

**ECHOES OF THE ORIENT: ORIENTALISM EXPLORED IN AMITAV GHOSH'S 'THE CALCUTTA CHROMOSOME' AND 'THE GLASS PALACE'**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study delves into the nuanced exploration of Orientalism in Amitav Ghosh's novels, 'The Calcutta Chromosome' and 'The Glass Palace.' Drawing inspiration from Edward Said's seminal work, the investigation critically examines how Ghosh navigates the multifaceted dimensions of Orientalist discourse within these narratives. The term 'Orientalism' serves as a key lens to uncover the intricate interplay between the East and the West, particularly how Western perspectives have historically shaped and defined the Orient. Ghosh's literary prowess comes to the fore as he skillfully dismantles, interrogates, and recontextualizes Orientalist representations. In 'The Calcutta Chromosome,' Ghosh fuses science, spirituality, and history, complicating traditional boundaries between East and West. Through a labyrinthine narrative, he deftly challenges prevailing Western notions of knowledge and authority, prompting a reevaluation of their impact on the East. The juxtaposition of science and mysticism serves as a vehicle for transcending Orientalist stereotypes, inviting readers to ponder the intricate tapestry of cultural exchange. 'The Glass Palace' further expands the discourse as Ghosh weaves a panoramic saga traversing India and Southeast Asia. Against the backdrop of colonialism and migration, he defies Orientalist reductionism by portraying a diverse range of characters with rich inner lives and experiences. The novel's canvas allows Ghosh to explore both the Orientalist gaze from the West and the self-reflection of characters caught in this gaze, thus fostering a multilayered understanding of identity, power dynamics, and cultural intersections. This study engages in a comparative analysis of the two novels, discerning recurring motifs, narrative techniques, and character dynamics that elucidate Ghosh's deliberate engagement with Orientalism. The narratives serve as platforms to challenge Western hegemony, disrupt binary categorizations, and amplify the voices and agency of characters navigating an intricate web of cultural complexities. Through this exploration, this study endeavors to illuminate how Ghosh's literary artistry not only dismantles Orientalist preconceptions but also enriches our comprehension of the East-West dialogue in contemporary postcolonial literature.

**Keywords:** *Colonization, discourse, hegemonic, Identities, Orientalism*

Amitav Ghosh is a renowned figure in Indian English literature, known for his exploration of themes centered around postcolonial perspectives. While he hails from India, his literary journey

has led him to reside in various countries for distinct reasons. His literary contributions have significantly enriched the landscape of English literature, introducing innovative dimensions. Focusing primarily on the theme of postcolonialism, Ghosh's literary repertoire holds a distinct place. His narratives offer a fresh lens through which postcolonial experiences are viewed, emphasizing the complexities and aftermath of colonization. His writing is not confined by geographical boundaries, as he delves into the multifaceted aspects of cultural and societal transformations, often triggered by colonial histories. Ghosh's unique background, being born in India and subsequently relocating for varied pursuits, has undoubtedly shaped his narrative perspective. His work resonates with an authentic and diverse representation of global experiences, effectively transcending the limitations of traditional literary frameworks. Within the realm of postcolonial analysis, Ghosh's work has been specifically scrutinized in terms of the theme of Orientalism. "Orientalism therefore is not an airy European fantasy about the orient, but created a body of theory and practice for many generations" (*Said, 4*). This academic lens delves into how colonial powers have historically portrayed and controlled the East. In this context, two of Ghosh's novels have garnered attention. These texts provide a platform to reevaluate conventional Western perspectives on the East, offering a rich and nuanced exploration of postcolonial thought.

