

Chapter I

Introduction

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Chapter I
Introduction:
(Post)coloniality and Psychology

The field of postcolonial studies addresses various kinds of postcolonial experiences, such as territorial occupation, slavery, migration, anti-hegemonic resistance, ethnicity, racism, formation of identity, cultural transformation and the like. Although, not all of the above concepts can be counted as ‘essentially’ postcolonial, in their complex relationships with each other they fit in the vast fabric of ‘postcolonial experiences.’ The experiences of people with above postcolonial conditions as historical events have been viewed as the effects of a Eurocentric world-vision that dismisses the rest of the world as inferior. Roughly estimated, from the age of early modernity in the sixteenth century, Europe, through its numerous territorial explorations for trade and conquests, has produced both through conscious efforts and as corollary episodes immeasurable transformations and displacements on all walks of life of the vanquished humanity. Such colonial practices have constituted on the non-European psyche a sense of being ousted from their history, land and culture, essentially binding them to permanent psychological disorienting experiences. While these colonial experiences inflict an enormous amount of psychological problems to the non-whites, it has generated equivalent ambivalent moments for the Europeans as well. Caryl Phillips (1958–), a major voice in the contemporary postcolonial literatures, provides in his fictional works deep insights into the fundamental issues related to the colonial cultures and histories and their unsettling roles in the various aspects of life of the colonial victims. The present thesis “Contours of Psychological

(Dis)orientation: A Postcolonial Reading of Caryl Phillips's Fiction” seeks to make reflections and evaluations on the psychological aspects of the postcolonial experiences of these colonial victims as reflected in the fictional works of Caryl Phillips. Accordingly, the study approaches the fictional works of Caryl Phillips from various thematic and interpretative angles to disclose the psychological (dis)orientation of the protagonists in the contexts of their postcolonial experiences.

Caryl Phillips, born in one of the Caribbean islands St. Kitts on 13 March 1958, holds a significant position among the present-day postcolonial writers for his ability to tell the tales of people who are burdened by the histories of colonialism and its unsettling ramifications in the present. While an impressive body of his writing conveys a deep understanding of the impact of colonial displacement on the psyche of its victims, it is also often admired for its penetrating social criticism as well as its insightful understanding of the human condition. However, this characteristic mode of his writing demonstrates his affinities with a distinctive body of writers that was popular in the latter half of the twentieth century under the label ‘black British.’ Black British are generally considered to be those ‘British citizens’ of black and African heritage. However, Prabhu Guptara defines ‘black British’ as “those people of non-European origin who are now or were in the past, entitled to hold a British passport and displayed a substantial commitment to Britain, for example by living a large part of their lives here” (16). Nevertheless, the label ‘black’ has not gone well with the ethnicities of some of the writers in this group, and so, the use of the term has not found quite favour with some of these writers. Kobena Mercer notes on the dangers involved

in labelling these writers of various cultural origin as ‘black British.’ According to her these writers “... interpellated themselves ... each other as ‘black’ ... in order to engender an inclusive and ‘pluralistic sense of an imagined community’” (291–92). The major figures of this group, apart from Caryl Phillips, include Wilson Harris (1921), Samuel Selvon (1923– 1994), George Lamming (1927), Kamau Brathwaite (1930), V.S. Naipaul (1932), Linton Kwesi Johnson (1952), Hanif Kureshi (1954), David Dabydeen (1955), Ben Okri (1959), Fred D’Aguiar (1960) and Jackie Kay (1961). However, many of these writers invite attention to the essential cultural hybridity of racial identities in their works in a way that productively dismantles ‘blackness’, making its boundaries less fixed and more fluid, and its thematic preoccupations more varied and shifting (Donnell 251–52). The recurrent themes that black British writers interweave in their writing often range from examining their colonial past, their constant migrations and the present–day harsh realities of living in the racially deterministic society of Britain/England. Victoria Arana examines that the black British writers took upon to explore themes of “displacement, migration, befuddled national and cultural identity, and other downbeat effects of living and working in a post imperial Britain or a former British colony” (31). Chris Weedon observes that in the rich body of writing of these writers, “the long history of slavery and colonialism and the more immediate history of post–war migration and life in contemporary Britain are main points of reference” (74).

Phillips’s principal focus has also been on these issues of displacement generated by various colonial processes in history and its present–day repercussions in the lives of people. One significant point of departure that Phillips

makes from the other black British writers is his choice to extricate himself from the constraints of subject matter that these writers take upon. Obviously, while sharing the platform with the other black British writers in their attempts to address the issues of such marginalised people and their predicaments, Phillips's humanism and sense of universality compel him to indulge in the issues of other marginalised histories, such as the issues of Jews. Therefore, one confronts a dilemma in categorising Caryl Phillips to this exclusive class of black British. Not only did these subject matter, but also his divided commitments and preponderance for a constant travelling life-style, rescued him from such exclusive appellations. After having brought to England by his parents, twelve weeks after his birth in St. Kitts, he grew up in England. At present, living and teaching in the United States, his 'home' destinations continuously shift between Britain, America and Caribbean islands. This ever-changing nature of his 'home' allows him to escape the easy fixation of the above tag, 'black British.' Benedicte Ledent, a prominent critic on Caryl Phillips's writing points out the difficulty "...in pigeonholing him as either Caribbean, Black British, British, or even, now that he resides most of the year in New York, as African-American" (*Caryl Phillips: Contemporary World Writers* 5). But the best tag that she proposes to be attached with Phillips is 'Caribbean' due to his complex identity, for it is an "...essentially inclusive and multicultural label, which contains not only 'both Europe and Africa' but also the Americas, and therefore sidesteps the conceptual straitjacket of adjectives such as 'Black British' or even post-colonial" (*Caryl Phillips: Contemporary World Writers* 5). However, the particular interest that Caryl Phillips evinces in addressing the issues of the downtrodden and the

marginalised people brings him together with the vast pool of other postcolonial writers while simultaneously placing him with black British writers on account of his treatment of the issues of black Britons.

Caryl Phillips has imprinted his identity in the literary world with a substantial amount of his works that include, fiction, non-fiction, plays, essays, screenplays for films and television and anthologies. His career started by writing for the theatre, and his early plays include *Strange Fruit* (1980), *Where There is Darkness* (1982) and *The Shelter* (1983). He has written a number of radio plays and documentaries for BBC such as *The Wasted Years* (1984), *The Prince of Africa* (1987) and *The Spirit of America* (1995). He has written many screenplays including the three-hour film of his own novel *The Final Passage* in 1996 and for the film *Playing Away* (1986). His screenplay for the Merchant Ivory adaptation of V. S. Naipaul's *The Mystic Masseur* (2001) won the Silver Ombu for best screenplay at the Mar Del Plata film festival in Argentina. He has written ten novels and a number of essays. His novels include *The Final Passage* (1985), *A State of Independence* (1986), *Higher Ground* (1989), *Cambridge* (1991), *Crossing the River* (1993), *The Nature of Blood* (1997), *A Distant Shore* (2003), *Dancing in the Dark* (2005) *Foreigners* (2007) and *In the Falling Snow* (2009). His non-fictional works include *The European Tribe* (1987), *The Atlantic Sound* (2000), *A New World Order* (2001), and *Colour Me English* (2011). He is the editor of two anthologies: *Extravagant Strangers: A Literature of Belonging* (1997) and *The Right Set: An Anthology of Writing on Tennis* (2009). The translations of his works into over a dozen languages reveal how significant his

works are today. Phillips's *Crossing the River* was shortlisted for the 1993 Booker Prize and *A Distant Shore* won the 2004 'Commonwealth Writers Prize.'

