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Orientalist Representation in Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*

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By

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Letter of Recommendation

Pragya Kharel has completed her thesis entitled "Orientalist Representation in Kincaid 's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*" under my supervision. She carried out her research from February 2021 to June 2022 A.D. I hereby recommend her thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Orientalist Representation in Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*" submitted to the Central Department of English , by Pragya Kharel has been approved by the undersigned member of the Research Committee.

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Declaration

The thesis titled “Orientalist Representation in Jamaica Kincaid’s *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalayas*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University is an original study and writing that I had undertaken under the supervision of the assigned instructor for the fulfillment of the requirements of the award of Master’s degree in Arts. I declare that all the content is free from plagiarism. I fully understand that I shall be held responsible for any breach of the academic integrity in the research if it is found at any point of time in future and I shall be ready to bear the consequences arising thereof.

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Orientalist Representation in Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*

This research casts light on how orientalism has relegated non-west into degraded level even in the postcolonial period. The nonwestern characters in Kincaid's Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya are subjected to various harrowing experiences. This text presents Sunam,, Khenpo and Rimpoche as representative nonwestern people. Tibetans have their own lifestyle, culture, civilization and attitude to native people. Kincaid portrays the troubled relation between the non-west and west. The entire regional culture and geography of Tibet, Nepal and India appears to be an exotic land caught in the turmoil and tension created by the conflicting interests of various power centers. The zone is stereotyped as the defeated, sterile, surreal, and static world. Most of the characters in this text are found humiliated, defeated, and resigned to their lives due to systematic marginalization of the west.

Key terms: Orient, Misrepresentation, Hegemony, Post colonialism, Marginalization

This research examines the role of the oriental representation in Jamaica Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. Orientalism is a way of seeing that imagines, emphasizes, exaggerates and distorts differences of nonwestern people and cultures as compared to that of Europe and the U.S. It often involves seeing nonwestern culture as exotic, backward, uncivilized, and at times dangerous. Edward W. Said, in his book, *Orientalism*, defines it as the acceptance in the West of "the basic distinction between east and west as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, texts, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, mind and destiny" (78). The oriental Ideology follows various steps and ways to bring people under control in the very text. From the hegemonic practices like manipulation and deceptive strategies biasfully marginalize Asians in the very

text. The organized campaign and conspiracy of orientalism are called into question in the research. The sole objective of this thesis is to show how westerners adopt treacherous policies of weakening the identity of nonwestern people. Divide and rule is the strategy which westerners often use to get their selfish interest fulfilled.

Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya is about the tale of Nepal, Tibet and India. Kincaid is the author's condescending account of time he spent in Asia. Her descriptions of what is actually a beautiful, rich and varied culture are narrow-minded and written in a tone that makes it clear that she considers herself superior to Tibetan and Asian people. She goes to Ashrams, Monasteries, Temples, 'Coffee Shops' in Tibet, Nepal and India to worship and attempts to learn the path about who we are and where we are going. There isn't any universal path to be found, everyone has to make their own, or not bother quite a lot of these spiritual homes charge a lot of money for imposing fairly punishing regimes on Westerners who would seek the truth. The author, Kincaid didn't just travel to Tibet for a month or two, she lived there for a year or two and traveled around, exploring as much of Tibet and India as she could: Ashrams, Buddhist monasteries, hanging out with a Parsi family, celebrating Passover with some Israeli émigrés, attending a Hindu wedding, and a dozen other adventures in various Asian locale.

Stuart Hall talks about representation and its significance to cultural formation through the meaning and language; how language was created to give meaning that allows people to communicate easily, how meaning is used to represent objects and concepts, producing meaning through language, and representation, giving us the ability to describe something or imagine it, to symbolize concepts through objects, and how the knowledge and power can control representation.

In *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* Kincaid, presents Asians as a representative nonwestern people. The west has its own life style, culture, civilization and attitude to look after native people. Kincaid portrays the troubled relation between the west and non-west. The entire regional culture and geography of Tibet appears to be an exotic land caught in the turmoil and tension created by the conflicting interests of various power centers. The zone of Tibet looms as the defeated, sterile, surreal and static world. Most of the characters in this text are found to be humiliating, defeating and resigning to their lives. Their communal pride is humble to dust. They act illogically and irrationally. They act as though their lives have lost direction and destination because of the domination of the power centre. The cause of their abnormality is the major concern of this research. The major thrust of this study is western ideology of the west even in postcolonial era. It deals with how and why westerners misrepresent cultural, environment, lifestyle of the nonwestern. This research aims to dismantle universal concept of cultural hegemony. No values can be claimed to be universally applicable. Each culture has its own ideals and norms. This research tries to see the impact of repressive approach of various power centers on nonwestern characters bringing the concept of Orientalism developed by Said which is question oriental stereotypes. It aims at countering some of the claims and assumptions mentioned about the superiority of western culture and people in western discourses.