The emergence of this phenomenon can be primarily attributed to the historical context of colonization, the post-World War II dominance of Western power dynamics and ideologies, the forceful expansion of capitalism and neoliberalism through the guise of globalization, and the coinage of the term 'Global South' to depict regions grappling with social and economic challenges. Amitav Ghosh's writings serve as a convergence of diverse currents, seamlessly establishing connections between seemingly disparate cultures and languages, while fluidly traversing geographical boundaries shaped by politics. Notably, Ghosh holds a profound fascination for Calcutta, a city that occupies a distinctive role within his literary realm, evident through its recurring presence across his works. A noteworthy creation among Ghosh's repertoire is 'The Calcutta Chromosome,' a novel that masterfully blends reality with fiction. This work stands as a testament to his post-colonial intent, aiming to confront the power struggles ingrained in the West's dominance over the East. Among the themes addressed is the intricate exploration of national identity and communalism within the subcontinent. The novel's meticulous plotting not only delves into historical circumstances surrounding the discovery of malaria and its remedy but also delves into pivotal philosophical and sociological themes relevant to the politics of science. Similarly, 'The Glass Palace,' another of Ghosh's prominent works, serves to illuminate the internalization of such constructed hierarchies by the colonized, leading to deep fractures within colonial societies and even within individual psyches. This novel, too, underscores the perceived superiority of the West over the East for readers, shedding light on the prevailing dynamics of power. Ghosh's exploration underscores his contention that the West, or the colonizers, wields authority over the East, or the colonized. This phenomenon, encapsulated within the framework of Orientalism, warrants comprehensive examination and scrutiny. Amitav Ghosh's literary contributions encompass a profound exploration of historical and socio-political complexities, artfully interwoven with compelling narratives. His works like 'The Calcutta Chromosome' and

'The Glass Palace' epitomize the author's endeavor to unmask the dynamics of power, colonization, and identity, offering readers a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay between East and West.

Edward Said introduced the term 'Orientalism' to describe the perspectives of Western scholars, referred to as 'Orientalists,' who upheld colonial agendas by intellectually subduing oppressed Eastern populations. According to Said, Europeans in the nineteenth century sought to legitimize their colonial conquests through a fabricated concept known as Orientalism. This involved propagating stereotypes about non-Europeans, portraying them as indolent, morally deficient in their sexual conduct, unreliable, and mentally unstable. Said, a prominent postcolonial academic, emphasized the creation of a binary division between the 'Occident' and the 'Orient.' He posited that the East was often depicted as a realm of ignorance, superstition, and illiteracy, while the West was cast as the pinnacle of knowledge and understanding.

In his novel 'The Calcutta Chromosome,' Amitav Ghosh artfully explores the tension between reason and faith, simultaneously critiquing and projecting beyond contemporary postcolonial India. Ghosh appropriates the Western science fiction genre as a means to challenge established notions of Western-centric rational inquiry. He contends that the prevailing perception of Western scientific dominance overlooks the intricate interplay between Eastern and Western scientific approaches and the historical inequities in access to technological advancements. Ghosh introduces a religious dimension into his narrative, suggesting that Eastern perspectives can harmoniously unite what Western observers might deem irrational and rational elements. Clair Chambers,<sup>58</sup> asserts that science is often presented as an impartial body of knowledge that transcends cultural bias, characterized by good intentions and an avenue to objective 'truth.' Nonetheless, recent scientific thinkers, including science historians and theorists, have illuminated the fact that science is culturally situated and carries its own biases and interests.

In 'The Calcutta Chromosome,' Ghosh ventures into the realm of science fiction for the first time to challenge the dichotomy between ideas of scientific 'truth' and fiction. He constructs a near-future society replete with technological advancements that surpass our current reality, adhering to the conventions of the science fiction genre. By fictionalizing the lives of actual scientists and intertwining the mainstream theories of Ross with the unconventional scientific revelations of the fictional priestess Mangala and her followers, Ghosh challenges the West's perceived supremacy over the East, as well as the dominance of colonizers over the colonized and established science over counter-science. Seamlessly blending science and religion, the novel prompts contemplation on the nature of knowledge. Through this narrative, Ghosh dismantles the colonial paradigm that portrays Eastern knowledge systems as inferior and unscientific, asserting that they constitute a rich and sophisticated repository of knowledge, surpassing their Western counterparts in many aspects (Chambers, 60).

