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Original Article

# Resistance forces in immigrant literature on selected immigrant communities in Germany

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**Abstract:** This study was an attempt to share findings and conclusions on a recent study done by author on ‘immigration, integration and development in immigrant literature, with a focus on selected communities in Germany’. This was done in order to appreciate immigrant literature and resistance energies against colonialism. The research methods used for this study were ‘literary evaluative-qualitative’ in nature, where data was collected from the field and analyzed accordingly, and their data inputs were processed in comparison with existing literature on the subject matter. The findings, *inter alia*, were that: first, there exists a developing body of literature that can rightly be termed as ‘immigrant literature’ which speaks about the aspirations and hopes of immigrants towards full liberation and humanity; second, immigrants are still faced with some forces of colonialism in the lands of their settlements. The conclusions, *among other things*, were that: first, immigrant literature must be oriented to the empowering of immigrant voices, and second, that immigrants must be empowered to detect colonial forces and transcend these towards full liberation and humanity. The recommendations, among others, are that: that, first, a Council for Immigrant or Refugee Literature Review be put in place by stakeholders, including the United Nations, Host Countries and selected representatives; and second, with the support of the international community, the host nations and stakeholders be allowed to deliberately enhance the empowering of the voices of immigrants in order to ensure a smooth movement of immigrants from a state of subordination to a stage of full liberation.

**Keywords:** Development, Immigration, Integration, Literature, Narratives

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## 1. Introduction

The objective of this journal study was to demonstrate how ‘immigrant literature’ is presented or represented by immigrant authors themselves or by others who are non-immigrant on immigrant experiences around the world. In this regard, the study made reference to key authors on ‘immigrant literature’ such as Bhabha (2004) and Elam (2020). In so doing, the study sought to evaluate the condition of the immigrant and/or refugee as expressed in the always-evolving style of immigrant and/or refugee narratives in literature, in relation to the broader inter-linked themes of immigration, integration and development, with a focus on selected immigrant communities in Germany. Thus, this study sought to appreciate the contributions of key postcolonial scholars to the emergence of immigrant literature and voices of resistance against new forms of colonialism against immigrants and/or refugees in literature. It is divided into the following parts: background, research gap, research problem, overall aim, specific objectives, research questions, methodology and data, literature review, demographic characteristics of respondents, research findings and discussions, conclusions, and recommendations.

## 2. Background

Throughout human history, factors such as wars, persecution, and poverty, among others, have forced a large number of people to abandon their homelands and seek refuge elsewhere (Spivak, 1988).

In this vein, a body of literary works, for example, Spivak (1988), Bhabha (2004) and Said (2013), has grown, centered around immigrants and their experiences which has come to be referred to by critics of postcolonial literature as 'refugee literature'<sup>1</sup>, which expresses the poetics of the people forced into refugee status throughout the world. This researcher is intrigued by this type of literature and wishes to explore it to the fullest extent for the benefit of academia and society.

The starting point of this study involved a review of the work of Gayatri Spivak (1988), whose seminal works on the concept of the subaltern proved to be important for the school of thought pertaining to postcolonial studies. Spivak (1988) argues that despite great efforts made by exponents, proponents and advocates for the subalterns, the subalterns are still unable to find 'their voices' in the modern world. Even though the study agrees with Spivak's notion of 'subalterns', the study argues that this must not be seen as fixed and a place of perpetual confinement, but a phase which immigrants must cross over to a place of liberation. This is because subjugation is not a permanent stage of life, but a transitory phase towards wholeness and full liberty (Bhabha, 2004). Further, the study dwelt on the work of Edward Said (2013), who provides certain pertinent and incisive observations on not only the nature of life in exile, but also the effect of displacement on exiled individuals. According to Said (2013), it is disheartening to observe that not only has the culture of the Orient been falsified by western colonial masters, but that the new elite in the Orient continue to live by the culture of the western colonial masters at the expense of their rich indigenous culture. In the light of Said's observations, this study will affirm key human values and practices which are universally acceptable such as adherence to human rights and freedoms, but will affirm the uniqueness of each group of people, as they respectfully interact with others. This is because the way of life varies from place to place. However, one must learn to affirm what is unique in one's group and what is good and positive in a different group. Still, the study referred to the work of Homi Bhabha (2004), who postulates how the literature by the displaced as an avenue within which the refugee can find a potential voice, through the dynamics of knowledge, action, and creation, in relation to key themes of immigration, integration and development. Bhabha (2004) further argues that through the cultural collisions of many cultures, the 'Third Space' is born, place where immigrants and refugees, find renewal and purpose in life. Bhabha's idea of the 'Third Space' is a splendid idea. However, the study argues that while this is an acceptable orientation, immigrants should be encouraged not to forget their homeland as they creatively encounter the 'Third Space'. Humans are naturally created to be resilient and do not usually forget where they have come from and where they are presently located.

The idea of synthesis put forward by Said (2013) and Bhabha (2004) served as a counterpoint to the idea of the subaltern (subordinate) as the marginalized. This will focus on how humans arrive at the paradox of the refugee both as a subaltern in the mode of Spivak (1988) and at the same time as a creator of a new space of agency and voice in the mode of Bhabha (2004). Further still, to contextualize these considerations of narrative and voice in the sense of cultural politics and subjectivity, Giorgio Agamben (1998 and 2005)'s concept of exception, alongside his rejection of Foucault's perception of bio-politics provided this study with another solid fortress of theoretical reflection. Again, key points from narratology, especially from theorists such as Gerard Genette (1983) and Juri Lotman (2009) were fundamental in viewing such immigrants' narratives. This is because in telling the narratives of immigrants, one must be aware of dictates, under-tones, overtones and dynamics of a narrative. And again, the idea of meaning in the literary text briefly referenced important figures in semiotics such as Roland Barthes (1977) in an effort to grasp the foundation of later post-structuralist readings of literature. In addition, Lotman's semi-o-sphere presented a compelling framework for reading such narratives, envisioning constellations of location and space around the significance of the stories (Lotman, 2009). In this vein, the link between Bhabha's 'Third Space' (Bhabha, 2004) was conceptually explored as dynamics and mechanics of as narratology.