Caryl Phillips's confrontation with cultural uncertainty in early years was enormous in the society of England that discriminated people on the basis of colour of the skin. Consequently, his dilemma arose out of a "discomfort of being torn between a British and West Indian culture" (Schatteman, *Conversations* xi). Most of the fictional works of Phillips are to be examined against this background of identity crisis confronted especially by Africans and West Indians in England. In an interview Phillips remarks, "I write because I don't want another generation, I don't want another individual to have to suffer, unnecessarily, anxieties around identity, to be ashamed of the questions "*Where am I from,*" [sic] to feel panicked when somebody says, "Who are you?" (Clingman "Other Voices", 113; emphasis original). The dilemma of rising from the displaced identity of first and second generations of Caribbean migrants in England and the uncertainty about belonging essentially become a catalyst for his imagination. It forces him not to spurn away from the issues of the impacts of colonialism, the displacement it brings about, search for belonging, bewilderment of living between multiple cultural identities and racial discriminations, and above all the psychological disorientation that all the above conditions bring in. As Nick Rennison in *Contemporary British Novelists* observes, "Through his carefully crafted but passionate investigations of people painfully uprooted from their selves and their past, he has provided an original perspective on themes of home, exile and memory that have exercised the imaginations of many novelists" (110). Accordingly, Phillips's fiction becomes a mirror that reflects the micro-history of the blacks – their colonial past,

experiences in slavery, dehumanisation, exiles and ultimately their present-day troubled presence in Europe. Nadine Fligel in her doctoral thesis argues, “Phillips compresses the historical world, thickening and reducing historical ingredients to their essential combination, thereby maximising their fictional use” (48). In fact, what Phillips intends to do through his writing is the retrieval of a history that has been obliterated by the West and its domineering discourses. Renee T. Schatteman quotes J. M. Coetzee in his introduction to *Conversations with Caryl Phillips*: “Phillips’s fiction has a single aim – ‘remembering what the west would like to forget’” (xv). This retrieval is a means of doing justice to the victims of history, reinstating their true history which the West forgets due to its inability and unwillingness to shoulder the responsibility in inflicting such massive amount of trauma and pain to millions of people. As Renee T. Schatteman notes, “The driving forces behind Phillips’s writing seem to be his commitment to the reworking of history to reveal new layers of analysis about the past and his ethic of sympathy and hope for those who have been overtaken by historical injustices” (*Conversations* xvi). Accordingly, behind his story telling, there is always a historical event as well as historical figures claiming for their rightful places.

Fundamentally, Africa, Caribbean and England become locations of major significance in Phillips’s fiction as it is in these locations where his characters confront uprootedness, displacement and search for a ‘home’ both in its literal and metaphorical senses. These triangular locations, with its interstitial spaces of Atlantic, hold importance in the diasporic journey of the blacks. It represents a movement as in Paul Gilroy’s ‘black Atlantic’ – a space that stands for the diasporic movement of the blacks across the space and time. Africa is important

because it has witnessed the massive displacements and dispersals of its people in a system of slavery, while it is also the ancestral home for many of the blacks who have been scattered across the globe. It represents the soil where they all find their 'troubled ancestral roots,' while profoundly creating a consciousness of being 'on permanent black diaspora.' Caribbean is pictured as a site of colonial remnants where European colonialism has played its havoc in constructing its marginality and postcolonial situation. It also becomes a location where Africa meets its displaced, lost children. Phillips says, "The reason I write about the Caribbean is that the Caribbean contains both Europe and Africa. ...It is where Africa met Europe on somebody else's soil and that juxtaposition of Africa and Europe in the Americas is very important for me" (qtd. in Rennison 109). England is important as it is the locale to where the displaced blacks from Africa, Caribbean and from the erstwhile colonies arrive. It becomes a point of destination as well for the twentieth century migrants, asylum seekers and refugees due to Britain's role in precipitating their postcolonial conditions, and also owing to the economic possibilities it offers in a capitalist world. Therefore, these three locations, as a structural triangle in Phillips's fiction, become spaces where diasporic consciousness of the blacks interact and negotiate to produce the black cultural identity.

Caryl Phillips's fiction shows a deep concern for the blacks' suffering in the system of transatlantic slavery. He recounts how their displacement and consequent diaspora have created in them an enduring sense of 'a people without history, land and identity,' and he reflects on how the present day lives of the blacks in Caribbean, Europe and America are part of that great catastrophe in the

history of humanity. Mawuena Logan notes that although slavery is a recognised institution as old as humanity itself, the ‘transatlantic slave trade,’ which gained momentum after the first human cargo of kidnapped Africans arrived in Portugal in 1441, gave a new meaning to the trade in humans (393). Transatlantic slavery as an institutionalised structure of oppression is reckoned to have flourished during the period from fifteenth to the nineteenth century that “transported between 9 and 15 million Africans to the Americas” (Falola xv). The whole structure of transatlantic slavery rested on two significant aspects in relation to the European whites; first, it depended on the socio–political and economic system of Europe, and second, transatlantic slavery flourished on the Orientalist principles that ‘authorised’ the Europeans to subjugate the ‘less civilized’ people. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin observe, “Commercial slavery was the logical extension both of the need to acquire a cheap labour force for burgeoning planter economies, and of the desire to construct Europe’s cultures as ‘civilized’ in contrast to the native, the cannibal, and the savage” (*Key Concepts* 213).

While slaves were bartered for goods from Europe, their physical and psychological conditions fell below that of human. As Suzanne Miers observes, “In normal parlance, slaves are possessions. They can be bought and sold, given away, inherited, paid as tax or tribute, and used for any purpose their owners wish”(714). More traumatising was their nightmarish journeys known as ‘Middle Passage.’ Middle Passage constituted one of three legs of ‘triangular trade,’ representing three voyages: the first, from Europe to Africa with manufactured goods and alcohol; the second, from Africa to the Americas with slaves; and the third, from the Americas to Europe with bills of exchange and trade commodities.

The Middle Passage refers to the second part of that voyage, which rendered both physical and psychological torture with harrowing conditions in the cargo ships where often the slaves were crammed in dirty and stinking conditions. BioDun J. Ogundayo observes that the intention behind such dehumanising acts was to either erase African identity or make the African forget his or her origins, or the very source of their being (175). Essentially, transatlantic slavery disrupted all the notions of community, kinships, history and culture. It “diluted their local and regional African cultures and stamped them as a people apart and inferior in societies otherwise characterised by a large degree of individualism, freedom, and mobility” (Rawley 4). The greater part of the slaves involved in the Middle Passage ended up on the Caribbean plantations, where they encountered extreme brutalities.

Phillips is concerned with multiple levels of displacements and colonial conditions created by transatlantic slavery and territorial colonisation in the lives of the blacks. Basically, the displacement of the blacks arose when they were transported from Africa to the Caribbean islands as slaves to work in the plantation colonies of Europe. Though slave trade and slavery were prohibited by law in Britain in 1907 and 1934 respectively (Bryan 64), colonial rule still continued in these parts of globe. British Empire held many parts of the Caribbean islands as its colony, leaving the region underdeveloped. When the post – War years necessitated the labour force for Britain’s renovation, many of the Caribbeans immigrated from their post-colonial circumstances of islands to the uncertain opportunities of Britain. In fact, such kind of immigration to Britain was endorsed by the British Nationality Act of 1948. ‘Windrush generation’ is a

popular designation for this post-war immigration to Britain, and it derives that name from the name of a converted troopship, *Empire Windrush*, which began carrying West Indians and other emigrants to England in June, 1948 (Weiss 163). Though Britain invited the West Indians for the reconstruction of the country, a true acceptance and recognition were not accorded to them. This predicament of the blacks has been one of the concerns of Caryl Phillips's literary explorations. His writing is, therefore, modified by a consciousness that envelops Africa, Caribbean and England. Maya Jaggi notes that the spectral triangle of Phillips's work embraces the Africa of his ancestry, the Caribbean of his birth, the Britain of his upbringing and the United States where he lives now (77).

While Phillips is concerned with the lives of the blacks in Europe and America, he finds similar predicament in the lives of the Jews in Europe. For him, both the Jews and the blacks are "figure[s] of exclusion" (Durrant 6). As a black British writer, Phillips's interest in the issues of the Jews has been quite fascinating and paradoxical as well. A lack of public reference points to the experiences of the blacks in Europe during the 1970's, turned Phillips's attention towards Europe's treatment of the Jews, through which he made some sense of his own marginalisation. His watching the T.V. programme "The World at War" on the Holocaust, and his reading *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1947), initiated him into the issues of displacement and diaspora of the Jews. He could not accept the discrimination against the Jews as true in a Modern Europe in spite of their white colour. In an interview he observes, "I felt that if white people can do that to themselves, what the hell are they going to do me? I became interested in Jewish history" (Bell 601). To Phillips, the issues of both the Jews and the blacks are

significantly analogous because Europe's eagerness to exclude the 'other,' which stems from an ethnocentric attitude, is indiscriminately directed against both the blacks and the whites alike. He is also reminded of Frantz Fanon's remarks: "It was my philosophy professor, a native of Antilles, who recalled the fact to me one day: 'whenever you hear anyone abuse the Jews pay attention, because he is talking about you'" (*The European Tribe* 54). In spite of his grandfather's Jewish background, Phillips denies his interest in the cause of the Jews coming that way. He notes, "...the family thing didn't contribute to my interest really" (Schatteman, "Disturbing Master Narratives" 60). Phillips's interests in the issues of the blacks and the Jews bring him to view human sufferings beyond any particular racial categories. Paul Gilroy shares a similar perspective of Phillips while placing together the histories of both the blacks and the Jews in his *Black Atlantic*. While examining the five hundred years of history of the blacks' diasporic journeys and migrations, Gilroy draws a parallel experiences of the Jews, thereby closely linking their histories of journeys and exiles. He reminds, "It is often forgotten that the term 'diaspora' comes into the vocabulary of the black studies and the practice of pan-Africanist politics from Jewish thought" (205). Though Phillips deals with the histories of the blacks and the Jews, in no way he makes a comparison with their experiences. Each history is treated with its unique experiences, simultaneously distancing and juxtaposing. His intention is to show how the victimisations in the history sometimes have a common source and common experiences of suffering.

