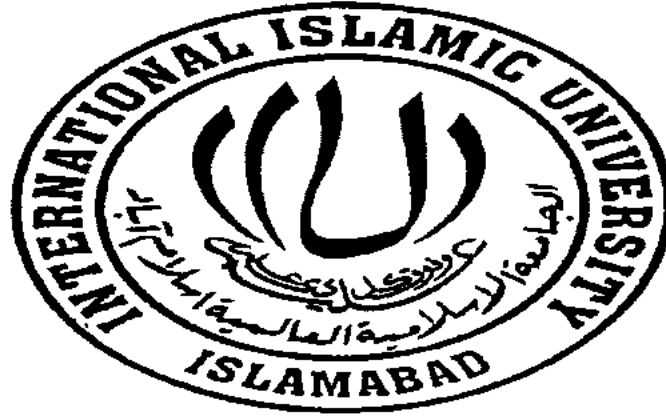


**Orientalism or Occidentalism: A Post-Colonial Study of Arundhati  
Roy's Non-fiction**



**Researcher**

**Khan Zeb**

**Reg.198-FLL/MSENG/F10**

**Supervised by**

**Prof. Dr. Munawar Iqbal Ahmed**

**Department of English**

**Faculty of Languages and Literature**

**International Islamic University Islamabad**





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A thesis submitted to the Department of English, at the Faculty of  
Languages and Literature, International Islamic University Islamabad,  
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of  
MS in English.

**By**

**Khan Zeb**

**Reg. No 198-FLL/MSENG/F10**

**Department of English**

**Faculty of Languages and Literature**

**International Islamic University Islamabad**

## Acceptance by the *Viva Voce* Committee

**Title of the thesis:** Orientalism/<sup>or</sup>Occidentalism: A Post-Colonial Study of Arundhati Roy's  
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**Name of Student:** Khan Zeb

**Registration No:** 198-FLL/MSENG/F10

Accepted by the department of English, Faculty of Languages & Literature, International Islamic University, Islamabad, in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master of Philosophy degree in English.

### *Viva Voce* Committee



---

**External Examiner**  
**Dr. Wasima Shehzad**  
Professor/Dean, Faculty of Humanities,  
Air University, E-9, Islamabad.



---

**Prof. Dr. Munawar Iqbal Ahmad**  
Dean  
Faculty of Languages & Literature



---

**Internal Examiner**  
**Dr. Zulfqar Hyder**  
Assistant Professor, Department of  
English, IIUI



---

**Prof. Dr. Ayaz Afsar**  
Chairman  
Department of English



---

**Supervisor**  
**Prof. Dr. Munawar Iqbal Ahmad**  
Dean  
Faculty of Languages & Literature

**July 21, 2016**

## **Abstract**

The thesis examines the representation of the orient and the occident in Roy's non-fiction. Thus it brings together two major post-colonial themes – Orientalism and Occidentalism as paradigms to understand the contemporary world.

Arundhati Roy in her non-fiction exposes the paranoia and ruthlessness of power. She takes on a number of swirling issues that emanate from the controversial relations between the American imperialism and the poor third world. Through her political essays she not only exposes the dystopia in the country of her birth India but also engages critical accounts of the (in) direct neo colonial practices of the first world. As a matter of fact, post-colonial theory provides better understanding to the examination of the relation between 'power and powerlessness' and the circular conflict they are engaged in. In this regard, Roy's work facilitates exposition to the Indian society, culture, economic conditions and creates an instrumental connection with the praxis of neo-colonial structures such as: democracy, human rights, free market, and corporate globalization.

The study draws upon a number of findings. Roy's non-fiction can both be treated as examples of Orientalism and Occidentalism. Furthermore, she is a humanist who voices for the deprived irrespective of religion, race or geography. Lastly, Roy's non-fiction may be explored for a number of other themes such as: Marxism, Critical Discourse Analysis, and class stratification among many.

## CANDIDATE DECLARATION FORM

I, Khan Zeb

Son of Haji Samad Khan

Registration No: 198-FLL/MSENG/F10

Candidate of MS in English at International Islamic University, Islamabad do hereby declare that the thesis “Orientalism/Occidentalism: A Post-colonial Study of Arundhati Roy’s Non-fiction” submitted by me in partial fulfillment of MS degree in the Department of English(FLL) is my original work and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of the degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

Date: 29-07-2016

  
Khan Zeb

**To My Father and Mother**

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Arundhati Roy is a prolific Indian writer and global activist. She inherits activism from her mother Mary Roy as she was also a staunch advocate of women rights. Roy's maiden novel, *The God of Small Things* (1997) is a kind of semi auto-biography that provides enough details about her early life at Aymanam in Kerala – a place where divergent communities: Hindu, Christian, Muslims along with other minority groups live together and, she imprints this diversity in her mind since childhood. She is a keen observer who looks close at things happening around and in her case “the problem is once you see it, you can't unsee it”. She audaciously expresses her way of seeing at ‘power’ and its by-products such as: poverty, displacement, political and economic disabilities, genocides and terrorism. She is a staunch critic of the so called democratic Indian government policies as it is virtually colonized by Corporate Globalization. It is not only engaged in the privatization of lucrative national assets but also in the internal colonization of its own poor people. In this regard, she inks and raises her voice on the various inland issues such as: Dam(n) projects, Demon(crazy), Operation Green Hunt, Kashmire and Naxalite movements in the country of her birth (India). Besides, she has authored political essays that expose the true face of the caste system, democracy, media, courts and judicial system. This stance of Arundhati Roy has earned her various labels: activist, anti- national and anti- development in India. Parallel to it, she crosses the borders and engages critical accounts of the American imperialism, expansionism, war on terror and capitalism for which she may be dubbed as anti American. Keeping these two labels ‘*anti Indian*’ and ‘*anti American*’ the researcher has tried to analyze the non-fiction work of Arundhati Roy and, group her in any of the two major post- colonial discourse academies i.e. Orientalism or Occidentalism.

In this project, the researcher has critically viewed Arundhati Roy's non-fiction. She has written a large number of books including her widely admired novel *The God of Small Things* that won her the Booker prize in 1997. In addition, she delivers a vast range of speeches on political, economical and social issues. It is difficult to include her whole work in this project that is why the researcher has selected two of her non-fiction books i.e. *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (Roy, 2001) and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (Roy, 2004) for analysis. Both books contain essays that are germane to the thesis topic. They reflect writer's representations of Indian as well as Western democratic powers and the repercussions of this master/slave relation up on general masses. A close scrutiny of the selected books may provide the researcher with an opportunity to analyze Arundhati Roy's construction of East/West dichotomy and locate her in any of the postcolonial academia. The researcher has also made an attempt to prove his thesis statement that is: The division between the Occident and the Orient was a deliberate creation to justify the colonization process which ultimately harmed the colonized. The intended study has also attempted to analyze the statement whether it is justifiable to hold the west responsible for the backwardness of the third world.

The *Algebra of Infinite Justice* (Roy, 2001) comprises a number of essays: the end of imagination, the greater common good, power politics, the ladies have feelings so..., the algebra of infinite justice, war is peace, democracy and war talk. A brief overview, informs about Roy's analysis of US role in world politics. She calls the September 11 attacks a tragedy that led the US to mobilize the first world army and invoke 'war on terror' causing two fold damage. Firstly, it has been costing millions of innocent lives in the form of collective genocides and secondly, it destroys and restructures the basic infrastructure in the poor war hit countries. The powerful *Empire* is on the move and its other episodes include US extremities in the shape of attack on

The dam building industry in the first world is in trouble and out of work. So it's exported to the third world in the name of Development, along with their other waste, like old weapons, superannuated aircraft carriers and banned pesticides. (Roy, 2002 pp. 58)

Here, the essence of Roy's argument seems to be that West is mainly responsible for the miserable conditions of the *Dark Globe*. The war is one of the economic resources of America. In other words, it guarantees the economic prosperity of the American nation. In order to perpetuate the imperial authority, its custodians not only pave ways for marketing their goods but also keep a vigilant eye on the natural resources and potential assets in the under developed regions. Such strategies, whether war or politics further, widen the gap between the *powerful* and its *Others*. Conceptualizing the US in such ways qualify Roy's position as an Occidentalist which is one of the main arguments of the project.

Another part of the argument is Orientalism, which has been viewed in the light of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). What interests the researcher here, is Roy's distinction as a writer. She is a writer of a different kind. She does not compromise when it comes to exposition of truth. She uncovers the very foundation of otherwise seemingly fair relations between the powerful political society and the less powerful civil institutions in India. In the selected text there are a number of descriptions that validate the thesis of Orientalism. And through such depictions she presents the existing dystopia, a story that reveals truth contrary to what is conveyed through the world second largest film industry Bollywood.

Besides being an Indian Roy does not carry the torch of Shining India. Her India suffers from a wide range of issues: poverty, rap culture, freedom movements, privatization projects, fascism, nationalism, emotionalism, human rights, NGOization, atomic weapons to list a few. What compels her to touch up on such subjects and go against her state is her practical life experience in which she closely observed the relation between the 'powerful and powerless'.

Almost half of India's population does not have access to basic needs: food, health, and shelter. Why is it so? Who and what can be held responsible for all this? are questions that take us to the very heart of Roy's treatment of the first and third world relations.. She aptly describes, "The theme of much what I write, fiction as well as non-fiction, is the relationship between power and powerlessness and the endless, circular conflict they're engaged in." (Roy, 2004, P.13) and her words "Non- fiction is wrenched out by the aching, broken world I wake up to every morning" (Roy, 2004 p-13) state the very purpose of her writings. Roy scrutinizes the political, economic and social phenomena and exposes the hidden agenda. Moreover, she lays bare the miserable conditions of the poor, their living condition, culture and traditions. At times, it seems to the researcher that she takes the position of an Orientalist when she pictures India; its society, culture and politics. Her position as a critic both of the oriental and occidental world will be looked at in detail in the analysis chapters.

The second book under scrutiny is *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2004). The book consists of a number of well structured articles written between 2002 and 2004. Some of the articles are also available in the form of speeches while, others published in various newspapers. The book is an informative run down on themes, most of the postcolonial writers wrestle with. Here, the researcher has tried to grasp Roy's deconstruction of concepts such as: empire, corporate globalization, neoliberal capitalism and above all, state terrorism. Articles included in the book are: ahisma (non-violent resistance), come September, the loneliness of Noam Chomsky, confronting empire, the ordinary person's guide to empire, instant-mix imperial democracy (buy one, get one free) and when the saints go marching out. The researcher has carried out an exhaustive textual analysis of the above mentioned concepts in the light of postcolonial theory.

Since Orientalism and Occidentalism are the key arguments in this research so before the researcher takes out a variety of themes for close textual analysis it becomes important to touch upon Orientalism and Occidentalism and justify the *modus operandi* of the research.

Orientalism is a discourse that deals with the (de)construction of the orient in western academe. In order to understand the phenomenon of Orientalism it is also significant to understand terms such as the Orient and the Orientalist. An orient is the subject represented and tagged by the Orientalists – those who speak, write or research about the orient. The Orientalists have represented the orient throughout academic and political history for varied number of reasons mainly: political, economical and ideological among many. Admittedly, analyzing these textual representations is a complex phenomenon which requires informed opinions of the postcolonial critics like Homi K Bhabha and Aijaz Ahmad. Keeping Bhaba's view in mind these representation may also pose some problems as he calls it "mimicry". In his views mimicry is nothing more than imitation. To him true and actual (re)presentation is not possible. However; this debate of oriental (mis)representation was instigated after the publication of Edward Said's influential work *Orientalism* (1978). According to Said, the orient is a deliberate construction designed to define its *Other* i.e. the West. The West declares itself the centre whereas; the East or the orient is its periphery. Both are separate entities and are different politically, economically as well as linguistically. It also carries along a history of prejudices and oppression of the dominant over the weak i.e. the East. Over a period of four hundred years the Westerners developed an image of the orient as stupid and lazy on one hand and on the other, they found it mysterious and attractive because of its being away from the centre. Said further argues that Orientalism in its true sense is a Western episteme which has worked as an essential part of Western colonialist ideology.