Said, a Palestinian literary critic, published what was to become his most famous work, entitled *Orientalism* conceptualizes orientalism as a result of imaginative geography created to make one part of the world appear as a contrast to the other. Said's theory also aims to show how the West's views of the East have been based on stereotypical and often patronizing ideas –ideas

observable in literature, arts and political essays. Orientalism takes the form to discriminate, dehumanize, embarrass and deprive racially and culturally different people, it becomes racial discrimination. Racial practice takes institutionalized form in a society in which different cultural norms, life-styles, and viewpoints cannot coexist harmoniously. Said also cautions the readers that western writers are a part of the “Project of colonization” in their Eurocentric view which portrays Orient as a place to be civilized by the Western Colonizer (Said 67). The significant part of literature and writings produced as such represent the Eastern women either as a prostitute, a sex object, or a simple, passive farm woman who never questions her male counter-part. This notion is challenged by Postcolonial feminists like Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak, indicating that the identity of a woman is not fixed rather it keeps on changing, depending on historical, cultural, geographical and local contexts.

Kincaid is a celebrated author who has produced series of travel stories which deal with the encounter between western European people and nonwestern people in different geographical territories of the world. Although Kincaid grounds his humanism in universality, she inevitably encounters the risk of imposing Western ideology and thus Western power in the East in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. As Edward Crankshaw says of Kincaid’s ideology:

It is primarily rooted in the humanist perception of cultural identity, a perception that tends to reinforce cultural distinctiveness, difference, and distance and in so doing provides the epistemic basis for the historical emergence of colonial expansion. He is doubtless a writer gifted with mounting voice of skepticism regarding any kind of adventurist mission. (54)

As claimed by Crankshaw, Kincaid recognizes the prevailing limitations. She knows them well as he faces similar complications with her characters in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. Westerner's desire to connect to a fictitious geography may be overridden by Western power over the Orient.

Guneli Gunn evaluates Kincaid as projected in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* objectively. She says that Kincaid is torn between the loyalty to self and the temptation of the selflessness. She makes the following appraisal of Kincaid:

Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya is an attempt to demonstrate that in this travelogue, as in his other work, Kincaid was torn between the poles of selflessness and selfishness. It is not an attempt to demonstrate a schematically fixed allegory. This text is an allegorical experiment. Its theme is imperfectly conceptualized. No doubt Kincaid intended an obscurity. But the premise here is that while the content of the text is not always technically or thematically consistent and clear. (52)

Despite the elaborate narrative design of *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, it does project a confused philosophy that Kincaid held throughout his artistic life. It defines a philosophical relativism in the text. It pits man, the protagonist, against his environment.

Rawal Mukherjee is extremely critical of Kincaid. He is just a backdrop which eliminates the Asia as human factor. Kincaid's nonwestern geography is a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity, into which the European enters at his own peril. Mukherjee gives expression to the following view with regard to Kincaid:

Kincaid's early fiction becomes more pronounced. Kincaid treats the local Asians and the ruling-class Arabs with something of the same pitying

contempt and exoticism he reserves for African Blacks and South East Asian peasants. Kincaid is even more drastic in depreciating hegemonic and racist concern to misrepresent the people from non-west. (65)

Kincaid effectively silences the other. She reconstitutes difference as identity. It rules over and represents domains figured by occupying powers, not by inactive inhabitants. Both the implicit and explicit components stand side by side in most of the works of Kincaid including *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*.

In *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, Barry even more forcefully enunciates the existence of the Other in Kincaid. For Kincaid the Far East, South America, Central Africa was not peripheral areas. They too were the core of human experience. Events and experiences there were not of merely secondary interest as measured against the centrality of European culture.

The entire text is the spectacular projection of a possible fundamental unity of human experience. To Spittles, Kincaid's claim that he was "content to sympathize with common mortals, no matter where they live would sound quite justified. There are some grounds on which he asserted that the projected vision of Kincaid is free from petty charges and allegations" (45). Exile informs most of the significant strands of modern social and philosophical thought. A misty halo of exile seems to surround the spectral figure of Kincaid himself. Focusing on this issue, Levis A. Lawson makes the following assertion:

The Third World was a *constructed* opposition to the West and their virtues, it was an opposition that was supposed to strengthen Christianity itself. This interpretation indicates that the general goal of authors writing on Third World could not be as exact rendition of that religion as possible. It was rather their

interest to present Islam in the way it suited best to their own goal, which was defiance and preservation of their own culture. (29)