However, the juxtaposition of the histories of both the blacks and the Jews in Phillips's fiction has been critically discussed from various angles. As Wendy

Zierler observes, "...by maintaining a pattern of asymmetry, Phillips brings together black and Jewish history, but also safeguards their respective integrity and specificity" (62–63). But the fierce criticism that has been levelled against this act of Phillips is by Hilary Mantel. As she notes, "This is the devil's sentimentality: it is demented cosiness, that denies the differences between people, denies how easily the interests of human beings become divided. It is indecent to lay claim to other people's suffering: it is a colonial impulse, dressed up as altruism" (qtd. in Craps 196). But Benedicte Ledent defends Phillips's position by observing that a black writer is reprimanded for such an act, while it is considered acceptable when it is displayed by white writers like Thomas Hardy, Tolstoy, or Shakespeare (*Caryl Phillips: Contemporary World Writers* 151). Sam Durrant also defensively argues: "To link the two modes of racial oppression is not to challenge arguments concerning the uniqueness of the Holocaust, nor to gloss over the differences between the extermination of the Jews and the many different forms of colonialism – few of which were genocidal in intention" (3). However, the treatment of the histories of blacks and Jews in Phillips's novels originates from viewing those histories through a sympathetic concern for humanity, for as he understands, human oppression and suffering are the same in the core, irrespective of space and time, or even race.

Taking all the fictional works of Phillips together, no work can be categorised as dealing with a specific theme, but a general pattern of dominant themes may be traced in his works. *Cambridge* (1991) and *Higher Ground* (1989) predominantly deal with the slave trade and the plantation slavery, while *Crossing the River* (1993) explicates the African diaspora across the globe. Migration to

Britain is treated in *A Final Passage* (1985), *A Distant Shore* (2003) and *Foreigners* (2007), while the post-independent situation and independence of Caribbean islands are explored in *A Final Passage* (1985) and *A State of Independence* (1986). *The Nature of Blood* (1997) almost wholly and a section in *Higher Ground* deal with the dislocation of the Jews at various periods in the history. The theme of black minstrelsy in America is also examined in *Dancing in the Dark* (2005), while *In the Falling Snow* (2009) discusses the modern-day presence of the blacks in England with a racial consciousness still tapping behind, the complexities related to the present generation, and the anxieties of the forthcoming generation in Britain.

The present study “Contours of Psychological (Dis)orientation: A Postcolonial Reading of Caryl Phillips’s Fiction” is an examination into some of the above postcolonial experiences as described in Caryl Phillips’s fiction from the perspective of a postcolonial psychological understanding. While Phillips’s fiction addresses as to how knowledge–power structures constitute the subordination and postcoloniality of the less powerful, the present thesis attempts to enter the psychological arenas of those power relationships and its massive consequences. It, thus, attempts to analyse the internal dynamics of those power relations that sustain colonialism and neo-colonialism, and the impacts and consequences of such power relations on the psyche of the coloniser and the colonised. However, a few terms associated with these experiences, such as ‘colonialism,’ ‘coloniality,’ ‘post-colonialism,’ ‘postcolonialism,’ ‘(post)colonialism’ ‘postcoloniality’ and ‘(post)coloniality’ often generate ambiguities in relation to its implications. In this

context, an explanation to some of the key terminologies as used in the thesis would help clarify the conceptual framework designed for this research.

‘Colonialism’ is viewed as the invasion, occupation and control of other people's territories and possessions. As John McLeod argues, “Colonialism transformed place, reorganising and restructuring the environments it settled; and it also changed the people involved – on all sides – who lived in colonized locations” (*The Routledge Companion* 2). The outcome of such incursions is revealed in the complex relationships that have emerged between the coloniser and the colonised. According to Ania Loomba, “... it locked the original inhabitants and the newcomers into the most complex and traumatic relationships in human history” (2). Primarily, it denotes a situation in which political, social and economic control is exerted through a colonial administration. On the other hand, ‘coloniality’ is the condition experienced by the vulnerable or the exploited even in the absence of a formal colonial administration. It is a ‘condition’ of subjugation and exploitation that spreads even to social, cultural, political, sexual, psychological and economic territories.

There exists a real disagreement and incongruity in the academic fields with regard to the use of the term ‘postcolonialism.’ The complexity that surrounds the term, as Simon Featherstone observes, “has led to much debate, to hyphens and parentheses demarcating the prefix, and to some theorists ... avoiding the term altogether” (4–5). One of such complexities associated with the term ‘postcolonialism’ is its indiscriminate use with and without a hyphen after the prefix ‘post’ to suggest various aspects of colonialism and colonial conditions. However, when used with a hyphen as in ‘post–colonialism,’ the term would

easily suggest “a compound, in which the ‘post–’ is a prefix which governs the subsequent element. ‘Post–colonial’ thus becomes something which is ‘post’ or after colonial” (Mishra and Hodge 276). The remarks made by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin clarify how the term has acquired a pluralistic meaning over the course of time:

As originally used by historians after the Second World War in terms such as the post–colonial state, ‘post–colonial’ had a clearly chronological meaning, designating the post–independence period. However, from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization. (*Key Concepts* 186)

However, one may find it useful to consider the term ‘post–colonialism’/‘postcolonialism’ by not designating a historical period, because in so doing, it suggests a period after independence or after colonialism. This method is likely to signify the idea of a historical period which, in effect, would confine the whole analysis to the effects of ‘after – independence’ period. Kwame Anthony Appiah notes that “the *post* in postcolonial, like the post in postmodern is the *post* of the space–clearing gesture” (119; emphasis original). For Robert Young, while postcolonialism is the political, cultural, economic and intellectual resistance of people in the third world to Western domination, it is not post as in “after the end of colonialism,” but rather post as in “after the onset of colonialism” (Krishna 67). However, while both the terms ‘postcolonialism’/‘post–colonialism’ are used interchangeably and indiscriminately in the contemporary theories and analysis to designate the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture and human identity are

represented in relation to colonial experiences, the present study would use the term ‘postcolonialism’ without hyphenation, unless and otherwise to designate a historical period, in its inclusive uses to see the causes and effects of colonialism on cultures and societies. Accordingly, the concept of ‘postcolonialism,’ in this thesis, is to be viewed as the study and analysis of European invasions, their hidden motives and interests in colonial occupations, the repercussions of colonial conditions on the victims, the formation of subjectivity and a decolonising consciousness of the subjugated under such conditions. It may be seen also as the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture and human identity are represented in relation to the above colonial experiences. Thus, ‘postcolonialism’ may be better viewed as a perspective that addresses “all aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *Post-colonial Reader* 2). For the purpose of which, the term is to be disconnected from the notions of formal end of colonial rule and acknowledge “that the material realities and modes of representation common to colonialism are still with us today, even if the political map of the world has changed through decolonisation” (McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* 33).

‘Postcoloniality’ is another term that finds a place in the discussion and analysis carried out in this thesis. While the term ‘postcoloniality’ escapes precise definition as the other related terms, it implies the ‘condition’ and the subjectivity of the individual, which is constructed in relation to race, ethnicity, culture, identity etc. It transcends the constrictions of a material condition, in that it exists before and after independence. Ania Loomba, while discussing Jorge de Alva, suggests,

Postcoloniality should signify not so much subjectivity ‘after’ the colonial experience as a subjectivity of oppositionality to imperializing/colonizing ... discourses and practices ... We should ‘remove postcoloniality from a dependence on an antecedent colonial condition’ and ‘tether the term to a post–structuralist stake that marks its appearance. (12)

The other terms that are employed in the thesis are ‘(post)colonialism and (post)coloniality with the prefix ‘post’ in parenthesis. This is because under certain contexts, the postcolonial subject’s condition is purely ‘colonial,’ where no possibility of resistance is seen at the other end of the tunnel; but under certain other conditions, it may be a ‘postcolonial’ situation, in which there may be a prospect for a resistance or agency. However, at times, the postcolonial subject’s position falls either into postcolonial condition or purely into colonial condition and under such fluctuating situations of the postcolonial subject, terms like (post)colonialism and (post)coloniality are adapted.

