specially, after the beginning of travel narratives, westerners began to produce Orientalism in the forms of imaginative writings such as fictions, autotrophies and so so. Similarly, Gilbert continues that legacy of producing Orientalism in the form of literature.

Said states, Orientalism depends for its strategy on flexible positional superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without losing him (the westerners) the relative upper hand.

In this regard, Kimberly Johnson, the professor of creative writing at Ohio State University on his review of the memoir writes:

> "it has also been heavily critiqued for its reliance on orientalist tropes of the 'Far East' as a source of spiritual healing for white people. When Liz, the main character, travels to Italy she spends a significant amount of time with locals, even making an Italian family a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. However, when she travels to India and Bali the locals are in the background

> while she socializes with almost exclusively expats. The locals who Liz does interact with in India and Bali are reduced to stereotypes and caricatures, only there for Liz to use as steps to her 'enlightenment.' (1)

Said figures out that nineteenth century Orientalism has nurtured the vocabulary, imagery, rhetoric, and figures which we can find in the writing of twentieth century writers. Binary could be found in lines of travelogue, books, novels and any written documents.

> Orientals lived in their world, "we" lived in ours. The vision and material reality propped each other up, kept each other going. A certain freedom of intercourse was always the Westerner's privilege; because his was the stronger culture, he could penetrate, he could wrestle with, he could give shape and meaning to the great Asiatic mystery. Yet what has, I think, been previously overlooked is the constricted vocabulary of such a privilege. (44)

As Orientalism in later phase shifted its journey through the literature, obviously the words played important role in Orientalising the east. Said said that Orientalism in the literature also created the binary of "we" (44) and Other. We mean those who produced such literature. Other means those upon whom these literatures are created. The vocabulary which reflects the sense of privilege are scribed in such writing which Said mentions as he (westerner) could come to, fight, defeat, shape, define and so on to Asian culture, map, and as a whole the mystery. Gilbert in her memoir gives this reflection of what Said calls as western privilege. Gilbert similarly comes to India, Indonesia with no resistance. She begins to define the Yogis in the way as if they were never exposed to the world, as if they were found for the first time. She helps Wayne to buy a house. It seems as if it is the responsibility of Gilbert to, help and eliminate the poverty of the East.

The orient is the land never touched never visited before and is biblical land. It is exotic and far from the west in total savage form.

> Imaginative geography, from the vivid portraits to be found [in the work of western writers] legitimates a vocabulary, a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding of … of the Orient. What this discourse considers to be a fact–that Mohammed is an imposter, for example–is a component of the discourse, a statement the discourse compels one to make whenever the name Mohammed occurs. Underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse–by which I mean simply the vocabulary employed whenever the Orient is spoken or written about–is a set of representative figures, or tropes. (71)

Said indicates that underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse–which means the vocabulary employed whenever in spoken or written–are a set of representative figures. For instance, Orientalising Islam and its founder, west began to demonize it through different words. "Imposter" (71) is the word imposed to Mohamad, the supreme God of Islam. He was defined as one who falsely claims to be another figure–that is the messenger of the God.

The most significant point Said makes is that these all kinds of discourses are further legitimized and provided with authenticity by the writers.

> Rather than listing all the figures of speech associated with the Orient–its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth–we can generalize about them as they were handed down through the Renaissance. They are all declarative and self-evident; the tense they employ is the timeless eternal; they convey an impression of repetition and strength; they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which

> is sometimes specified, sometimes not. For all these functions it is frequently enough to use the simple copula is. Thus, Mohammed is an imposter. (72)

According to Said, these discourses were developed long before and handed down through Renaissance. Renaissance further ignites these discourses as it was the time when the western colonialism began. Most importantly, Said looks as the syntactical feature of the discourse and says that timeless and eternal structure is used to form the discourses. Therefore this eternal structure aided them to further survive through different period.

Said explores the psychological aspect of the Orientalism as well. He defines Orientalism as the form of paranoia, knowledge of another kind from ordinary historical knowledge. Said mentions the context of East India Company approaching towards India where William Jones was one of the important officer of the company. On August 17, 1787, he wrote to Lord Althorp that "it is my ambition to know India better than any other European ever knew it" (78). Here, it gives the impression as if Mr Jones claims to know Orient more and better than anyone else.

Most of the European traveler in the Orient–east– according to Said, holds 'a frank acknowledgement that "it was a world elsewhere, apart from the ordinary attachments, sentiments, and values of our world in the west" (190). This very statement completely applies in many instances in the Gilbert's text. Her act of erotic and exotic description in India and Indonesia as if they are far from the modern world, savage in nature, and are biblical land and yet not given any name so that she has the responsibility to name it as Gilbert write "I have christened 'Baby’s First Handshake' [to Indonesia]" (246). Said's claim and evidence from Gilbert text seems to go parallel for Gilbert regards India and Indonesia as an alien world which is in need of naming it.