Kincaid has the impressive exilic pedigree and employment experience. The elusive nature of reality in the imperialistic aura and atmosphere fascinates Kincaid. Xavier Brice typically looks into this aspect of the text. He adds his view regarding this aspect of the text in the following citation:

Kincaid precisely addressed this issue in his classic text set on a fictitious geography in the early decades of the twentieth century. The author was keenly and painfully aware of the gap that constituted the reality of his contemporary imperialistic situation. Interestingly it is his unease and unhappiness about the situation that proved particularly enriching for *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. (33)

In the text westerners seem to have been bent on seeing propaganda or scheming behind every event. Kincaid is profoundly shocked by this sort of abject and inhuman trend. She distances herself from this general trend. Kincaid shows an extraordinary fairness and insight in portraying the western plunderers.

Cedric Watts examines Kincaid's portrayal of native revolutionaries in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. Kincaid's sympathy for the female characters trapped in their own confused decision is clearly revealed in the text. Watt discloses the following view concerning this aspect of the text:

Revolutionaries in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* permanently from their unsettling experience. However, although the whole story evolves, the emphasis is more on their failure than on their success. Kincaid finds it to be a study of what it means to be capable, a social position that cuts across

biological and racial lines to inscribe culturally constructed definitions of sexuality within a sex/gender/power system. (41)

The projection of multiracial issue is more controversial in the text. Kincaid's presentation of gender, race and culture more vulnerable in the text. Although all these critics and reviewers examined the text from different points of view and then arrived at several findings and conclusions, none of them notice the issue of the projection of colonial psyche in ex-colonies. Along with the projection of colonial psyche, there are various forms of dominations faced by the native people of the ex-colony. The hegemonic mentality and the mentality to control the colonized are found abundantly in the white characters of the novel. Beneath the veneer of their civilizing pride and selfless activities lies the scheme of exploitation and domination lie. The altruistic and philanthropic activities of westerners are suspicious because they are not what they appear to be. They rob the resources and wealth of nonwestern. The unwillingness of Europeans to cultivate an empathetic attitude towards different and the other is a mark of colonial psyche. By using the postcolonial theory, the researcher probes into this topic.

To probe the issue at hand, the researcher makes use of the theory of post-colonialism. Post-colonialism is subversion. It aims at countering some of the claims and assumptions mentioned about the colonial culture and people in the dominant colonial discourses. In this regard, Bill Ashcroft argues:

Post-colonial studies developed as a way of addressing the cultural production of those societies affected by the historical phenomenon of colonialism. In this respect it was never conceived of as a grand theory but as a methodology: first, for analyzing the many strategies by which colonized societies have engaged imperial discourse; and second, for studying the ways in which many

of those strategies are shared by colonized societies, re-emerging in very different political and cultural circumstances. (14)

There has hardly been a more hotly contested term in contemporary theoretical discourse. Postcolonial in this perspective represents an attempt to regroup intellectuals of uncertain location under the banner of postcolonial discourse.

According to Edward Said, it is important to delineate the discourse so as to identify postcolonial intellectuals themselves. An investigation of the emergence of the term 'post-colonial' "reveals how and why such a range of meanings has come to surround its use. Employed by historians and political scientists after the Second World War in terms such as the post-colonial state, post-colonial had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post-independence period" (45). The study of the discursive power of colonial representation was initiated by Edward Said's landmark work *Orientalism* in 1978.

Postcolonialism serves as the methodological fulcrum. It gives plenty of insights about how to examine various tricks and treacheries used by European westerners to exploit the native inhabitants of the colonized land. Postcolonial criticism has refocused attention on neglected aspects or areas within it. Postcolonial criticism has contributed to the interrogation of received distinctions between high and popular culture.

In *Orientalism*, Said argued that much of the Western study of Islamic civilization is political intellectualism. It is meant for European self-affirmation, rather than for objective intellectual enquiry and academic study of Eastern cultures. Hence, Orientalism functioned as a "method of practical, cultural discrimination applied as a means of imperialist domination, producing the claim that the Western Orientalist knows more about the Orient than do the Orientals" (*Orientalism* 86). Said

argues that the history of European colonial rule distorts the writing of even the most knowledgeable, well-meaning, and culturally sympathetic Western Orientalists.

Present researcher aims to dig out Orientalism as the result of orientalism in the text *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* by Kincaid . She is an American social worker and reporter, went to Tibet, Nepal and China to accompany his friend. In this text, Tibet, China and Nepal are misrepresented as commonly seen as a land of crushing poverty laced with an exotic spirituality and mysticism. She presents Kathmandu as a place exasperating and hard to get used to. The noise, the crowds the intense heat and dust seemed relentless and all-encompassing. This book is about her journey as she traveled all over the country and met people who belong to the many religions that are practiced in Tibetan continent. She went as a seeker who wants to know and learn, and with prejudice. She presents Kathmandu as “a supermarket of wilderness” (87).