The thesis proposes to analyse Caryl Phillips’s fiction under the light of a postcolonial reading strategy. ‘Postcolonial reading’ is a reading strategy that attempts to discover the hegemonic relationships in various domains of human relationship in the backdrop of colonialism. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin suggest that “postcolonialism” should be seen as a “reading strategy” (*Empire Writes Back* 189). They consider ‘postcolonial reading’ as “A way of reading and rereading texts of both metropolitan and colonial cultures to draw deliberate attention to the profound and inescapable effects of colonization on literary production; anthropological accounts; historical records; administrative and scientific writing”

(Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *Key Concepts* 192). Such an approach of subversive reading allows seeing the processes and repercussions of colonialism in a new light. Here, the text is read to bring out the ‘contradictions’ of its underlying ‘assumptions’ of civilisation, justice, aesthetics, sensibility, race and reveals its colonialist ideologies and processes (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *Key Concepts* 192). On the contrary, a reading strategy that allows seeing colonial processes and repercussions of colonialism enables the reader to discover the fundamental dialectics of colonial relationships, the structuring aspects of colonialism and varied manifestations of such relationships. In the present study this latter aspect of postcolonial reading is adapted, mainly by incorporating the psychological insights and theories provided by many of the scholars in the field of postcolonial psychology.

The study finds many-sided relationships between the psychology and postcolonial conditions. Under the influence of poststructuralist dismantling of the Cartesian view of ‘self’ that guaranteed the supremacy and integrity of the self with its oft-quoted dictum, “I think, therefore I am,” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Key Concepts* 11), postcolonial theories also view the ‘self’ not anymore as an entity that has an exclusive power over it, but rather as one that is exposed to external and internal influences. Therefore, in postcolonial studies, the self becomes an entity that is profoundly influenced by the effects of various colonial conditions and processes. John C. Turner’s observation is significant in this regard. He says that self is often fashioned and defined by the socially produced anchor-points, and all the cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioural functioning take place from a socially defined vantage point and are, therefore,

regulated and mediated by it (xiii). Accordingly, the correlation that the study draws between the psychology and postcolonial conditions offers a framework to examine the after-effects of various colonial histories and contexts, the complexities of identity and race, and the psychological and cultural manifestations of colonial relationships. Psychological aspects of colonial conditions gain significant attention in this study from an awareness that while there have been great amount of researches conducted on the political, cultural and economic dimensions of colonialism and colonial conditions, adequate considerations have not yet been given to analyse the psychological experiences and coordinates of such conditions. However, this does not mean a total absence of any studies that examine the psychological aspects of colonial experiences; but rather, it indicates the discrepancy in the amount of attention laid on the issue.

Various postcolonial thinkers have noted the necessities and the implications emerging from the link between the studies of postcolonial psychology and various aspects of colonialism. As Ashis Nandy observes, “The political economy of colonization is of course important, but the crudity and inanity of colonialism are principally expressed in the sphere of psychology” (2). Abigail Ward argues, “A psychological approach to studying postcolonial cultures often establishes a way of reading which is attentive to the psychological effects of colonization and/or decolonization on formerly colonized and, frequently, colonizing peoples” (190). The basic assumption of the present study is that a psychological understanding of postcolonial experiences can significantly clarify many of the fundamental issues related to colonial relationships and experiences in

(post)colonialism and (post)colonial conditions that are often undermined or obliterated in the metanarratives of the history of colonisation.

While attention is focused on the postcolonial psychological experiences, a clarification of the concept ‘psychological (dis)orientation’ as used in the title of the thesis is deemed necessary. This may be done by viewing the concepts in their separate connotations, as ‘disorientation’ and ‘orientation.’ However, these concepts as employed in the study always cannot be taken as categories diametrically opposed; instead, the term as used in the title designates two simultaneous positions of human psyche under postcolonial conditions. Psychological disorientation is a psychological state characterised by a lack of a consistency, a state of disruption and a disorder. David Matsumoto describes psychological disorientation as an impaired capacity to perceive one’s place in time, space or situation (163). M.S. Bhatia explains psychological disorientation as impairment of awareness of time, place, and the position of the self in relation to other persons (118). However, the concept of psychological disorientation designates two aspects in the thesis. First, in the light of above two explanations of the term ‘disorientation,’ it explicitly refers to a dissociation of the self from reality, a loss of direction and sanity, or to some extent, a state of psychic disorder. Such disorientation occurs in the individuals who confront the effects of traumatic events in the colonial conditions. Second, it denotes a sense of uncertainty and incomprehension, a condition in which the individuals fail to find a unique experience. This situation is not exactly a state of mental disorder in psychological sense, but rather an experience of ambivalence that provides them with a sense of ‘not here and not there.’

On the other hand, the concept ‘psychological orientation’ indicates how one directs, moves or conducts one’s life, rather positively, under a particular condition or disposition. The study is conducted from the point of two aspects of psychological orientation. First, psychological orientation suggests how one’s attitudes and psychic dispositions operate under various situations. In the study, it signifies how the individuals conduct, orient or perform even under psychologically disorienting experiences. In this paradigm, the individuals are conscious of their ambivalent conditions and their inability to hold themselves uniquely under multiple uncertain experiences. This kind of situation is often displayed under psychological disorientation, where the individuals find themselves in a situation ‘not here and not there,’ where everything is out of joint. Second, it denotes a psychological condition, where they conduct themselves rather constructively, though, unaware of their psychological disorientation or psychic disturbances. Nevertheless, the concept ‘orientation’ in association with the term ‘disorientation’ implies a paradoxical situation. It is true that basically in the disoriented individuals, a delusive psychological condition compels them to imagine that they exist in a normal world. The individual caught in psychological disorientation loses contact with reality, and therefore thinks that he or she is conducting himself or herself ‘logically.’ However, this ‘false vision’ of the disoriented individuals generally provides a clue to their emotional instability. Thus, the concept of ‘psychological (dis)orientation,’ in nutshell, implies two psychological states working in an individual simultaneously.

The vast fields of postcolonial studies and psychology are closely related, for as Mrinalini Greedharry observes in *Postcolonial Theory and Psychoanalysis*,

“the language of psychoanalysis so permeates the discourse of postcolonial theory that most of us have lost track of the origins of the terms and conceptualizations we regularly use such as, most notably, the well-worn term ‘the other’ derived from Lacan” (5). Colonial encounters have created unparalleled situations of complex and unsettling relationships between the coloniser and the colonised in history, impacting tremendously on the psyche of each other. A psychological understanding of the colonial experiences can inevitably enhance deep insights into the social, cultural and political effects of diverse colonial moments, while such experiences have been investigated so vibrantly to understand the material effects of colonial practices. Therefore, in order to understand the extensive impacts of colonial experiences, it is imperative to identify also the psychological coordinates and effects of colonialism. One of the fundamental premises on which the present thesis develops is that the “‘marginal’ and the ‘central’ [in colonial relationships] are of course psychological constructs” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Empire Writes Back* 104). Mrinalini Greedharry accentuates the need for incorporating psychological theories into the analytical contexts of postcolonial experiences when she says,

Since Fanon, focusing on subjectivity, identity or the relational dynamic between colonizers and colonized, through psychoanalytic language, has allowed postcolonial criticism to insist and demonstrate that there are devastating cultural and personal manifestations and effects of colonialism that strictly economic and political accounts of colonialism have not, in the past, been able or willing to reveal. (5–6)

A psychological inquiry can thus bring to surface many of the fundamental issues simmering beneath the colonial/postcolonial experiences. However, the present research does not dwell exclusively on psychoanalytic theories related to colonial moments, but rather it attempts to draw heavily on the postcolonial psychological insights and theories as provided by some of the postcolonial scholars in the field. That is to say, the present study engages itself with those psychoanalytic theories that have been adequately utilised by some of the postcolonial scholars to theorise various kinds of (post)colonial experiences.

Critical insights, in the field of postcolonial psychology, provided by W.E.B Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Octave Mannoni, Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak have all been significant contributions to the understanding of the postcolonial experiences of individuals dislocated through various colonial processes. While the present study is conducted to examine the psychological experiences of postcolonial conditions, it seeks to be informed by the postcolonial theoretical formulations on the dynamics of psyche within the context of colonial hegemonic relationships as conceived by some of the postcolonial thinkers. While some of these thinkers explore the peculiar psychological dynamics of the coloniser and their strategies and methods, discourses and ideologies used to produce and perpetuate such power–relationship, others attempt to analyse the peculiar psychic conditions of the oppressed that guarantee and legitimise colonialism in spite of their anti–hegemonic resistive power. While examining the fiction of Caryl Phillips from postcolonial theoretical perspectives, the present study utilises the theories and psychological insights of these postcolonial thinkers as a theoretical framework to read his fictional works. While the thesis depends

extensively on postcolonial psychological theories, it also seeks considerable help from the modern psychological theories that elude the distinction between psychoanalytic, psychiatric and general psychological theories. A brief survey of these theoretical positions would allow one to see how these thinkers view colonial relationships, and to what extent the impacts of colonialism exert influence on the colonised and the coloniser.

