

**Tribhuvan University**

**Orientalist Representation in Sarah Macdonald's *Holy Cow***

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Of the Degree of Masters of Arts in English

by

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled,

**“Orientalist Representation in Sarah Macdonald’s *Holy Cow*”**

is my own original work carried out as a Master’s student at the Department of English at Ratna

Rajyalaxmi Campus except to the extent that assistance from others in the

thesis design and conception or in presentation style, and linguistic

expression are accordingly acknowledged.

All sources used for the thesis paper has been fully and properly cited. It contains

no material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award

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is made in the thesis paper.

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**November 2017**

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled, “**Orientalist Representation in Sarah Macdonald’s *Holy Cow***” submitted to the Department of English, Ratna Rajyalaxmi Campus, Tribhuvan University, by Mamata Saud has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee:

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## **Abstract**

This research entitled “Orientalist Representation in Macdonald’s *Holy Cow*” casts light on how the orientalism has relegated Indians into degraded level even in the postcolonial period. The nonwestern characters in Macdonald’s *Holy Cow* are subjected to various traumatic experiences. This travelogue presents Vivek, Harilal and Keval as a representative nonwestern people. The Sikh character in Keval is referred to as "the Great Hermaphrodite" and a "hairy man-woman." Indians have own life style, culture, civilization and attitude to native people. Macdonald portrays the troubled relation between the non-west and west. The entire regional culture and geography of India appears to be an exotic land caught in the turmoil and tension created by the conflicting interests of various power centers. The zone of India looms as the defeated, polluted, strange, and static world. Most of the youths in this travelogue are found humiliated, defeated, and resigned to their lives due to systematic marginalization of west.

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## **Orientalist Representation in Sarah Macdonald's *Holy Cow***

### **Macdonald's Perspectives on Orientalism**

This research examines the role of the oriental ideology in *Holy Cow* that operates covertly and overtly robbing the freedom and choices of the Indian people. The oriental ideology follows various steps and ways to bring the people under control in the text. From the hegemonic practices like manipulation and deceptive strategies biasfully marginalize Indians in the very text. The organized campaign and conspiracy of orientalism are called into question in the opposed 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. *Holy Cow* is about the tale of India. *Holy Cow* is the author's condescending account of time she spent in India. Her descriptions of what is actually a beautiful, rich, varied culture are narrow-minded and written in a tone that makes it clear she considers herself superior to India and Indian people. She goes to ashrams, temples; coffee shops in Nepal and other places of 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 that charge a lot of money for imposing regimes on westerners who would seek the truth.

According to *Dictionary of Philosophy*, "orientalism is west's views of the east that 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." The author Sarah Macdonald traveled to India for two years. She traveled around, exploring as much of India as she could: ashrams, Buddhist monasteries, the Kumbh Mela in Benares, hanging out with a Parsi family, celebrating Passover with some Israeli émigrés, attending a Hindu wedding, and a dozen

other adventures in various Indian locale. However, she presents Indian culture and civilization with bias perspective.

Macdonald presents Indians as a representative nonwestern people. They have own life style, culture, civilization and attitude to native people. Macdonald portrays the troubled relation between the western and eastern. The entire regional culture and geography of India appears to be an exotic land caught in the turmoil and tension created by the conflicting interests of various power centers. The zone of India looms as the defeated, polluted, strange and static world. Most of the youths in this text are found humiliated, defeated and resigned 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. The cause of their abnormality is the major concern of this research. The major thrust of this study is to explore oriental ideology of west even in postcolonial era. It deals with how and why westerners misrepresent culture, environment, lifestyle of the nonwestern. This research aims to dismantle universal concept of cultural hegemony. No values can claim 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 the nonwestern characters by bringing the concept of orientalism developed by Said is a question to oriental stereotypes. It aims at countering some of the claims and assumptions mentioned about the superiority of western culture and people in eastern discourses.

Said published his most famous work, entitled *Orientalism* conceptualizes orientalism as results 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 the 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. 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.

Macdonald is the celebrated author who has produced series of stories, which deal with the encounter between western European people and nonwestern people in different geographical territories of the world. Although Macdonald grounds her humanism in universality, she inevitably encounters the risk of Western ideology and thus Western power on the East in *Holy Cow*. As Edward Crankshaw says:

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. She is doubtless a writer gifted with rising voice of doubt regarding any kind of adventurist mission. (54)

As claimed by Crankshaw, Macdonald recognizes the prevailing limitations. She knows them well as she faces similar complications with her characters in *Holy Cow* Westerner's desire to connect to a fictitious geography may be overridden by Western power over the Orient.