She presents Tibet as a continent of widespread poverty, no respect for time, no sense of space and privacy, people gawking at western women, dirt and filth, the unbearable heat and poor medical standards. She travels Tibet with his friend Dan ,who never has respect to Tibetan culture. He presents religious places of Hindus negatively. He underestimates monastries as “market”, brushes with death in the forms of earthquake and double-pneumonia (Kincaid 87). Making sense of the Tibetan marriage scene (its close connection with family and honour), cleansing of mind and finding inner peace through Vipassana, learning about Buddhists and meeting a unique group of white Buddhists, grim realities of a paradise lost in Kashmir, experiencing Jewish rituals, getting blessed by Rimpoche are no more than the “primitiveness” for Kincaid (87).

Edward Said has called Orientalism, a discourse which produces 'knowledge' about the Orient in order to legitimize the West's power over the Orient. In his seminal work *Orientalism*, Edward Said believes that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'" (Said 2). The dualism on which Orientalism is based offers a difference between 'the self' and 'the others' in order to justify some patterns of exploitation and domination. The postcolonial field includes "various topics like the formation of empire, the impact of colonization on postcolonial history, economy, science, and culture, the cultural productions of colonized societies, agency for marginalized people" (Said 41). Literally, post-colonialism refers to the period following the decline of colonialism. Although the term post-colonialism generally refers to the period after colonialism, the distinction is not always made. In its use as a critical approach, post-colonialism refers to "a collection of theoretical and critical strategies used to examine the culture of former colonies of the European empires, and their relation to the rest of the world" (Bill Ashcroft, 121). The postcolonial writers face numerous challenges like the attempt both to resurrect their culture and to combat preconceptions about their culture. Edward Said uses the word 'Orientalism' to describe the discourse about the East constructed by the West.

Said examines the historical, cultural, and political views of the East that are held by the West. He examines how they developed and where they came from. He basically traces the various views and perceptions back to the colonial period of British and European domination in the Middle East. Said argues:

During this period, the United States was not yet a world power and didn't enter into anything in the East yet. The views and perceptions that came into being were basically the result of the British and French. The colonial rulers

could not rule properly. It was believed without some knowledge of the people they ruled. Westerners believe themselves to be superior to the others. They were basically the opposite of the East and considered to be active while the Orient was considered to be passive. The Orient existed to be ruled and dominated. (76)

Post-colonialism or postcolonial studies are an academic discipline featuring methods of intellectual discourse. It analyzes, explains, and responds to the cultural legacies of colonialism and imperialism. It responds to the human consequences of controlling a country and establishing settlers for the economic exploitation of the native people and their land.

Kinciad portrays the lopsided relation between the former colonizers and former colonized. Every hotel she checks into is filthy and without water or power or both, trains and flights always seem like crashing; all Muslims, Buddhists, Buddhists and Christians she meets seem to be unhappy with Tibet and either want a separate state or join Pakistan or China. Tibetans are very shy about public displays of affection, the parental bond is very strong, social mores are very critical, the traditions are strange, and there are festivals of colors and lights, wedding rituals and last rites, all of which seem very eccentric and queer. She further states:

The Tibetans seem even more confused by the turbaned white people. The next day I run in to Sunam again at the Golden temple and we sit down for a final chat. A small crowd gather around us to watch us. Buddhist women do not wear turban. For once I'm not the centre of attention. They all are staring Sunam. I wander near by the headquarter of faith. (111)

Needless to say, Tibet is a land of contradictions. It has both sides of almost everything. Hence getting an experience and then subsequently capturing it in a text

without showing any positive image is politics of Kincaid has done against the non-west.

The project of postcolonialism is not only applicable to the students of literature alone; indeed, it seeks to emancipate the oppressed, the deprived and the down-trodden all over the world. Bill Ashcroft puts forward his view regarding postcolonial theory:

Postcolonialism is an enterprise which seeks emancipation from all types of subjugation defined in terms of gender, race and class. Postcolonialism thus does not introduce a new world which is free from ills of colonialism; it rather suggests both continuity and change. Postcolonialism marks the end of colonialism by giving the indigenous people the necessary authority and political and cultural freedom to take their place and gain independence by overcoming political and cultural imperialism. (22)

Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary postcolonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of cultural displacement. Culture is translational because such spatial histories of displacement. It becomes crucial to distinguish between the semblance and similitude of the symbols across diverse cultural experiences. The transnational dimension of cultural transformation migration, diaspora, displacement, and relocation jointly makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification.