Regarding the imperialism at present context, Said expresses "I think one can say this almost without qualification–Orientalism was such a system of truths, truths in Nietzsche's sense of the word. It is therefore correct that every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric" (204). Some of the "immediate sting" will be taken out of these labels if we recall additionally that human societies, at least the more advanced cultures, have rarely offered the individual anything but imperialism, racism, and ethnocentrism for dealing with "other" cultures (204). Therefore, he argues that Orientalism is fundamentally a "political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which [removed] the Orient's difference with its weakness" (204).

As the topic of my research demands scrutiny of certain kinds of travel and tourism writing carrying the legacy of western colonial and imperial ethos, I have chosen *Eat Pray Love*–a memoir that depicts the east from the western gaze. Though the memoir belongs to the genre of modern popular fiction, it in a way or other, continues the legacy of nineteenth and twentieth century Orientalism while writing about the Eastern world, particularly India and Indonesian. In representing India and Indonesian, the idea popularized by the 2006 memoir, *Eat Pray Love* regards Indian region an exotic playground, where one can project a sense of purpose or indulge in an escapist fantasy. A high degree of exoticism often characterizes the few representations of non-Western locales/cultures. Along with such exoticism, Gilbert's approach to the complex socio-cultural fabric of India is much more nuanced, although still exhibiting distinct traces of Orientalist stereotypes.

Several inevitable problems arise in the process of representing the cultural other. In the memoir the author’s culture and the culture depicted share a historically

unequal power relationship. As the Orient is, according to Said, a European invention, it rather than unveiling the truth, it constructs its own version of truth, repeats that discourse through domination by the Imperialist West.

In the very cover of the Memoir, Elizabeth Gilbert maps the outline of her victorious "search for everything across Italy, India, and Indonesia" by making an important connection between these places. First, she observes, "When you're traveling in India–especially through holy sites and Ashrams–you see naked, skinny and intimidating Yogis wearing strings of beads called *Japa Malas* used in India for centuries to assist devout Hindus and Buddhists in staying focused during prayerful meditation" (1). And then the connection: "When the medieval Crusaders drove East for the holy wars, they witnessed worshippers praying with these *Japa Malas*, admired the technique, and brought the idea home to Europe as rosary" (1).This idea also proves how everything the Western travelers encounters becomes the object of consumption for them. History witness the act of taking abundance of rich and strange things to home by Western travelers, and *Japa Malas* as device to connecting one to spiritual practice are also named as rosary beads and made them their own.

Gilbert's observation seems to discriminate and triangulate Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. Despite writing and traveling in the midst of the bloodbath promoted or unleashed by the United States in Asia after 9/11 (September 11, 2001), Gilbert's memoir negates the context of the war and instead maps her own tortured and triumphant journey. However, a necessary distancing from Islam occurs continually throughout the novel.

This particular self-help memoir is no isolated cultural product. Despite its exceptional print success, *Eat Pray Love* rests at the heart of a cluster of post-9/11 memoirs that reach toward and produce Hindu India, as the antidote to an

uncontainable metropolitan misery. Skillfully navigating between twentieth-century imperial histories, the rise of the War on Terror, the memoir is driven by the idea that India, and Indian women, will heal the mind and body of the white woman. India enables the American woman to cure herself. Somewhere, to some extent, the memoir seems to break away from the longer history of Western imperialism by revealing the deepening alliance between India and the United States. However, again, the legacy of the imperialism is manifested throughout the memoir..

Now, let me discuss the geography of west and east from the gender perspectives bringing some references from some of the feminist critics. We know through the work of feminist scholars that empire provided a supportive ground and context for European female interests and feminist desires in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Specifically writing of British colonialism, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, on her work *Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism* argues that nineteenth-century white women crafted literary images of the barbarous treatment and even inherent backwardness of non-Western women so as to project themselves as civilized and more refined (248-50). Spivak argues that sisterhood through Saviorism emerges strongly at this time; white women staged concern over the plight of Indian women to support imperial expansion.

Whether appearing as imperial feminism or as global sisterhood, the relations that we can see in the texts of American or European women have supported the logic of empire even as they divert attention away from the existence of imperial racism (248-50). In general, according to Spivak and many other scholars, white women do not merely depict non-Western women as subjugated; rather, they portray the non-Western to be in dire need of being saved from their men and their culture. These white women have something to teach Indians. Take for example; Gilbert appears as

sister in Indian women. She makes India women/girls friends. In a way, she attempts to keep her away from the past of imperialism. She attempts to be innocent of all these historical events. This innocence, by Marry L. Pratt, is defined as anti-conquest. " A second term I use often in what follows is “anti-conquest,” by which I refer to the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony" (7). The examples of such innocence are everywhere in the memoir. For instance Gilbert thinks as if she has something to be taught by the Yogis, Hindu women, and Indian Hindu scriptures. Yet again, her words while describing Indian women as helpless, lean and thin, uneducated and away from the metropolitan life carries–in a blurry manner–the legacy of imperialism. For she describes Indian women as uneducated and helpless means she has role to play in educating them instead of learning form them. This idea, however, can be found after reading between the lines.