In *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) addresses the issue of the colour line in twentieth-century. According to him the problem of the Negro is that he constantly strives to conflate two identities in a quest for self actualisation; he aspires to be both a Negro and an American. By introducing two concepts like ‘the veil’ and ‘double-consciousness’ Du Bois attends to the quintessential black experience in America. To him, the veil suggests three things: first, the dark skin that distinguishes them from the whites; second, the white’s inability to see blacks as ‘true’ Americans; and third, it refers to blacks’ own inability to see themselves beyond racial stereotypes created by the whites. He also provides an insight into the dangers of blacks’ internalising the stereotypes in his celebrated concept of ‘double consciousness’ that occurs precisely by “looking at one’s self through the eyes of others” (*The Souls of Black Folk* 8). These theoretical perspectives of Du Bois provide a hint to the psychic mechanisms and dynamics that the black man adopts especially at the presence of whites; it essentially points to how a colonial relationship is perpetuated by internalising the Western stereotypes about the black man.

Octave Mannoni (1899–1989) in his book *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonisation* (1950 trans.) explores mainly the psychological

imperatives of both the coloniser and the colonised in their basic character of 'Inferiority Complex' and 'Dependency Complex' respectively. He sees colonialism in Madagascar "as a case of the meeting of two entirely different types of personality and their reactions to each other, in consequence of which the native becomes 'colonised' and the European becomes a colonial" (Mannoni 17). According to him, Malagasy (the native of Madagascar) were "neither inferior nor superior but yet wholly dependent" (Mannoni 157). Mannoni contends that the dependency behaviour in the Malagasy predated the arrival of the Europeans. When the Malagasy is forced to break ties with their cultural practices of their tribal society – "ancestor-worship, or the cult of the dead" (Mannoni 49), they suffer a sense of "abandonment" and undergo a kind of predicament similar to that of 'adolescent crisis'. For Mannoni, this threat of abandonment creates an "orphaned state" (Mannoni 55). Therefore, the drive to avoid this sense of abandonment in the Malagasy results in dependence; consequently, the presence of the European becomes very comforting. Mannoni observes, "They considered the presence of the European beneficial and felt that his arrival held out to them hopes of progress" (128). In the European, the Malagasy sees an absolute master, the protector and the guardian. Mannoni also discovers in the Malagasy the dependency being continued when the European does the colonised a favour and the natives expect such favours again and again. "In fact the gifts which the Malagasy first accepts, then asks for, and finally, in certain rare cases, even demands, are simply the outward and visible signs of this reassuring relationship of dependence" (Mannoni 42). According to him, the colonisation is a kind of gratification of this dependency complex of the Malagasy. By contrast, Mannoni

proposes that the European culture is inclined towards what he calls inferiority complex of the Europeans. According to him, it is the result of a “grave lack of sociability combined with a pathological urge to dominate” (102). Mannoni’s concept of inferiority is attributed to Europeans’ inability to compete successfully with other Europeans in their land. This inferiority complex in the Europeans compels them to paternalize and dominate others. Regardless of some limitations, Mannoni’s study remains significant in its attempts to comprehend the psychological effects of colonisation. Frantz Fanon had been a great critique of Mannoni, whose theory of ‘dependency’ as the root cause of colonialism was vehemently critiqued by Fanon.

A rather authentic study on the development of colonial encounters and the psychological pressures of the colonised began to appear with the works of Frantz Fanon (1925–1961) from Martinique, one of the Caribbean islands, in his works *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967 trans.) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1965 trans.). Fanon focused on the subjectivity, identity and the dynamics in the relationships between the colonisers and the colonised, and moreover on the transformation of the colonised at the presence of the white coloniser. His views on cultural colonisation, especially by colonial language, have wider implications in the formation of ‘self-consciousness.’ According to Fanon, “To speak means to be in a position to use a certain syntax, to grasp the morphology of this or that language, but it means above all to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 8). His viewpoints on blacks’ sense of ‘inferiority complex’ and need for ‘lactification’ or “hallucinatory whitening” (*Black Skin, White Masks* 74) sheds light on the mechanism that conducts the

black man in the presence of whites. In Fanon's opinion, the black man, when living in the white society, becomes excruciatingly aware of his 'blackness' and a sense of 'lack' of white colour; as a result, he makes frantic attempts to escape, in a self-deceiving manner, his 'blackness'. Such an attempt to compensate this grave 'lack' of self, the black man puts on various 'white masks' of language, dress and manners – which becomes a kind of 'lactification.' Thus, the black man's attempts to redress the 'blackness' in him essentially crush his psyche and create his subjectivity more emphatic. Fanon argues, "In the man of color there is a constant effort to run away from his own individuality, to annihilate his own presence" (*Black Skin, White Masks* 43). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, he speaks about colonial violence as a necessary resistive strategy against colonialism. To him, decolonisation is a process attained through colonial violence. Fanon speaks about violence in decolonisation from his own experiences of Algerian war that erupted 1954, while he was working as doctor for the psychiatric ward of the Blida-Joinville, a French-run hospital in Algeria. Fanon treated the victims of psychological suffering of both the soldiers who attempted to quell anti-colonial resistance through violence as well as the Algerians who were victimised in the war.

After Fanon and Mannoni, colonial situations and internal dynamics of colonialism were captivatingly analysed by contemporary postcolonial thinkers like Edward Said (1935 –), Homi K. Bhabha (1949 –) and Gayatri C. Spivak (1942–). Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha and Gayatri C. Spivak who constitute what Robert Young describes as "the Holy Trinity of colonial-discourse analysis," (*Colonial Desire* 154) offer considerable psychological insights into the

interactive dynamics of the coloniser and the colonised. Edward Said's monumental works *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), Homi Bhabha's *Location of Culture* (1994) and Gayatri Spivak's works "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1995) and the essay "The Rani of Sirmur" (1985) all provide ample illustrations of how colonial psychology evolves in the matrix of power and knowledge. *Orientalism* specifically points out how Western knowledge constructs the Orient through the dissemination of Westernised notions of Orient. Orientalism produces an image of the Orient, which is also a moral system, in which "the Orient ('out there' towards East) is corrected, even penalized, for lying outside the boundaries of European society, 'our' world; the Orient is thus Orientalized ..." (Said, *Orientalism* 67). Ashcroft notes that the European knowledge, thus, by relentlessly constructing its subject within the discourse of Orientalism, is able to maintain hegemonic power over it (*Edward Said* 53). Edward Said says,

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. (*Orientalism* 2)

One of the central features of the construction of the subjectivity is its inseparableness from constructing the 'other'. The subject is tended to assimilate and internalise the stereotypes and discourses constructed through Orientalist perspectives of the West, and end up, in the final analysis, a multifaceted individual with a 'fracture' or a 'rupture' that makes it impossible for a retrieval of

the former self. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said explores how Western cultural imperialism exercises control over the colonised. He cautiously distinguishes between imperialism and colonialism. He defines imperialism as “thinking about, settling on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others” (*Culture and Imperialism* 7). His argument is that in spite the disappearance of formal colonialism, imperialism, especially in the modes of cultural imperialism, may be sustained by colonial powers from the distance. These two books of Edward Said remarkably tell how the West fixes the ‘rest’ of the world in its colonial discourses and Western cultural attributes that create issues of viewing the colonised as the ‘other,’ while it also provides the colonised plentiful opportunities to indulge in colonial stereotypes.

Homi Bhabha’s *Location of Culture* (1994) provides an understanding about basic psychological coordinates in colonial locations through the concepts of ‘mimicry,’ ‘stereotype’ and a sense of ‘ambivalence.’ If in Edward Said, one finds a debilitating overpowering of colonial discourse, subjugating the subject, in Bhabha, there is actually a split subject who is always at a traumatic ambivalence. Bhabha argues that the identity of the subject is in a motion sliding ambivalently between the polarities of similarity and difference, which shows how the self is split between the contrary positions. “...a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (*Location of Culture* 86). In this case, it is more than ambivalence, but rather it is a ‘rupture.’ His argument is that while colonial powers use these strategies of ‘mimicry’ and ‘stereotypes’ to perpetuate colonialism, the resultant phenomenon of cultural hybridity of the colonised

renders ambivalence in the coloniser that disrupts colonial authority and their power–sources. Bhabha also demonstrates as to how these colonial strategies become tools of subversion and resistance in the hands of the colonised by mimicking the colonisers’ cultural attributes.