The unsettling advantage of this position is that it makes readers increasingly aware of the construction of culture and the invention of tradition. Postcolonial literature is a body of literary writings that reacts to the discourse of colonization. Kincaid's travelogue talks on this abuse of labor Tibet. When silver was found it was

"worked in the early days mostly by means of lashes on the back of slaves, its yield has been paid for in its own weight in human bones. Whole tribes of Tibetans had perished in the exploitation" (*Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, 75). Indeed, throughout the history of mining, "men risked their lives in excavating minerals and mapping out new veins; candles illuminated a few feet of space, hardly an entire cavern" (5). Shifts lasted eight to ten long hours, and each load, "weighing roughly fifty pounds, was carried on one's back before animals could be used for transport above ground. Hydro-drills in the twentieth century became less hazardous, but only relative to the life-threatening conditions of earlier times" (87). Yet foreign companies, particularly those of the British, continued to fund these kinds of operations, largely satisfied with the seemingly endless supply of labor. In addition to the abuse of labor, the actual management and financing of mines presented serious problems to English investors. The following extract highlights the case:

I'm face to face with one of the ugliest beasts on earth. Nose to beak with a hunch shouldered smelly Frankenstein with feathers that could rip my limbs apart, crack open my cranium, much of my brains and consume every part of me with in twenty minutes. But the vulture is dead. Mumbai is also dead. The nine o'clock wail of the work start. (200)

The default caused a widespread panic that provoked English financiers to sell off their mining securities. By selling the mining securities so cheaply, English financiers jeopardized their entrepreneurial counterparts in the Americas. Politics of deception upsets the balance of power between Africa and Tibet.

Ella Shohat observes if the postcolonial denotes the closure of a previous condition. The postcolonial critique celebrates globalism for the volatility of the cultural flows it brings about. The problem can be located even further, in the failure

to engage with the prior terms, colonialism and imperialism. Shohat makes the following observations:

The postcolonial is said to displace or supersede. Associated with a casual approach to historical specificities is an indifference to overseas empire's capitalist trajectory. It is because imperialism lives on in new forms and perpetuates the exploitation of the Third World. The addition of postcolonial to the critical vocabulary remains controversial. The formal independence won by colonial populations does not automatically imply decolonization and independence, since an active colonialism continues to operate in the form of transnational corporatism. (19)

Shohat laments that postcolonial preoccupation is with the representational systems of colonialism and imperialism. Those pursuing a postcolonial critique are able to hail the vigorous contestation of ideologically contrived knowledge. This knowledge is tantamount to sounding the death-knell of the West's continuing power. It also marks the end of the need to examine the political economy and international social relationships of neo-colonialism.

Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya represents the turbulent political history of many countries in Asia, both in Kincaid's time and the present. These nations suffer through continuous cycles of revolution and oppression, which never seem to end. The following extract is illustrative of how European youths work as an ally and spy of western power mongers:

I climb down the slippery slope to visit the Tibetan government in exile to research an article I'm considering writing about the town. The information secretary talks about the violence, depression and health problems and how he

wants western visitors to be more aware of reality. . . we are of this world with the same weakness and faults as the rest of people. (180)

Western representatives rely on their wealth and position abroad to guarantee their democratic aspirations.

Edward Said puts an end to the difference between east and west, as orientalist put in discourse of orientalism. He says that with the start of European colonization the Europeans came in contact with the lesser developed countries of the east. They found their civilization and culture very exotic, and established the science of orientalism. Orientalism is the study of the orientals or the people from these exotic civilization. Edward Said argues that the Europeans divided the world into two parts; the east and the west or the occident and the orient or the civilized and the uncivilized. This was totally an artificial boundary. And it was laid on the basis of the concept of them and us or theirs and ours. Said's ideas, which constitute the theoretical framework, are presented below:

The Europeans used orientalism to define themselves. Some particular attributes were associated with the orientals, and whatever the orientals weren't the occidents were. The Europeans defined themselves as the superior race compared to the orientals; and they justified their colonization by this concept. They said that it was their duty towards the world to civilize the uncivilized world. The main problem, however, arose when the Europeans started generalizing the attributes, they associated with Orientals, and started portraying these artificial characteristics associated with Orientals in their western world through their scientific reports, literary work, and other media sources. (87)

The trend to divide geography, culture and civilization takes root in the discourses of orientalism. The Europeans see their advantage in drawing boundary between the culture of the west and the culture of the east. By so doing they intend to make their “culture acceptable universal” (Said 87). On the strength of the universality of their culture, the westerner intends to take economic and political benefit. As claimed by Said, orientalism generates those truths regarding to the cultures and history of orients. Those truths are political truths. The truths and knowledge that arise from the discourse of orientalism are politically charged. They are unable to give exact reality regarding how the oriental culture really is. The truths that are commonly found in the discourses of orientalism favour the colonial interest.

Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya Picturizes Tibet as book is fantastical poverty porn and reads like slum dog. He only talks about lepers begging at the airport, ash-smearred naked monks at traffic signals in central Tibet. He further narrates:

The High pitched, highly excited jumble of Tibetan voice almost germinates a recollection. But after too many going away parties involving too much indulgence, I’m too wasted become aware increasingly. Somewhere over Shanghai. I become aware of an increasingly rhythmic prodding of my inner thigh by something long thin and hard . . . She looks cranky. (156)

He does not tolerate and even appreciate the Tibetan culture and people. A life-threatening bout with pneumonia awakens a desire in her to explore the spiritual side of life, and she quickly finds that there is no better place to do so than west. In “The Curse of Marginality” Hana Neshet writes, “the colonized native male who has been humiliated by colonialism has only one kind of power left—his greater physical strength to overpower the female” (542). Tibetans hopelessly uses words to serve

their fantasies and obsessions, though Shogyal specifically uses a pen to shape his life into a “fairy story” (18). As the illegitimate child of western hegemony, Shogyal’s heroic fantasies are dictated by Fairy story. However, when “the charm” of authorship wears off and Shogyal is confronted with “the emptiness about him,” he horrifyingly seeks salvation through ritualistic cool image" (75).

The narrator foretells Shogyal’s “slip into psychosis” relatively early in the text: “he had a vision of darkness, of the world lost forever . . . words, which at some times did so much for him, now did not restore him to himself. He was a lost man, more lost than he was as a boy” (48). No longer supported by his words and delusions, Shogyal and his family members.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said captures the basic thought behind colonization and imperialism. This line “They’re not like us,’ and for that reason deserve to be ruled.” Shows the basis on which the project of imperialism is constructed. “The colonized, Said maintains, “becomes the other, the not me. Hence, the established binary opposition of “the West”/ “the Other” must be abolished along with its intricate web of racial and religious prejudices”(64). This erroneous view of humanity creates a simplistic interpretation of human experience. It must be replaced by one based on narrative, a historical view that emphasizes the variety of human experiences in all cultures. This narrative view does not deny differences but presents them in an objective way. “Scholarship”, asserts Said, “must be derived from firsthand experience of a particular region, giving voice and presence to the critics who live and write in these regions, not scholarship from afar or secondhand representation” (73). Postcolonial theory moves beyond the bounds of traditional literary studies. It investigates social, political, and economic concerns of the

colonized and the colonizer. No matter which methodology a postcolonial critic may choose, it matters greatly whether or not the theorist/critic has been a colonial subject.

Despite his own marginality, Sunam inexorably represents the colonial world that has deprived of his manhood—and Sunam is therefore bent on his subjugation. S.W. Perera explains: “Initially, Nancy the privileged, white liberal who makes demands from Sunam, yet at the end she is not only humiliated brutally but is deprived of he is identity and self-respect” (40-41). Both Sunam and his wife harbor the torment/anguish expressed as “Agony as of Now”: “I am inside someone/ who hates me. I look/ out from his eyes . . . Love his/ wretched women” (15). The “wretched” white women in these texts are integral to both characters’ ideation of black consciousness and manhood.

Cultural imperialism is the part of the thorough system of economic exploitation and political oppression of the colonized peoples. Western literature is an integral part of that system of oppression and genocide. No, less so than postcolonial theory, moreover the African tradition proposes that criticism is a practice. “It can play an important role in the ongoing struggle for the political and economic, as well as cultural liberation of the Third World. These practices of cultural resistance take a number of forms. Many of these have their analogue in postcolonial theory” (Gilbert 45). To begin with, there is a long tradition of what has now come to be known as colonial discourse analysis in African criticism. The simple truth is glossed over in Western criticism of his work is due to the fact that white racism against Africa is such a normal way of thinking.