As for the specific German context with regard to immigrant and/or refugee literature, suffice to note that, there have been 'literary works' about immigrants and refugees written by immigrant or refugee writers, which have come out of Germany, such as those listed by the University of Illinois Library (Illinois Library), for example, Saša Stanišić (Bosnian) a winner of 2019 German Book Prize

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<sup>1</sup> A refugee is 'a person who has escaped from their own country for political, religious, or economic reasons or because of war' (Cambridge English Dictionary 2022, 'Refugee', viewed 7 April 2022, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>). Nonetheless, the preference of the author is to use the term 'immigrant literature' which is more respectful, affirming and all inclusive, because an immigrant is simply a person 'who comes to live permanently in a foreign country' (Cambridge English Dictionary 2022, 'Immigrant', viewed 7 April 2022, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org>).

(Deutscher Buchpreis) for his novel *Herkunft*, for his powerful exploration of identity and belonging among immigrants and refugees in Germany, and Emine Sevgi Özdamar (Turkish) who presented some dimensions of immigration centered on 'migrant as wanderer' (University of Illinois Library). But these writers have not raised the technicalities of developing an 'evaluative literary perspective' which looks at an evaluation of immigration, integration and development from the vantage point of the 'Presentation' and 'Representation' of immigrants' narratives in literature on selected immigrant communities in Germany. In addition, these writers have not dealt with the three research themes at a 'goal.'

With reference to key scholars in the field of postcolonial studies such as Spivak (1988) and Said (2013), and key scholars in the field of literature theory and methodology such as Greimas (1976) and Lotman (2009), as discussed above, their high-level contributions are recognized and endorsed by this study. Nonetheless, this study observes that while the issue of postcolonial issue and the subjugation of people from former colonies by descendants of colonial powers is raised and literary theories on literature and/or narrative criticism are raised, these matters are presented and discussed at the global level. Thus, this study, wishes to apply these 'global perspectives' to a local situation and attempt to raise 'specifics' for the situation of selected communities of immigrants and refugees in Germany, with regard to key research themes, immigration, integration and development, and the search for an adequate literature methodology in the presentation of immigrants and/or refugees' literature.

The scholars referenced above stand out as pillars of immigrant literature for the past and present.

With the foregoing, this study is motivated to argue that these writers and key literary theorists have not fully and adequately addressed these technicalities and specifics about the subject matter mentioned above. Hence, this researcher would like to submit that the fact that this has not been done, established a 'research gap' which this researcher wanted to 'narrow', for the specific context of selected immigrants and refugees' communities in Germany.

### **Research Problem**

The study notes that there have been 'literary works' about immigrants and refugees written by immigrant or refugee writers, which have come out of Germany, such as those listed by the University of Illinois Library (Illinois Library), for example, Saša Stanišić (Bosnian) a winner of 2019 German Book Prize (Deutscher Buchpreis) for his novel *Herkunft*, for his powerful exploration of identity and belonging among immigrants and refugees in Germany, and Emine Sevgi Özdamar (Turkish) who presented some dimensions of immigration centered on 'migrant as wanderer' (University of Illinois Library 2022). However, these writers have not raised the technicalities of developing an 'evaluative literary perspective' which looks at an evaluation of immigration, integration and development from the vantage point of the 'Presentation' and 'Representation' of immigrants' narratives in literature. In addition, the study notes that there have been some key works with a global perspective in the field of postcolonial studies such as those done by Spivak (1988) and Said (2013), and that they have key literary works with a global perspective in the field of literature theory and methodology such as those by Greimas (1976) and Lotman (2009). Nonetheless, this study observes that while the issue of postcolonial issue and the subjugation of people from former colonies by descendants of colonial powers is raised and literary theories on literature and/or narrative criticism are raised, these matters are presented and discussed at the global level. Suffice to say, the issue of inadequate presentation and/or representation of immigrant narratives in literature, for the specific context of Germany, has not been fully addressed by researchers.

Consequently, this study is motivated to argue that these technicalities and specifics about the subject matter have not yet been fully and adequately addressed by these writers and key literary theorists mentioned above. Hence, this study would like to submit that the fact that this has not been done, established a 'research gap' which this researcher wanted to 'narrow', for the specific context of selected immigrants and refugees' communities in Germany.

Thus, the research problem which the research addressed was the existence of an inadequate presentation and representation by some immigrants, immigrant hosts, policy makers, community leaders, writers, thinkers and the like about the position, identity and function of immigrants. This has engendered a state of paralysis and hopelessness among some immigrant communities in foreign lands where they now live. Consequently, this has hindered their full integration and participation in development, where development is holistic – cultural, social, political, economic, religious and technological. This inadequacy makes immigrants to feel as if they are second class citizens and are not part of the common life and work of the people in lands where they have settled, away from their homelands. This has further resulted in a complexity of inherent cultural and socio-political-economic factors that hinder or pull back their natural inclinations and drive them towards full humanity and

actualization in faraway lands. This can partly be explained by deficient immigrant or refugees' narratives which promote a psyche and a phenomenology of subalternity, subjugation and subordination rather than a psyche and a phenomenology of liberation.