Guneli Gunn evaluates Macdonald as projected in *Holy Cow* objectively. She says that Macdonald is torn between the loyalty to self and the temptation of the selflessness. She makes the following evaluation of Macdonald. Furthermore Guneli Gunn says:

*Holy Cow* is an attempt to demonstrate east, as in her other work. Macdonald is torn between the poles of selflessness and selfishness. It is not an attempt to demonstrate a schematically fixed allegory. The tale is an allegorical experiment. Its theme is imperfectly conceptualized. No doubt Macdonald intended darkness. 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 *Holy Cow*, it does project a confused philosophy that Macdonald held throughout her artistic life. Rahul Mukherjee is extremely critical of Macdonald. She is just a backdrop which eliminates the Asia as human factor. Macdonald's nonwestern geography is a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity, into which the European enters at their own peril. Mukherjee gives expression to the following view with regard to Macdonald:

Macdonald's early fiction becomes more pronounced. Macdonald treats the local Indians and the ruling-class Arabs with something of the same pitying contempt and exoticism she reserves for African Blacks and South East Asian peasants. Macdonald is even more drastic in depreciating hegemonic and racist concern to misrepresent the people from nonwestern. (65)

Macdonald 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 Macdonald including *Holy Cow*.

In *Holy Cow*, the misrepresentation of the writer to nonwesterns is scattered over the text. It stands in sharp contrast to the actions of her assistant. Panichas discloses the following remarks:

In *Holy Cow*, Macdonald even more forcefully utters the existence of the other. For Macdonald the Far East, South America, Central Africa was not peripheral areas. They too were the core of human experience. Events and experiences were not of merely secondary interest as measured against the centrality of European culture. (16)

The entire text is the spectacular projection of a possible fundamental unity of human experience. To Spittles, Macdonald's claim that she was 'content to sympathize with common mortals, no matter where they live would sound quite justified. There are some grounds on which it can be asserted that the projected vision of Macdonald is free from petty charges and claims. 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 Macdonald herself. Focusing on this issue, 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 interpretation 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)

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

Macdonald precisely addressed this issue in her 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 her

contemporary imperialistic situation. Interestingly it is her unease and unhappiness about the situation that proved particularly enriching for *Holy Cow*. (33)

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

Watts examines Macdonald's portrayal of native revolutionaries in *Holy Cow*. Macdonald's sympathy for the female characters trapped in their own confused decision that is clearly revealed in the text. Watt discloses the following view:

Revolutionaries in *Holy Cow* permanently move from their unsettling experience. However, although the whole story evolves, the emphasis is more on their failure than on their success. Macdonald 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. Macdonald's presentation of gender, race and culture is more vulnerable in the text. Although all these critics and reviewers examined this text, *Holy Cow*, 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 *Holy Cow*. Beneath the veneer of their civilizing pride and selfless activities lies the scheme of exploitation and domination. The selfless and benevolent 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 searches into this topic.

To search 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.

Ashcroft goes on to say that “since its entry into the mainstream in the late 1980s with the publication of *The Empire Writes Back* there has been a constant flood of introductions to the field” (86). 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 westerns 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.

### **A Study of Postcolonialism**

Present researcher aims to dig out Orientalism as the result of orientalism in the text *Holy Cow* by Sarah Macdonald. Macdonald, who is an Australian reporter, went to India somewhat reluctantly to accompany her fiancé, an Australian television reporter stationed in New Delhi. In this text India is misrepresented as commonly seen as a land of crushing poverty laced with an exotic spirituality and mysticism. She presents New Delhi as the place frustrating 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 India. She went as a seeker - someone who wants to know and learn, and with prejudice. She presents

India as “a supermarket of wilderness”. She presents India as the 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 India with her husband Jonathan, who never has respect to Indian culture. She presents religious places of Hindus negatively. She underestimates Rishikesh as “market”, brushes with death in the forms of earthquake and double-pneumonia (87). Making sense of the Indian marriage scene (its close connection with family and honour), cleansing of mind and finding inner peace through Vipassana, learning about Sikhs and meeting a unique group of white Sikhs, grim realities of a paradise lost in Kashmir, experiencing Jewish rituals, getting blessed by Mata Amritanandamayi are no more than the “primitiveness” for Sarah.

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 influential 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 revive 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.

Macdonald 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, Sikhs and Christians she meets seem to be unhappy with India and either wants a separate state or join Pakistan or China. Indians are very shy about public displays of affection, the parental bond is very strong, social traditions are very critical, the traditions are strange, there are festivals of colors and



lights, wedding rituals and last rites, all of which seem very odd and surprising. She further states:

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

Needless to say, India 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 Sarah.

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

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 native 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. Macdonald's travelogue talks on this abuse of labor in Benares. 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 Indians had perished in the exploitation" (*Holy Cow* 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 dangerous, 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 risked their

entrepreneurial counterparts in the Americas. Politics of deception upsets the balance of power between Africa and India.

Ella Shohat observes if the postcolonial denotes the closure of a previous condition. The postcolonial critique celebrates globalism for the instability 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. On this point, Shohat states:

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 continues 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 false knowledge. This knowledge is equal 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.