In 'The Glass Palace,' Amitav Ghosh continues his exploration of the theme of Orientalism, further dissecting the intricate dynamics between the West and the East. The novel serves as a canvas upon which he paints a vivid picture of how the constructs of Orientalism permeate various facets of society, culture, and individual identities. Ghosh's narrative skillfully portrays how the colonial

mindset influences perceptions of the East and the West. Through the experiences of the characters, he illuminates how the colonizers' perspectives infiltrate the colonized individuals' self-perception, leading to internalized notions of inferiority and subordination. This internalization, rooted in Orientalist ideology, engenders deep-seated fractures within both colonial societies and individual psyches.

The characters in 'The Glass Palace' embody this struggle. The novel follows the lives of diverse individuals spanning different regions and eras, from British Burma to India and Southeast Asia. Ghosh magnificently captures how the weight of Orientalist preconceptions shapes their aspirations, identities, and choices. This serves as a powerful testament to how the West's projection of itself as the epitome of knowledge and enlightenment intertwines with the lives of those colonized, leaving indelible imprints. Ghosh's portrayal of the characters' interwoven destinies in 'The Glass Palace' underscores the persisting impact of Orientalism. The novel's narrative trajectory mirrors the historical timeline, enabling readers to witness the shifting tides of colonial power dynamics and the lasting consequences they bear on generations to come. Ghosh's literary craftsmanship lies in his ability to seamlessly blend history, personal narratives, and thematic exploration, unveiling the complexities of the East-West encounter. In this novel, Ghosh's exploration of Orientalism extends beyond the colonial period, reaching into the modern era and highlighting the enduring legacy of Western dominance. By demonstrating how Orientalist constructs infiltrate even the most intimate corners of characters' lives, Ghosh emphasizes the intricate and multifaceted nature of this phenomenon. This intricate interplay between the West's projection of itself and the East's internalization of those projections is an ever-present undercurrent in 'The Glass Palace,' adding layers of depth to the novel's thematic resonance.

"We employ the term 'postcolonial' to encompass all cultural aspects influenced by the imperial process from the onset of colonization to the present day." (Ashcroft, et, al. 2). Beyond being a historical epoch, postcolonialism serves as a method to critically analyze the ramifications of colonization on indigenous populations. Notable postcolonial writers, including Amitav Ghosh, Salman Rushdie, Shashi Tharoor, and Vikram Seth, have delved into the colonial past, exposing concealed truths about its harsh exploitations. Thus, postcolonialism serves as a lens for comprehending the literature of authors who have their roots in once-colonized nations.

Amitav Ghosh's novel 'The Glass Palace' intricately chronicles a century of Burmese history encompassing pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods. The narrative commences in the late 19th century with the demise of the Konbaung dynasty, traversing through the Second World War, and extending into the emergence of a democratic movement in the 20th century. Set against this historical tapestry, the novel interweaves the destinies of three families, illustrating how their lives intertwine with the backdrop of Burmese history. The novel portrays greed on both sides; the colonizers and the colonized. Rajkumar, originating from Bengal, transitions from being a subject of Bengali colonization to becoming a colonizer himself in Burma. Ghosh utilizes the romance subgenre to present characters who reflect upon Burma's colonial past and its influence on the emergence of modern Myanmar. Employing a sophisticated narrative structure, the novel delves

into the multifaceted identities and experiences of its diverse cast of characters (Vijay and Kumar, 257).

The book examines themes including British colonialism, cultural hegemony, exile, mimicry, ambivalence, and hybridity. This critical perspective not only reveals the perceptions bred by British imperialism but also delves into the political, psychological, and economic aftermath of colonization on indigenous lives (Solanki and Ratad, 755). Centered on the families of Rajkumar and Uma Dey, the narrative navigates the tumultuous course of Burma's modern history, marked by events such as the 1962 military coup, both World Wars, and the British removal of the Burmese royal family in 1885. Amidst the upheaval, the protagonists seek solace in beauty and art. Ghosh skillfully alludes to historical events and connects them to the contemporary state of Burma, depicting the consequences of the British invasion. The metaphorical portrayal of looting parallels the appropriation of power itself. Ghosh captures the erosion of Burma's royal tradition, monarchy, and tragic royal lineage as a consequence of colonization, leading to turmoil and instability across the nation.