India. She does not confine herself to India but also portrays the marginalized and disposed in other parts of the world. In her writings whether, fiction or non-fiction her prime concern is the complex relation between the powerful and the powerless. She states in the book *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*. "The theme of much what I write, fiction as well as non-fiction, is the relation between power and powerlessness and endless, circular conflict they are engaged in" (Roy, 2004 P-13)

In her articles she portrays the issues of the poor world in general and India in particular and at the same time links these issues to the dominant, political and repressive forces of the imperial powers. At times, she seems to show her anti-western tendency and holds the colonizer and its policies responsible for the backwardness and miserable fate of the third world. This position of Roy interests the researcher to also view the other side of her intellectual insight and study her work from the Occidentalism point of view which is another major thesis that will remain as a reference point throughout this project.

Occidentalism is the counter-discourse of Orientalism in which the West or the Western subjects/citizens are represented and dehumanized by the scholars particularly from the Eastern academy. The term Occidentalism was first introduced by James G. Carrier in his book *Occidentalism: Images of the West*. (1995). Occidentalism may be considered a reaction against the Western dominance at global level or its territorial and structural exploitation of the East. Just as the Orientalist view of the world is not innocent, the Occidentalist view is also informed by prejudices, generalizations, and stereotypes. All civilizations create simplistic images of other civilizations but Arundhati Roy is an intellectual whose discourse should have greater self-reflection therefore, it is important to study her work and analyze her representations of the *Other*. Is it justifiable to hold the West, responsible for the backwardness of the Third World?

The Western intelligentsias have represented the East for a variety of reasons: cultural, ideological, economic and political among others. As a response, the non-western intellectuals also display a strong reaction which seems to lead towards a clash of civilizations. The academic scholarship produced in the colonized regions contains images of the west. This kind of picturing and representation employed by either Western or Eastern intellectuals is termed as Occidentalism. Here, it is also important to state that the term Occidentalism implies both positive and negative meanings. The former stresses upon both positive and negative images of the West whereas, the later approach is informed by stereotyping and dehumanization of the occident. In his book *Occidentalism: Images of the west* (1995). Carrier investigates and reflects back onto the images that shape western cultural and social identities. The volume also shows the way western images form people's notions and in turn their (both Western and non- Western) approach in shaping these images. The contributors interpret these images of the west from areas such as: academic writing, pop culture, societies both inside and outside Europe, to demonstrate that how authority and conflict figure such conceptions.

Arundhati Roy is Indian and like other postcolonial writers writes back to the centre. She rather seems to go a step further as she also takes her own country's policies to task. At times, it appears as if she dwells in between the local and global politics but, her prime concern remains the same i.e. humanity. She concerns humanity and speaks for the oppressed and marginalized irrespective of religion, race or culture. This stance of Roy may take her beyond the academies of Orientalism and Occidentalism and link her belongingness to the global academy. She engages activism not only on the streets and forests in India but also on the global forums. In her work we find a kind of double critique: she criticizes forces both within and outside India – both multinational corporations and their exploitation of democratic powers, ideology and the effects



of capitalism in India. She appears to be both national and transnational. Gurleen Grewalls in an essay "*Home and the World*" *The Multiple Citizenship of Arundhati Roy* argues that Roy's work should be simultaneously studied at two levels, the local and the global. She has the ability to remain *glocal* in the postcolonial world. (Navarro-Tejero, 2008) This in-betweenity or in Bhabha's words liminality may place her in the "thirds space" a space beyond the proposed ones. She seems to be in a continuous interaction with both the worlds. Can she be called as liminal rather than Orientalist or Occidentalist?

Before, scrutinizing Roy's credentials it is also important to briefly state other dimensions of her work. Roy, having an Indian background along with her non-violent credentials, is a living scholar. She has not restricted herself to any particular area rather; she has crossed the boundaries placing herself in India. She is a different kind of Indian as she deals the problems of human beings, not any single ethnic group or community. She uses very powerful rhetoric to assert her presence. She does not confine herself only to journalism or literature rather, she actively takes part in (inter) national politics. Her presence in the academy of politics may place her in any of the discourse academies. Due to her political rhetoric, she can be labeled as an Occidentalist but simultaneously she exposes the Indian dystopia and finds the internal links and instrumental connection between the powerful and powerless. She keeps looking through her politicians as well as her country politics as I can see her support with Naxalite and Naxalism. She has not ignored the Kashmires too. She advocates the cause of Kashmires separatism and is of the view that Kashmires should be given the right of freedom. She favours all marginalized and oppressed societies. Similarly, she criticizes America due to her policies against war on terror. She is of the view that America and England either are causing the whole terrorism in the world whether in the form of nuclear weapons or having the advantage of 9/11

attacks. They particularly, America is killing innocent people by calling itself a peaceful and peace loving nation. She holds similar views about England. She also criticizes the claims of British Prime Minister, Tony Blair who proclaimed that we are peaceful people however, she also appreciates them for their welfare based policies. Keeping all the points in view, I shall be looking at her from a critic point of view whether, she is an Oriental or Occidental or goes beyond as she demands social justice irrespective of ethnic and geographical divisions.

Roy's work becomes an Eastern canon of knowledge about America and its imperialistic policies world over. Parallel to it, her work is also an eye opener to the capitalistic tendencies and India's internal colonization of its own people. Her success as a political, economic and social activist mainly rests upon her arguments that bring to light the actual imperial designs either by the imperial power or by its subaltern counterpart India. She daringly highlights the American tactics and states that, America is not only engaged in building up on its territorial expansionism and molding constitutions of the occupied regions in ways that serve capitalism. She also writes how the US is harnessing world's natural resources through its shyllocks like IMP, World bank, Asian Development bank etc. Its policies have made human life in the world other, than the western hemisphere miserable. The poor nations are dually controlled and are endowed with raw gifts, such as: sky rocketing inflation, unemployment, terrorism, nationalism which further strengthen the imperial theory of divide and rule.

To study Roy's work in the light of the postcolonial theory provides useful intellectual insights and reveal the existing dystopia as does the theory itself. Furthermore, it may pose a challenge in a sense as it deals with the concerns and life of common individuals no matter, which part of the planet he or she belongs to. She talks about the marginalized and subaltern which certainly requires to be studied in relation to its other. She also brings to light the

repercussions of the rapidly growing capitalism on the lives of the have-nots. In this Postmodern world the poor and marginalized bear no significance other than being consumers. Throughout her essays the dominant theme is the relation between the state policies and their impact on the lives of the common men. She is far-sighted who digs deep into the postcolonial complex phenomena. In this role she acts like a chameleon and changes its stance as does the postcolonial theory. On one page we find her criticizing the Indian government's policies, justice, courts, dams, democracy whereas, on the next, she connects these flaws to the multinationals and capitalist organizations. From this perspective, it seems as if she is more an occidental rather than oriental. One of its many reasons can be her postcolonial identity as she was born in India and received western education. What makes her position more interesting is her detailed commentary on the countries that are (in) directly, the victims of the imperial policies. She becomes an embodiment of the postcolonial theory and expresses all its themes through her essays.

Postcolonial theory deals with the relation between the imperial authority and its colonies. In this sense of the term which dates colonialism back to the pre historic times the terms becomes trans-historical and exhibits that almost all societies have enjoyed the status of being a colonizer and a colonized at some time in the history. (Aijaz Ahmad quoted in (Peter Childs and R.J. Patrick Williams, 1997)

It brings to light almost all aspects of this relation whether cultural, political, economical or societal. And in the process reveals the otherwise inhumane nature of the powerful. Since time immemorial man has tried to subdue and enslave other human beings. History reveals that all those nations who were once in power employed similar tactics of repression for the maintenance of their authority. Roy too like postcolonial theory mirrors this relation in her non-fiction work.

For instance, in an Essay on Genocides, she provides a detailed rundown on the genocides and brings to the fore the implicit political and imperial designs. Her work can be construed as an eye opener to the modern day to day happenings. She unfolds the hidden realities behind the otherwise human friendly policies of the American government. Her critiquing the American war on terror, growing consumerism, and neo-colonialism in the shape of capitalism places her in the crew of Occidentalists as Ian Baruma sees to it.

Colonialism now, more aptly the American colonialism has global repercussions. The US hegemonic intensions also pose serious threats to the heterogeneous cultures in the colonized regions. They are being molded into *mono-culturalism* through channels such as media, literature and multinational corporations. She unlocks the truth and laments not only on the imperial influence in the world affairs but also on the replicating the same on the soil of her birth. She is a staunch critic of the reverse engineering that is being employed by the Indian government against its own people.

Roy's intellectual insight bears resemblance to the renowned political analyst Noam Chomsky. Like Chomsky she is also allured by the existing political realities. Both have patient hearts and are against the unfettered wealth accumulated by capitalistic regimes. American fights for the foreign lands that has led to national suicide in some cases, is a serious concern to both intellectuals. Both unmask and differentiate between America as a nation and a state. Both inform about US imperialistic designs. According to them in countries where the American hold to the phrase "no boots on the ground" it turns to tactics such as sanctions as in the case of Iran and drones attacks in the tribal areas in Pakistan. Both furnish us with history. Both adopt brave and undaunting stances against their regimes.

Roy does not confine her writings only to political and economic topics but also cries her heart out about the growing capitalist ideology that inter alia manifests itself in cultural consumerism in India. She seems to view this liberalization and reintegration of Indian economy as a strengthening ground for maintaining Multinationals hegemony. In other words, local cultures are canned. A leading Indian weekly covers similar story by making the headline 'After burgers, Cielos and cellulars, it's time for cultural consumerism' (Outlook, April 9, 1997)

"The Merchandising of Culture" as tilted by the cover story signifies the local and global capitalist hegemony which further, provide rough data to the researcher to view this wedding of the local and global cultures in Roy's writings. Owing to this, modern day consumerism, the world has become a market place where masses' importance has been reduced to only being consumers. To put it more simply, Coca cola, KFC, NESTLE among other international brands determine and regulate masses' lives. Roy's work exhibits that India is also patronizing itself on the capitalist lines and is practicing similar tactics on its soil. Here, brands such as Tata Group and others are adopting the western models. They also manipulate both print and electronic media to serve their vested interests by molding and forming masses opinions.

Now the question arises that what kind of world does she aspire for? She declares herself as "a mobile republic". She envisages a future in the civil movements and shows optimism in the resistance movements both within and outside India. She herself does not stay behind rather, persistently contributing to the cause through writing articles and essays. She opines that the contemporary regimes invent lies to further capitalist and free market driven projects. She terms this as *linguistic legislation*. Both the world largest democracies (America and India) adhere to this principle. They manufacture lies during their election campaigns and after gaining access to power corridors are left with no choice other than becoming puppets in the hands of institutions

like IMF, World Bank etc. Elections bring no change as we saw in the form of the black man in the white house. While speaking to the ASA Roy says "Choosing between the Republicans or the Democrats; Bush or Kerry is like in fact, to choose a detergent whether you chose 'Tide' or 'ivory snow' they are both owned by proctor and gamble". She opines that democracy is a messy business. It is a flawed and installed ideology and is aimed to serve multinationals and imperial ends. She also criticizes electoral process and the way power is achieved. She talks of the social equality which seems to remain a distant hope in the presence of corporate globalization. She is against the ever growing disparity between the people. 580 billionaires of the world have more wealth than 170 poor countries of the world. It is not a natural happening but has been made to happen. The system is well entrenched. The gap between the poor and rich is on the rapid increase and the multinationals hold masses destinies through market. Similarly, she unveils the corporate media and its role in maintaining people lives and in forming public opinions. The vast number of call centers in India, and the CSR's adaptation of the Native American style of speaking. Roy's wisdom is a guide to the neo liberal world where, the relation between the ruler and the ruled is intelligently highlighted.