*Holy Cow* represents the confused political history of many countries in Asia, both in Macdonald's time and the present. These nations suffer through continuous cycles of revolution and oppression, which never seem to end. Macdonald further says:

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 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. On this point, he states:

The Europeans used orientalism to define themselves. Some particular attributes were associated with the orientals, and whatever the orientals weren't the occidentals 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 universally. 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 orient. 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.

*Holy Cow* picturizes India as book is fantastical poverty filth and reads like slum dog. She only talks about lepers begging at the airport, ash-smearred naked *aghoris* at traffic signals in central Delhi. She further narrates:

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

She does not tolerate and even appreciate the Indian culture and people. A life-threatening attack 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). Macdonald's Indians hopelessly uses words to serve their fantasies and obsessions, though Vivek, an Indian specifically uses a pen to shape his life into a "fairy story" (18). As the illegitimate child of western hegemony, Vivek's heroic fantasies are dictated by motifs and figures drawn directly his freelancer film making. However, when "the charm" of authorship wears off and Vivek is confronted with "the emptiness about him," he horrifyingly seeks salvation through ritualistic cool image.

The narrator foretells Vivek'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, Vivek 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 wrong 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, Vivek inevitably represents the colonial world that has deprived of his manhood—and Vivek is therefore bent on his subjugation. S.W. Perera explains: "Initially, Vivek is the privileged, white liberal who makes demands from Vivek, yet at the end she is not only humiliated brutally, but is deprived of his identity and self respect" (40-41). Both Vivek and his wife Simi 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 people. 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 conflict 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 of 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, “Vivek’s battle with whites is simultaneously a battle with loved and hated aspects of himself...to which he can relate only by a distortion of an act of love” (75). Sarah’s transfer of power is the transformation of power to whites to dominate and exclude nonwhites. Sarah’s visit to India allows another white Jonathan 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). Vivek, on the contrary, is left without power and such pleasant delusions. When Jonathan enters India he states:

That is why I have had this country! This place is unfit for habitation, it's 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, Vivek “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, Vivek muses: “Later...in Delhi 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 India, Macdonald’s choice to render the Delhi 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. She writes:

The mistake ninety-nine percent of humanity made, as far as Fat 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.

Keval, representative of Indians in of Macdonald's *Holy Cow*, has taken a Sikh name; she has also adopted her rhetoric of retribution to her culture. Macdonald recreates all this in the text. Keval's commune, a fake, finds support in guilt-motivated generosity from Delhi businesses. Price works for one, White, which has donated tractors and farm equipment. The commune merely serves Keval 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. Keval 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)

Harilal another character is constantly associated with bodily abjection and thus Jonathan argues that Harilal is “carnally humiliated by his profession” because the “diseased flesh belongs to the humiliated level of existence” (104). During their first encounter Harilal the aggressor and Jonathan 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). Harilal manages to teach Hindi to Jonathan. And thus, Macdonald repeatedly associates her with the point of utilitarian to humiliate Indians :

As Harilal sticks to his principle, fewer and fewer students stick with him. He is relic of forgotten Indian, 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 Jonathan is only utilizing Harilal, he is so disturbed by these 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)

Harilal’s threatening “formlessness” is emphasized throughout the text. Harilal is ultimately threatening because he is indefinable/unreadable.

Macdonald's *Holy Cow* dramatizes how Indians are subjected to inhuman practice of orientalism. In western texts they are deprived of getting peaceful and harmonious living conditions. Indians are treated as uncivilized by the white without any fault of their own. Indians are subjected to a series of violence. Indians are denied access to the life of dignity, freedom, and sound social standing. The various outcome and implications of lasting leftovers of Orientalism prevent them from achieving the lives of accomplishment and fulfillment.

### **Macdonald's Concern with Nonwesterns in *Holy Cow***

The core finding of this research is to clarify 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 Macdonald's *Holy Cow*, 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 confusions. The stability of the lives of the individual characters does not last long. Concerning the events, as is often the case in Macdonald, conclusion is partial, doubtful, or incomplete.

The hangover of the colonial psyche pervades even in the postcolonial period. Macdonald's *Holy Cow* 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 Vivek 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. This is still underway even in the postcolonial period. Genocide, terror, suppression of the colonial

people and cultural dispossession are the greatest problems to which the nonwhite people are prone. The former westerns had the tendency to dominate and dispossess the ex-colonized.

People are highly convinced that there would be no domination genocidal violence and cultural dispossession. The relationship between the colonial power and subjects of colonialism, even in the post colonialism, is the relationship of expectation and excitement. Because the citizens and subjects gave solid authority 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 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 harmful to the collective desire and ambition of the people.

Macdonald's portrayal of the India is rather prejudiced. While it is indeed true that the representation of India carries sense of scorn and ridicule that seems to colour the representation of Vivek. 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 Vivek family refers to an unwilling acknowledgment of the presence of ethnic minorities based on different degrees of racial otherization which also contribute to varying forms of self-fashioning Macdonald's subtle scorn and ridicule for the nonwestern.

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