In postcolonial studies, Gayatri C. Spivak’s essay, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” has occupied a significant place due to its emphasis on the necessity of having the voice of the subaltern be heard directly. In poststructuralist perspective, the human consciousness is constructed by the discourses of power while it discards the idea of possessing an autonomous self by the subject; that is, the subject cannot hold absolute control over the construction of selfhood. Under such perspective, one’s identity is constructed from the positions outside of itself and one has his/her voice articulated by others. Thus, it follows that the individual is not a transparent representation of the self, but essentially an effect of discourse provided by others. What Spivak argues in this context is that while the intellectuals, through representing the voice of subaltern or the oppressed through their discourses and voices, assume to represent a transparent medium for the subaltern. The intellectual becomes a dependable negotiator for the voice of the oppressed, a spokesperson through whom the oppressed can clearly speak. Gayatri Spivak draws attention to the dangers of seizing the voice of the subaltern by the dominant discourses, thereby foreclosing the possibility of even forging an active anti–colonial resistance or agency. Spivak’s point is that “no act of dissent or resistance occurs on behalf of an essential subaltern subject entirely separate from the dominant discourse that provides the language and the conceptual categories with which the subaltern voice speaks” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Key*

Concepts 219). Moreover, Spivak points out the complex problems of ‘the subaltern’ by situating them as ‘gendered subjects’; for, according to her, “both as an object of subaltern colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant” (“Can the Subaltern Speak? 28).

Gayatri C. Spivak’s “The Rani of Sirmur” (1985) expounds the idea of colonial process of ‘othering,’ which describes the various ways in which colonial discourse produces its subjects. Spivak gives three examples of othering in a reading of Colonial Office dispatches between Captain Geoffrey Birch, his superior Major-General Ochterlony and his superior the Marquess of Hastings, Lord Moira (*Key Concepts* 171). The first is a process of ‘worlding’ whereby Captain Geoffrey Birch, one of the colonial officers in India, by riding across the Indian countryside represents Europe as the ‘Other’ creating the colonial ‘subjectivity’ of those residing there. The second is a process of ‘degrading’ by which the hill tribes are described by the colonial officer General Ochterlony in terms of “the brutality and purfidy [sic] of the rudest times without the courage and all the depravity and treachery of the modern days without the knowledge of refinement” (“The Rani of Sirmur” 254–55). The third is an example of ‘differentiation’ by which “the native states are being distinguished from “our [colonial] governments” (“The Rani of Sirmur” 255). Othering is a dialectical process in which the colonising Other is established simultaneously as its colonised others. ‘Constructing’ the others and keeping the process of othering on the move, therefore, is important for the imperial and colonising powers to affirm their own superiority.

The present study also has been informed, in certain cases, by the psychological observations made by the trauma studies. Novels of Caryl Phillips depict the crucial effects of traumatic past on the memory on the individuals, especially in the victims of Holocaust persecutions, in creating the post-traumatic stress. Cathy Caruth and Dominick LaCapra have explored the psychological legacies of the Holocaust. Abigail Ward quotes Cathy Caruth who in her edited collection of essays, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996) defines trauma as an “overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena” (196). Very often, the effects of trauma revisit the victims even after a long lapse of time. According Jon G. Allen,

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is aptly named; it’s a disorder that develops *after* traumatic stress. It’s a cruel illness, adding insult to injury. Experiencing extremely stressful events induces an illness that renders sufferers vulnerable to continually reliving those experiences in their mind afterward, in the form of flashbacks or nightmares. (171)

The past memories intrude into the present creating problems to persons who have already developed psychological symptoms owing to traumatic experiences. They may re-experience the powerful emotions which they experienced at the time of the trauma. In the novels of Phillips, the Holocaust victims become an instance of a case study in posttraumatic stress disorder. They re-experience a distressing past through memories, flashbacks and nightmares. As they re-experience such

traumatic events, they also undergo severe psychological problems. Jon G. Allen's observation that traumatic experiences can result in cynicism, bitterness, distrust, alienation, hatred, vengefulness, demoralisation, loss of faith and loss of hope (4–5) accentuates this argument.

The various postcolonial conditions and psychological experiences that the individuals in Phillips's novels experience become the crux of the present study. Evidently, the theoretical contexts also analyse how the psychological orientation and disorientation of individuals in Phillips's novels take place in relation to various postcolonial experiences such as those of power relationships between the colonial binaries, the various displacements, identity crisis and racial discrimination, and it also examines how the postcolonial agency becomes a psychic drive. The power-centered relationships between colonial binaries, about which the aforesaid postcolonial thinkers discuss, culminate in the displacement of the marginalised from manifold aspects of their life. One of the central aspects of Phillips's fiction is his preoccupation with the issues of displacement and search for 'home,' and therefore, it becomes a platform wherein he lets the painful drama of the humanity unfold with its psychological complexities and tensions. Jenny Sharpe observes, "Though the scope is broadened, Phillips's works have still a common element: people who have been displaced and who lack a comforting or stabilizing history or tradition" (28).

The displacements occur in relation to geographical, social, cultural and mnemonic spaces, and very often the subsequent attempts of the displaced to relocate or to find an alternative 'space'/ 'place'/ 'home'/ 'belonging' put them under various psychological pressures. However, the terms 'place' and

'displacement' occupy different shades of meaning in postcolonial studies. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, in postcolonial discourse 'place' is not necessarily what one conceives of it as a physical 'landscape' alone or never simply a location that is static, but rather it is also a concept that is associated with 'complex interaction of language, history and environment' (*Postcolonial Studies Reader* 391). Therefore, 'place' involves certain cultural signifiers and it clarifies as to how one's cultural consciousness is related to one's territory, how one's identity inevitably emerges out of it and how one is historically connected to its spatiality. Accordingly, 'displacement' in postcolonialism is a basic sense of 'uprootedness' and 'dislocation' from one's land, culture, self and history under colonial intervention and occupation, and it is essentially related to one's self and identity, informing its psychological impacts. As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin observe, "A valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by *dislocation*, resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or 'voluntary' removal for indentured labour" (*Empire Writes Back* 9).

A constant search for a 'home' or 'belonging,' therefore, becomes part of reinstating what has been lost in such displacements. For Phillips himself, 'home' ceases to be a single location of fixity and stability, while it possesses unstable and fluid characteristics like the waters of Atlantic. This predicament of uprootedness and the undecidability of re-rootedness are referred to in his essay *A New World Order* (2001). To his lawyer's rather troubled question as to where he should be disposed of posthumously, Phillips replies, "I wish my ashes to be scattered at the middle of the Atlantic Ocean at a point equidistant between Britain, Africa and North America'," a place, as he puts it, "I have come to refer to as my Atlantic

home” (*A New World Order* 304). Phillips finds this predicament with the black diaspora, in general, for whom “Belonging is a contested state [and home] is a place riddled with vexing questions” (6). Therefore, the idea of ‘home’ for the displaced becomes a contested state and the attainment of it is all the time deferred, while their life, living experiences and identity are constructed around these constant movements and dispersions. Phillips primarily suggests that this sense of rootlessness and homelessness that he finds in the Caribbeans and the Africans is part of their characteristic diasporic experiences.

The sense of rootlessness and continuing diasporic movements modify the concept of cultural identity of the postcolonial subject. As Phillips is deeply concerned with the present-day lives of those in forced migrations and exiles, “his writing,” in general, is viewed as “a place where diaspora identities are constructed and performed” (Walters 129). For Phillips, therefore, the identity formation of migrants, exiles and people on diaspora essentially take place in and around their constant movements and travels, implying that it occurs ‘neither here nor there.’ His fiction reflects the images of such states of anxiety and psychological distress of individuals who remain perplexed at the presence of incoherent identities. As Benedicte Ledent notes in relation to Phillips’s works, “... the diaspora is not an agenda imposed from the outside on Phillips’s work, but is a fully integrated element of his world vision, thus a catalyst for his complex approach to what home can be” (“Ambiguous Visions of Home” 200). While previously the Enlightenment assumptions held the view of an ‘essential’ and ‘unique’ cultural identity, and the ‘centrality’ of the idea of human subject, such conceptualisations are destabilised under post-structuralist perspectives. These

post-structuralist notions are adapted by postcolonial thinkers who concur with much of the post-structuralist position on subjectivity (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Key Concepts* 8). In other words, the field of postcolonial studies holds the view that one's identity is no longer perceived as an innate construct, but rather as something unstable, which changes in accordance with the diverse cultural contexts and societal operations. Accordingly, the concept of identity transcends the barriers of nation, culture and race. What modify all these transformative phases of the postcolonial subject are the constant travels, cross-border movements and cross-cultural engagements.