The overall aim of the study was to evaluate, that is, 'to judge or calculate the quality, or value of' (Cambridge Dictionary 2022) key themes of immigration, integration and development from the perspective of an adequate representation and re-presentation of refugees' narratives with a focus on selected immigrant communities in Germany. The key research objectives included the following: To grasp how immigrants' literature has been presented and represented by immigrants themselves and by others in history; To establish the position, identity and function of contemporary immigrants, with specific reference to selected immigrant communities in Germany; To assess how refugees create spaces of belonging in their stateless conditions. Key research questions included the following: How has immigrants' literature been presented and represented by immigrants themselves and by others in history? With specific reference to selected immigrant communities in Germany, what is the position, identity and function of contemporary immigrants? Which factors have led immigrants to create 'spaces of belonging' in their stateless conditions?

The research problem was very specific and applicable to selected immigrant communities in Germany. A wide sample size and data analysis would have entailed the inclusion of nearly all immigrant communities in Germany or nearby areas such as northern Switzerland. Because of the limitation of time, space and resources, the research under consideration focused on specific immigrant communities in Germany. Hence, the selection of a representative small sample size which was very specific and which, consequently, reflected aspects of immigrant realities and experiences in other similar communities. Findings, conclusions and recommendations were inextricably linked to the research problem which evolved out of a specific sample size.

### Methodology and Data

The research methods used for this study were mainly literary evaluative-qualitative in nature (Savin-Baden & Major 2013; Mbozi 2018, and Scheibelhofer, 2008), where data was collected from the field from 105 respondents and analyzed in comparison with existing literature. Data from the field was collected by means of a questionnaire, which had five main research questions, and data was processed, accordingly. Data was analyzed through evaluative tables which demonstrated key facts and figures on the demographic characteristics of respondents, summarized results from the field and key points described, compared with other results in literature (see demographic details and tables below, under 'results and discussions').

### Literature review

A literature review was first conducted concerning existing literature. The study did a background etymological review of key words namely: 'presentation' and 'representation'. This was in order to point to key thinkers on the subject matter.

The word 'presentation' is a 'noun', which appeared in late 14<sup>th</sup> Century as *presentacioun*, meaning an 'act of presenting' or a 'ceremonious giving of a gift, prize, etc.', based on Old 13<sup>th</sup> Century French, *presentacion* (Online Etymology Dictionary. *Sub verbo*, "Presentation" (Online Etymology Dictionary 2022). Further, the word is based directly on a Medieval Latin word, *praesentationem*(accusative) (nominative *praesentatio*), meaning 'placing before', signifying a 'noun of action', from past-participle stem of *praesentare*, meaning 'to present, show, exhibit' (*Ibid.*), literally meaning 'to place before' (*Ibid.*). For the technical purposes of this research, the word 'presentation' means the act of 'placing before, showing and exhibiting' evidence about how immigrants themselves present immigrant literature for public consumption. Whereas the word 'representation' is a noun which also appeared in about 1400 of our common era as *representacioun*, meaning 'image, likeness, symbolic, memorial', from 14<sup>th</sup> Century Old French word, *representacion*, a direct derivative from a Latin word, *repraesentationem* (accusative)(nominative *repraesentatio*), a noun of action, meaning 'a bringing before one, a showing or exhibiting', based on the past-participle stem of *repraesentare*, meaning 'show, exhibit, display' (Online Etymology Dictionary. *Sub verbo*, "Representation"; (Online Etymology Dictionary 2022). Similarly, for the technical purposes of this research, the word 'representation' means the act of 'imaging' what has already been presented, bringing 'what is represented' closer to the first act of 'placing before, showing or exhibiting' by one who should have presented first. In fact, as a general rule, in classical Latin, the word 're' denotes 'back, back from, back to the original place', from Old French *re-* which appeared about 1200, a direct derivative from the Latin word, *re-*, a prefix which means 'again; back; anew; against' (Online Etymology Dictionary 2022). He or she who makes a 'presentation' is regarded as that person who originally exhibited or exhibits and he or she who makes

a 'representation' is regarded as one who attempted to add or adds a voice to the original voice in order to strengthen that voice, in order to contribute to the liberative agenda to be fully human in a one's homeland or foreign land.

#### **Literature review from 'Presentation'**

For the purposes of this research, this study mainly made use of the capturing ideas articulated by key thinkers and literary giants on immigrants, especially, Spivak (1988) and Bhabha (2004), as frames of reference to prop up and strengthen what this researcher intended to develop, under the subject matter, as a creative and innovative contribution to knowledge, the academia and society, in the service of humankind. The two authors were supplemented by compelling ideas from Edward Wadie (William) Said (2001).

#### **Presentation in the literature of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak**

It is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak who provides key ideas in the development of thought in this research with regard to 'Presentation', especially her 1988 work entitled 'Can the subaltern speak?' which articulated on postcolonial critique of the problem of subalternity(subordination), whereby, an immigrant or refugee is presented as a subordinate human being in a foreign land. Though not a refugee but an immigrant, she articulates what it means to be an immigrant in a foreign land, with resonance to the condition, identity and function of refugees around the world. Apart from her talk about the root causes of class divisions of peoples of the world, the idea of subalternity made very interesting reading and from this researcher's vantage point, when an immigrant or refugee is presented as such, they cannot be fully integrated nor fully participate in development in lands where they have settled. This is because a 'psyche' and 'ethos' of subservience in word and action will always hinder their full development.