Erasing the realities of contemporary globalization–especially those of Islamophobia, and genocide, she is deliberately targeting minorities. Her desire to escape the racism in the United States is sustained as she distances herself from colonial history and the racialized terrain of India. However, that very legacy is manifested in one way or other.

Sarah Knudson, the professor of the sociology program at the University of Toronto, studies self-help products and their role in intimate relationship. *Eat Pray Love* illustrates the type of soul-searching that has become emblematic of life in an increasingly individualized and self- absorbed society. Consumption is an integral part of this quest for self-discovery, supported by multi-billion- dollar industries that cater primarily to middle-aged women (2).

While Gilbert sought to chronicle her year of self-discovery within the context of international travel, it cannot be ignored that her positionality as a white woman from the West recreates what Michel Peillon in his *work Tourism: A Quest for Otherness* refers to as a “quest for otherness"(2). Through Gilbert’s masculinized privilege of transnational mobility, Gilbert reinforces colonialist power structures that position cultures and people of the East as feminized objects for Gilbert’s personal and spiritual discovery, entertainment, and consumption. Here, masculinized means someone who has the privilege to travel, while feminized refers to one who is marginalized because of gendered-colonialist power structures. Gilbert’s descriptions and interactions with people in Bali, Indonesia, vividly display these power structures. This form of travel-tourism enables privileged people of the West to be able to apolitically consume cultures of the East.

Peillion argues that the Western-appropriated notion of spirituality via travel has catered to privileged white women within the West because they now have the geopolitical abilities to participate in a tourist system shaped by colonialist forces. "I call this phenomenon 'mobile spirituality' the idea that one’s spiritual journey and self-discovery is simultaneously dependent on their ability to transcend borders *and* on the immobility of those whose culture is being consumed" (2). Many feminist writings from the West also discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of the lives of women in the East, thereby producing/re-presenting the women of the East in a way which appears arbitrarily constructed, but nevertheless carries with it the authorizing signature of Western humanist discourse. Here, the view of Peillion can be applied to Gilbert’s exoticized travels, demonstrating that her masculine self-construction feminizes both men and women in the East as “other.”

Gilbert seems to masculinize her travel. It is when if we place it in a transnational context, the West–colonizing entity–is masculinized and the East is subsequently viewed as a feminized item for consumption. Thus, Gilbert's transnational mobility, her occupation, and her positionality all posit her as an extension of the colonizer. For example, when meeting Ketut–the Balinese medicine man–for the first time, Ketut states that Gilbert is a world traveler, to which she internally responds, "which I thought was maybe a little obvious, given that I was in Indonesia at the moment, but I didn't force the point…" (28). While this statement could be written off as arrogance, this encounter foreshadows multiple instances of Gilbert's attempts to visibly portray her mobile spirituality. Aside from this, she wrongfully assumes that all people should worship her as the travel-capable individual that she is. How *dare* Ketut not instantly praise Gilbert as a traveler, effectively refusing to transform Gilbert's travel capabilities and her newly masculinized mind into a form of social power for her own personal recognition? When bringing in feminist critiques of masculine sphere versus feminine sphere, Gilbert perhaps becomes annoyed at Ketut's comment because his indifference towards her mobile spirituality could mean that he is actively choosing to ignore the hierarchies that exist between them.

Another instance of Gilbert's self-masculinization occurs when she takes on the task of buying a home for her Balinese friend, Wayan. Gilbert seemed to feel a sort of compulsory protectiveness over Wayan,

> She and the three children all sleep on the same mattress in the one bedroom behind the shop. How a Balinese single mother facing eviction found it in her heart to take in two extra homeless children is something that reaches far beyond any understanding I've ever had about the meaning of compassion. I

> want to help them. That was it. This is what that trembling feeling was, which I'd experienced so profoundly after meeting Wayan for the first time. I wanted to help this single mother with her daughter and her extra orphans. I wanted to valet-park them into a better life. (292)

After sending out an email to her friends and family members abroad, Gilbert raises $18,000 USD to fund the land, materials, and labor necessary to build Wayan and her children a home. While Gilbert used her masculinized privilege as a Westerner to pay for Wayan's new home, Gilbert also positions herself as Wayan's economic benefactor. It should be noted that Wayan had been living without a husband and with her children for a while before Gilbert ever came to Bali. Thus, the traditional position of a provider and breadwinner is taken over by Gilbert.

