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## DEMYSTIFICATION OF THE POSTMODERN DIALECTICS OF SPACE AND IDENTITY IN PETER CAREY'S *JACK MAGGS*

Anjan Saikia

### Abstract

The discourse of "Postmodernism" is an exasperating and problematic one to define precisely due to its encapsulation of a wide range of objects and phenomena, and the diverse levels of conceptual abstractions. Its complex anti-modernist strategies erupted into the scene from the late 1950s and received widespread momentum during the 1970s and 1980s at an unprecedented level. Apart from freeing it from any extraneous influence, it also brings into critical discussions the seminal ideas of indeterminacy, plurality, fragmentation, fracturing, and rejection of grand and metanarratives as such. In fact, the different aspects of postmodernism have impacted the contemporary social, economic, political, philosophical and cultural productions in a significant manner and extent. The paper frames the notions of space and identity as operating within postmodern discourse and how these emerge as representations in the works of Peter Carey.

**Keywords :** Peter Carey, space, identity, postmodernism.

In the Postmodern discourse, the notion of 'space' has occupied a central position for its thematic and conceptual importance. It has, in fact, re-emerged as an important means of analysis in literary and cultural studies in recent years. In other words, the discourse of postmodernism has especially emphasized the importance of space, geography and cartography, especially in relation to modes of transgression, transcendence, multi-focalization and fragmentations as well. Besides, in the aftermath of the hyper-localization of experience, there have been calls for orienting and re-orienting the efforts of mapmaking and space. In the "Preface and Postscript" of the book *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (1990), Edward Soja significantly states

Today, however, it may be space more than time that hides consequences from us, the 'making of geography' more than the 'making of history' that provides the most revealing tactical and theoretical world. This is the insistent and promise of postmodern geographies. (1)

Similarly, the notion of 'identity' has also been given the status of a focal issue of discussion in the postmodern era owing to its significance, relevance, and