It is Spivak's thought-provoking article, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), which is extremely crucial for this researcher's analysis of the presentation and representation of immigrants' literature in the western world and the position, identity and function of the migrants or immigrants or refugees in human history. It is to this article that this researcher turns.

Jade Munslow Ong this terse statement concerning the essay in question:

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is one of the key theoretical texts in the field of postcolonial studies It was first published in the journal *Wedge* in 1985, as "Can the Subaltern Speak?: Speculations on Widow Sacrifice"; reprinted in 1988 as "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Larry Grossberg's edited collection, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*; and revised by Spivak as part of her "History" chapter in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, published in 1999, It has also appeared in essay collections of and on Spivak's work, and in postcolonial studies readers(Munslow Ong, Jade. "Can the Subaltern Speak?"(*The Literary Encyclopedia* 2014)

Morris (2022) gives a brief analysis of what the book is all about, including that the essay:

- transformed the analysis of colonialism through an eloquent and uncompromising argument that affirmed the contemporary relevance of Marxism while using deconstructionist methods to explore the international division of labour and capitalism's "worlding" of the world;
- Ennobles and inspires eight scholars who are cited by Morris (2022) in her analysis of Spivak's work, and: to begin contextualizing her writing within the development of subaltern and postcolonial studies and the quest for human rights; and through the lens of Spivak's essay, begin to rethink historical problems of subalternity, voicing, and death.
- (In its 'final section'), is situated within contemporary issues, particularly 'new international divisions of labour' and the 'politics of silence' among indigenous women of Guatemala and Mexico.

#### **Presentation in the literature of Homi Kharshedji Bhabha**

In similar fashion, Homi Kharshedji Bhabha, a fervent immigrant literature advocate and theorist, passionately speaks for a 'postcolonial theory of resistance by the colonized against colonizing elements of modern life' in his 'immigrant literature'. This stance resonates well with the condition of immigrants and refugees. *Inter alia*, Bhabha postulates that a space in which the refugee can find a potential voice via the dynamics of knowledge, action, and creation is called "Third Space" and that this occurs when "the process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation" (2008: 211). Of interest to this study is the way Bhabha articulates the following key ideas which add value to the development of critical thought on the subject matter by this researcher, thus:

**Hybridity:** Hybridity, that is, a condition where boundaries of identity are crossed and mixed (Durgan 2022), or, put differently, "hybridisation,"that is, a process by which mixed identities come into being, is one of the central themes in the literature of Bhabha. His contribution on 'hybridity' has engendered freshly cut post-structuralist methodologies in the study of colonialism – the approach that the colonial

past is constantly affecting the present as humans interact in multi-cultural contexts (*Parsons and Harding 2022, Abdennebi 1998*).

**Ambivalence:** Here, Bhabha (1994) advances the view that culture consists of opposing perceptions and dimensions - ambivalence. According to Bhabha (1994), this duality of existence, exhibits 'a split' in the identity of the 'colonized other person', who is hybridized and embraces two identities, namely: 'own cultural identity' and 'the cultural identity of others. Bhabha further argues that 'ambivalence' explains the reason why colonial power is characterized by its belatedness, that is, a condition of backwardness or being too late (Your Dictionary 2022), where, for example, leaders in formal colonies, with a colonized mind, will always find solace in some prior archaic image or identity (Bhabha 1994). His thesis does open up the two dimensions of colonial discourse, namely: a dimension of colonial discourse which is characterized by invention and mastery on one hand and a dimension of colonial

discourse which is about the anguish of displacement and the fantasy of wishful thinking, dreaming and dreaming what life might have been, on the other hand (Ibid.).

**Cultural Difference, enunciation and stereotype:** Bhabha (1994) postulates that 'cultural difference' is an alternative to 'cultural diversity'. According to Bhabha (1994), in 'cultural diversity', a culture is an "object of empirical knowledge", that is to say, culture is real and concrete, and is not just an abstract imagination of the mind and is very much a part of objective knowledge. As such, culture exists independently from the bias of a subjective mind and pre-exists the knower, that it existed before the knower (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). According to Bhabha, 'cultural difference' sees culture as the point or place at which two or more cultures meet (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). In Bhabha's thought (Bhabha, *op. cit.*), culture cannot be a 'pre-given'; as such, it must be uttered, that is, expressed. Further, according to Bhabha, it is through enunciation or expression that the other discovers and recognizes cultural difference (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). With regards to 'stereotype', that is, a fixed and often untrue idea about the identity of another person (The Britannica Dictionary 2022) comes in when people embrace fixations of racial typology (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). According to Bhabha, 'fixity' implies repetition, rigidity, an unchanging order, and disorder (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). 'The 'stereotype' feeds and depends on this notion of 'fixity'; consequently, 'the stereotype' creates an "identity" which stems as much from mastery, the anxiety, and the defense of the dominant classes (Bhabha, *op. cit.*).

**Mimicry:** Similar to Bhabha's concept of hybridity, the concept of 'mimicry' (the action or skill of imitating someone or something) (Collins Dictionary 2022) is a metonym of presence, that is, a 'figure of speech in which an object or idea represents a larger concept that's related to it' (Vocabulary 2022). According to Bhabha (*op. cit.*), 'mimicry' appears when members of a colonized society decide to imitate and take on the colonizers' culture. He further postulates that the colonists' desire in this scenario is to emerge as 'authentic' through mimicry (Bhabha, *op. cit.*). Worse still, he sees 'mimicry' as a "double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority" (Bhabha *op. cit.*). In short, according to Bhabha (Bhabha, *op. cit.*), 'mimicry': Produces 'double vision' and a lack of authenticity on the part of the colonized; Produces 'partial vision' about the colonizer's presence; (while it seeks to give 'seeming' liberation to the marginalized individual), it breaks the unity of the being of a human being who sees doubly and partially; and through this, the colonizer extends 'sovereignty' over the colonized.