Orientalism stands as a key element of postcolonialism. Edward Said's influential 1978 work 'Orientalism' critiques Western depiction of Eastern countries, shaping postcolonial studies and fostering ideas challenging Western portrayals. Postcolonialism addresses oppression, ethnicity, cultural loss, and Orientalist rhetoric's current portrayal. It adopts a deconstructive approach, scrutinizing colonized responses and interactions with colonizers in Third World countries, which were predominantly under European rule. Postcolonialism suggests England's colonial attitude waned around the twentieth century's onset, marked by decolonization. India's independence heralded postcolonialism's emergence and the end of colonialism, driving narratives reflecting oppression, cultural erosion, and identity struggles.

Amitav Ghosh effectively interweaves orientalism and postcolonialism in his novels. He elucidates orientalism through diverse lenses, offering insight into marginalized perspectives. Despite detailed depictions of Ross' scientific research, Ghosh omits exact ritual steps, emphasizing the locals' intelligence and Eastern epistemology's value. Ghosh endeavors to elevate Eastern knowledge, yet Western writing norms hinder complete conveyance. While addressing religious epistemology as sophisticated, he's ensnared by the post-colonial notion of knowledge's harmful impact, leaving gaps in character narratives.

'The Calcutta Chromosome' demonstrates Ghosh's argument for Western superiority, albeit subverted. He underscores the East's concealed dominance, undermining Western authority. Ghosh challenges the West's unacknowledged control over the East, aiming to disrupt its dominance. In Ghosh's literary tapestry, orientalism and postcolonialism intertwine, revealing layered complexities and narratives that redefine power dynamics and historical interpretations.

In the initial scene of 'The Calcutta Chromosome, the protagonist Antar, an Egyptian computer expert, encounters his co-worker Murugan at Life Watch. Murugan has discovered hidden records indicating a scientific and mystical movement promising eternal life. This discovery challenges the conventional narrative of Ronald Ross, who was wrongly attributed to discovering the malaria parasite's life cycle. The book portrays a secret group of Indian mystics who had actually identified



the parasite earlier than Ross. Ross's belief in his exclusive role in the discovery is depicted as a delusion. Ghosh juxtaposes Western scientific epistemology with Eastern counter-science, represented by the clandestine Indian practitioners. This counter-science challenges conventional knowledge frameworks and is led by a mysterious figure named Mangala. Their accomplishments predate Ross's, showcasing a contrasting form of knowledge rooted in Eastern beliefs. The novel explores how the characters navigate between these distinct epistemologies, one grounded in science and the other in Eastern spirituality.

The novel aims to emphasize the equal valuation of all knowledge systems within their respective contexts. However, science holds a higher status compared to its counterpart due to its structured framework involving rules, laws, data collection, classification, and documentation. The absence of such a system makes traditional approaches more challenging to integrate. In response, these approaches opt for secrecy to avoid exposure and extinction. In the narrative, both Elijah Farley and Phulboni engage with the mysterious group in similar ways. At Renupur station in 1894, Phulboni disembarks, surviving a perilous encounter that Farley, who vanished mysteriously after departing from the same station. Farley had uncovered Mangala and her covert gang altering Ross's research at the laboratory, leading Mangala to silence him to protect their secrets. This theme of silence becomes recurring, as Mangala and Lutchman, representing hidden religious groups, embrace quietness as a healing and protective force. Their actions are driven by ethical motivations centered around concealment, challenging the prevailing narrative of colonial medical history and eschewing typical scientific practices. Based on this premise, neither their actions nor their achievements can be 'known' in the sense of being incorporated into scientific or other types of discussions. Their focus is on transmitting personality traits from one individual to another, representing a collaborative effort between Western science and the concept of spiritual movement. This group of mystical adherents, who consider their secret cult a religious practice, diverge significantly from Western science proponents by regarding silence as integral to their progress. Despite being part of the medical community, Ronald Ross and these individuals are depicted in the novel as possessing a notably advanced comprehension of malaria. This counter-science, therefore, remains largely unaccepted by its scientific counterpart. Nevertheless, their deliberate choice of marginalization empowers them rather than rendering them powerless. This decision grants them flexibility and authority to conduct scientific exploration in unconventional ways, divergent from traditional scientific methods. In comparison to their scientific counterparts, their approaches differ substantially. In reality, counter-science wields such influence over the knowledge exchange process that it gives the impression of elevating them to a higher realm, seemingly rendering scientists as mere puppets under their guidance. "Post-colonial studies developed as a way of addressing the cultural production of those societies affected by the historical phenomenon of colonialism". (Ashcroft,7)