Roy's strong and daunting approach to the affairs of the world seems to be honed by her chaotic child hood. In other words, it is tough times that have made her in to what she is now. Her mother's running away from a brutal father and marrying to a drug addicted husband and then divorcing him after bearing two children. After leaving her husband she started running her own private school. Roy also had to sell empty bottles in her teenage before she became an architect. Later on, in her life she did not look back and stepped up the ladder. She performed a variety of roles: actress, screen play writer, social activist and finally, as a world renowned writer. Roy's childhood exhibits that she saw life in all its forms and manifestations. She

remained detached from her parents which influenced her personal as well as professional life a great deal. As a researcher, I can see the expressions of her deprived soul in her work. At a place she describes herself as “The worst thing a girl could be: thin, black, and clever.” (Busman, 2009) She fought and is fighting hard against disparity and becomes a never ceasing voice. She was jailed and put to other penalties like court contempt etc but, none could silence her. She has become “the fairy princess of the rising Indian middle- class”. She takes on a cause and writes for the poor, dispossessed, and abused. She does not confine herself to the Indian sub-continent; rather she becomes a universal voice. She also expresses her woes for the Palestinians, Iraqis, and Iranians. This takes her to reveal the ugly face and so called civilizing mission of the so called peace makers of the world. She believes in progressive resistance. She finds hope in the political anger whether, on the Wall Street or on the roads of Mumbai and Delhi. She thinks it will dismantle the existing political model that serves a handful of individuals. Likewise, she takes globalizing dissent as one of the solutions to the growing capitalism. So, to conclude the introduction chapter, the researcher can say that Roy’s work is a complete guide to understand the contemporary world affairs.

### **Statement of the problem**

The division between the Occident and the Orient was a deliberate creation to justify the colonization process which ultimately harmed the colonized.

### **Research Questions**

How does Arundhati Roy construct the East (*Orient*) in her non-fiction?

How does Arundhati Roy construct the west (*Occident*) in her non-fiction?

What are the political and cultural ramifications of Roy’s representations of the *Orient/Occident*?

## Theoretical Framework

In this project, the researcher has used qualitative techniques of research to analyze the primary non-fiction texts of Roy with special consideration to her construction of the *Orient* and the *Occident*. As a principal strategy, the researcher has applied Postcolonial theory with special emphasis on Edward Said's Orientalism for digging deep in to the selected work to prove the thesis statement. Moreover, the theoretical model is applied to the extracts taken from the selected books. Roy's construction of the *orient* (Indian society) and the *occident* (first world) is critically analyzed. The researcher has also made an attempt to locate Roy's work either in the Orientalists or Occidentalists group.

A number of findings about the authors' work are in place. Firstly, the analysis of her treatment of the orient provides a space for her work to be dubbed as Orientalism. Her construction of the orient bears resemblance to the *orient* as reproduced in oriental discourses. It is represented as backward, fanatic, irrational and in some cases uncivilized. Significantly, such constructions imply deeper meanings. She constructs the oriental world but with a different intent. Said's theoretical framework is vital to the analysis of Roy's construction of the orient.

In the second place, she uses her rhetoric as a resistance strategy. She becomes a mouth word of the postcolonial theory and exposes the paranoia and ruthlessness of neo-colonialism. Like post-colonial theory, she facilitates exposition to the otherwise human friendly institutions. The imperial hegemony over the rest of the world is maintained through various structures of neo-colonialism. Such structures include: democracy, free press, Aid, Trade, corporate globalization and other projects of modernism.



Post-colonial theory portrays the swirling issues emanating from these controversial issues. Due to the exploitation of the imperial structures the disparity between the poor third world and the materially prosperous first world grows. In this regard, the binaries: powerful and powerless, usurper and usurped, occupier and occupied and colonizer and colonized help in determining the relation between the powerful West and the poor East.

### **Significance of the study**

Firstly, the study proposes itself as a step towards an in-depth understanding of Roy's anti-power stance as well as informs about the excesses and ruthlessness of power. Secondly, it undresses a number of contemporary power structures notably: democracy, freedom, free market, free press and most important of all Corporate Globalization; and the ways these structures control assets, emerging markets and democracies in the poorer countries of the world. Thirdly, it offers newer perspectives to look at the powerful west versus the poor third world relations. Last but not the least; it may be used as reference point in the domain of postcolonial studies.

### **Chapter division**

The thesis intends to facilitate exposition of power and its aftermaths in the so called third world as much as possible. It is also an attempt to analyze Roy's construction of the Orient and Occident. Chapter One, "The Introduction" draws a circle around the writer's personal life as well as her academic contribution. In addition, it discusses the thesis topic, research questions, methodology and a brief over view of the text, selected for textual analysis.

Chapter two, "Literature Review" is divided under three main headings namely: Post-colonialism, Orientalism and Occidentalism. It attempts to trace and provide descriptions from a

number of books, research articles, overviews and other digital resources under each heading. The chapter builds comprehensive and analytical knowledge around the topic and facilitates the researcher with multiple insights to view and analyze his point of view on the topic.

Chapter Three, “Analysis of Roy’s Orientalism” is a very important part of the thesis. Here, the researcher carries out his analysis of the selected text i.e. *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *An Ordinary Person’s Guide to the Empire* (2004). Arundhati Roy’s construction of the Indian *orient* is analyzed in the light of postcolonial theory. Said’s *Orientalism* is also employed as a sub model as it exhaustively studies the relation between the occident and the orient. The researcher has also made an attempt to create a link with other texts and supplement it with his own commentary.

Chapter four, “Analysis of Roy’s Occidentalism” informs about the researcher’s findings about Roy’s Occidental constructions. Here also, the two books in question are *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *An Ordinary Person’s Guide to the Empire* (2004). Post- colonial theory is used as a lens to scrutinize the writer’s representations of the first world.

Chapter five “Conclusion Chapter” is decisive as it contains the ultimate findings on the topic. An attempt is also made to find out the writer’s *strategic location* in the text.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Academically speaking, postcolonialism though, concerned with the spatial location of the writer; fails to adequately, address the very question of post- coloniality. Much has been written on the nature, content, origin and importance of postcolonialism. Most often, it portrays the swirling and controversial issues that emanate from the disturbing relation between the colonizers and the colonized. This ever increasing, unequal relationship also gives birth to other binaries such as: oppressors and oppressed, ruler and ruled, occupiers and occupied, usurper and usurped and presenter and represented. Authors belonging to each binary strive to advocate relevant ideologies. Intellectuals that hail from the authoritative regimes justify the colonizers' standpoint and label it as a part of the so called "Civilizing Mission". On the contrary, the distant voices in the peripheries pose a resistive and libratory response and sing the local songs of nationalism, ideology, self rule and home among others. In this continuous clash of civilization, representation is one of the strategies employed. Almost all cultures and communities represent the simplistic images of one another. These images are often imbued in politics and serve myriad purposes – political, economic, material and strategic among many. However, there are writers who stand against all odds and resist oppression no matter; it is carried in the nation- state in the name of development or imperial regimes in the name of 'civilizing' the uncivilized. Strategies and claims are the same throughout the human history.

The 18 century industrial revolution, exploration of new lands and illegal usurpation of colonized regions, resources, and people by the Europeans are few of the instances in the annals of human history. The new found regions are called 'third world' and its people 'aliens'. Such

constructions were challenged by intellectuals and theorists around the world. They deemed it unjust and dehumanizing. This led to the notion “writing back to the centre” and hence, the beginning of the discipline postcolonialism.

In this comprehensive review of literature, I have included summaries of notable scholarly work to build an in-depth understanding about postcolonial theory and its binary discourse academics Orientalism and Occidentalism. This part of the project has helped a great deal in analyzing Arundhati Roy’s construction of the first and third world respectively. The chapter has been divided in to three sections i.e. Post-colonialism, Orientalism and Occidentalism.

## **Post- Colonialism**

Post-Colonialism spans variety of themes covering diverse disciplines such as: philosophy, psychology, sociology and literature. Most often, this thematic multiplicity revolves around the unequal and disparate relations between the *powerful* and the *powerless* since time immemorial. Human history exhibits that powerful regimes have always tried to subdue and subjugate the lesser nations through various tactics. One of such strategies is the politics of language through which the Orient’s culture, race, and civilizations have been (de)constructed in ways that help perpetuate the hegemonic dominance of the imperial regimes. They (re) present the *orient* in almost all forms as inferior, uncivilized, barbarian and undemocratic to justify *The White Man’s Burden*. As a matter of fact, the colonial powers implicitly sustain their hegemonic and authoritative regimes through linguistic, cultural and economic imperialism. Academe is no less a tool employed and it is this academic response and intellectual enquiry to the texts produced in colonial era; that form the basis of postcolonial theory. Literary texts produced

during colonial era are reproduced, re examined and re interpreted. An army of writers, intellectuals, theorists and academicians both from the *centre* and its *peripheries* pose a holistic response in the form of post colonial theory. Over the past few decades, it has evolved into a full fledged academic discipline and offers many fold avenues for research.

In the theorization of postcolonial perspectives prominent scholars like Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Frantz Fanon among loads of others articulate their ways of seeing the relation between the dominant colonizers and the dominated colonized. Their work mainly, concern and argue over themes such as: economic, culture, language, politics and their (in) direct relations to the white and black binary. This thorough insight into the West/East relation helps the researcher and readers a great deal about the nature of postcolonial theory. However, the theory is one of a complex nature and poses a number of serious questions:

When does it begin? Will it end? Who or what is postcolonial?

Generally, the term designates a chronological meaning and commences with the post independence era after the Second World War however, it assumes newer applications in 1970 and emphasizes various cultural and political impacts that occurred during and after colonization. Along with, temporal interpretations it encompasses numerous issues that constitute its subject matter. Academically, discourse occupies a central position that employs Centre vs Margin relation in physical, geographical, or contextual terms. Likewise, it unfolds imperialism and its repercussions on the subaltern culture, societal structure, economy, language and politics among other. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in the opening chapter of the book *The Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* (2001) explain that the postcolonial conceptual

vocabulary “function in a highly charged and contestatory atmosphere of intellectual exchange and cultural negotiation”. They further, elucidate the ‘What’ of post colonial studies and to them “As a subject, post-colonial studies stands at the intersection of debates about race, colonialism, gender, politics and language”. The theory challenges the perceptions and re- invents the modes of thinking, the modes of viewing and being viewed and resultantly, “is forging new cultural identities” (Ashcroft et.al. p.1)

As a critical theory, post- colonialism offers an illustration to the praxis and ideology of neocolonialism. It draws its examples from a large number of disciplines; questions and destabilizes the established social, philosophical and economic theories; that advocate imperial ideology. It also invites the colonized to speak for themselves in their own language and produce cultural discourses which may balance the (Us vs. Them) relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. It asks for ‘contradictions’

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back* explain the major concerns – “reclaiming spaces and places, asserting cultural integrity and revising history” and characteristics – “resistant descriptions, appropriation of colonizer’s language and re working colonial art forms” of postcolonial literature. The book further, states that broadly postcolonial literature is “affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (Ashcroft et al, p. 2). Post colonialism is thus a theoretical framework in fields such as literature and cultural studies that delegate politics of resistance to the biased and unlike forms practiced during colonial era.

Dorothy Figueira, a reviewer of the article *The Profits of Post colonialism* argues Said’s essentialism and does not take by surprise Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin’s

inclusion of "all literature written in English by societies affected by colonialism" under the rubric of postcolonial literature. Along with American literature, this huge geographic zone includes Africa, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore and the South Pacific Islands. She also acknowledges that each of these areas possesses "special and distinctive regional characteristics," however, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin nevertheless focus on a common experience presumably rooted in the time when "they all emerged from the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with imperial power" . (Figueira, 2000)

Post-colonial is an umbrella term and asks for interpretations at various levels. The prefix 'post' creates great hazards when it is affixed to any theory or concept (for instance, post-structuralism, post-modernism, post-industrialism and post-feminism). It relegates the usefulness of the term to 'banal expressions'. Hence, post colonialism is preferred when written without a hyphen. It is relevant and along with its chronological significance performs some other denotational functions as Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins (1996) clarifies

The term *post-colonialism*—according to a too-rigid etymology—is frequently misunderstood as a temporal concept, meaning the time after colonialism has ceased, or the time following the politically determined Independence Day on which a country breaks away from its governance by another state. Not a naïve teleological sequence, which supersedes colonialism, *post colonialism* is, rather, an engagement with, and contestation of, colonialism's discourses, power structures, and social hierarchies. . . . A theory of post-colonialism must, then, respond to more than the merely chronological construction of post-independence, and to more than just the discursive experience of imperialism.

However, traces of postcolonial theory can be traced back in the resistive movements that carried the torch of resistance against the imperial authority. In this regard, a close look into the past informs that the fountainhead of what is called postcolonialism was formed by the major

resistant and colonial movements in countries like Egypt, Algeria, Ghana and India. The freedom and national movements under the leadership of nationalist leaders like Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian sub-continent, Frantz Fanon in Algeria and Kwame in Ghana contributed to the major ideologies of postcolonial theory. Thus anti-colonial struggles lay the foundation of postcolonial literature and later on, regional writers interpret, analyze and explain the texts produced during colonialism and established a response which is liberatory and resistive in nature.