Paul Gilroy's work *Black Atlantic* (1993) shares this view of identity formation of postcolonial subject at the backdrop of migrations and travels wherein the concepts of nation, culture and identity are transcended and are gathered into new formations. In Gilroy's conceptualisation, 'black Atlantic' signifies the history of the movements of people of African descent from Africa to Europe, the Caribbean and the Americas and it offers new patterns of movements, cultural engagements and identity constructions. He argues, "The specificity of the modern political and cultural formation I want to call the black Atlantic can be defined, on one level, through this desire to transcend both the structures of the nation state and the constraints of ethnicity and national particularity" (*Black Atlantic* 19). As such, Gilroy's proposal argues against essentialist versions of identity in favour of a "more difficult option: the theorization of creolization, metissage, mestizaje, and hybridity" (*Black Atlantic* 2). Taken metaphorically, 'black Atlantic' represents the effects of transnational dispersions as well as the resultant forms of creolisation and hybridisation of identity. He takes Atlantic as

“one single, complex unit” of analysis in the discussions of the modern world and uses it to produce an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective (15). For him, a focus on the Atlantic crisscrossed by the movements of black people provides a means to re-examine the issues of the formation of cultural identity of blacks. Phillips, in a way, also shares this ideological framework that Gilroy conceives for his discussion of the identity formation of blacks.

The question that arises here is as to how, by living at these diverse cultures, by making continuous travels and migrations, and by being at the ‘centre’ and ‘periphery,’ the postcolonial subject discovers a viable solution for the identity formation. Hence, new cultural productions and cross-cultural engagements are expected to originate at new negotiating spaces and overlapping territories. As Edward Said mentions “overlapping territories and intertwined histories” are characteristic patterns of the postcolonial diaspora and dispersions (*Culture and Imperialism* 61). In *Culture and Imperialism*, he challenges the traditional binary colonial conceptualisations of cultures that held the stage for decades, and therefore, he offers new paradigms of cross-culturality and hybridity of the cultures. According to him, the binaries of the coloniser and the colonised cease to occupy on distinctly separate terrains; rather their encounter is attained on ‘overlapping’ territories: “So vast and yet so detailed is imperialism as an experience with crucial cultural dimensions, that we must speak of overlapping territories, intertwined histories common to men and women, whites and non-whites, dwellers in the metropolis and the peripheries, past as well as present and future ...” (*Culture and Imperialism* 61). Therefore, the focus of attention is not within particular national spaces or the distinct cultural locations or unique

identity constructs, but rather at ‘a meeting point,’ ‘the overlapping territories’ ‘borders’ or ‘liminal spaces’ where cultures and identities are engaged and negotiated. For Bhabha, these negotiating spaces are the ‘in-between,’ ‘interstitial spaces’ – spaces where cultural identity is modified and reformulated. Thus, it is at this ‘interface,’ where the two groups come, two identities meet and two cultures confront, where and when the new signs of identity and cultures are produced.

Stuart Hall (1932–), while conceiving of cultural identity, primarily points to two different ways of thinking about it. His essay, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” (1990), stresses on the significance of individual’s positioning in the formation of one’s cultural identity. Though he does not speak about the ‘overlapping territories’ and ‘in-between spaces,’ as Said and Bhabha do, he proposes two transformative aspects of cultural identity in relation to the history of colonialism. While the first view entails identity in terms of one shared culture, the second mode defines cultural identity rooted in continuous ‘play’ of history on the individual’s life. Whereas the first one reflects common historical experiences and shared cultural codes of African and Caribbean identities, the second mode of cultural identity focuses on what “‘we really are’; or rather – since history has intervened – ‘what we have become’” (225). He goes on to argue that “Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power.... [Identities] are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narratives of the past” (225). What Hall emphasises as the effect of such identity formation on the postcolonial subject is that one is allowed to recognise the ‘traumatic’ character of the colonial experience as a response to oppressive milieu. For him,

such transformative contexts have “the power to make us see and experience *ourselves* as ‘Other’” (225). This focuses mainly on the psychological experiences of the individuals under various colonial processes. Hall’s observation is similar to that of Bhabha and Said, for whom, identity formation of the postcolonial subject is principally impacted by the effects of colonial conditions.

Owing to the involvement of Britain in the colonial history of the Caribbean and elsewhere, it has witnessed great waves of migrations into its territories. Such migrations were also part of a fabricated myth about England as the ‘Mother country’ that was deeply embedded in the minds of the colonised during the days of Britain’s imperial glory. But on arriving in Britain, many of the migrants were exposed to the falsehood and deceit active around this myth. The migrants in Britain recognised that the suspicion and the feelings of inhospitality directed against them were the results of viewing them as exclusively a racial category and ethnic ‘other.’ From then, such ‘menacing situation’ has been encountered by Britain by adopting well-defined racial ideologies and by cultivating ethnocentric attitudes. In this context, Phillips notices that Europe had been a long subscriber to a “racially inscribed ‘traditional’ values” (*A New World Order* 245). Even many years after the great waves of immigrations, the arrival of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers into these locations is a remarkable phenomenon. England and America like other economically developed countries have become points of destinations to many who aspire to improve their life. In the contemporary period, civil wars, political strife and famines have also prompted great deal of migrations to these parts of the world seeking refuge and asylum. However, the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are met with the

same strategic approach of racial exclusiveness in these places. It exposes the obsession of these countries like America and England with homogeneity and their inability to deal with heterogeneity.

Paul Gilroy in his *Postcolonial Melancholia* (2005) observes that “Across Europe parties that express popular opposition to immigration have triumphed at the polls. Xenophobia and nationalism are thriving” (1–2). The racial ranting of Enoch Powell, a post–War racist politician in Britain in 1968, had been the symptom of this paranoia in Britain. In his infamous “Rivers of Blood” speech, he remarked about the black’s immigration to Britain: “It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre” (“Enoch Powell’s ‘Rivers of Blood’ Speech”). Accordingly, a total expulsion of the immigrants out of its political scenario or its racially constructed ghetto spaces, and reducing their identity into an inescapable ‘otherness’ have been the ways out before Britain. Such views have often pushed the immigrants to the edges or the margins of society making their condition more deplorable. While ‘racism’ categorises people on the basis of the colour of the skin, there is another parallel mode of exclusionary practice in ethnocentrism by which Europe and America exhibit discrimination towards the foreigners. In ethnocentric discriminatory practices, the focus is shifted from biological aspect to one of cultural difference. Ali Rattansi observes that this is a tendency to regard inter–communal hostilities as stemming from issues of cultural rather than racial difference (8). According to Gilroy the biological basis of eighteenth and nineteenth century modes of racialisation seem to be irrelevant as contemporary molecular biology emphasises the fundamental unity of all life at the genetic level. He argues, “[The] biotechnological revolution

demands a change in our understanding of ‘race,’ species, embodiment, and human specificity” (Gilroy, *Against Race* 20). However, racial and ethnocentric assumptions, which underlie much of Europe’s political and cultural epistemology, are manifested on the social and contemporary political policies and cultural practices. Phillips observes in connection with the social discrimination that he finds in Britain: “Race and ethnicity are the bricks and mortar with which the British have traditionally built a wall around the perimeter of their island nation and created fixity” (*New World Order* 272). Phillips sees, especially, in relation to Britain, an exclusive cultural sense of Englishness and a particularly closed, restricted and regressive form of national identity, as one of the central characteristics of their ethnocentric ideologies.

While ‘racism’ and ‘ethnocentrism’ can be the names for that experience by which persons belonging to (an)other group are categorised and marginalised due to the ‘presumed’ racial and ethnic inferiority, ‘xenophobia’ originates from the fear of the ‘foreigners’ and ‘outsiders’ as they are considered to threaten the cultural integrity of the society. Etymologically xenophobia means “fear of the stranger” and it is derived from the Greek words “xenos” meaning stranger or foreigner and “phobos” meaning fear (Nothwehr 6). Jonathan Crush and others define xenophobia as “attitudes, prejudices, and behaviour that reject, exclude and often vilify persons based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity” (5). Xenophobia is generally related to a sense of nationalism, and a psychological character in which it fears the presence of an ‘other’ in their premises. Caryl Phillips also examines the strange character of Europe and America in ‘tribalism’. His celebrated travelogue cum

cultural studies, *The European Tribe* (1987) and his latest collection of essays *Colour Me English* (2011), point to 'tribalism,' a particular sense of exclusionary practice of Europe and America that is intrinsic and typical to the character of tribes. While tribalism is the attitude and practice of harbouring a strong feeling of loyalty or bonds to one's tribe, it excludes or even demonises 'others' who do not belong to that group (Nothwehr 5). Often such characteristics turn to violent outpours against the 'migrants' in an attempt to secure a presumed 'purity' and 'homogeneity' of its national and cultural characteristics. Since Phillips's central focus of attention is England, the racial, ethnic and xenophobic violence and atrocities there have created a great part of his concern in his fiction.