**Third Space:** In the thought of Bhabha (*op. cit.*), the 'Third Space' acts as an ambiguous area that develops when two or more individuals/cultures interact. According to Bhabha (*op. cit.*), this "challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People." Culture is always dynamic. The concept of 'Third Place' in the 'immigrant literature' of Bhabha helps one to appreciate: the 'dynamism of culture in multicultural contexts'; that when one culture meets another culture, a new space is born, the 'Third Space'; it is a brand-new space where a refugee or immigrant is given an opportunity to think about who they are and their function in human history.

### **Presentation in the literature of Edward Wadie (William) Said**

His major article and book: *Orientalism* (Said 1978) was key to his scholarly and literary credentials. thus:

In it, Said examined Western scholarship of the "Orient," specifically of the Arab Islamic world (though he was an Arab Christian), and argued that early scholarship by Westerners in that region was biased and projected a false and stereotyped vision of "otherness" on the Islamic world that facilitated and supported Western colonial policy." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*)

The salient points of his book(article) stand out as follows, including:

- Orientalism, that is, style, artefacts, or traits considered characteristic of the peoples and cultures of Asia or a representation of Asia in a stereotyped way that is regarded as embodying a colonialist attitude (Oxford Languages) is the source of the false cultural representations with

- which the Western world perceives the Middle East, that is, the narratives and stories of how The West sees The East;
- That European political domination of Asia has biased even the most outwardly objective Western texts about The Orient, to a degree which is unrecognized by the Western scholars, who have appropriated for themselves the production of cultural knowledge;
- That Orientalist scholarship implies that the colonial subalterns (the colonised and subordinated people) were almost 'empty', and incapable of thinking, acting, or speaking for themselves and in this regard, the colonial subalterns, were and are incapable of writing their own national histories;
- That the Orientalist scholars of the West wrote the history of the Orient and in this vein, constructed the modern, cultural identities of Asia, from the perspective that the West is the cultural standard to emulate.

### **Literature review from 'Representation'**

As already alluded to above, 'Representation' is the act or acts of exhibiting how other writers have portrayed immigrants or refugees, especially in relation to the key research themes of immigration, integration and development of refugees. From the body of 'Presentation scholars', a few which are extremely relevant for this study were selected and reviewed.

#### **Representation in the literature of J. Daniel Elam**

Elam (2019) re-emphasizes that postcolonial studies are essentially regarded as those studies "concerned with the lingering forms of colonial authority after the formal end of Empire.

He has produced an important thought-provoking excellent piece of work and research which add value to this study which seeks to evaluate key research themes of immigration, integration and development of immigrants' narratives in literature, namely: '*World Literature for the Wretched of the Earth: Anticolonial Aesthetics, Postcolonial Democracy.*' According to Elam (2020), he submits that the fact of the matter is that the battle against colonialism in various forms still rages on; Anticolonial theories of reading and critique in the writing of Lala Har Dayal, B. R. Ambedkar, M. K. Gandhi, and Bhagat Sing theorized reading not as a way to cultivate mastery and expertise, but as a way, rather, to disavow (deny any responsibility or support for) mastery altogether and further, that to become or remain an inexperienced reader, divesting oneself of authorial claims, was to fundamentally challenge the logic of the British Empire and European fascism, which prized self-mastery, authority, and national sovereignty (*Ibid.*). Herein lay the power anticolonial theorists.

Elam (2020) raises key points in understanding postcolonial literature which have far-reaching ramifications for the position of immigrants and refugees, including namely:

- the world has not yet been fully emancipated from colonial rule, which still manifests itself through lingering forms of colonialism, such as Western economic domination and cultural influence over former colonies;
- it was naïve to claim that anticolonial writing was going to lead to 'politics on the hope of eventual success, mastery, or national sovereignty';
- the movement towards 'egalitarianism' (doctrine that all people are equal and deserve equal rights and opportunities) would still be dogged by colonialism;

#### **Representation in the literature of Gérard Genette**

The work of Genette (1983) is also cardinal in the bid of this study to gain insights into what tensions and significant narrative literature nuances can entail, especially by using his seminal work 'Narrative Discourse' concepts to evaluate this researcher's study interests: immigration, integration and development in immigration or refugees' literature. Thus, his work has implicitly strengthened the bid to represent 'immigrant literature' most analytically and systematically. Gérard Genette (1930 – 2018) was a French literary theorist associated in particular with the structuralist movement<sup>2</sup> (*Kéchichian, Patrick. (2018)*). His major contribution to dissecting literature and the related 'immigrant or refugee' literature is in his 'narratology' or 'narrative discourse' through his work. Narrative discourse is essentially: 'a discourse that is an account of events, usually in the past, that employs verbs of speech,

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<sup>2</sup> Structuralism or the structuralist movement or structural movement was/is "the intellectual movement and philosophical orientation often associated initially with the Western discourses of Levi-Strauss, Marx, and Althusser, for example, who claimed to analyse and explain invariant structures in and constitutive of nature, society, and the human psyche" (International Encyclopaedia of Education (Third Edition) 2010).

motion, and action to describe a series of events that are contingent one on another, and that typically focuses on one or more performers of actions' (Thus, in narrative discourse, one must distinguish between the following categories for example: Folk stories - stories about real or imagined ancestors, often containing supernatural elements; Historical events - stories or accounts about the social and political history of the world and its contacts with the rest of the world; Mythology - stories explaining origins, natural phenomena, or social and religious customs, often involving the supernatural; and Personal experience - accounts of significant events in the life of the narrator or the community (Ibid.).