In line with resistive movements Rajesh James in an article '*Postcolonialism*' states that Fanon's cultural nationalism and his doctrine of revolutionary violence influenced many movements across the globe. His prime focus is the social discrimination and its resultant behavior. He looks into the psychopathology of colonialism and describes the feelings of dependency and inadequacy under the white colonizers. Fanon's prime contributions are *The Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) where he describes the relation between the dominant White and the dominated Black race which resulted in psychological complexes. The racial discrimination made the local Algerians feel inferior who see salvation only in White Masks (superior culture). Adaptation of the white culture and ways of living or in Bhabha's words mimicry can rid them of their present state of desperation. (Fanon, 1952)

Unlike, Fanon, M.K Gandhi believed in 'ahimsa' (non-violent resistance movement) and won independence for his country in 1947. Besides, being a nationalist, he was also a prolific writer who provoked his countrymen against the British domination. The other nationalist leaders who waged resistance against the empire include a Cuban military theorist and revolutionary leader Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela in South Africa (Rajesh James p.2)



Mary Gilmartin and Lawrence D. Berg in an article *Locating Post colonialism* writes about the writings that emanate from these resistive and anti-colonial movements across the globe. They refer to the writings "from Fanon to Cesaire, from Senghor to Cabral to Achebe (see, for example, Fanon 1963, 1986; Senghor 1965; Cesaire 1972; Achebe 1975; Cabral 1980)". This whole bulk of work not only unmask the harsh experiences of colonial oppression, but also offers alternative visions. Gilmartin and D. Berg also find their successors in the shape of 'Marcos in Chiapas' and Arundhati Roy in India who speak for the poor, marginalized and oppressed in the modern capitalist societies.

Referring to the 'Holy Trinity' or triad of Post colonialism ( Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak) Gilmartin and D. Berg point out that " Said helped many geographers understand the relationship between colonial projects and imaginary, metaphorical and material geographies (e.g. Said 1979- 1994). Bhabha gave geographers a more nuanced understanding of the hybrid and unstable character of colonialism (e.g. Bhabha 1994). Spivak, among other things, helped some geographers to understand some of the problematic neo-colonial impulses of postcolonial theory (Spivak 1988). " In addition, the article " points to the limited ways in which many (but not all) British geographers have appropriated postcolonial theory in the construction of 'postcolonial geographies' and suggest that " there is a significant difference to be found between 'anti colonial' and 'postcolonial' geographies." (Gilmartin and D.Berg, 2007, p. 121)

## **Orientalism**

Orientalism is a designed colonial discourse strategy through which the West or the imperial powers have tried to create a difference between the Western *Self* and its Eastern *Other*. The debates on the unequal relations between East and West gained momentum after the publication of Edward Said's most influential book *Orientalism* (1978). The book sparked newer debates around the world and is widely used as a reference point, to examine western's construction of the orient in ways that show western superiority over its '*Other*'. Said views Orientalism "as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient". It offers analysis of the deliberate construction of the orient to dominate the third world. Said asserts "Indeed, my real argument is that Orientalism has less to do with the Orient than it does with 'our' world."(Said, 1978)

In making this argument Said puts forward that the orient is a deliberate construction intended to define the Western *self*. The West declares itself the centre whereas; the East or Orient is its periphery. Both are separate entities and are different politically, economically as well as linguistically. It also shows the prejudices and oppression of the dominant over the weak i.e. the East. Over a period of four hundred years the westerners developed an image of the orient as stupid and lazy on the one hand and on the other they found it mysterious and attractive because of its being away from the centre. Said further argues that Orientalism in its true sense is a western episteme which has worked as an essential part of Western colonialist ideology. (Said, 1978)

Said further illustrates that "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and the Occident". Both are distinct

entities and the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony. (Said, 1978, P 2).

Orientalism divides the globe into two different halves i.e. West and East. It is purely a western discourse that displays western material and moral superiority. The East in western imagination is constructed as lesser, barbaric, uncivilized, and unworthy of running the affairs of the nation state. On the contrary, the western hemisphere is materially and technologically developed, civilized and cultured. The west is presented as a superior model that justifies its interventions in the irrational and less civilized regions of the world. In this regard Said makes a distinction between the actual and constructed orient. In Said's analysis the orient is deprived, childlike; irrational which paved way for the superior west's identity i.e. virtuous, advanced, civilized and normal. He also attributes such constructions and manipulations to the west's "knowledge of the orient generated out of strength, in a sense creates the orient, the oriental, and his world" (Said, 1978, p.40)

The essence of Said's argument is that Orient is not a natural creation but is rather constructed and orientalized. It is a human construction that divides the orient and occident into two different geographical zones. Through such reproductions of the lesser orient the powerful west has tried to justify its colonial practices in alien lands. The dominant cultures kept on capturing and usurping the poor countries. In this regard, the oriental discourse is employed in which the third worldians are labeled as others, niggers, lethargic and short stature. (Said, 1975 p.5)

The relation between the West and East is looked at in terms of power. The west is materially, technologically and politically advanced. The west witnessed the enlightenment era

and the industrial revolution. On the contrary, East mostly, remains in darkness. Said also explains this relation in the following words. "They are the people of knowledge and power" (Said, 1978, p.5). The Europeans deem India as a dark land 'since long a place of romance, alien beings, imaginative memories and landmarks' (Said, 1978, p.1)

Michael Pickering, a senior lecturer in media studies, examines the dynamics of such representations in the British colonial texts. He studies the constant stereotyping of the racially backward societies. In this regard, his description illustrates the East/West contrast in the following lines.

Western societies classifying themselves as modern and civilized relied heavily on the contrast between their own sense of advancement and the idea of racially backward and imperior societies. Those who were conceived as inferior in this way become inferior to national identity in the West by becoming its other and its decivilized counterpart (Pickering, 2001, p. P.51)

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Pickering notion advocates Said's Orientalism which is prejudiced and biased and manifests itself in academic sources like art and literature. Said in his third qualification of Orientalism asserts that "the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies and myths" that construct truth about the orient. He believes that "Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient"

Said presents exhaustive history of Orientalist traditions under French and British imperialism and concludes American Orientalism which is seen as a means to pave the American way for military aggression in Arab world. In recent American Orientalism the Arab Muslims are represented as either potential terrorists or oil suppliers. In the otherwise American free press the news about Muslims are fabricated. The media reports hardly represent the human density and passion of Arab Muslim world. "What we have instead is a series of crude, essentialized

caricatures of the Islamic world presented in such a way as to make that world vulnerable to military aggression". (Said, 1980)

Orientalism is political in nature and is construed as means to dominate and occupy the foreign lands. Said demonstrates how objective scholarship is applied to cover American military interventions. When the imperial powers have political, economic and military interests in foreign lands they resort to this notion of objective scholarship. A sense of urgency is passed on in to the civil societies which Said deems as "a direct political infusion". Said refers to Noam Chomsky's examination of the "instrumental connection between the Vietnam War and the notion of objective scholarship as it was applied to cover state-sponsored military research". (Said, 1978)

Said's Orientalism ties cultural and political positions in a complex manner that makes it difficult to derive any precise definition. However, Tony Schirato in his cultural study *The Narrative of Orientalism* cites the American anthropologist James Clifford who has identified three "loose meanings of Orientalism". Firstly, that the orient in western intellectual tradition is always constructed as *other* which helps to define and recognize the western self. Secondly, the orient is explained in various cultural institutions such as texts and knowledge. Thirdly, these cultural institutions display the west as informed, knowledgeable and powerful. Fourthly, this natural position of the west as dominant, powerful and authoritative justifies its stance for violent cultural and political practices. We have here a relationship between discursive Orientalism and new American imperialism. Said argues, it is difficult to make any essential distinction between the neutral apolitical and cultural products and the recognizable political practices (policing, invasion, usurpation). (Clifford, 1988:259)

Tony Schirato applies Said work to two examples of 'western' popular culture and attempts to produce, represent and explain the *orient* and *Orientalists* in western discursive reproductions and produces a kind of narrative of Orientalism. He uses two films as exemplification: *Gunga Din* and *Blood Oath* as classic examples to highlight overt Orientalism in western discourses.

*Gunga Din* is a film about British Raj in which 'Indian as child and as animal/monster' is portrayed. The character of Din stands for an ideal Indian native. His character is constructed negatively and is described as a 'dark and exotic Indian slave'. Furthermore, he is "very short, weak of build and prone to breaking of exaggerated smiles". He cannot speak until 'activated' by a British officer. The film also marks Indians as "mindlessly violent and threatening". So, overall the film expresses a kind of "natural" superiority of 'adult' British culture over an 'undeveloped' and childlike Indian culture"

*The Blood Oath* introduces Orientalism in another form. It shows the relations between the superior west and less cultured Japan. Here, unlike *Ganga Din* which presents superiority of western soul over oriental mind it reflects the moral superiority of western culture.( in the form institutions such as Christianity and democracy). It is a new kind of Orientalist myth appropriated to maintain western hegemony and contemporary imperialism. (Schirato, 1994)

Gina Marchetti in her thorough analysis of American *Orientalism* compares the common points between the two books *Cold War Orientalism* and *Embracing the East* and provides different insights in to American Cultural and Political Orientalism. Both books re work Said's concept of Orientalism and fits it in the American context. Both books contribute significantly to current scholarship on relations between US and Asia. Christina Klean in the *Cold War*

*Orientalism* uncovers the phenomenon of free world. She examines US foreign policy of suppression in foreign lands. It arouses large scale hatred in the developing countries and is looked up on as a usurper of the third world countries. She exposes patterns

“in which the figures of the jungle doctor, tourist, and adoptive white mother come into play as ambassadors of a U.S. foreign policy that welcomes the pre modern, underdeveloped, ailing, exotic, and orphaned people of Asia into the “free world.” To achieve this end, these multifarious cultural products argue against racism and for civil rights at home and for an American sense of “responsibility” toward its Asian allies abroad.” (Marchetti, May, 2004)

Klein analysis also illustrates the ways in which American cold war rhetoric has served in making of a ‘new world order’ through the process of corporate globalization. She sees that American dream is turning in to a reality by observing the fast expansion of American markets in Asia and China’s entrance in to free market. (Marchetti, May, 2004)

## **Occidentalism**

Occidentalism is the counter-concept or counter-discourse of Orientalism in which the West or Western subjects/citizens are represented and dehumanized by the scholars particularly from the Eastern academy. The term Occidentalism was first introduced by James G. Carrier in his book *Occidentalism: Images of the West*. Occidentalism may be considered a reaction against Western dominance at the global level or its territorial and structural exploitation of the East. Just as the Orientalist view of the world is not innocent, the Occidentalist view is also informed by prejudices, generalizations, and stereotypes.

So much has been written about Occidentalism however, the term Occidentalism was first introduced by James G. Carrier in his book, *Occidentalism: Images of the West* (1995)

where he unveils and highlights the anti-European intelligentsia attitude on the intellectual front. Another grandly illuminating study of anti-Western ideas was carried out by Buruma and Margalit in their book *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of its Enemies*. (2004) Buruma and Margalit contend that the hostility of Islamic jihadists toward the United States is but the most recent manifestation of a long-running, worldwide reaction to the rise of Western modernity. They call the cluster of prejudices and unflattering images of the West conjured by its enemies "Occidentalism", a phenomenon that originated within the West itself in the late eighteenth century and only later spread to the Middle East, Asia, and beyond. German romantics, reacting to the Enlightenment and the rise of capitalism, expressed it in their rejection of a coldly rational Europe—a "machinecivilization," manifest in imperialism, urbanism, and cosmopolitanism. From there, similar themes appear in Occidentalism's other variants: the sinfulness and rootlessness of urban life; the corruption of the human spirit in a materialistic, market-driven society; the loss of organic community; the glory of heroic self-sacrifice in overcoming the timidity of bourgeois life. Western liberalism is a threat to religious fundamentalists, priest-kings, and radical collectivists alike—because it deflates the pretensions of their own brand of heroic utopianism. Ultimately, the picture that emerges is not of a clash of civilizations but of deeply rooted tensions that ebb and flow within and across civilizations, religions, and cultures. What the West can do about Occidentalism, however, is less clear.

