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Mini Paper: Ghosh Close Reading (FD)

In the novel, *Sea of Poppies*, the author, Amitav Ghosh. Utilizes diction such as river, poppies, forcing, and impossible. To illustrate to the audience the difficult working and living conditions of a poppy farmer as of the consequence of the Opium Trade in India. For instance, Ghosh uses the terms in the following quote when Deeti and her daughter are looking back at their house, “tiny raft, floating upon a river of poppies” (27). This suggests that they are being carried away to a place unknown and a scenario in which they have no control over. Yet, they know that this is because of the poppies they are harvesting. The effect is that it shows the reader that they are entrapped by this labor as it is endless. This moment alludes to the lives of many Indian farmers who are trapped in labor so to say that they are no longer living life. Their life is being directed towards focusing on survival. In addition, When describing the English men with their farming contracts, Ghosh describes the following, “forcing cash advances on the farmers, it was impossible to say no” (29). This suggests that the farmers really have no way of acquitting the opium plantations thus, illustrating the working conditions that lead to hopelessness and entrapment. The effect is that what is being described as ‘farmer’ takes on a different meaning now, as it seems to be more as a form of an enslavement than work. As in earning a sustainable salary. Similarly, this also implies that they are no longer in control of the harvest but rather the harvest of poppies controls them. Furthermore, these farmers aren’t even being affected by their own country of India but rather are being dictated by a foreign one in which they for some reason can’t say no and put an end to. In essence, the working and living conditions of a poppy farmer in this novel are enhanced by the specific word choices Ghosh makes. Educating the audience sublimely of the injustice, entrapment, and hopelessness that Indian farmers face in the name of colonialism and survival.