Next, we encounter Mangala, a lab assistant in Dr. Cunningham's lab, who harbored knowledge of a secret malaria treatment. However, the prospect of fame and a Nobel Prize conflicted with their preference for secrecy. Mangala's main motive was to cure syphilis, alongside her discovery, by using a bird to transmit the malaria germ to patients, aiming to achieve a kind of 'immortality'

where traits could be genetically passed. Farley, Murugan, and Phulboni attempt to spy on this enigmatic group to acquire the knowledge. Laakhan, the guardian, thwarts their efforts, upholding Mangala's ownership of this esoteric knowledge. This post-colonial perspective suggests that unveiling the unknown has negative consequences. From a spiritual standpoint, Mangala symbolizes the regenerative goddess Kali or Maa Durga.

Ghosh extensively explores the mystical rituals of a secretive group centered on soul transmigration and immortality. Mangala holds this knowledge and develops a method for preserving it through reincarnation. She selectively chooses individuals to continue transmigration, seeking a sharper intellect. Mangala, now known as Mrs. Aratounian, inhabits Urmila, a journalist, aiming to break her limitations and boost her confidence. This expertise benefits a specific educated sect. The transmigration ceremony, with Mangala (as Mrs. Aratounian) transferring Laakhan's spirit into Romen Haldar's body, is witnessed by Sonali from Calcutta magazine, who infiltrates Robinson Street. As Sonali observes the event, she witnesses something unprecedented and falls asleep amidst familiar faces in attendance. Unlike his detailed portrayal of Ros' mosquito and malaria research, Ghosh struggles to outline the ritual's exact steps. He highlights the locals' intelligence, possibly surpassing that of Western scientists. Despite his intent, his Western writing style hinders prioritizing Eastern epistemology. He strives to present religious knowledge as innovative, distinct, and positive, yet grapples with depicting Mangala and Laakhan due to a post-colonial fear of knowledge's harm. This results in unexplained disappearances in the narrative. Ghosh's endeavor to balance Eastern and Western epistemologies falters, lacking depiction of Mangala's knowledge system. Accepting Mangala's system might seem challenging for outsiders despite its acceptance by locals. Ghosh fails to explain Indian/Eastern epistemology within both frameworks, a hazardous taboo requiring concessions to adopt it silently. Access to diverse scientific knowledge can be obtained. Phulboni, another key character, briefly encounters the mysterious group, sparking his curiosity and inspiring his writings. The author of the Lakhaan Stories dedicates his words to Mangala, expressing his strong desire to join the group. He pleads for forgiveness and asks for a sign of their existence. He aims to validate both the rational and irrational, countering the colonial view of Eastern knowledge as inferior. Ghosh employs this character to showcase the rich and advanced nature of Eastern knowledge, refuting its perceived inferiority in contrast to the Western system. Ghosh weaves together the clash of diverse customs, discourses, and epistemologies as a central theme, challenging the notion of Western dominance over the East. He questions this hierarchical assumption and strives to equalize the two, even suggesting that Eastern epistemology holds a superior theory capable of reversing power dynamics. The novel delves into the intricate interdependence of both epistemologies for survival and growth. In doing so, it explores the social discourse between colonizers and the colonized, influencing post-colonial literature and commenting on European colonization. "The Calcutta Chromosome's postcolonial politics is about the research contexts in which the data alters with the context. Its key theme is the creation, packaging, transmission and reception/interpretation of data. The 'creation' of data is of course linked to the contexts (including bodies) in which it is produced."(Nayar.57)

The post-modernist prose of the novel's world rejects Western norms and attitudes, embracing a broader human experience. It rejects not only Western principles but also feminist theory, literary criticism, and cultural norms. By reimagining literary imagery and theoretical frameworks, *The Calcutta Chromosome* reveals the complex interplay and evolution of Western and South Asian epistemologies through cross-cultural exchanges, translations, and adaptations.

