

ESSAY TEST CODE - 2320

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IN ORDER TO HATE IMPERIALISM
YOU HAVE GOT TO BE PART
OF IT.

Once upon a time, India was known as a "son-chiriya" (the golden bird). Unity, diversity, economic and cultural richness, and contentment were the hallmarks of this land. But then the country became a victim of imperialist desires of Britain and in a matter of two centuries, all the wealth, richness, and harmony was lost. The "golden-bird" was left bleeding after years of exploitation and a violent partition at the end.

The above story is enough to understand the destruction, havoc and disharmony that forces of imperialism can unleash.

Still let us first understand imperialism in more lucid terms and know why it should be an object of hate and rejection by humanity.

Imperialism refers to the exercise of influence over another territory or people, so that the imperialist could benefit at the expense of welfare of the "other" territory and people. It can take a direct form like colonisation or an indirect form like today's cultural imperialism.

Moreover, there are diverse facets of imperialism. The domination of dollar in the world economy, the "loans with conditionalities" by IMF and World Bank, the aggressive promotion of capitalism by the west in the form of "structural adjustment programmes" and "shock therapies" are examples of economic imperialism.

The international dominance of English over all other languages is a sign of ^{linguistic} ~~cultural~~ imperialism. It demands us to reject our own languages as inferior and use only the language of the powerful.

Similarly, the promotion of "Macdonaldisation", "jeansization", and "coca-colisation" are features of cultural imperialism which compels us to lose our cultural diversity and instead paint ourselves in the colours of the dominant culture of west.

Hence, we know that despite experiencing imperialism for long, the phenomena still continues to be a part of our lives. Why do we still not hate it? Or why do you think it should be hated?

Imperialism is a sin as it treats another country or people and their lives as means to

achieve the end of power and domination. The intention to harm the other for promotion of self-interest is what makes imperialism, a subject of absolute rejection and abhorrence.

In fact, the experiences of the two world wars due to clamour for colonies, the Holocaust, the destruction of the third world countries, the dehumanising institutions of slavery, and apartheid are reasons enough to never let these forces rise again. Did only the victims of Imperialism suffer due to it?

Probably yes. But the colonisers were also a part of this process and therefore, must be more responsible to not let such instances take shape again. The entire world felt and continues to feel the disastrous impacts of this phenomena and therefore, all of us should collectively reject it.

But has the world experienced expressed its hate for imperialism? First let us look at the former victims of imperialism. Some, like India have been ardent opposers of imperialism. Our struggle for freedom, support for decolonisation and call for an equitable, inclusive and multilateral world order shows our appropriate learning from the past experience of imperialism.

However, many of those who experienced the horrors of imperialism, instead of hating the same, have themselves transformed into neo-imperialists of the world. Take the case of America. It was one of the worst sufferers of European imperialism, yet seeks to assert domination over the entire world. Similarly, China was also a colony but is today seeking revenge by in turn establishing imperial domination over the world.

Also, if we look at the former perpetrators of imperialism, we will realise that even they ^{do} ~~did~~ not see imperialism as a mistake which is not to be repeated. According to them, it was their intelligence, far-sightedness and blessed destiny that enabled them to rule over the world. This lack of realisation of what they did to fellow human beings, the environment, the resources and cultures of the world is also a primary cause of acceptance of imperialism. They were also equal parts of it, yet do not hate it.

Another reason for which those who experienced imperialism have not learned to hate it is lack of understanding of one's subordination. Edward Said in his book on 'Orientalism' talks about how our history, geography,

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language, culture, and science have been painted with imperial designs that we do not realise its effects. The Western way has been established as the norm and all that does not conform to the norm is termed as the inferior "other". We have been indoctrinated to believe that the imperial legacies give us a superior and more civilised life. This is the reason we prefer English over our mother tongue, Jeans over our traditional wear, foreign tours over visits to historical monuments and sites.

But is imperialism necessarily to be hated always? Did it not give us new languages, world views, perspectives, railways, telegrams, dollars, etc.

Yes, it did bring all these. But the fundamental reason for

it to be abhorred in the intention.
The imperialist designs which are
driven by the intention to
dominate over the other, to
destroy the other for self-
advancement, to ~~the~~ treat the
other as a "means" for our ends,
are to be openly rejected and
renounced.

So, what is the solution?
How can we move away from these
tendencies?

First, let us acknowledge
that imperialism of past and of
today is a "wrong" that must
not be practised in any way.

second, let us see each
other as a fellow human being
first, as a fellow country first
rather than seeing each other
through lens of hierarchy and

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difference. We need to realise the importance and inherent worth of each territory, society, language, culture and economy. None deserves subordination. All are to be respected for their uniqueness.

Third, let us collectively raise our voices against those who support or promote imperialism. Cooperation and consociational rejection of imperialism can prevent this phenomena from spreading its wings.

Whether it is the cheque-book diplomacy of China, forced promotion of capitalism by USA, imposition of English, indifference of developed countries to support the developing countries in mitigation of climate change, racial discrimination or gender

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discrimination, all are manifestations of imperialism and must be rejected by all of us, TOGETHER.

The entire world was a part and is a part of the experience of imperialism, directly or indirectly and therefore, should come together to reject it in one voice.

We need to imagine ourselves like the petals of a grand and beautiful lotus. All of us, each living entity, is interconnected to each other. Only when all petals flourish, can the flower bloom. Therefore, peace, cooperation, support and absolute rejection of imperialist tendencies are the way forward because -

"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - The world is one family.