In summary, Genette's (1983) narratology, stand as follows, including that:

- A narrative has an order, where events are usually presented chronologically, and this helps one to grasp series of events which led something to occur;
- A narrative has a frequency, that is, how many times it is told in order to grasp how wide spread it is and how valid it is;
- A narrative has a duration, that is, time between the time when the event occurs and the time when it is told – thus, giving one two parts of the narrative, namely: discourse time and narrative time;
- A narrative has a 'voice', with regards to who narrates the story and from where the story is narrated, and this further helps one to dissect the following: if narrator is inside the narrative (intra-diegetic) or outside the narrative (extra-diegetic); if the narrator is not a character in the narrative (hetero-diegetic) or the narrator is a character in the story (homo-diegetic);
- A narrative has a 'mood' which is dependent on distance and perspective (view), and has predominant patterns (main characteristics) and is related to a voice.

### **Representation in the literature of Yuri Mikhailovich Lotman**

Lotman (2009)'s idea of 'semi-o-sphere' was incorporated as a paradigm of 'Representation', and applied to the immigrants' narratives that were to be examined in this research. This is another scholar who implicitly enables this researcher to present 'immigrant or refugee literature' in a manner which systematically presents signs and symbols in literature among immigrant communities and other communities. His major contribution to this study is in the area of 'semiotics' or 'semiology', shaping this researcher's approach to story-telling among immigrant or refugee communities. Semiotics is essentially the study of signs and symbols (Oxford Languages 2022). Lotman's other major contribution to this study was in structuralism, which he defined as "the idea of a system: a complete, self-regulating entity that adapts to new conditions by transforming its features while retaining its systematic structure" (Encyclopedia 2022). Lotman (2001) postulated that any chosen object of investigation must be viewed as an interrelated, interdependent system composed of units and rules for their possible combinations, and defining 'culture' itself as "the whole of un-inherited information and the ways of its organization and storage." (Ibid.). Thus, for Lotman, from the point of view of semiotics, anything linked with meaning in fact belongs to culture (Ibid.). In this way, semiotics is very much part and parcel of cultural expressions or culture. Lotman's most important work on semiotics and culture was *Culture and Explosion* (Mouton, De Gruyter 2009), where he describes the essence of a semi-o-sphere. Lotman, elucidated on the following key points, including:

- there is presence of a semiotics of culture for all peoples of the world;
- culture can be observed and described;
- culture can be governed and guided;
- the modelling system of culture has an immeasurably strong influence on the way that humans experience "reality" (Mouton 2009)

### **Representation in the literature of Algirdas Julien Greimas**

Greimas (1976) was also examined to provide that relevant piece of work about literature criticism, including the criticism of immigrant literature, especially when he refers to the 'semiotic square' in his development of frameworks which challenge dualist oppositions. He stands in the tradition of Lotman. His work Maupassant: *The Semiotics of Text*. (1976) the following key concepts are arise out of his work, that: Isotopy is the repetition of a single element of meaning; the semiotic square is the elementary structure of signification, built on an opposition, that is, the semiotic square which produces an elementary structure of signification is brought into being when there is an opposition, one opposing the other (dualistic opposition); the actantial model is that which breaks an action down into six actants or facets, namely: (1) The subject is what one wants or does not want to be joined to; (2) an object; (3) The sender is what instigates the action, while the; (4) receiver; Lastly, (5) a helper who helps to accomplish the action; while (6) an opponent hinders it; the narrative program is that which represents an action as two opposite states in succession; the semiotics of the natural world – that the world is a sign, and as such, is made up of 'signifiers' and 'signifieds'. Greimas' (1976) thought resonates well with Spivak's idea (Spivak 1988) that our world is a divided world between those who have and those



who do not have and hence, it becomes increasingly difficult to evolve their own voices and speak in an idiom and language which comes out of their authentic experiences.

### Results and Discussions

Under this characteristic of gender and age group (see Table 1 below), it was indicated, 'how youthful the immigrant communities are, in general terms.' The youth spoke with passion, clarity and survival instinct about where they came from in their traumatized homelands, where they are in their land of settlement and where they want to be in a world of immense possibilities. Thus, enabling this study to benefit from what one would call a 'trajectory of hopelessness and hope among young people.' As already noted above, on the basis of social demographics, most of the respondents were male, who were 66.7% of the total and focused on the 31-45 and 46 -60 age categories and that more males than women were more prominent when it came to taking up of community leadership roles. The observation is that more male respondents were present and willing to participate in the study, and that more males were elected or chosen to be leaders in the 31 – 45 and 46 – 60 age-group categories. It is not clear whether this was by choice or coincidence that there were more males than women among immigrant and refugee communities. As noted, it suffices to state that in spite of these empirical facts, female voices and life experiences supplemented and complemented male voices and life experiences.

Table 1: Gender and age distribution among study respondents

Age group (years)	Female	Female	Male	Male	All	All
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
< 15	0	0	0		0	0
15 – 30	15	42.9	35	50.0	50	47.62
31 – 45	12	34.3	22	31.43	34	32.38
46 - 60	6	17.1	10	14.28	16	15.24
> 60	2	5.7	3	4.29	5	4.76
TOTALS	35	100	70	100	105	100
Gender %	33.33		66.67			100

Further, under the characteristic of occupation (see Table 2 below), the medical workers and teachers who represent the masses carried a total of 68% who were captured by the study. This indicates the transition stage in life where one requires more advanced skills and knowledge to render professional services. Farm and factory workers captured a total of 25% of respondents. This is an indication that the immigrant community is still in the transition stage to increase on more qualified numbers in other more specialized professions, including those of the medical and teaching professions. Business owners only occupied a paltry 5 – 6 % of professions. This is an indication that more immigrants have moved away from a traditional mercantile type of life to more formal jobs. People who use their occupation and/or profession as a means to an end for greater personal and professional achievements and who have a passion for education and a survival instinct are more likely to articulate verifiable hopes and aspirations as a people clearly. Thus, this articulation helped this study gather reliable data about real life, which is testable to be true among all people who seek a more just and a better life, especially when they strive to be like their role models of a better standard of life in society.