The study examines postcolonial consequences on the lives of people from various ethnic groups, cultures, and nations as well as how these effects affected colonisers live in the novel, particularly in Burma and India. *The Glass Palace*, unfolds over a period of hundred years of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Burmese history from the late 19th century beginning with the demise of Konbaung dynasty through the Second World War to the end of the 20th century with the emergence of a democratic movement. It covers the period from the British conquest of Burma in 1885 to 1957 including the Second World War. The book discusses three families in detail. A beginning point for the British invasion of Burma in 1885 was specifically the Saya John and Rajkumar Raha families as well as the Burmese royal family. King and queen Supayalat of Thebaw reside in the opulent palace known as The Glass Palace with their daughters as members of the royal family. After being defeated by the British army, the royal family is gradually exiled. Rajkumar, an eleven-year-old Indian kid, was forced to seek work in Burma when the plague killed all of his family. In the beginning, he assists Ma Cho at a stall before venturing out on his own, the business of Saya John. According to Edward, the basic idea of Orientalism is discussed in his outstanding book *Orientalism*, which was published in 1978. This tells us that Middle East, North Africa, and Asia are regarded as Oriental or non-Occidental by Western society. The narrative begins in Mandalay in 1885. Rajkumar, the main character identifies as 'English canon.' 11 years old orphan from Chittagong who arrives in Mandalay as the British occupy the nation. The boy's remarks herald the fall of Burma's current ruler, King The baw. Indian-majority British soldiers arrived shortly after the explosions. "The Glass Palace provides the necessary information to understand the political, social ,cultural ,economic and ideological factors of their dislocation from their own homes and thus, the novel "charts the unmaking of individual and collective identity and examines the novel's self-fashioning and self-alienation".(Mondal,113)

The British initially acquired control of Burma by utilising Burmese army subversion. The Konbaung dynasty's ultimate ruler of Burma resided and ruled from The Glass Palace, which they gradually changed in every way after assuming control of. The Anglo-Burmese conflict is said to have been sparked by imperial avarice. They essentially want all of the teak in Burma. They're planning to get rid of the king because he won't give it to them. The palace was robbed by British forces after the king was overthrown and the city was taken, and locals saw them marching out of the fort carrying bundles of loot. The empire was given freedom to plunder the nation's natural riches when the monarch was banished now Burma was integrated into it and it was forcibly turned into a province of British. The queen is correct when she predicts that in a few decades all of the wealth—all of the diamonds, lumber, and oil—will be gone. The comparison between the Siamese kingdom and the condition of our own subjugated country in a century from now will serve as an indictment of Europe's greed. Both the colonisers' and the colonized's avarice are depicted in the



story. Rajkumar, a colonial person from Bengal, invades Burma as a coloniser. He brings indentured workers from India to the rubber plantations in Malaya, the teak forests and oil wells in Burma in order to make rapid money. With a labour shortage, many foreign corporations were busy hauling trees from Burmese woods while they dug for oil. Rajkumar projected Burma to the poor Indian villagers as the 'golden land,' and this attracted them to it. Others were compelled to move forward by their fathers and brothers while some moved forward willingly. Rajkumar made nine journeys to India in three years to gather workers and during that period he saved money equal to two-thirds of the cost of the trip. A lumber yard in Rangoon's asking price. He had also been in charge of guaranteeing a consistent flow of Indian labourers as a partner in the rubber plantation in Malaya. He drove them to the rubber plantation where they were forced to live in substandard conditions and made a lot of money doing it. It was impossible to imagine the squalor in the mud-walled cabin where the employees went to be treated when they became ill and the floor was covered in filth. The workers' huts were tiny hovels with roofs made of twigs and leaves. In these similar coin with two sides.