Anthony Brewer points out some of the important clues as to how representation of culture takes place in a discourse and how the process of interpreting culture turns out to be problematical. Brewer works out some sorts of plan to narrow

down the gap between cultures as such and the textually represented culture. Brewer's ideas are reflected below:

As people who belong to same culture must share a broadly similar conceptual map, so they must also share the same way of interpreting the signs of a language. In order to interpret them, we must have access to the two systems of representation: to a conceptual map which correlates the sheep in the field with the concept of a sheep: and a language system which is visual language, bear some resemblance to the real thing or looks like it in some way. The relationship in the system of representation between sign, the concept and the object to which they might be used to refer is entirely arbitrary. (72)

As claimed by Brewer, the meaning is constructed by the system of representation. It is constructed and fixed by the code, which sets up the correlation between our conceptual system and our language system. One way of thinking about culture is in terms of these shared conceptual maps, shared language systems and the codes which govern the relationships of translation between them. Not because such knowledge is imprinted in their genes, but because they learn its conventions and so gradually become culture persons. They unconsciously internalize the codes which allow them to express certain concepts and ideas through their systems of representation. But of our social, cultural and linguistic conventions, then meaning can never be finally fixed.

According to Jeffrey Robinson, "Sunam's battle with whites is simultaneously a battle with loved and hated aspects of himself...to which he can relate only by a perversion of an act of love" (75). Kinciad's transfer of power is the transformation of power to whites to dominate and exclude nonwhites. Kinciad's visit to Tibet allows another white Dan to project his fantasy onto nonwhites "doll-like form; only then,

does he perceive their affection in positive terms: again/ laughed the blue eyes without a stain cheek once more/Blushed bright beneath my burning kiss” (44-48). Sunams, on the contrary, is left without power and such pleasant delusions. When Dan enters Tibet he states, "That is why I've had this country! This place is unit for habitation, its mad. Why are we here/ what the hell I have done? I have left my job for this place. Why can't we be normal and live in the place we born? Sydney is safe. What the hell do you wear for earthquake anyway? Jeans?" (32). Reading on, Sunam “found that it soon became what Price had said: a film...ungrammatical and confused, about life in the forest, about the anxieties, dangers, and needs of isolated men” (11). Struggling to imagine his place in the story, Sunam muses, “Later . . . in Kathmandu this visit to Thrush cross Grange might be a story. But now, in that hut...the light and the emptiness outside and the encircling forest, she felt she had entered another, complete world” (11). Though the text takes place in Kathmandu, Kincaid ’s choice to render the Kathmandu as an uncanny “wasteland” further emphasizes the text’s anti-fairy tale dimensions (43).

Imperialism pursued by Europe tends to destabilize the political nonwestern countries. That is why the politically motivated murder and politics of conspiracy often take place. The following extract highlights how imperialism tends to get its goal accomplished through politics of conspiracy and secret murder:

The mistake ninety-nine percent of humanity made, as far as Fats could see, were being ashamed of what they were, lying about it, trying to be somebody else. Honesty was Fats' currency, his weapon and defense. It frightened people when you were honest; it shocked them. Other people, Fats had discovered, were mired in embarrassment and pretense, terrified that their truths might leak out, but Fats was attracted by rawness, by everything that was ugly but

honest, by the dirty things about which the likes of his father felt humiliated and disgusted. (71)

Cultural practices could equally work to challenge, question, and critique and condemn colonialist ways of seeing; but the crucial point to grasp is that the act of representation itself is also securely hinged to the business of empire. Stuart Hall makes the following view in this regard:

In order to assess the justice of some of the charges brought against postcolonial theory, it is necessary to begin with a comparison between its critical focuses, practices and assumptions and those which were traditionally involved in the study of the relations between culture and imperialism in the Western academy. As will be demonstrated later, a number of earlier non-Western critics anticipated the argument of Said *Orientalism*, in asserting a direct and material relation between the political processes and structures of (neo-) colonialism on the one hand and, on the other, Western regimes of knowledge and modes of cultural representation. (27)

Within Europe and America, however, these interconnections were almost completely ignored throughout the period from 1945 to the early 1980s. This provides the first context, then, in which postcolonial theory must be placed in order to determine whether it is indeed complicit with dominant ideologies in the more recent history of the post-war era.

Sunam, representative of nonwestern in of Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, has taken a Tibetan name; he has also adopted her rhetoric of retribution to his culture. Kincaid recreates all this in the text. Sunam's commune, a fake, finds support in guilt-motivated largesse from Kathmandu businesses. Price works for one, White, which has donated tractors and farm equipment. The commune

merely serves Sunam as a convenient headquarters from which he maintains contact with gangs in the city and in which he hides himself with the slum boys who bunk in a barracks and pose as agricultural trainees. Sunam fans the resultant ire and succeeds in fomenting what looks like a general social revolt. As authority breaks down, placards appear praising Ahmed as "the Arrow of Peace (6)". Herbert's prediction seems to have come true. The dream of blood has broken free.