In the world of academe, the notion of Occidentalism emerges from Said's seminal study on Orientalism; however, this area is comparatively less investigated and researched. Although the Occidentalism phenomenon is less popular in the academe, even then its definitions do exist and vary. A Syrian scholar, Sadik Jalal Al-Azam, called it "Orientalism in reverse" when he investigated the topic in 1981. Later on, in the nineties, the phenomenon emerged in the field of



anthropology. In his 1995 book on the topic, James Carrier defines Occidentalism as “essentializing simplifications of the West” that may not be potentially voluntary. Scholars approach Carrier’s definition of the topic in various ways: According to Baruma and Margalit these essentializations are “hateful caricatures” portraying resentment with the West. To Chen these essential simplifications of the west are the appropriation of the west. Moreover, disagreement about the genesis of Occidentalism do exists. For many like Carrier Occidentalism constructions of the west is made both within and outside the west but finds its roots in Western Orientalism. For others, like Alastair Bonnet Occidentalism discourses are purely non- western representations of the west. Most scholars link Occidentalism and Orientalism. However, the phenomenon is relatively recent and remains without an agreed definition and theory that may map these definitions (Wagner 146).” (Leservot, Winter 2011, pp. 115-130 ).

Citing Djbar’s traditional postcolonial perspective on western media Typhaine Leservot remarks that how western media influence, mould and control psyches not only at home but also abroad. Djbar criticizes the role of western media that invent lies and then rationalize the same to the people at home. She further, paints western media in the following lines taken from her 1999 collection of essays: “In her 1999 collection of essays *Ces Voisins qui assiègent* Djbar sharply criticizes western media, accusing them of brainwashing “her people” and destroying “third world” cultures:” (Leservot, Winter 2011, pp. 115-130 )

Reference is also made to the Iranian writer Jalal Al –e Ahmad’s *Occidentosis: A Plague from the West* which is a critique on Iran’s intoxication with the west. He laments over the process of westernization in Iran. He uses a pejorative term “gharbzadgi” meaning “westoxication” to describe the ways in which Iranian society and culture went through under Shah’s regime. However, the article shows that Occidentalism in Iran was never essentialized

and basis on its relation with the west. References that present both positive and negative images of the West can be found in Persian literature. (Leservot, Winter 2011, pp. 115-130 ).

Marianna Torgovnick in her book, *Gone primitive* (1990) examines that how the ideas of the primitive are structured in various western texts. She creates the dichotomy between the traditional, primitive and the modern and technologically advanced societies. She includes two photographs i.e. (figure 1.6, p. 39) and (figure 3.2, p. 80). In the first one a woman with bare breasts is shown against a background of mud huts. The woman is also shown as wearing a cassette head phone and a cross. Furthermore, the image is surrounded by a number of scattered pots in her conventional village. In the second photograph a young dark colored women is shown. She is decorated with flowers, banners and her necklace is made of large size flash bulbs. (Errington, 1991)

Torgovnick's makes a similar point, and views the construction and manipulation of the primitive a strategy to espouse western male control of themselves and dominance over the defined and less developed *other* mainly women and non-western people. (Errington, 1991)

An American Indologist Ainslie T. Embree reviews Partha Mitter work *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850-1922: Occidental Orientations*. He treats Occidental influences on art and literature in India. He tries to seek the infusion of western naturalism into local Indian art. Local artists employed a variety of local themes with western stylistic devices. The review work also asserts that Occidentalism implies 'an interest in western art'. This academic naturalism's obvious influence is seen in hoardings, advertisements, Indian movies among other. (Embree, 1996).

Alastair Bonnet in his paper draws up on the work of two non-western interpreters of the West—Japanese nationalist Fukuzawa Yukichi (1834-1901) and Indian spiritual poet Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and illustrates the essentiality of western stereotypes.

Occidentalism is the construction of a West through which the Orient identifies itself as its binary opposite. Occidentalism can assist resistance narratives against Western intervention. The Egyptian philosopher Hassan Hanafi goes as far as to call for a science of Occidentalism (istighrab) which would serve as “a discipline constituted in Third World countries in order to complete the process of decolonization” where the objective is to frame the West in “order to enable a clearer sense of an independent Islamic (more specifically, Arab Muslim) sense of self”. (Bonnet, February, 2006) (Cited in Christopher Sims Occidentalism at war)

Bonnet reverses Said’s definition of Orientalism and asserts that Occidentalism may be used as a strategy to justify resistance movements against western imperialism. Hassan Hanafi call for a ‘science of Occidentalism’ in the third world Muslim countries also bears significance. In this regard, we see that Eastern or non-European interpretations of the west are not new. It is represented as an outside other in Russia, Middle East, Asia for centuries. Contemporarily, the Al-Qaida use similar rhetoric against the west and its allies to justify its resistance. The Al-Qaida Ideologues through its resistive rhetoric frame the west as an aggressor and Muslim Umma as victim. It creates an un- Islamic other. (Sims)

Chen informs about Chinese Occidentalism which divides the discourse of Occidentalism into official and non-official. The former implies nationalism that essentializes the west in order to suppress people at home. Here, the western other is construed in Chinese imagination not for the purpose of domination but in order to dominate ‘the Chinese self at home’. The later (non-official Occidentalism) can be understood as “using the Western Other as a powerful metaphor for a political liberation against ideological oppression within a totalitarian society”.

She includes examples such as: Moa Zedong's three world theory, Lin Biao's essay "Long Live the Victory of People's War and Mao' theory of subaltern representation to explain official Occidentalism. In the construction of anti – official Occidentalism under official ideology she includes the television program *He Shang*, the characterization of Liu Zaifu and the subject poetry and drama. (Tian, Spring 1997)

Sadik J. Al-Azm in his article *Orientalism, Occidentalism, and Islamism* provides clearer insights in to the various varieties of Occidentalism. In the first place, he presents his analysis of mild Occidentalism in Adonis's "Manifesto of Modernity" (1980). Adonis differentiates between the western mind as 'technicism' working on a pre - given plan, and eastern mind as creative (ibda) that creates something out of nothing. Al-Azm next touches upon vulgar and Talibanish variety of Occidentalism which glorifies illiteracy, backwardness, primitiveness, brutality and superstitions and defends them as true to Muslim community. He also discusses Buruma and Margalit imagery of Occidentalism who finds its very roots and germs in the occident itself. His paper further contains Baudrillard's superannuated Occidentalism in which he differentiates between the victims and attackers of the September 11 attacks. He calls the former as part of "an employment contract" and celebrates the latter as part of "pact and a sacrificial obligation". Lastly, the benign variety of Occidentalism is found in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* and Salman Rushdi's *Satanic Verses*. This kind of popular Occidentalism reinforces shaken identities and promotes self assertion and self esteem. (Al-Azm, 2010)

In fact, Orientalism and Occidentalism have been employed as discourse strategies to dominate or resist domination respectively. In addition, both discourses have been (mis) used to justify colonial actions and reactions. This comprehensive review of literature provides useful insights which might prove helpful for the analysis chapter. Keeping in view, the reviewed

literature the researcher hopes that this research work would give newer perspectives to the study of post-colonialism. Unlike Said's orient with peculiar characteristics such as irrational, cruel, un-civilized and barbarian the *orient* in the present study is the victim of western imperialism. He is not supposed to be civilized. Instead he needs to rise against the suppression of western colonial practices. On the other hand, Occidentalism constructions expose the destruction brought up on the poor countries of the world due to the practices of new American imperialism. It might also be taken as a resistance strategy against the west. Roy's orient and occident would add newer perspective to the study of Orientalism and Occidentalism in the already existing bulk of knowledge on post-colonialism.

### Chapter: 3

#### Orientalism in *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2004)

It is my intention in this chapter to show Arundhati Roy's construction of the Orient. With this in view, my task in this chapter is to develop meta-text alongside the original text. To avoid the possibility of misinterpretation, I must explain that by Orientalism I mean writer's construction of Indians (People and society) in particular, and other third world countries in general. Consequently, it may assist in finding out the strategic location of the author in the text. Overall, it serves as a guide to view the various markers that stereotype India in certain ways. Said's Orientalism is used as a lens to analyze Roy's construction of the orient.

Said's Orientalism is both daunting and challenging. It offers ways for analysis of political and cultural studies. It has rapidly grown in to a practical "field" incorporating complex areas of Foucauldian theories of power, psychoanalysis, post-colonial criticism and new – Marxism. Why do we analyze a culture? What outcomes do we get from such analysis? A very useful response to such questions comes from Tony Bonnet who sees cultural studies "a term of convenience for a fairly dispersed array of theoretical and political positions".(Grossberg et al.,1992.3) and claims " commitment to examining cultural practices from the point of view of their interaction with, and within, relations of power" .(Grossberg et al.,1992.3) cited in (Schirato, 1994). Said's Orientalism used here as a lens, to view Roy's work which consistently demonstrates power and its relation with and within public, cultural, religious and political premises. The inside of her work includes her practical experiences of nationhood and

nationalism, identity politics, fanaticism, neo- colonialism, free market, globalization, and democracy.

In the analysis of Roy's construction of the orient, I would like to focus on just one of the categories of political and cultural studies – Said's notions of what is called 'Orientalism (Said, 1978). I have also tried to demonstrate the usefulness of the work in the analysis of Roy's non-fiction. How does she attempt to construct and explain the Orient and Orientals? The work under scrutiny is *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2004). My purpose is to demonstrate Roy's treatment of the orient in relation to contemporary US imperialism.

Said's Orientalism ties cultural and political positions in a complex manner that makes it difficult to derive any precise definition. However, Tony Schirato in his cultural study *The Narrative of Orientalism* cites the American anthropologist James Clifford who has identified three "loose meanings of Orientalism".

First, Orientalism is what Orientalists do and have done. An Orientalist is 'anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient... either in its specific or its general aspects'. Included in this group are academics and government experts: philologists, sociologists, historians, and anthropologists. Second, Orientalism is a 'style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident" '. Any writing, Said goes on to suggest, at any period in the history of the Occident that accepts as its starting point a basic dichotomy between East and West and that makes essentialist statements about 'the Orient, its people, customs, "mind", destiny and so on' is Orientalist. Finally, Orientalism is a 'corporate institution for dealing with the Orient', which, during the colonial period following roughly the late eighteenth century wields the power of 'dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient'. (Clifford, 1988:259)

In order to produce what may be called a 'Narrative of Orientalism' I extract a number of points from Clifford's summary. Firstly, that the orient in western intellectual tradition is

always constructed as *other* which helps to define and recognize the western *self*. Secondly, orient is explained in various cultural institutions such as texts and knowledge. Thirdly, these cultural institutions display the west as informed, knowledgeable and powerful. Fourthly, this natural position of the west as dominant, powerful and authoritative justifies its stance for violent cultural and political practices. We have here a relationship between discursive Orientalism and new American imperialism. Said argues, it is difficult to make any essential distinction between the neutral apolitical and cultural products and the recognizable political practices (policing, invasion, usurpation).

I shall try to build my analysis around these four points. Firstly, with regard to, the construction of the orient as the western *other* Said argues, "the Orient has helped to define Europe as its contrasting idea, personality, experience" (Said, 1985:2). This point bears validity keeping in view the contemporary American developments and interventions across the globe.

A group's identity is always constructed in terms of what the dominant group is opposed to. In other words, what it is not. Factors, such as violence, murdering and aggression are associated with the oriental *other*. Orient with such attributes has long played part of the western *other* throughout colonial history. We find examples in 16 century Europe's orientalizing of Turks; and the Australian reproduction of the Communist China in 1950's. The orient in western discourse is characterized as lazy, sexually depraved, untrustworthy and barbaric which directly guarantee the superiority of western values. Through such oriental myths the west has been able to justify and legitimize aggressions of all kinds – political, military and economic.

Said argues, that occident and orient are the two unequal halves of the planet. So the powerful western subject is not only different in terms of color but also in terms of politics,



government, and religion above all culture. In the Asian sub-continent the Muslims and Hindus are read as superstitious, fanatical, irrational, and cruel while the west is read as rational, sensitive, and thoughtful. Said further says that this basic construction of the west/orient is institutionalized in western civilization. He writes that the 'Orient'

"is an integral part of European material civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles." (Said, 1985:2)

So, Said, declares this process responsible for the representation of west/orient construction and values such as positive/negative are attached to it. The west invests resources and acquires knowledge about institutions, religions, and customs and then tells stories about the oriental object (dramas, novels, prose, scientific treaties etc). Again, Said asserts, "Continued investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into western consciousness" (Said, 1985:6).