There Indian labourers were forced to clear latrines, pull rickshaws, and work in ports and mills on one side of the country. Some of the city's wealthiest individuals, however were Indians and the most of them had only a small start a tin box and a bundle of garments. The colonists relocated young men from India to serve as troops in Burma, Singapore, and Malaya. Two thirds of the 10,000 soldiers in the British invasion force of Burma were Indians. These seasoned, battle-hardened troops had proven their value to the British over decades of warfare, both in India and abroad. They had steadfastly stood by their masters, even through the uprising of 1857, when most of northern India had rebelled against them. He could still smell the gangrenous bandages on the amputated limbs and hear the teenage guys screaming in the middle of the night. They agreed to let their employers use them however they pleased in exchange for a few coins, not much more than a dockyard coolie, to remove every sign of resistance to the might of English. They were battling in obedience to commands from superiors without complaint or conscience, rather than out of animosity or fury. They were once free individuals, but years of slavery reduced them to becoming mindless tools in the hands of the British. Displacement, the experience of slavery, transportation, or "voluntary" removal for indentured labour may have damaged one's ability to have a healthy and active sense of self. The British invasion of Burma is described in the opening pages of the book. Capitalists' avarice in wanting to make the most money possible from the teak wood industry is the main driver behind this onslaught. While being exiled for the rest of his life in India, King Thebaw of Burma reflected on the nature of colonialism and how it causes people to become recurrent refugees. The author only highlights unease in relation to Rajkumar and Saya John's transformations, as well as the alteration of the collectors to a lesser level, despite the fact that there are numerous changes occurring in the identities of other persons. It demonstrates how comfortable Orientals are with their orientalised conceptions of the Orient. When Uma informs Dinu in 'The Glass Palace' that they must not be fooled by the illusion that imperialism is an effort of reform, she is the one who best exposes the truth about colonialism. Simply put, it is false to assume that colonialists sit down and reflect on the virtues and vices of the nations they seek to

subjugate: empires are not built for that. contrasting one colonial population with another. Worker trafficking from India sustains economic activity in both Burma and Malaya so that Arjun, the plantation manager, owns a home in Malaya with a flower-filled yard. A riot of colour, but ‘mainly English varieties’ of flowers. Edward Said demonstrates how colonial forces ‘created’ an oriental environment that permitted the use of particular forms of control there. The Glass Palace by Amitav Ghosh demonstrates how such ‘constructions’ are internalized by the colonized, leading to profound fractures within colonial societies and occasionally within the individual consciousness. Despite the fact that The Glass Palace favours the colonial past, this makes it. The novel offers situations and individuals in a generally complicated framework that adds depth and richness, and it is vital to the lives of everyone concerned. Another part of Indian history that was not covered in this book. When discussing the colonial era in terms of what it meant for people who had joined the British Army, the history of the Indian Army under British Rule is grossly oversimplified. These two characters' class and agency in the book, Arjun and Hardy, vary in accordance with time and space. The novel's chronological frame allows for the horrible exploitation manifestations that occurred during colonialism and neocolonialism. "It is ironic that troops like Arjun were fighting in the British Indian Army as subalterns (subordinate officers), neither to defend nor to expand the borders of India. They were merely assisting the British government's colonial expansion policy. The most outspoken way that Amitav Ghosh addresses the issues of identity, colonialism, and belongingness is through the figure of Arjun. Ghosh emphasizes that Indians were also accountable for such exploitation of people and the environment. When Arjun realizes that he has been willingly used by the empire to modernize the ‘uncivilised’ East, he is likened to a clay vessel that has been moulded by an unknown "potter," which points to the loss of his identity. The Glass Palace also analyses the many aspirations of different people to understand the political and social upheaval that followed the British occupation of Burma and the Japanese invasion of Malaysia. The characters in the novel are constantly grappling with a sense of rootlessness, reflecting how British colonization deeply affected the Indian psyche. Arjun, in particular, comprehends how the Empire's ideology influences Indians, notably the Indian troops, shaping their perspectives. Ghosh acknowledges the profound wounds inflicted by British colonialism on Indians. The film ‘The Glass Palace’ portrays the transformation of Mandalay’s palace’s west wing into a British Club, symbolizing how colonial discourses, particularly in the military context, shaped native identity and caused a significant detachment. Characters like Arjun, manipulated by British military rhetoric, and the Collector, a colonial official with British training, embody self-alienation. Both characters reach an impasse in their identity and tragically end their lives. Arjun, initially steeped in military culture discourse, realizes his puppetry in this colonial narrative and eventually breaks free from it, leading to his personal downfall.