While some might read Gilbert's willingness to purchase a home for Wayan as an act of philanthropy, Gilbert's intentions are questionable because she feels the need to let her extended group of friends and families know about it. This point is solidified when Gilbert later becomes frustrated with Wayan's apparent reluctancy to buy land and build a home. Gilbert vocalizes her frustration to Wayan,

> Still, Wayan needs to buy a house, and I'm getting worried that it's not happening. I don't understand why it's not happening, but it absolutely needs to happen. Felipe and I have stepped in now. We found a realtor who could take us around and show us properties, but Wayan hasn't liked anything we've shown her. I keep telling her, "Wayan, it's important that we buy something. I'm leaving here in September, and I need to let my friends know before I leave that their money actually went into a home for you. And you need to get a roof over your head before you get evicted". (338)

While Gilbert condescendingly explains Wayan's own housing situation to her, as if Wayan is not already aware, also in careless manner raising the question of who Gilbert bought the house for. Is the house truly for Wayan and her family, or is the house a way for Gilbert to materially demonstrate her mobile spirituality?

While critiquing the orientalist gaze of Gilbert in her memoir, it should not be forgotten that she even seems to draw positive personal experiences of India. The memoirs, somehow, seems to present an important twist on US orientalist accounts of India. An additional break comes with the seemingly apolitical nature of Gilbert's interest in India. She reveals an urge to break with the British colonial past and thus to escape their own history. This, even as her very mode of expression reveals the continuing grip of colonialism on her imagination and ways of knowing.

Since Gilbert appointed herself as Wayan's financial caretaker, she effectively takes Wayan's agency away. Gilbert continues her fascination by focusing on the outward behaviors and bodies of people in the East through her descriptions of Bali. Gilbert insists that the "Balinese are famously friendly" (233).Women are more likely to experience this kind of objectification than men. Western women as powerful than Eastern poses themselves as masculine and objectify Orient women.

> No, he says, in his most friendly manner. The Balinese are famously friendly. See, I'm supposed to stay here for three or four months, I tell him. I don't mention that it's a prophecy–that my staying here for three or four months was predicted two years ago by an elderly and quite possibly demented Balinese medicine man, during a ten-minute palm-reading. I'm not sure how to explain this. (233)

Here, Gilbert addresses the medicine man as 'demented'. Demented means suffering for dementia or entirely irrational. However, the medicine man is healthier than

Gilbert herself. He rather heals Gilbert's depression with traditional medicine inscribed in the texts of Hinduism. Isn't it the irony that Gilbert in spite of being suffered from depression herself, names a health-concerned medicine man–who is healthy himself, heals other–demented?

Gilbert also states that the hotel staff if they are "Balinese, which means they automatically start adoring you and complimenting you on your beauty as soon as you walk in" (235). Gilbert does not elaborate on either of these statements, nor does she explain that since Bali's economy is dependent on tourism, it is literally the job of Balinese hospitality workers to be friendly to Westerners.

Gilbert continuously feminizes both the men and women of Bali throughout the third part of *Eat Pray Love*, the most obvious of which she states, "beauty is good in Bali, for men and women. Beauty is revered. Beauty is safety. Children are taught to approach all hardship and discomfort with a 'shining face,' a giant smile" (244). These observations seem to be merely her own. This quote exemplifies how colonialist notions of exotification, eroticization, and the constructed "passivity" of people in the East are perpetuated through travel-tourism. The constructed passivity of colonized peoples is a strategic tool that reinforces the idea of complicity–involving in wrongdoing. Gilbert's constructed reality and subsequent perpetuation of smiling, sweet, and beautiful Balinese people was founded in racialized and patriarchal colonialism, which Gilbert is effectively perpetuating through her these thoughts. If the Balinese people are always beautiful and smiling, then Gilbert has no reason to believe she is doing anything wrong or question existing power dynamics.

Gilbert's constructed reality of the beautiful and docile Balinese is soon shattered through her trip to the local library, where she learned about the genocide that took place in Indonesia in 1965. Gilbert states,

> Wait–why did I come to Bali again? To search for the balance between worldly pleasure and spiritual devotion, right? Is this, indeed, the right setting for such a search?…The Balinese quite literally live off their image of being the world's most peaceful and devotional and artistically expressive people, but how much of that is intrinsic and how much of that is economically calculated. (256)

Here, Gilbert's entire reality is destroyed. Gilbert seems to feel betrayed by her perception of the culture she wanted to consume. She was so convinced of colonialist stereotypes of the Balinese that she was shocked to find out that the Balinese are humans with a historically complex culture and thus similar to herself.

When analyzing how Gilbert apolitically consumes the East, it is important to note that more ethical forms of tourism such as staying at a locally-owned homestay and eating at local restaurants which can deconstruct the gendered-colonialist binaries. However, tourism and transnational mobility are still inherently dependent on categorizing the East as exotic in order to procure profit. It would be better that if the feminism critically examines the legacies of racism and colonialism; however Gilbert remained blissfully unaware of it.

Regarding the context of tourism, Erik Cohen, in his essay, *The Changing Faces of Contemporary Tourism,* claims that contemporary tourism itself is a "modern Western cultural project," (2) and that "the industry was developed, owned and managed by Westerners; modern tourists were predominantly Westerners; Westerners shaped the principal tourist routes and destinations, styles of travel, of accommodations and of auxiliary services" (2).