Orientalist discourse is employed as a means through which violence against any group is perpetrated not only in terms of authorization but also political practices. Kipling's White man's burden is an apt example. British travelers of the 19 and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, colonial administrators, novelists provide numerous examples of the orient construction – mysterious, exotic, lazy, and godless. The orient cannot represent its own self but is subject to the explanation of the western authority. This point stands central to the study of every Orientalist discourse and practice.

Here, I firstly demonstrate Said's thesis to show Roy's representation of the powerless (in this case the orient) and secondly go beyond and suggest what kind of Orientalism is practiced in Roy's non-fiction. I have selected two of her non-fiction *The Algebra of infinite justice* published in 2001 and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* published in 2004 as examples of what might be called Orientalism. Both books comprise essays that demonstrate the relationship of power structures and the existing dystopian conditions in the poor third world. Notions of identity are constructed in terms of binaries which are hierarchal in nature (powerful/powerless, wealthy/poor, technical /corrupt).

The notions of poverty operate in most of her essays. India is constructed as a poor state where the poor citizens die of starvation. They lack basic health facilities and "most of them are not serviced by municipal facilities – no electricity, no water no sewage system". (P.206) In Delhi which is the very heart of India "about 50,000 people are homeless and sleep on the street".(P.206) The sad story is further intensified with descriptions such as in India, "hundreds of millions of Indian citizens live below the poverty line and do not have the means to eat a square meal a day. Starvation deaths are being reported from several parts of the country" (P.201) and 400 million Indians are 'illiterate and live in absolute poverty'. (P.26)

Here, India is constructed in a fashion that is usually true to western discourse. Unlike, the oriental India, the west is materially prosperous and technologically advanced. It is licensed to carry out its civilizing mission in the name of development and progress project. In fact, Roy's essays concern criticism of the globalization and its devastating impact up on the poor countries. In this process, India is depicted as still living under the Raj. The west/orient is complemented by powerful western structures/poverty in India. There are numerous examples that depict India, a state drenched in absolute poverty.

She constructs India as less civilized and a country with poor health hygiene. For instance, unlike the westerns “we don’t mind the odd mosquito- bite or the occasional weevil” (P.203). So, Indian people are orientalized here as *childish* to be more precise the western *object*. By this description the western is constructed as more civilized and informed subject. She seems to apply certain codes of civility or she might have certain covert ambitions by highlighting such miserable life conditions in India. The western food habits are valued positive whereas the Indians’ are characterized with negative habits.

There are other markings that show lack of civility on part of the orient. Like members of an informal society the poor and displaced Indians shit on the railway tracks and public places. Roy notes, “In Delhi, they run the risk of being shot by the police for shitting in public places.(P.63). Roy also mirrors Indian police as corrupt and brutal – other attributes of the typical orient. She labels the Indian police as greedy and gluttonous. She notes that the illegal slums dwellers in Delhi are illegal so, “they become easy meat for the rapacious bribe seeking police and predatory government officials. (Roy, 2001, P.206)

So, high intensity words such as absolute poverty, starvation deaths, and homelessness, illiteracy, shitting in public places and eating of “odd mosquito- bite or the occasional weevil” paint the oriental India in dark colors. Certainly, she constructs India as materially poor and uncivilized *other* of the materially prosperous and technologically advanced west. India neither under British colonization nor under the government of indigenous people succeeds to bring any significant changes in to the lives of the common public. Only “Conqueror has succeeded conqueror; one domination has followed another” (Said p.33). The poor are further, marginalized and driven in to the corners.

It is also significant to cite Said's preference to view text in to context. So, viewing Roy's text in the Orientalist context seems to approve her case as an Orientalist. She depicts India as inferior and poverty stricken country. She also attaches other off shoots to poverty. The most common of them are corruption, lack of manners, blind nationalism and fanaticism. Among them the last point brings us to another binary fascism/rationalism in Roy's work.

Irrationality, cruelty, fanaticism and superstitions are other essential characteristics of the orient whereas; the westerners are reasonable, thoughtful and sensitive. Said argues, that such labels are institutionalized and deemed as an integral part of western material civilization. Roy's picture of India is replete with instances of Hindu fascism and its lack of respect for other minorities notably, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Dalits and Adivasees. Church burning, mosque breaking and collective murders are common episodes of Hindu Fascism. Roy notes, that "Fascism's firm footprint has appeared in India". (P.283). and it is not only operated within general public but also activated and fully supported at government level. Roy illustrates, this fact when she describes that "fascism is indeed as much about people as about governments". (P.283). Such description informs that politics in India is imbued in religious and political nationalism. The military wings of political parties spread hatred, violence and are used under 'as and when needed policy'. To take a clearer view of Hindu Fascism I quote the following description in full.

"hundreds of RSS Shakhas and Saraswati Shishu mandir across the country have been indoctrinating thousands of children and young people, stunting their minds with religious hatred and falsified history, including unfactual or wildly exaggerated accounts of the rape and pillaging of Hindu women and Hindu temples by Muslim rulers in the pre colonial period. They are no different and no less dangerous than Madrassas all over Pakistan and Afghanistan which spawned the Taliban" (P.283)

In fact, she covers the whole of sub-continent in such a way that shows it the western other. The contemporary US Empire is in the process of expansionism and use rhetoric that justifies its motives in heading towards what might be called the new world order. It has already declared Afghanistan and the tribal areas of Pakistan as 'safe heavens' for the terrorists. Religious extremism leads to terrorism and hence authorizes the current US war on terror. The US considers religious extremism as a threat to the world peace and first bombed Afghanistan in 2001 and now civilizing the uncivilized in the tribal areas of Pakistan. Here, she depicts the whole of Asia as a terrorist's factory. She also exposes the way it is indoctrinated in to the minds of young children and people. With a nuance Indian fascism is, directed at minorities specifically Muslims yet, its history is filled with pogroms of every kind ". directed at castes, tribes, religious faiths" (P.275) Here, in India, Roy describes "we subsist on a regular diet of caste massacre, mosque breaking, church burning, female infanticide and the Nasdaq crash and husbands who continue to burn their wives for dowery".(P.188) Certainly, expressions such as these depict oriental qualities such as fanaticism, irrationality, cruelty and barbarity. In a systematic and deliberate attack on the economic hub of Muslim Community in Gujrat "the Hindu nationals were armed with "petrol bombs, guns, knives, swords and tridents" P.269 they looted and destroyed Muslim homes, shops and business".

The point Roy makes here is that unlike Islamic extremism she confines Indian fascism to India. It is a black spot on the otherwise secular face of India. She depicts India as a fascist country where only those who advocate the 'Hindvata Project' dominate the various spheres of life. "It is about the slow erosion of civil liberties, about unspectacular day to day injustices". (P.286). Such descriptions might make India open to western interventions the way US media has made the Islamic world vulnerable to American military interventions. Said illustrates the

western media reports in which “what we have is a series of crude, essentialized caricatures of the Islamic world in such a way as to make that world vulnerable to military aggression. (Said 1980)

Another important point to make here is that in India fascism and nationalism (here it means Hindu Nationalism) work in synergy. Unlike other post-colonial writers Roy’s work offers a scathing criticism of implanted psyche at home. She describes ‘Hindu Nationalism’ as a threat to other races and faiths. She differentiates between Indian nationalism and Hindu nationalism and in India “nationalism has come to mean Hindu nationalism which defines itself not through a respect or a regard but through a hatred of the other. It is disturbing to see how neatly nationalism dovetails into fascism.” (P.286)

Roy’s work reveal that how general psyches are locked in to fascism and nationalism across both sides of the border. “India is the bomb. Not just India Hindu India. Therefore be warned any criticism of it is not just anti-national, but anti Hindu. (Of course in Pakistan the bomb is Islamic)” (P.138)

People both in India and Pakistan are the victim of religious fundamentalism – a factor peculiar to the irrational and emotional orient. The narratives of religion and nationalism occupy the general psyche. Hundreds of military and religious organizations recruit ordinary people who fight for the sake of religion and country. This hatred of an inside other has played havoc with the oriental societies. The contemporary terrorism, bomb blasts, suicide bombers, self blowing are common to the sub- continental societies which constitute the irrational and barbaric orient.

RSS (Rashtria Swayam Sewak) in India is a right wing Hindu guild that openly admires Hitler and his methods. They retrieve Hindu Nation’s lost identity through and by “amassing

nuclear weapons, religious bigotry, misogyny, homophobia, book burning and outright hatred” (P.187) So, what can be inferred, is the inferiority of Indian culture, which in turn guarantee the superiority of the dominant culture. Deadly and fanatical cruelty leads to barbarity – an essential feature of Oriental societies.

Roy also reproduces Indian culture as lesser. In fact, culture may entail social behavior, customs, language and other manifestations of a community. Arundhati Roy reflects the inclination of Indian culture towards British Culture. This fact is illustrated when she refers to a Call Centre College in Delhi where, “hundreds of young English speaking Indians are being groomed to man the backroom operations of giant transnational companies”(P.181). They are trained to speak in British and American accents. To have day to day knowledge they are advised to read newspapers so to start chitchat about routine matters. They perform their duties under false names. “Sushma becomes Susie, Govind becomes Jerry, Advani becomes Andy”. So, this multi-dollar industry is built on bedrock of lies, false identities and racism.” (P.182) So what is expressed in this process of “westoxication” of Indian society she ensures the superiority of western culture over the lesser undeveloped Indian culture. We get here that how the Indians use British culture willingly which further perpetuate the western imperialism.

These markers set out the possibility of Indian stereotypes in the western Orientalist discourse. Roy’s discourse like Orientalist discourse reproduces Indians as poor, fanatic, uncivilized, mindlessly violent, and threatening. With this Roy’s non- fiction displays that under such markers Indians can be read as Orients and India an Oriental society.

So, in this analysis I make the point that in one sense Roy’s non-fiction can be labeled as an Orientalist text because it constructs the orient in ways peculiar to western discourse. In the

second place, as Said claims Orientalism as a corporate institution for dealing with the orient by making statements or describing it. However, my point on the contrary is that she describes the Indian orient with a different intent. She does not construct to show the supposed western superiority or inferiority of the orient. Rather, she displays it as the victim of western powers. In short, Roy's orient is subject to the "paranoia and ruthlessness of power" (P.14) so, the orient that she constructs is subject to this exercise of power. Western superiority is shown as tricky as it plays by civilized rules. It usurps and exploits the already tainted and marginalized through the modernization projects of progress and development.

It is also important to note that Roy's orient differs from that of Said. Said argues that "because of Orientalism the orient was not and is not a free subject of thought or action" (Said 1985.3) what Said emphasize here is the fact that the western powers constructed Orient in such ways that legalized and justified the empire interventions. On the contrary, Roy urges the orient to whisper, to resist, to take action, to speak about "real things – about bonded labor, marital rape, sexual preferences, women wages, uranium dumping, weaver's woes, and farmers' worries. (P.286)



## Chapter: 4

### Occidentalism in *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2004)

*The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* (2004) are the two books in question for the analysis of my second argument i.e. Roy's construction of the *Occident*. In this chapter I have textually analyzed Arundhati Roy's Occidental constructions. An attempt is also made to go beyond the representation of the occident and see the usefulness of Occidentalism as theory of resistance. . Both books facilitate exposition to what Roy herself describes as "The theme of much what I write, fiction as well as non-fiction, is the relationship between power and powerlessness and the endless, circular conflict they're engaged in." (Roy, 2004, P.13). By stating the purpose of her writings, she sets out the binary powerful/powerless which literally serves as a starting point to analyze my second research question i.e. How does Arundhati Roy construct the *Occident* in her non-fiction? Parallel to it, an attempt is made to find out answer to question i.e. whether, it is justifiable to hold the West, responsible for the backwardness of the third world? This kind of analysis also helps in understanding the political and cultural ramifications of Roy's representations which further add to the already vast realm of post -colonialism.