Said considers Orientalism is "a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient" (Said 34). It is the image of the 'Orient' expressed as an entire system of thought and scholarship. He further asserts:

The Oriental is the person represented by such thinking. "The man is depicted as feminine, weak, yet strangely dangerous because his sexuality poses a threat to white, Western women. The woman is both eager to be dominated and strikingly exotic. The Oriental is a single image, a sweeping generalization, and a stereotype that crosses countless cultural and national boundaries. (34)

Khenpo another character is constantly associated with bodily abjection and thus Dan argues that Khenpo is "carnally humiliated by his profession" because the "diseased flesh belongs to the humiliated level of existence" (104). During their first encounter Khenpo the aggressor and Dan feels himself as superior being: "he feared he was losing the moment again. He felt isolated by his indifference and began to fear that he was losing him as well" (McDonald 92). Khenpo manages to teach Tibetan language to Dan. And thus, Kincaid repeatedly associates his with the point of utilitarian to humiliate Tibetans :

As Khenpo sticks to his principle, fewer and fewer students stick with him. He is relic of forgotten Tibetan; a gentle congenial land of courtly poets and he is slightly lost in the increasingly crude and brutal present. I keep having lesson to protect him from the world because I like his company. He even encourages me to get fit and get about. (60)

Though Dane is only utilizing Khenpo, he is so disturbed by this movements that he is temporarily paralyzed. Elizabeth Grosz writes:

Can it be that in the West, in our time, nonwestern body has been constructed not only as lack or absence but with more complexity, as a leaking, uncontrollable, seeping liquid; a formless flow; a viscosity, entrapping, secreting: as lacking not so much or simply the phallus, but self-containment—not a cracked or porous vessel, like a leaking ship, a formlessness that engulfs all form, a disorder that threatens all order? (203)

Khenpo's threatening "formlessness" is emphasized throughout the text. Khenpo is ultimately threatening because he is indefinable/unreadable. Dan muses: "her face was the puzzle; he hadn't been able to remember it, and now he thought he saw why. It seemed characterless, soft, without definition; it could become many faces" (65).

Kincaid *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* dramatizes how Tibetan are subjected to vicious practice of Orientalism. In western texts they are deprived of getting peaceful and harmonious living conditions. Tibetans are treated as uncivilized by the white without any fault of their own Tibetans are subjected to a series of violence. Tibetans are denied access to the life of dignity, freedom, and sound social standing. The various outcome and implications of lingering vestiges of Orientalism prevent them from achieving the lives of accomplishment and fulfillment.

The core finding of this research is to elucidate how Orientalism generates evil impacts upon nonwesterns. Orientalism is the projection of the mentality to conquer, subjugate and dehumanize those who belong to different kinds of socio-cultural category. In Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, it is noticeably clear how westerns practice harsh and dehumanizing practices even in the postcolonial period. The fates of the principal characters are fixed. On the other hand, the region is poised to undergo a new series of upheavals. The stability of the lives of the individual characters does not last long. Concerning the events, as is often the case in Kincaid, closure is partial, dubious, or incomplete.

The hangover of the colonial psyche pervades even in the postcolonial period. Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* explores the extent to which the colonial institutions and bodies can become more violent and insensitive in its relationship to the subjects and citizens in the postcolonial period. The pros and cons of colonial power are explored with the objective sense of neutrality. In the colonial context colonial subjects like Sunam expected sense of security and freedom in private world. But the unexpected results turned out. During the colonial rule of Europe, colonial subjects had suffered a lot from the colonial regime.. Genocide, terror, subjugation of the colonial people and cultural dispossession are the greatest problems to which the nonwhite people are prone. The former westerns had the proclivity to dominate and dispossess the ex-colonized. This is still underway even in the postcolonial period too.

People from the newest are highly convinced that there would be no domination genocidal violence and cultural dispossession after the end of the colonialism. The relationship between the colonial power and subjects of colonialism, even in the post colonialism, is the relationship of anticipation and exuberance.

Because the citizens and subjects gave unwavering consent to the colonial power, colonial agency started exercising power in a dictatorial way. In the beginning, people did not think that state can become so cruel and callous in the name of executing its duty.

As the colonized country did not face the resistance from the side of the public, it continued to be ahead in an uninterrupted way. When citizens and subjects were reduced to the level of puppets, state got miraculous support and permission. In the name of handling the deviant and violent behavior state speeded its influence and power which is detrimental to the collective aspiration and ambition of the people.

Kincaid's portrayal of the Tibet is rather prejudiced. . Such representation not only recycles certain inherited Orientalist stereotypes, but also peddles new stereotypes born out of Britain's ongoing negotiation with a multicultural future. In that sense, the representation of Sunam Family refers to a grudging acknowledgment of the presence of ethnic minorities based on different degrees of racial othering which also contribute to varying forms of self-fashioning Kincaid's subtle scorn and ridicule for the nonwestern.

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