Similarly, Gilbert's reaction to Bali's 1965 genocide and her subsequent justification for remaining in Bali displays the dangers of remaining apolitical for

one's own comfort. After accepting that Bali had a bloody past, Gilbert states "whatever the Balinese need to do in order to hold their own balance (and make a living) is entirely up to them. What I'm here to do is work on my own equilibrium, and this still feels, at least for now, like a nourishing climate in which to do that" (257). Some might argue that this revelation marks a positive change in Gilbert's consumption of Balinese culture. Most tourists are not exposed to (or choose not to be exposed to) morally unacceptable political histories while visiting on their vacation, so at least she is educating herself and now recognizes that her spiritual growth should not be dependent on an idealized culture. However, while educating oneself is important, Gilbert uses individualism as a way to shield herself from the recognition that she has been relying on colonialist power structures to produce her own personal fulfillment. Gilbert chooses to ignore Bali's less desirable history so that she feels no responsibility for her actions and so that it will not hinder her spiritual journey. Through operating within the implicit system of the West as masculine and the East as feminine binaries, Gilbert is effectively able to transcend responsibility for her participation in the system that positions people of the East as "other."

In the case of the American relationship with India, the wounded white woman seeks to learn from the strength of Hindu women, and in this way she fortifies herself and her nation. It appears as though she entirely reject the colonial history. And yet she sees India through the very eyes of British colonialism. She seems to however surpass any connection with the interconnected histories of imperialism with her.

But here lie clues as to how these women mirror the American body politic. By fixating on their innocent, gendered and suffering, American women absolve themselves from the current manifestation, and the long history, of imperialism. It is

their personal, internal pain that drives them to India. Gilbert's draw to India–as the place to pray–starts with her crushing depression. Characterizing herself at the start of the memoir as a "professional American woman in my mid-thirties, who has just come through a failed marriage and a devastating, interminable divorce, followed immediately by a passionate love affair that ended in sickening heartbreak" (7). When she realizes at the age of thirty that she does not want to have a baby, she spirals through seizures of despair, marital discord, and divorce; she "spins into a panic of loneliness and meticulously detailed suicidal thoughts" (22). Gilbert's self-portrayal is one of exhaustion, pain, and loneliness. Her pervasive unhappiness seems to emerge from the failed expectation that love, marriage, committed domesticity, and reproduction lead to contentment, for "to create a family with a spouse is one of the most fundamental ways a person can find continuity and meaning in American society"(99).

At the ashram itself, she befriends Tulsi, a seventeen-year-old Hindu woman who "speaks a delightful, lilting English–the kind of English you can find only in India–which includes such colonial words as 'splendid!' and 'nonsense! (189). Slipping in the reference to Indo-British history, Gilbert simultaneously signals her amused–but necessary–distance from the fact of British colonialism. For Gilbert, marriage seems to be the primary, if not only, topic of conversation that she is able to sustain with this one Indian whom she befriends. Tulsi's family is keen to have her arrange marriage, though for her part Tulsi exclaims that she wants to "roam" the world like Gilbert. The entire experience has the teenager questioning her fate, "Why was I born an Indian girl?" (182). Instead of engaging in conversation with Tulsi, Gilbert moves into a discussion on her own divorce, the lingering negativity that continues to structure her life. Soon after, she meditates intensely and releases her

rage against her ex-husband, a lesson in patience, forgiveness, and tolerance that she exudes after her interaction with Tulsi.

Men and women of other minority communities are entirely absent from the texts. Special focus to so-called upper-caste Hinduism is given throughout the text. Apart from this, many aspects are absent from the text which seems intentional. For instance, picture of Indian and Indonesian as poor seems to ignore the temporary status of these countries. India, for example, is coming to be superpower in Asian region. It has the world's fourth largest Economy and fourth in row of highest GDP– Gross Domestic Product. Indonesia, similarly, is becoming the hub of tourism and progressing a lot. These facts are deliberately ignored. Therefore it seems that her intention is to focus on those spot having negative picture so that the history and legacy of imperial past trough literature continues.

Discussing cultures of US imperialism in the nineteenth century, Amy Kaplan has argued that the "rhetoric of manifest destiny and that of domesticity share a vocabulary that turns imperial conquest into spiritual regeneration in order to [remove] internal conflict or external resistance in visions of geopolitical domination as global harmony" (588). Kaplan also points to the "pervasive invalidism" that portrays white American women as spiritually and emotionally unable to shoulder their global responsibilities at the time of an expanding empire (590). All the while, empire is framed as a robust, self-contained, masculine enterprise that remains mobile and flexible to make itself at home anywhere in the world. What her quests do is extend the realm of imperialism and colonialism, through the course of suffering and revelation, toward new allies in the post-9/11 world.

For Gilbert, India is an otherworldly essence that is realized through yogic mediation, Hindi, the Ramayan. The consumption of Indian knowledge systems will alleviate the innocent's suffering and pain.