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I ALONE CANNOT CHANGE
THE WORLD BUT I CAN CAST
A STONE ACROSS THE WATER
TO CREATE MANY RIPPLES.

The story is of a young boy who is given a stick by his teacher. The teacher asks the boy to break the stick and the child does it easily. Then, the teacher gives him a big bunch of sticks to break. The child tries hard but cannot break it. And with this, the teacher teaches the lesson of collective strength. It has been a well-established learning that "united we stand, divided we fall". When we are together, we can easily change the world.

But are we all always united? Do individual biases and choices not come in our way to come together with others? Yes, our

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individualistic concerns often tend to overshadow our responsibility towards the larger public good. Then, what is to be done in such situations?

In such situations, one person has to take up the responsibility to initiate a change. Though the path is difficult, but strong and morally upright persons do not fear obstacles. History is a testimony to the fact that as one person progresses on a noble path, he is soon joined by many. Nobility is contagious, it spreads, but it requires some person to be the source of the contagion. Yes, resistance is also met on this path, but the change is not impossible to achieve.

Think of the great French Revolution of the 18th century. It was probably the first grand revolution

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against the monarchical tyranny. It happened in one small country but its ripple effects spread far and wide. It was said that when French sneezed, the entire Europe caught cold. And till today the ideals of "liberty, equality and fraternity" reverberate in our hearts.

Similarly, in the Indian freedom struggle, reminisce that first ~~shot~~ shot of Mangal Pandey that marked the beginning of our first war of independence. It was just one shot by one soldier in a huge army. But even today, his brave action is the first to appear in our history of struggle for independence.

Also ^{if} we take into consideration the international context, we can find a similar tale. There was a time of extreme bipolarisation when the entire world was divided into 2 blocs. This division was the identity of the cold war. But India decided to

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bring a change. India proposed Non-alignment against bloc politics. The choice was definitely tough. But what is important to note is that we did not remain alone. We initiated the change and were soon joined by many others. Today NAM is a powerful 120 nation forum asserting its significance.

Like our fearless choice of NAM, our administration also demands people who can make such choices. Corruption, inefficiency, and red tapism have become the hallmarks of our administration. But is it correct to ignore all this assuming one person cannot change the entire administration?

No. One person might not change but he/she definitely can initiate a change which would in turn inspire many to support the change. When T.N. Seshan initiated electoral reforms, he faced a lot of criticism.

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But ultimately that one person was enough to show how "free and fair" elections are to be administered in a democratic country.

Our social environment also presents a similar trajectory. When one person makes a change, it can even transform into a big movement. Raja Rammohan Roy's demand for abolition of sati or Savitribai Phule's emphasis on education of lower castes and girls, all such ideas of reformation were initiated by these individuals. But they effectively created ripples. Their ideas still resound in today's struggles for recognition of LG, BT & T rights and women's safety and education.

Following up on the same, take a look at the environment. It does not know any boundaries or limits. It is a natural gift for the entire humanity and entities on this planet. But today, it is polluted.

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exploited and contaminated. One person cannot change this reality. This change is a result of actions of many generations of people that an individual cannot entirely reverse. But if ^{all of us} ~~we~~ make a change at individual levels, imagine what it would be like? Just like drop by drop, a pot gets filled up, small changes in our lifestyles at individual levels can add up to become a huge change.

If there are still doubts as to why we should take the pain of initiating the change, let us explore the reverse side of the argument as well. What happens when no one wishes to bring about a change? What is the consequence when no one dares to take the "road not taken"?

When all renounce the responsibility to be the change-makers, the result is a collective failure and a collective loss.

Look at the story of our global commons. No country wishes to take the first step and work for their conservation and preservation. What is the result? We are all losing our precious global commons. This is why we are all victims of global warming, erratic weathers and imminent destruction.

Same is the issue with the generations old issues of inter-state water disputes in our country. Neither the states, nor the centre and not even the people are interested in actual cooperation and management of the shared rivers. The result

is disputes are pending since decades, farmers are suffering due to water shortage, and there is no management of the river bodies. The non-willingness and indifference of all ultimately leads to a cumulative loss for all.

In a more quotidian content, reflect upon the everyday accidents that take place on our roads and highways. No person initiates to help. All are more interested to look at it, make videos and circulate in whatsapp groups. What is the end result?

Lives are lost. Moreover, this indifference and apathy also spreads like an infection.

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Just like we are not interested to help others, others will also not extend help when we need it. A vicious cycle develops and continues until some noble-hearted person does the opposite and becomes a source of inspiration. That is why cyandhi ji said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world".

Therefore, whenever you doubt whether you alone can bring about a meaningful change or not, remember :-

The NGO that brought Right to Information Act was one.

The epitome of compassion, Mother Teresa was one.

The great Buddha whose teachings

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are followed the world over was one.
mahatma gandhi was also one.
And you are also "one" like
these great people.

The story that we came
across at the beginning of the
essay highlighted the power
of collective strength. But the
journey towards that united
bond is started by one.

Therefore, we cannot change
the world but we can always
be the source of bringing
about a change. If we emit
those positive vibes and the
courage to pursue a change,
even the most fierce opposers
would eventually join us.
Society is like a chain, we
are all interlinked and
interconnected. If one bead of

the chain moves in a better direction, eventually all beads would follow. All we need is the courage and strength to bear that temporary pain when we move towards a new path and there is a strain in the chain. Ultimately, pain would be relieved and change will be visible.