The protagonist grapples with a lack of affiliations and struggles to forge a new identity amid competing allegiances. In the colonial context, the subject's dilemma is both pressing and somber, requiring acceptance of an unfamiliar epistemology for self-acceptance. Colonized individuals are deprived of the right to assert their own truths, originating from the dominant Western perspective. Arjun believes this transformation leads to a more complete persona, fitting for an officer. He

proudly embraces military life, glorifying his regiment, The Royal Battalion, and idealizing his role, echoing the Collector's attitude. Arjun sees soldiering as a powerful, obligation-free profession, boasting that they are the 'First True Indians' due to the army's unity. The novel 'The Glass Palace' reveals Ghosh's understanding of the racialized structure of the colonial armed forces, reflecting a truth about Indian participation in the British military.. Ghosh endeavors to provide an internal perspective on the plight of Indian soldiers who faced racial discrimination, resulting in discontent and unrest. His portrayal of the colonial institution in 'The Glass Palace' is unique in its emphasis on the challenges faced by these soldiers. To comprehend the military system depicted in the novel, particularly in terms of British Indian army recruitment, a brief historical context is needed after the 1857 Revolution. This event prompted significant adjustments in the organization and composition of the British army. With colonial objectives in mind, the Peel Commission of 1859 eventually advocated for a "general mixture" approach, promoting the recruitment of individuals from diverse castes and ethnicities.

Thus, the exploration of Orientalism in Amitav Ghosh's novels 'The Calcutta Chromosome' and 'The Glass Palace' reveals a complex tapestry of themes, characters, and historical contexts that shed light on the intricate interplay between the East and the West. Through the lenses of these two works, Ghosh skillfully dissects the dynamics of colonialism, knowledge exchange, and cultural assimilation.

'The Calcutta Chromosome' delves into the clash of epistemologies, contrasting Western scientific knowledge with Eastern mystical beliefs. This confrontation underscores the power dynamics embedded in colonial discourse, where the West often held superiority over the East. Ghosh's portrayal of Antar and his encounter with the covert organization, led by Mangala, illustrates the tension between dominant scientific narratives and indigenous knowledge systems. The narrative's layers of secrecy and revelation mirror the complexities of colonial-era interactions, hinting at the erasure of Eastern contributions and the resilience of suppressed wisdom. On the other hand, 'The Glass Palace' delves into the nuanced experiences of Indian soldiers within the colonial military machinery. Ghosh unearths the racial prejudices faced by these soldiers and their consequent struggles for identity, pride, and self-recognition. The novel meticulously examines the evolving nature of the British Indian army, influenced by historical events such as the 1857 Revolution. Through characters like Arjun and the Collector, Ghosh exposes the paradoxes of pride and disillusionment that define individuals caught between allegiance and alienation.

Both novels are marked by Ghosh's commitment to providing multifaceted perspectives, weaving intricate narratives that challenge conventional historical narratives. As Ghosh unearths the layers of Orientalism embedded in these narratives, he presents not only a critique of colonialism but also a reflection on the intricate ways in which cultures intersect and impact one another. The narratives ultimately serve as a testament to the complex and enduring legacy of Orientalism in literature and history. In 'The Calcutta Chromosome' and 'The Glass Palace,' Ghosh achieves a delicate balance between historical fiction and critical commentary. By amplifying the voices and experiences of characters often marginalized in traditional historical narratives, he uncovers the hidden nuances of Orientalism. These novels invite readers to contemplate the intricate web of power, knowledge,

and cultural exchange that shaped colonial interactions and continue to reverberate in contemporary discourse. Ghosh's exploration of Orientalism stands as a poignant reminder of the importance of questioning dominant narratives and seeking a more comprehensive understanding of history and its implications for our world today.

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