Table 2: Occupation/professions among respondents

Occupation/profession	Female	Male	All	All
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Percent
Farm worker	2	7	9	8.57
Factory worker	4	14	18	17.14
Medical worker	10	17	27	25.71
Teacher	18	27	45	42.86
Business owner	1	5	6	5.71
TOTALS	35	70	105	100%

Still, on the characteristic of highest academic qualification (see Table 3 below), it was observed that Technician's certificate and Apprenticeship mostly featured as highest qualifications among respondents (73%), that Advanced qualifications from Diploma/BA/BSc and above were rare among immigrants under this category and occupied about 17% of qualifications indicated. This is an indication that among immigrants and refugees are well tutored and qualified persons who can contribute to development in any field, given a chance by a host country, and that more needs to be done by all stakeholders to enable immigrants and refugees under this category to be fully integrated in host nations. Thus, enabling them to make valid contributions to development in host nations and at home, by acquiring relevant and appropriate skills in advanced qualifications at Bachelors' degree level and above.

Table 3: Qualifications among respondents

Academic qualification	Female		Male		All	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	Percent
None	0		0		0	0
Elementary (primary)	3	8.5	7	10.0	10	9.52%
High school and Apprenticeship	15	42.9	23	32.9	38	36.19%
Tertiary (Technician)	11	31.4	28	40.0	39	37.14%
Tertiary (Diploma/BA/BSc)	5	14.3	8	11.4	13	12.38%
Tertiary (MA/MSc)	1	2.9	4	5.7	5	4.76%
Tertiary (PhD)	0		0		0	0
TOTALS	35	100	70	100	105	100%

On the question of proficiency in German language (see Table 4 below), it still further observed that all respondents (100%) contacted had some level of basic/elementary proficiency in the German language. The point is that acquisition of and familiarity with foreign language enables one to excel not only in daily life but in career prospects in a foreign land, more so as an immigrant or refugee. This enabled this researcher to manage communication among respondents and to grasp the data and use this efficiently to transcribe this into English for the purpose of this research.

Table 4: Proficiency in Germany language among respondents

Proficiency in German language	Female		Male		All	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
None	0		0		0	0
Basic / elementary	35	33.33	70	66.67	105	100%
TOTAL	35	33.33	70	66.67	105	100%

On the question of the presentation and representation of immigrants and/or refugees by immigrants and refugees themselves and by other writers, all respondents except three agreed they were not fully satisfied in the manner immigrant and refugee narratives were presented by immigrants and refugees themselves and by others. This was because of negativity and positivity in how immigrants and refugees presented their stories, and how other authors and storytellers represented the story of immigrants and refugees. They agreed that the style and form were often demeaning and condescending.

Results appear in this manner for a number of reasons, including the reasons below:

- Immigrants and refugees are more likely to tell their authentic stories and be satisfied about this because their stories are not imagined, but are born out of the 'womb of pain and joy, hopelessness and hope'.
- From their authentic experience, authentic stories are engendered.

These results compare very well with other results in literature, especially in the literary works of key thinkers in postcolonial literature on immigrant and refugee literature. The question of how 'immigrant literature' is presented or represented by immigrant authors themselves or by others who are non-immigrant on immigrant experiences around the world is well-known. For example, Spivak (1988), whose seminal works on the concept of the 'subaltern' proved to be important for the school of thought pertaining to postcolonial studies. Further, Said (2013) provided pertinent and incisive observations on not only the nature of life in exile, but also the effect of displacement on exiled individuals. According to Said (2013), it is disheartening to observe that not only has the culture of the Orient, as an example of a colonized territory, been falsified by western colonial masters, but that the new elite in the Orient continue to live by the 'false' culture of the western colonial masters at the expense of their rich indigenous culture.

On the question of the position, identity and function of contemporary immigrants and refugees in selected immigrant and/or refugee communities in Germany, it was noted that immigrants and refugees were persons with legal status. The majority have espoused a transcultural identity, with the majority aiming at being fully integrated in the land of their settlement.

Results appear in this manner for a number of reasons including the following below:

- Immigrants and refugees are most likely truthful about their legal status because of the harsh consequences of expulsion if someone lies about their legal status.
- Immigrants and refugees do not want to be associated with lies so that they do not risk their legal status in a foreign land. As such, their legal status was true.

It is Bhabha (2004) who firmly underscores this point over and over again about self-discovery, renewal, survival and contribution of immigrants and refugees in a foreign land, especially with his resounding ideas on 'hybridity', 'ambivalence', 'cultural difference, enunciation and stereotype', 'mimicry' and 'Third Space'.

On the question of immigration and 'spaces of belonging', it was noted that the inner and communal quest for social longing explains this social fact among immigrants and refugees. This inner and communal quest for social longing helps immigrants and refugees transcend all odds, make friends, and live in communitarian supportive ways.

Results appear in this manner because of the following reasons below, including:

- Immigrants and refugees are fellow humans who have a natural, inner and communal craving for social belonging, just like other humans.
- Again, it is reiterated that the inner and communal craving for social belonging is the basis for the drive towards integration and desire to contribute to development abroad and at home.