One of the significant areas where colonial conditions and postcolonial psychology meets each other is anti-colonial resistance. Colonial subjection, in its various manifestations, is a condition of human oppression involving the construction and perpetuation of an enforced sense of inferiority and degeneracy of the lives or the cultures of the oppressed through sustained colonial discourses and stereotypes. Colonial cultural apparatuses like language and religion often privilege the colonisers over the colonised, and by unsettling and disrupting the latter they make the political, economic, cultural and social subjection of the colonised more emphatic. Any such colonised individual would imagine a moment of anti-hegemonic resistance against his or her oppressive condition. Generally, postcolonial 'resistance' is one that is associated with political, social, cultural and economic struggles made by the oppressed against such hegemonic relationships. While political and social resistance implies a struggle against those extrinsic aspects of colonialism, an intrinsic aspect of resistance is formulated, for example,

in literary and cultural spheres. Ashcroft provides a rather striking interpretation of the term ‘resistance’:

... if we think of resistance as any form of defence by which an invader is ‘kept out,’ the subtle and sometimes even unspoken forms of social and cultural resistance have been much more common. It is these subtle and more widespread forms of resistance, forms of saying ‘no,’ that are most interesting because they are most difficult for imperial powers to combat. (*Post-Colonial Transformation* 20)

However, what is emphasised here is the psychological disposition that the oppressed requires to refuse and resist colonial power, structures and authority while attempting to reinstate the position and worth of theirs in terms of liberation. Therefore, the colonised develop a ‘decolonising consciousness’ with a motive of overcoming such hegemonic structures through various strategies.

Combating colonialism can be understood by two models; first, resisting the colonial domination through subverting various discursive methods and practices, by which the coloniser authorises colonialism and second, through resisting the representations of colonial authority in a visible and concrete manner. Homi Bhabha’s concept of colonial “mimicry” gives attention to the first aspect of forming a resistant strategy. Jenny Sharpe elaborates the concept of ‘mimic man’ or ‘colonial subject,’ who makes visible the contradictions of colonialism. She says that the mimic man is a contradictory figure who simultaneously reinforces colonial authority and disturbs it (99). As Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin observe,

“The problem for colonial discourse is that it wants to produce compliant subjects who reproduce its assumptions, habits and values – that is, ‘mimic’ the coloniser. But instead it produces ambivalent subjects whose mimicry is never very far from mockery” (*Key Concepts* 13). Another model of decolonisation is discernible in Frantz Fanon’s proposal of decolonisation as described in his celebrated work *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon argues that the colonised peoples have no other choice but to meet coloniser’s physical and psychological acts of violence with a violence of the same magnitude, until “the last become first and the first last” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 28). His notion of decolonisation rests on the analysis of Algerian revolution during the 1950s, and according to him, decolonisation depends on the collective violence. He also argues that “decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon” (*The Wretched of the Earth* 27). He is of the view that “a decisive struggle between the oppressor and the oppressed is inevitable to bring about authentic decolonisation. As far as the oppressed are concerned, absolute violence is the only means to calling question the authority of the oppressor” (Rajan 81). Thus, the anti-colonial resistance is viewed in multiple ways, wherein the psychic dynamisms of the colonised are manifested in creating an opposition to the colonial conditions.

Based on the postcolonial experiences and the related psychological phenomena, the present thesis is structured into seven chapters. Inserted between the introductory and concluding chapters, the five core chapters engage specifically with different postcolonial experiences or conditions, against which the psychological experiences of the protagonists are examined. Chapter One ‘Introduction: (Post)coloniality and Psychology’ introduces the topic for the

present study. It introduces Caryl Phillips and his relevance in the contemporary literary world. This chapter also offers a theoretical framework with the help of which the novels under study are critically analysed in order to reach the proposed claims of the thesis. It critically evaluates the postcolonial psychological theories proffered by the postcolonial thinkers such as W.E.B. Du Bois, Frantz Fanon, Octave Mannoni, Homi Bhabha, Edward Said and Gayatri C. Spivak in analysing the psychological experiences of postcolonial subject.

The second chapter, “Dialectics of Postcolonial Relationships: Mapping the Psychodynamics of the Colonial Binaries in Caryl Phillips’s Fiction,” discusses how colonial situation is generated and perpetuated through the formation of particular colonial attitudes, interests and motivations of two ‘colonial opposites.’ Phillips’s novels *Higher Ground*, *Cambridge*, *Crossing the River*, *Nature of Blood* and *Dancing in the Dark* are examined to uncover such complex dialectics of the relationship between the ‘colonial binaries’ of the blacks and the whites or the colonised and the coloniser or the slaves and the slavers. It examines how the European whites’/colonisers’ colonial attitudes and vested interests construct the marginalised position of the blacks/colonised, and how in turn, the latter group internalises the colonial stereotypes and remain trapped or ‘fascinated’ in the colonial situation, thereby perpetuating colonial conditions.

The third chapter, “Geographic, Cultural, Social and Mnemonic Spaces: Displacement and the Vexing Question of Belonging in Caryl Phillips’s Fiction,” deals with the psychological experiences of individuals caught up in various modes of displacements as a result of varied (post)colonial situations. It analyses *The Final Passage*, *A State of Independence*, “Pagan Coast” and “West” sections

in the novel *Crossing the River*, “Higher Ground” in the novel *Higher Ground*, *The Nature of Blood* and *A Distant Shore*, where colonial processes such as slavery, wars, territorial occupations and Jewish Holocaust have been presented as instrumental in producing forced migrations and exiles of individuals. It examines how territorial displacements instigate a sequence of displacements in cultural, social and psychological terrains. As a consequence of various displacements, the displaced or dislocated individuals struggle to find an alternative strategy of relocation or a ‘home,’ which need not necessarily be a physical home or space, but rather a psychological experience of being reinstated culturally, socially, psychologically and even spatially. Very often, the impossibility of such relocation often drives the victims to profound psychological vexations and disorientations.

The fourth chapter, “Cross–Cultural Encounters, Movements and Liminal Spaces: Formation of Postcolonial Identity in Caryl Phillips’s Fiction,” discusses the psychological problems encountered in the identity formation of the diasporic individuals under postcolonial conditions. *The Final Passage*, *A State of Independence*, *Cambridge*, “The Pagan coast” in *Crossing the River*, *A Distant Shore* and *The Nature of Blood* are analysed to examine how individuals, forced to constant migrations and cross–border movements, constitute their cultural identities. Essentially, in a situation where the identity formation of these individuals ceases to be constituted within homogenous categories of nation, race and culture, it evolves at the backdrop of a cultural ‘hybridity’ or at the ‘in–between spaces’ or at the ‘liminal spaces’ of different cultures, nationalities and racial backgrounds, giving the postcolonial subject psychological ambiguity and ambivalence of being ‘not here or not there.’

The fifth chapter, “Racism, Xenophobia and Tribalism: Constructing the Postcolonial Other in Caryl Phillips’s Fiction,” analyses the psychological experiences encountered in a racialised society. Feelings of mistrust and inhospitality that are directed against the migrants, refugees and exiles shape their identity as an exclusively racial and ethnic ‘other.’ “The Cargo Rap” in *Higher Ground*, *The Nature of Blood*, *A Distant Shore*, *Foreigners* and *In the Falling Snow* present these peculiar predicaments of migrants and refugees in America and Britain against the background of escalating sentiments of ‘racism,’ ‘ethnocentrism,’ ‘xenophobia’ and ‘tribalism.’

The sixth chapter, “The Decolonising Consciousness of the Oppressed under Slavery in Caryl Phillips’s Fiction,” engages in analysing the anti-colonial resistance formulated by the slaves. Phillips’s novels *Higher Ground*, *Cambridge*, and “Pagan Coast” and “West” sections in *Crossing the River* deal with the decolonising consciousness of the colonised in a more remarkable manner. However, the kind of resistance as devised by the slaves here do not belong to a large scale anti-colonial slave revolts, but one which is mobilised individually and much anticipated even before the actual execution of large scale political, economic or social resistance. This decolonising consciousness of the colonised are examined from two different angles: first, it studies how through subversion of dominant colonial discourses the slaves create anti-colonial struggle against cultural colonialism, and second, it seeks to analyse how, in certain extent, their decolonisation is achieved through creating opposition to the representational strategies of colonialism. This particular psychological orientation in slaves for colonial resistance allows them to break the constraints of hegemonic relationship

between the European slave owners and rise to the level of freedom to some extent.

While winding up the discussion of the present study, the seventh chapter, “Conclusion,” provides what has been discussed in the form of summary. Before concluding, it also attempts to throw light upon potential research fields and areas of investigation within the fictional works of Caryl Phillips, thereby acknowledging the gaps and silences in the present study.