Mary Louise Pratt begins by pointing out particular historical time of Regan-Thatcher era when "demystifying imperialism seemed more urgent than ever, and also more hopeless. It was interrupted by the outbreak of the various struggles, precisely, over the legacy of Euroimperialism, androcentrism and white supremacy in education and official culture (xi). Coming up to this time from Regan-Thatcher ear, still there are various instances where various Western agents are trying to renovate this legacy. "Today's imperial eyes look out on 'less developed' spaces and see sites for industrial outsourcing, plantations for genetically modified monocrops, dumping ground for toxic waste (xiii). The Unlike in the time of colonialism, today, they don't want to take away the rich and strange assets to their land, rather they want to get raw material, uneducated people as their industrial workers and even want to establish industries in those lands so that all the toxic elements and waste will remain on those less developed lands, thereby making westerners wealthy, on the one hand, and good environment on their home country, on the other hand.

In the colonial era, the aim of the colonial force would be to conquer the world or particular part of it. Nonetheless, they are penetrating in other's land–the land less developed or remote– with different purpose than in past. Pratt presents the example of 43rd president of United States–George W. Bush who "in 2003 told the U.S. Army he was sending them to Iraq not to conquer anybody, but to liberate people" (xiii). Saddham Hussain, according to Pratt, fought "combat against European dominance in the Arab World" (xii) is lynched and the westerners made a discourse about this incident as liberation of Iraq.

Pratt coins a term as European “planetary consciousness,” (11)–a change that comes with many others aspects including "bourgeois forms of subjectivity and power, the inauguration of a new territorial phase of capitalism propelled by searches for raw materials, the attempt to extend coastal trade inland, and national imperatives to seize overseas territory in order to prevent its being seized by rival European powers" (11). This is, according to her, is propelled exploration that took place from Europe since mid eighteen century.

This act of exploration is, as stated by Pratt, influenced by planetary consciousness. Pratt quotes Daniel Defoe who had written that travelers who set out for exploration thought of themselves as knower of everything–"[He may] make a tour of the world in books, he may make himself master of the geography of the universe in the maps, atlases and measurements of mathematicians. He may travel by land with the historians, by sea with the navigators. He may go round the globe and know’ a thousand times more doing it than all those illiterate sailors" (15). Pratt mentions two European events which took place in the year 1735. They are the publication of *The System of Nature*, by Carl Linnes in which Swedish naturalist categorized all plant forms on the planet, known or unknown to Europeans, and the launching of Europe’s first scientific expedition, to determine the shape of the earth. Pratt argues that these two events, and their coincidence, suggest important dimensions of change in "European elites’ understandings of themselves and their relations to the rest of the globe" (15). To this two incidents, Pratt calls Europe’s “planetary consciousness,” a version marked by an orientation toward interior exploration and the construction of global-scale meaning through the discourse. This planetary consciousness, for Partt is a basic element that leads to the formation of the Eurocentrism.

This planetary consciousness, according to Pratt created maps about the people of the world. By 1758, human beings had been divided, where the main feature of the "European [is] fair, sanguine, brawny; hair yellow, brown, flowing; eyes blue; gentle, acute, inventive, covered with close vestments, governed by laws" (32). However, the main features of Asian are "sooty, melancholy, rigid, hair black, eyes dark, severe, haughty, covetous, and covered with loose garments, governed by opinions (32). Here the extreme contrast between European and Asian can be seen. Europeans are fair, confident, muscular, gentle and so on. They are compared with positive images. However, Asians are dark, sad, rigid, unpleasant, arrogant, and– unlike European who are governed by laws–are governed by emotions and feelings.

The act of exploration further accelerated the "power of naming. Indeed it was in the naming that the religious and geographical projects came together, as emissaries claimed the world by baptizing landmarks and geographical formations with Euro-Christian names" (32). The evidence of naming in the memoir *Eat Pray Love* comes when Gilbert steps on the land of Bali and says "I have christened 'Baby's First Handshake' [to Indonesia]" (246). It seems as if this land needs to be associated with the system and naming is what gives it order.

Pratt defines planetary consciousness as the act of making order or system in the nature. For several years, European knowledge making apparatus constructed the planet in navigational term. Therefore, in course of navigating the world, European sailed round the globe and wrote account of that. This act is, by Pratt, termed as "circumnavigation" (29), which has double meaning–"[making] voyage and [writing] books" (29). Pratt argues that European continued this double standard deed for continuously. The systematic surface mapping of the globe, Pratt mentions, correlates with expanding search for commercially exploitable resources, markets and land to

colonize, just as navigational mapping is linked with search for the trade routes. All these scientific works, Pratt argues, are oriented towards providing order in a chaotic world. Therefore, circumnavigating is not merely about–"depicting the world as it is" (30) but to give shape to it.