One of the key arguments in Said's introduction to the historical debate about Western identity as opposed to its Eastern *other* is that "in order to know who I am, I must know what I am not". This argument clearly creates imbalance between the Western and Eastern cultures in which the former predominates the latter. This white/black dichotomy and the supposed Eastern

inferiority do not produce any vibrant discourses between the two civilizations. Instead, it creates a biased debate in which the East reacts to the Orientalist discourses.

The East's reaction and notions of the West leads to a debate on what we might call Occidentalism – a term open to multiple interpretations. One of its most problematic interpretations comes from Buruma and Magalit who in *Occidentalism: A short history of Anti Westernism* (2004) defines it as “the dehumanizing picture of the west painted by its enemies”. Occidentalism is a counter discourse which represents anti-western notions of the East. Occidental discourse is developed during decolonization era and a number of groups such as: fundamentalists, nationalists, and Islamic jihadists contribute to the notions of Occidentalism. All these factions oppose western culture and de-legitimize it as “a poisonous materialist civilization”. Occidentalism is also employed as a strategy to assist resistance narratives against the west.

It is my objective in this part to show Arundhati Roy's construction of the *Occident*. With this in view, my task in this chapter is to develop meta-text alongside the selected passages. To avoid the possibility of misinterpretation, I deem it necessary to explain that by ‘Occident’ I mean writer's construction of contemporary US neo-colonialism in particular and other first world countries in general. This reproduction of the first world might help a great deal in finding out the strategic location of the author. To begin with, the titles of the books “*An ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*” and “*The Algebra of infinite Justice*” suggest deeper meanings. The former implies an understanding to the notions of imperial hegemony and is very much in connection with the chapter under scrutiny. How an empire, in this case, The United States of America maintains its (in) direct control of the world. She recounts US military and political interventions in Afghanistan, Iraq, Vietnam, and Pakistan among many. In addition, she

deconstructs neo-colonial structures such as western liberal democracy, corporate globalization, Free Trade, the new economic world order, secular fanaticism and other modernization projects. She also unmasks US Orientalism and media discourse employed to legalize its military aggressions in Muslim world. And the later title, seconds the first one. It illustrates the imperial algebra of infinite justice. 'Infinite justice' was a name given to Afghan operation in which the powerful country of the world bombed and reduced the poorest Afghan land in to smaller dusts. It is a hollow word employed to deny all kinds of legal procedures. So, my whole point here to say is that Roy is employing what a Syrian scholar Sadik Jalal Al Azam once called 'Orientalism in reverse'. She adopts an anti-power position and exposes the various geo-political practices of the powerful first world. In fact, she exposes the "paranoia and ruthlessness of power". (P14) and is reluctant to believe in "the politics of governance but the politics of resistance." (P.214) Roy's anti-war position brings her to the camp of Edward Said and US anti-war critic Noam Chomsky. Said provides intellectual insights to the ways and procedures the *orient* is constructed throughout colonial history and leads to the assumption that the west is always represented as the leading domain in the contest. Chomsky furnishes us with detail of US interventions and excesses across the globe.

An important point to make is that Roy does not show any ambivalence towards the contemporary US imperialism. She applies cautions and criticizes western materialism, expansionism and its illegal occupation of resources in the poor countries of the world. In this regard, she provides a historical review of western colonialism. She writes "These are people whose histories are spongy with the blood of others. Colonialism, apartheid, slavery, ethnic cleansing, germ warfare, and chemical weapons – they virtually invented it all. They have plundered nations, snuffed our civilization, and exterminated entire population." P.24

In fact, she identifies the west with qualities that not only define its *other* but also present *other* as the victim of imperial practices. The west always viewed itself as the center of power and justified its cruel and unjust political and cultural practices in the oriental world. We have here the relationship between the powerful and powerless. Said's argument that "the Orient has helped to define Europe as its contrasting idea, personality, experience" (Said, 1985:2) seems valid here but by applying reverse engineering Roy defines the occident as *other*. Importantly, Roy's focus is not to justify the west in its ends. She exposes the repercussions of western political, economic and cultural practices. She turns the table, and portrays the west (*Occident*) as cruel, barbarian, racist and a source of trouble for non-western civilizations. Buruma and Margalit contend such constructions a hostile reaction to the rise of western modernity. In their book *Occidentalism: Images of the west* (2004) they conclude that such cluster of images conjured by the non-westerners is a manifestation of Occidentalism. Certainly, Roy informs about "the endless circular conflict" that the poor third world and the powerful first world are engaged in. Moreover, descriptions such as these are also in line with Said's assertion who in his most referred *Orientalism* (1978) argues "the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said, 1978 p.6).

In this relation of complex hegemony Roy maintains that since the occident has more powers, more wealth so it is licensed to kill, colonize, enslave – in short, do whatever it wants to do. This brutality garbed as western civility has lead to a chaos in the non-western societies and ultimately leads to What Bonnet termed as 'resistance narratives' against the west. This discussion can also be linked to the ongoing conflict between the mighty US and the poor Muslim world. The US is engaged (in) directly in an endless war with a number of countries:

Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Tribal areas of Pakistan. Similarly, the existence of Boko Haram in Africa, Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan and ISIS in the Gulf countries pose strong resistance to the imperial interventions. Roy raises the question of who suffers in this conflict between the US and the local resistant groups. No doubt, it is the general and poor masses who find themselves between a devil and a deep blue sea.

Admittedly, it is the dominant group that constructs the *other* opposed to what it is not. However, in Roy's political essays the dominant *other* is exposed. It is attributed with qualities such as: cruel, usurper, arrogant and hypocrite. Admittedly, such representations of the west by the non-westerners are not new. The Russian, Iranian, Chinese and Arab world Occidentalism are few of the recent examples. Through such representations of the west the resistant groups have always justified their resistance against western interventions.

Said's argument about the west as rational, sensitive, and thoughtful is challenged. Roy turns to the contemporary US Imperialism which is based on 'arrogance and hypocrisy'. She exposes the recent American interventions in foreign lands. The contemporary US Empire stands on the blood, collective massacre of the poor nations of the world. She provides a detailed account of how the US is involved in the bloodshed of millions of Koreans, Vietnamese, Cambodians, Iraqis and Palestinians. The US extremities do not end here. It also includes countries such as: Somalia, Yugoslavia, Haiti, Somalia, Chile, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Roy argues that in all these interventions "the American government supported, trained, bankrolled and supplied with arms." (P. 234)

Such interventions and aggression in foreign lands make Occidentalism an accepted framework for viewing the west in to non-European consciousness. The west has long been

playing part of an external *other* in foreign territories. However, the west as an external *other* in the oriental world is both celebrated and challenged. After the Second World War the US geopolitics and neo-colonialism is looked up on with hatred by the general public in the poor countries. The US government is involved in funding, arming and sheltering insurgents and rebels around the world. The US as an external *other* has always faced serious confrontations both on physical and ideological level. What makes the foundation of resistance in the developing countries? In this regards, “in resistance narrative against the west it is western actions which necessitate and justify resistance (Fanon 1989:47).

Roy's Occidentalism informs about the hidden agenda behind US expansionism under the constructed myth of 'war on terror'. It is fought for strategic, economic and military reasons. In other words, these wars are actually fought to serve the American religion i.e. free market. In order to worship this deity the US does not shy to inflict war in the third world regions. It restructures the parliamentary constitutions in the poor countries so as to usurp and exploit assets, resources and in turn export its arms and bombs. In certain cases, when it does not find any substantial evidence against its enemies; it resorts to manufacturing. Said in 2003 preface argues that such warmongering is accompanied by CNN, Fox and hosts of right-wing radio channels and “all of them re-cycling the same unverifiable fictions and vast generalizations so as to stir up "America" against the foreign devil”. Roy exemplifies the same truth when she writes, “For strategic, military and economic reasons, it is vital for the US to persuade the American public that America's commitment to freedom and democracy and the American way of life is under attack.” (p.233) so, an important point to make here is that the US government is exposed as a liar who invents lies to persuade its own people at home. After taking the folk at home into confidence then the US forms an international coalition on war. Roy describes it as a cable of

the richest countries in the developed world. She also exposes the coalition forces. She writes "they possess all the world largest stock pile of weapons of mass destruction – chemical, biological and nuclear. (P.245) and they "account for most of the genocide, subjection, ethnic cleansing and human rights violations in modern history and have sponsored armed and financed untold number of dictators and despots. Between them they have worshipped, almost deified the cult of violence and war" (P.245)

Roy's descriptions of the US and the richest countries in the first world demonstrate that they are the real perpetrators. The American empire rests on massacres, falsehood, enslaving, and stealing of others' resources. In order to sustain prosperity at home it does not restrict itself from destroying other nations. This cable of richest countries in the first world has overturned established governments; turned peace in to chaos; destroyed the overall infrastructure in foreign lands. In order to get support for its excesses the US uses its arrogant formula "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists" (P.242)

Roy's criticism also includes the US corporate media also known as 'Free Press'. She writes that the American 'Free Press' is founded on "insinuation, auto- suggestion and outright lies" and the most popular American democracy rests on this 'edifice of falsehood and deceit coordinated by the US government and faithfully amplified by the corporate media". (P.105)

Although, it symbolizes the technological superiority of the west over the rest of the world but Roy laments over the role of western media. Like Djebbar she accuses western media of "brainwashing 'her people' and destroying 'third world' cultures. Roy notes that in free market democracies public opinions are manufactured like other mass products such as switches, soap, or sliced bread. She writes, that "in the free market free speech has become a commodity like

everything else – justices, human rights, drinking water, clean air.”(P.44) An important point here is Roy’s analysis of the linguistic legislation that is carried out in the American free press. Like Free Press the current affairs TV hosts and other specialists coin phrases like “women empowerment, peoples’ participation, and deepening democracy” (P.150). Under such constructions the west lies to its own people at home and pursues its free market agenda abroad. The American ‘Free press’ manufactures opinions both at home and abroad. On the other hand, the subalterns are deprived to speak. They resort to social media to air their grievances against the west. In certain cases, the west justifies its stance by permitting a controlled space for dissidence. In addition, the subaltern discourse is studied and vaccinated by those in power. Said, rightly says, “to have knowledge over something is to dominate it, to have authority over it”. (Said, 2003: 32) He further, shares similar concerns and to him, such media functions doubly as well as, both shape and mask the voice of the colonized. He claims that the US usurps and misuse universal values and reckons values as its perennial monopoly. In his book *Covering Islam*, Said deems Western media coverage, as a triumph “not just of a particular knowledge of Islam but rather of a particular interpretation” (Said 1997: 169). US anti war critic Noam Chomsky advocates Roy’s argument and calls the ‘American Free Press’ a ‘free-market theory’ in which “Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to totalitarianism.”

Exploiting others/lesser cultures has always been one of the strategies of the dominant imperial powers. Culture may entail social behavior, customs, language and other manifestations of a community. Arundhati Roy reflects the very process of transforming local cultures. She refers to a Call Centre College in Delhi where, “hundreds of young English speaking Indians are being groomed to man the backroom operations of giant transnational companies”.(P.181) They



are trained to speak in British and American accents. So “this multi-dollar industry is built on bedrock of lies, false identities and racism.” (P.182)

This description serves two-fold purpose. On one hand, it represents the exploitative process in which the young Indians are made subject to lies for a very meager amount and on the other, the process through which local cultures and attitudes are manipulated. In this connection, Iranian writer Jalal Al-i- Ahmad can be quoted who also lamented over western influence on Iranian society under the pro west Shah regime. He used the pejorative term “gharbzadagi” for the “westoxication” of the Iranian society. More significantly, how the superstructures maintain this kind of cultural domination? An Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci identifies it with *hegemony*. He divides society in to civil and political where, the former consists of voluntary associations such as families, schools and unions, the latter of state institutions like police, army and bureaucracy whose major role in state politics is direct domination. Culture operates within civil society, where the influence of institutions works not through power but *consent*.

Admittedly, western cultural practices such as food, English language, dress code, education and way of life among others are practiced by *consent* in third world countries where ‘gharbzadgi’ is seen and welcomed as a token of advancement and civilization. Importantly, in Roy’s work we can see that western culture is not only produced but also consumed. She clearly underlines the westernization of India but at the same time offers a very different way of reading the western imperialism. She makes an instrumental connection between the civil and political society.