These results on the quest for 'places of social belonging' among immigrants and refugees compare well with other results in literature, especially in the works of Bhabha (1994). As already noted, in Bhabha's (*op. cit.*) thought, the 'Third Space' acts as an ambiguous area that develops when two or more individuals/cultures interact. According to Bhabha (*op. cit.*), this "challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People.

On the question of transition of immigrant communities, new cultural spaces, integration and contribution to development it was noted that the need to adjust, to be integrated, to adapt and to search for meaning in a new settlement could explain this phenomenon.

Results appear in this manner because of the following reasons below, including:

- The drive to make a transition from displacement to reality and improve on oneself and one's family in a foreign land is a plausible argument among immigrants and refugees.
- You rarely find immigrants and refugees who wish to die in a foreign land. Immigrants and refugees take this transition as a second chance to improve oneself and family, to seek new ways of being useful to the immediate familiar community and the global society at large.

These results compare well with other results in literature on the quest among immigrants and refugees to transit from displacement into full integration and full participation in development. As noted already, the concept of 'Third Space' in the 'immigrant literature' of Bhabha (1994) helps one to appreciate: the 'dynamism of culture in multicultural contexts'; that when one's culture meets another culture, a new space is born, the 'Third Space'; it is a brand-new space where a refugee or immigrant is given an opportunity to think about who they are and their function in human history. As already noted, this researcher observes that the 'Third Space', must be a place of renewal of being, attitudes and world-views (cosmologies), and a place of reclaiming one's authentic identity. In addition to Bhabha's 'Third Space' (Bhabha 1994), one must take a keen interest in how the language and literature on immigrants and refugees is conceptualized, presented and represented in human history. That there is a noticeable movement to help in dissecting this through the literary tools developed by eminent literary theorists such as Lotman (2009) on semi-o-sphere, Genette (1983) on narratology or narrative discourse and Greimas (1976) on semiotic square.

On the question of presentation and representation of immigrant narratives, empowering of voices of immigrant communities, and movement towards a liberated state for immigrants and refugees, it was noted that stories which are respectful of the authentic narration of the journey of immigrants and which promote the positive image, position, identity and function of immigrants abroad and at home in human history, stories which are collaborative between immigrant literature writers and real life immigrants, and which promote equality, freedom, fraternity, solidarity and community of all humans, regardless of any condition contributed to this fact

The results appear in this manner because of the following reasons below, including:

- The passion for liberation and restoration to full humanity is in the heart of any human being.
- It is this passion which leads to new beginnings and the achievement of greater heights among immigrants and refugees.

Suppose immigrants and refugees have to transit to a liberated state. In that case, one has to tenaciously and jealously embrace and protect the type of immigrant narratives or literature which is aware: of dynamics of the less powerful and of the rich and powerful, and seek to empower the subalterns of the world (Spivak 1988); of the need to find new spaces of renewal in a multicultural context (Bhabha 1994); of the need to move away from a falsification of one's culture and which embraces rights and liberties of all people (Said 1978); of the fact that aspects of colonialism are still evident in our contemporary society and must be dealt with (Elam 2021); of power politics between the rulers and the ruled in real life and in literature (Lotman 2009, Genette (1983), and Greimas 1976). Thus, achieving an adequate presentation and representation of immigrant and/or refugee literature that empowers the subaltern move towards liberation and full humanity.

### Conclusions

First, on literature by immigrants, refugees and others in history, this study concluded that because of the fact that there exists a 'mixed grill' of both negativity and positivity embedded in immigrant literature, more needs to be done to ensure that the negative energy which is latent in immigrant or refugee stories is diminished. Second, on the position, identity and function of contemporary immigrants or refugees in Germany, this study concluded that there is an evident and self-revealing path of self-discovery and discovery of new meaning of life among immigrant communities. Third, on how refugees create spaces of belonging in their stateless conditions, this study concluded that the inner and communal quest exists for social longing among immigrants and refugees. This is natural among all *homo sapiens*. Fourth, on how immigrant or refugee communities' transit to the new spaces occupied by a transnational movement into new cultural spaces, this study concluded that there is an evident transition of immigrant communities in host countries because of the need to adjust, to be integrated, to adapt and to search for meaning in a new settlement. Fifth, on how refugees' narratives, can be a conduit of empowering the voices of immigrant communities to transit from a 'subaltern state' to a 'liberated state', the study concluded that stories which are collaborative between immigrant and refugee literature writers and real-life immigrants and refugees, and which promote equality, freedom, fraternity, solidarity and community of all humans, regardless of any condition, are key to a transition to a liberated stage for immigrants and refugees.

### Recommendations

In the light of the foregoing and with regard to the five conclusions stated above, it was hereby recommended that: First, a Council for Immigrant or Refugee Literature Review be put in place by stakeholders, including the United Nations, Host Countries and selected representatives; Second, an institutional and legal framework be put in place by stakeholders, supported by the international community such as the United Nations to support the transition and settlement of immigrants and refugees; Third, an institutional and legal framework be worked out by host nations with the support of the United Nations and other well-wishers to support the full realization of 'spaces of belonging'; Fourth, with the support of the international community, the host nations and other stakeholders be allowed to make deliberate decisions and acts to cultivate the transition of immigrant and refugee communities to new cultural spaces; Fifth, with the support of the international community, the host nations and stakeholders be allowed to deliberately enhance the empowering of the voices of immigrants and refugees through various fora, including enhanced educational scholarships and grants, and enhanced health support insurance schemes and assured job opportunities.

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