Pratt focuses on natural history questions about analysis of natural history of different philosophers. "Analysis of natural history, such as Foucault's, does not always underscore the transformative, appropriative dimensions of its conception. One by one the planet's life form were to be drawn out of the tangled thread of their [original land] and rewoven into European-based patterns of global unity" (31). Pratt further argues that "the (lettered, male, European) eye that held the system could familiarize ("naturalize") new sites/sights immediately upon contact, by incorporating them into the language of system" (31). This is how everything that comes to the sight of visitor's sight, he/she wants to bring them into the order or system from the original state which European thinks to be in chaos. Thus, through travel and exploration aimed not at the discovery of trade routes, but at territorial surveillance, appropriation of resources, and administrative control began.

The European traveler tends to explicitly projects the surface reality of western geography, society and people. Pratt argues that it is the task of "the advance scouts for capitalist to encode what they encounter as unimproved and, in keeping with the terms of the anti-conquest, available for improvement" (60). Here the textual construction that separates landscape from people, accounts of inhabitants from accounts of their habitats, can be seen. The European improving eye produces habitats as empty landscapes" (60), and which is "meaningful only in terms of a capitalist future and of their potential for producing a marketable surplus" (60). From the point of view of their inhabitants, of course, these same spaces are lived as intensely

humanized, concentrated with local history and meaning, where plants, creatures, and geographical formations have names, usages, symbolic functions, histories and so on. It is not only habitats that must be produced as empty and unimproved, but inhabitants as well. To the improving eye, "the potentials of the Eurocolonial future are predicated on absences and lacks of inhabitants' lives in the present" (60). In the memoir *Eat Pray Love* also, the Indian women, lean and thin in saris, walking at dawn are unimproved from the point of lettered and European eye. The most beautiful land of Bali which is far from the metropolitan seems empty or more natural that means there is space for European to perform their certain purpose.

Pratt also explores sentimentality in the travel writing. She reveals that "it found readerships already fit on sentimental dramatizations of the contact zone" (84). A great theme of such works, according to Pratt, is that these works presents conjugal love as an alternative to colonial domination. After the rise of travel literature as a profitable print industry, "sentimentality consolidated itself quite suddenly in the 1780s and 1790s as a powerful mode for representing colonial relations and the imperial frontier" (85). "The reader-text relation is encoded in the same masculinist and eroticized terms that encoded the European traveler’s relation to the exotic countries he visited" (86). These sentimental writings also gave priority to masculine European subjects.

Pratt emphasizes the term "prospect" to refer to the colonial space and future in the Eastern countries, "[it] ironically recalls the hegemonic European subject who scans landscapes and dreams of their transformation. And that persona [tends to be] masculine in nature, and desire possessiveness" (102).

Similarly, in the preface, Marry L. Pratt, in her work *Imperial Eyes : Travel Writing And Transculturation*, begins by declaring that her work offers the counter-

history and renovation of "celebratory narratives of European superiority" (Pratt, xi).Pratt discusses the conventions of representation that comprise western travel writing, particularly European, often based on close readings and the study of tropes. Pratt interrogates "how has travel and exploration writing produced “the rest of the world” for European readerships at particular points in Europe’s expansionist trajectory?" (5). She states that the "travel writing of 1960 onwards can be juxtaposed with the tourist propaganda on the one hand and testimonials and oral history on the other" (5). As mentioned in the earlier section of the research, Partt states that presenting themselves as heroic survivors who involved in mapping the new worlds, Westerner and European writers used their self-referential narratives to articulate the subjectivity as "a European global or planetary subjects" (9). This global subject is more masculine in nature–" male, secular, and lettered" (29).

Pratt while illustrating about the western-meaning making of east, talks about 'contact zone'–"social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination–like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (7). Here India and Indonesia have become the contact zone of those people have history of one being colonizer and other being colonized, one being imperialist while other being under its shadow, one belonging to so-called metropolitan, civilized and modern culture while other belonging to so-called biblical land, savage and barbaric culture and far from the city.

Similarly, Pratt coins other term that is 'anti-conquest', which according to her "refer to the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony. The term “anti-conquest” was chosen because, as I argue, in travel and exploration

writings these strategies of innocence are constituted in relation to older imperial rhetoric of conquest associated with the absolutist era" (9). Here the main protagonist of the anti-conquest is what Pratt calls as "seeing man, whose eyes passively look out and possess" (9). It amounts to a kind of false innocence. The third term she coins is "auto-ethnography" or "auto-ethnographic expression" (9). These both expressions refers to the instances in which "colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms" (9).

Skillfully navigating between twentieth-century imperial history, the rise of the War on Terror, and a barely-contained obsession with Hindu female sexuality, this memoir is driven by the idea that India, and Indian women, will heal the mind and body of the white woman. India enables the American woman to cure herself.