A very important and recurring theme in Roy’s non-fiction is her criticism of what is called ‘Corporate Globalization’. She provides apt analysis of how hegemony in the post-

colonial world is maintained through mighty corporations of the first world. In the post-colonial world the imperial hegemony is sustained through powerful multi-nationals. She exposes the very process of geo-political practices that include both direct (political and military) and indirect (cultural) control in the form of hegemony. Roy describes free market as a myth and writes, "Corporate Globalization – or shall we call it by its name imperialism needs a press that pretends to be free. It needs courts that pretend to dispense justice." (P.72, Book 2). Corporate globalization undermines democracy and requires an international confederation of corrupt, loyal and authoritarian governments in the poor third world countries to bring reforms and quell mutinies. With the help of sweat heart deals with third world elite they "corporatize the crop we grow, the water we drink, the air we breathe, and the dreams we dream". Through such practices, the disparity between the rich and the poor grows which is the sly cry of American capitalism.

Roy in her political essays personifies corporate globalization as "powerful, pitiless and armed to the teeth" who is stalking almost anything "mega-game: dams, mines, armaments, power plants, public water supply, telecommunication, the management and dissemination of knowledge, biodiversity, seeds and the industrial infrastructure that supports all this" P.154 Corporate Corporations capture the resources in the poor countries as she writes "Creating a good investment climate is the new euphemism for third world repression" (p.202)

Roy also exposes the craftiness of the first world. The powerful multi-nationals of the developed world exploit the poor of the poor countries by the name of development and progress. In this way they not only pave their way for investment in these regions, but also market other waste, like old weapons and banned pesticides. Roy exposes,

“The dam building industry in the first world is in trouble and out of work. So it’s exported to the third world in the name of development Aid, along with their other waste, like old weapons, superannuated air craft carriers and banned pesticides.” (Roy P.58)

Roy’s detailed exposition of the neo-colonial practices correspond with my thesis statement that the division between the *Occident* and the *Orient* was a deliberate creation to justify the colonization process which ultimately harmed the colonized. In fact, Corporate Globalization has created a chaos that widens the already vast gap between the wealthy and poor. She exemplifies the American companies ENRON, GE, Carlyle and its Oil and armed industries and informs that how these corporations export destruction, poverty, displacement and massacres in to poorer countries under modernization projects. She charges the western governments for its craftiness, arrogance and lack of respect for the poor governments of the world. Unlike, Said she is not concerned to legitimize western superiority or to portray oriental backwardness but the “ruthlessness of power”. She notes that because of capitalism, “the orbits of the powerful and the powerless spinning further and further apart from each other”(P.40 ) She is apprehensive of “the aches of the broken world” that she wakes up to every morning. Her orient is the victim not of oriental discourses but of the ruthless power of neo-colonialism. Similarly, her occident is not sensitive, rationale and thoughtful but ‘pitiless, powerful and armed to the teeth’. Keeping these points in view one might approach her non-fiction from the post-colonial critical theorist Homi K Bhabha’s notion of the ‘third space’. In her work both the orient and the occident are in continuous interaction. So it becomes an amalgam of both Orientalism and Occidentalism. Roy writes, “language is the skin of my thoughts”. (p.153). so her political essays and speeches reveal her as a philanthropist who

stands by all those who are the brutal victim of power irrespective of race, religion or geography. She is not an anti-development junkie. Neither is she a proselytizer of upholding of customs and traditions. However, she is curious.

Although, she is vilified as 'anti-west' 'and anti American' yet she finds a remarkable position of defending America as a nation. Likewise, she is maligned as anti- India yet she is the 'fairy princess' of the Indian proletariat. She is a writer of the world. She resists the exploitative effects of power and invites others to join. "I hereby declare myself an independent, mobile republic. I am citizen of the earth. I own no territory. I have no flag. I am a female, and have nothing against eunuchs. I am willing to sign any nuclear non-proliferation treaty that's going. Immigrants are welcome". (P.21). She believes in the only genuine fruit of modernism – "the right to raise our voices, the right to be heard." (P.91). She views the west relationship with others as heavily marked by the practices of neo-colonialism which pulls her to the Occidental camp. She is an anti-war activist and as Foucault argues, "that it is this form of discourse which ultimately matters, a discourse against power" (Cited in Bouchard 1980: 209). Like Foucault she advocates "no as a decisive form of resistance". Foucault views power relations between liberties as strategic games in which one tries to control the conduct of others, who in response try to avoid to be controlled or seek to control others – "and the states of domination that people ordinarily call power" (Foucault 1997:299) Power is defined, from this perspective, as the capacity to structure the field of action of the other, to intervene in the domain of the other's possible actions."

Roy's work replicates Michel Foucault's theory of Bio-power – a model which helps to understand power and social relations in the modern capitalist world; where freedom means the "power to deprive others". More importantly, in Foucault's view concepts such as power,

difference and freedom serve to explain social relations. In Roy's work concepts of neo-colonialism such as: globalization, Free Press, Multi-national Corporations and their impact in the poor countries in the form of poverty, displacement, and injustice go side by side. She illustrates the power relations between US imperialism and the poor third world specifically the Muslim. She engages critical accounts of how the powerful and wealthy ruthlessly destroy and deprive the lesser, poor nations. "The theme of much what I write, fiction as well as non-fiction, is the relationship between power and powerlessness and the endless, circular conflict they're engaged in." (P.14). The theme of Roy's non-fiction also bears resemblance to Said's distinction between occident and orient. She builds on what Said argues, "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Said, p, 5 1978)

With a nuance, Roy offers newer ways to approach the East/West relations. She facilitates exposition to power relation and urges the exploited and the poor to stand against. At home she spearheads in carrying the torch of resistance to Narmada Valley while, abroad she demonstrates the same on the streets of New York. She seeks 'resistance' as a tool towards salvation from neo-colonial powers. She firmly believes that "We can re-invent civil disobedience in a million different ways. In other words, we can come up with a million ways of becoming a collective pain in the ass". (p.90.) This brings us to Foucault' point "So what I've said does not mean that we are always trapped, but that we are always free – well, anyway, that there is always the possibility of changing"(Foucault 1997a:167). She finds a hope in the resistance and like Foucault believes in the possibility of turning the table. What I can infer from this discussion is that what Said and Foucault theorizes, Roy translates in to action by advocating the only genuine fruit of modernism – the right to raise our voices, the right to be heard." (P.40).

So, in this discussion on Roy's construction of the *occident* it is concluded that non-fiction can be classified as an example of Occidentalism. She views the US imperial power in relation to the poor others which qualify her role of an Occidentalist. In this relation the dominant neo-colonial power is portrayed as usurper, cruel, pitiless, and arrogant and hypocrite. The US neo-colonial practices have been exposed. She facilitates exposition to the otherwise human friendly liberal democracy, media, and other projects of progress and development. Like other occidental writers she resists modernization projects and calls for the universal politics of resistance.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion:

Arundhati Roy is an anti-war critic and a global activist. She audaciously exposes power and its relations with others. She engages critical accounts of neo-colonialism for which she has been vilified as 'anti-west' and anti-American. Similarly, she is a staunch critic of the so called democratic Indian government policies as it is virtually colonized by Corporate Globalization. She also exposes the true face of the caste system, fascism, poverty, courts and judicial system in India. This kind of construction of the Indian society earned her maligned labels such as anti-national, anti-India and anti development. Keeping these two labels '*anti Indian*' and '*anti American*' the researcher has tried to analyze the non-fiction work of Arundhati Roy and, group her in any of the two major postcolonial discourse academies i.e. Orientalism or Occidentalism.

The researcher has selected two of her non-fiction *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* published in 2001 and *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire* published in 2004 as examples of what might be called Orientalism or Occidentalism. Both books comprise essays that are germane to the thesis topic. They reflect writer's reflection of the *orient* and the *occident*. The researcher has also made an attempt to prove his thesis statement that is: The division between the Occident and the Orient was a deliberate creation to justify the colonization process which ultimately harmed the colonized. The intended study has also attempted to analyze the statement whether it is justifiable to hold the west responsible for the backwardness of the third world.

Postcolonial theory deals with the relation between the imperial authority and its colonies so it is used as a principal paradigm to scrutinize Roy's construction of the orient/occident. As a sub model Edward Said's *Orientalism* is employed as it lays the very foundation of post-colonial theory by stating that "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power,

of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony” (Said, p, 5 1978). The major objective of this research work was to explore Arundhati Roy’s construction of the *Orient* and *Occident* and analyze the political ramifications of such constructions. Oriental descriptions were related to the construction of Indian people, its social and cultural behavior whereas, occidental representations are provided in the form of ‘the ruthlessness of power’ and the neo-colonial structures. In this research project the researcher took on the following questions:

RQ 1. How does Arundhati Roy construct the East (*Orient*) in her non-fiction?

RQ2. How does Arundhati Roy construct the west (*Occident*) in her non-fiction?

RQ3. What are the political and cultural ramifications of Roy’s representations of the Orient/Occident?

A comprehensive review of literature was carried out under three main headings i.e. Post-colonialism, Orientalism and Occidentalism. Summaries of notable scholarly work were included in the literature review section which provided an in-depth understanding about post-colonial theory and the discourses of Orientalism and Occidentalism. This part of the project helped the researcher a great deal in analyzing Roy’s construction of the orient and the occident.

A sea of writers, intellectuals, theorists and academicians both from *centre* and its *peripheries* pose a holistic response in the form of postcolonial theory. Over the past few decades, it has evolved into a full fledged academic discipline and offers many fold avenues for research. In the theorization of postcolonial perspectives prominent scholars like Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Frantz Fanon among loads of others articulate their ways of seeing the relation between the dominant colonizers and the



dominated colonized. Their work mainly, concern and argue over themes such as: economic, culture, language, politics and their (in) direct relations to 'white and black' binary.

The debate on Orientalism sparked from Edward Said's seminal work *Orientalism* (1978). Later on the tradition was followed and different varieties of French, British and recently American Orientalism were found. If Orientalism exists so 'Orientalism in reverse' also exists. Occidentalism is a counter discourse in which the East's notions of the west are constructed. Representations of the west are not new. We have, Russian, Chinese, Iranian, and Indian varieties of Occidentalism. Summarizing the various features of these topics helped the researcher a great deal in the analysis section.

The findings in Chapter three revealed that Roy's non-fiction can be labeled as an Orientalist text because it constructs orient in ways peculiar to western discourse. Roy's discourse like Orientalist discourse reproduces Indians as poor, fanatic, un-civilized, mindlessly violent, and threatening. In the second place, as Said claims Orientalism as a 'corporate institution' for dealing with the orient by making statements or describing it. However, the researcher found that Roy's Orientalism is not intended to show the superiority of western culture. Instead, Roy displays her orient as the victim of the neo-colonial practices. She shows western superiority as tricky as it plays by civilized rules. Roy' orient is not an imaginative construct rather; an entity which is subjected to the "ruthlessness of western power".

In Chapter four the researcher finds that Roy's construction of the *occident* might be classified as an example of Occidentalism. She exposes "the paranoia and ruthlessness of power". She laments over the (in) direct practices of neo-colonialism. She constructs the Corporate Globalization as "powerful, pitiless and armed to the teeth". The west is constructed

as cruel, usurper, liar, arrogant and hypocrite. She also holds the west responsible for the backwardness of the third world. In this whole process of American imperialism the clear inference is that the division between the occident and the orient was by large a deliberate one that ultimately harmed the colonized. The powerful west plagues a number of issues such as: poverty, sectarianism, repression, terrorism and injustice in the poorer countries of the world. She is anti-power and not only resists modernization projects but also calls for universal politics of resistance.

### **Suggestions for Further Research:**

Roy's non-fiction offers many avenues for further research. In the first place, Marxist or capitalist critique can be carried out as it exposes capitalism, multi-national corporations, US armed and oil industries and their connection with powerful business combines in the first world. Secondly, Roy's use of language provides the possibility for CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis). Thirdly, social stratification can also be researched as Roy discusses the elite and the poor classes of Indian society in her non-fiction.

Arundhati Roy's exposition of the Indian orient and western occident is based on the relation of power and powerlessness. Her work provides an informed view about what is happening around. It offers newer ways of approaching to the relation of the powerful west and existing dystopia in the third world. Her minute analysis of the neo-colonial structures and their suppression of the poor world might be deemed as a welcoming addition to the already vast realm of post-colonial literature.

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