On the same way, if we look at the memoir, at the ashram in India, Gilbert befriends with Tulsi, a seventeen-year-old Hindu woman who "speaks a delightful, lilting English–the kind of English you can find only in India–which includes such colonial words as 'splendid!' and 'nonsense!' " (170).Gilbert is also put away India to unique and solitary place in regard to language also. English is what Gilbert's forefather imposed over Indian. English is what they established a tool as through which European, specially British and American, they can practice hegemony. They even established the standard of language in which one who is English literate is considered to be civilized and educated. Yet, Gilbert involves in differentiating Indian uttering English words from that of Gilbert's own. It seems irony that when Tulsi speaks those words imposed by British becomes strange words as if they are Indian invention.

Pratt examines some western travel books on Orient and Africa. Among them, one is John Barrow's *Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa*. In John Barrow's

account, "the scanning I (again the imperial I of the title) is on the lookout for potential European gain: possibilities of a Euro-colonial future coded as resources to be developed, surpluses to be traded, towns to be built. But European designs must be seen as uncontested. Landscapes must be empty of indigenous people: It is the task of the advance scouts for capitalist 'improvement' to encode what they encounter as "unimproved"(61).

Similarly, in the memoir, Gilbert seems to define and defamiliarize whatever she encounters. The long taxi ride from Bombay airport to the ashram at 1:30 a.m. is the one experience that spills beyond what Gilbert knew to expect. During that drive she notes “the strange haunted shapes of thin women in saris walking alongside the road with bundles of firewood on their heads,” which leads her to query, “At this hour?” (119). There are various instances; this memoir tries to explain the land of orient in the manner of mystery, exotic and new-world yet to be discovered.

These portrayals undoubtedly continue the past practices of exoticism illustrating how most Western while dealing with India and probably with the non-West in general is more interested in using the location/culture as an estranging device sufficiently alternative to the West than as an actual living culture. All such contemporary representations could be found in the older Orientalist works.

Shinji Yamashita, a Japanese actor and a scholar in his work Bali and *Beyond: Explorations in the Anthropology of Tourism* argues that "just as ‘madness,’ ‘children,’ and ‘women’ have been created during the course of history, so the tourist gaze of the Western ‘other’ gave birth to the ‘Balinese’ under Dutch colonial rule" (28). What came to be known as Balinese culture under Dutch rule was in fact a simulacra of native traditions. The legacy of the Dutch’s emphasis on the exotic uniqueness of Balinese culture is seen in the positioning of Bali in *Eat Pray Love*

tourism as not only a paradise with sandy beaches, but a land in which the neoliberal spiritual tourist can experience a deep peaceful spirituality and have a meaningful experience whether it is for relaxation, exploration, or cultural exchange by participating in as many spiritual and healing ceremonies as one would like. Such kind of descriptions that we can find throughout the memoir make it clear that it is not simply the landscape of Bali that is offered as a commodity to be purchased by *Eat Pray Love* tourists, the experience of Balinese culture, especially spiritual culture, is also seemingly for sale.

Michel Picard in his work in ‘‘Bali: the discourse of Cultural Tourism,’’ outlines the consequence of the tourism industry’s emphasis on the consumption of Balinese culture: ‘‘[culture] has become for the Balinese a ‘capital’–indeed their one and only capital–and as such, it must be considered as a value to exploit, commercialize and promote on the international tourist market’’ (2). Picard’s article explains how the Indonesian state, in order to foster tourism, has perpetuated the Balinization of culture under the guise of a program called "Cultural Tourism" (2) which has tried to associate the fostering or growth of culture with the development of tourism.

To conclude, Elizabeth's Gilbert's *Eat Pray Love*, in spite of being best seller and being not sponsored by any western imperialist agents, in a way or other carries the legacy of western imperialism in various ways. The memoir frequently involves in defining and mapping the Orient which according to Said is the way of westerner's to have power over Orient. Estranging the orient as remote and biblical land where one–westerner–can approach to cleanse his/her sin for their biblical text defines them to be inborn-sinner. Appearing as global sisterhood, the relations of the Gilbert that she has with Indian and Indonesian women have supported the idea and logic of empire.

Similarly, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's claim about nineteenth century white women's invention of different literary images of the savage and barbarous as well as backwardness of non-western women as so to project themselves as civilized is supported by the textual evidences of the memoir where Gilbert, white women, stage concern over the plight of Orient women to support the imperialism.

Similarly, western notion of spirituality via travel has provided the white western women to participate in the tourist system shaped by the colonialist powers in the past. Michel Pelions's notion of "quest of otherness" is supported by the memoir where Gilbert placing herself at center, involves in othering the Orient. Her masculinized notion recalls the colonialist power structure where she positions the culture and people of the East as feminized objects. Gilbert's masculinzed and privilege attitude–one who has privilege to travel–any objectifying and feminizing Asia proves the Pratt's argument of "celebratory narratives of European superiority" (xi). Similarly, the way she uses the words to refer to non-Western women supports the discourses made by colonialist forces in the past. The memoir attempt to portray the complexity of Orient society and culture by showing how difficult it is to know and trust the local people. The memoir operates with the same Orientalist framework as in past. It though does not invited the protest, but its proximity to Orientalist tropes may make one think twice.

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