

Impact of Cosmopolitanism and the Socio-cultural Change in Indianness in Indian Writing in English: A Postcolonial Study

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Abstract - The Present Study is to look at the impact of Cosmopolitanism in Indian English Fiction and the irreversible socio-cultural change in Indianness of the Indian people through a Postcolonial lens. Applying Homi.K.Bhabha, the Postcolonial cultural critic's postcolonial narrative theory, "Third Space", the Postcolonial Indian Writer Kiran Desai's fiction, *Inheritance of Loss* is analyzed as how hybrid subjects emerged by consuming two cultures, due to Cosmopolitanism, the Euro-centric Cosmos rightly the world-wide colonist ideology aims at bringing all the natives' national cultures under one umbrella enforcing global modernity. Today in the 21st century, the globalization era, the hybrids are the migrants or the diaspora in an "in-between" state of both the homeland and host land have undergone cultural homogenization due to Cultural globalization. Thus the paper analyzes how the natives in the novel feel suffocated by cultural synchronization with the dominant culture and how they are marginalized and remain outsiders at worst, effects the dead spirit of nationality and the marginalization of nationalism. The outcome expected is to alarm the cosmopolitans, about the perils of dropping one's cultural identity, internalizing internationalism is nothing but going for commoditization and glocalization which will cause the probability of recolonization and default dominance in the future, all becoming a threat to the future generation of the nation.

Index Terms— Cosmopolitanism, Postcolonialism, Cultural Homogeneity, Marginality of Nationalism.

I. INTRODUCTION

India is a land of diverse forms and its riches lie in its plurality of languages, religions, cultures, values, castes, creeds, and sects. However, it finds its calmness and composite nature in "Unity in Diversity". People's relationships with their local environment and the living world are reflected in the diversity of their cultures. The variety of their cultures reflects how they

relate to their immediate surroundings and the natural world. Although centuries of invasion, colonialism, and "progress" have already drastically reduced the globe's cultural diversity, In today's global scenario, among the diasporic cosmopolitans the term, "Hybridization" has become a postcolonial thirst, often gets quenched by cultural homogenization by internalizing or mimicking the mighty cultures willing to undergo global modernity.

Diaspora like exile or expatriate is not a recent phenomenon; it has existed for as long as people have actively left their home countries, especially those from third-world nations, in search of better opportunities and to become members of the modern global elite, who are correctly referred to as "Cosmopolitans," a byproduct of hybridization.

The Present Study's objective is to use a postcolonial lens to examine the effects of cosmopolitanism in Indian English fiction as well as the irreversible socio-cultural change in the Indian population's identity I.e., the marginality of nationalism. The methodology adopted is a qualitative, descriptive method applying Homi. K. Bhabha, the Postcolonial cultural critic's postcolonial narrative theory, "Third Space" and cultural Homogeneity theory as tools.

Today in the 21st century, with the postcolonial readings of literary works, the term, Cosmopolitanism is more concerned with its growth due to Migrants and Diaspora communities who mimicked the European (Western Cultures), have found routes beyond their ethnic roots for global connections and a desire for a broader European identity. Thus the real objective is to question the transnational cosmopolitanism resulting from cultural globalization.

Globalization has allowed society to enjoy multitudinous benefits, including increased global cooperation, reduced trouble of global conflict, and

lower prices for goods and goods. Unfortunately, it's also led to serious impacts. As it's not realizable for globalization to end or reverse, it's likely the situation will worsen until nations, governing bodies, and other associations are impelled to apply laws and regulations that limit negative adversities, which may lead to serious cultural or social identity crisis, loss of nation-state belongingness, and fading of national spirit or patriotism.

Duality in identity may result from globalisation. People can create a global identity in addition to their original identity, which gives them a sense of inclusion in a larger global culture and makes them aware of its numerous facets (Arnett, 2002; Shinohara, 2004).

Global identity, as any other identity, would not be salient all the time; therefore it would be contextual and deposited. Still, in a forced choice terrain, metropolitans would be anticipated to choose dedication to the wider world, transcending their original and public boundaries. Hence, the present study considers that globalization processes are accelerating sensations and are increasingly of interest but globalization is likely to affect changes in individual and cooperative individualities, and so individual differences are to be anticipated in global identity development, there's a need for a spirit of nationalism.

The present study tries to imply the following questions to introspect among Cosmopolitans living under the umbrella term, "Global Culture";

- Is it enough to be claimed as the "Citizen of the World" rather than a particular country?
- Do you have a greater respect towards a well-established man in his local community or a man who is widely known with no local or ethnic roots?
- If you are a cosmopolitan, which affair do you follow closely - international or National or state or local affairs?

Postcolonial theory is concerned with the situation of former subject nations and cultures whose histories have been irremediably and irreversibly altered by the experience of colonialism. It looks critically at imperialism and its legacy and works to reclaim the past and to understand their own culture and personal identities and chart their own futures rather than the terms superimposed on them by colonial ideology and practice. (The Empire Writes Back, 151). It examines repression, English language assimilation, lack of freedom of expression, and shifting socioeconomic

cultural facets. It has made a commitment to taking into account global modernity and globalization.

According to Third-space theory, Homi Bhabha has insisted that instances where cultures overlap. He further adds that the emergence of the interstates overlap and the displacement of domains of difference that the intersubjective and collective experiences of nations, community interests or cultural values are negotiated. (Bhabha 1994).

According to Bhabha, Cosmopolitans are Diasporas, the uprooted population who's cultural and ethnic origin lie in a land other than where they currently reside and whose social, political and economic affections cross borders of nations. Major concerns are fractured and the fluid nature of individual identities relates to a tension between 'making and being made' results in a complicated sense of in-between being and becoming. The main problem is that the character Judge doesn't think of his homeland as his Country though he resides in India; he seems himself as self-cultured. He is brought up between two diametrically different courts, negotiating within his worlds.

REVIEW

According to the study and survey of various resources, *The Inheritance of Loss*, Kiran Desai's second book, was written over the course of seven years and was first published in 2006. That same year, it won the Man Booker Prize, and in 2007, it won the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award.

Many papers have been identified with the research questions regarding the benefits of globalization, the celebration of hybridity, the global citizen, and the advancement of new ideas, the novel raises several significant issues such as relocation as a painful choice between assimilation and nativism, the desirability of assimilation and the wisdom of maintaining difference, inhabiting the margins, and avoiding, unapologetic participation in the New World.

The word "Cosmopolitan" derives from the Greek word, "kosmopolitès", which means "Citizen of the world". Today, however, there is not a uniform concept of global or cosmopolitan identity. Some researchers view it as a "consciousness of an international Society or global community transcending national boundaries. (Iriye, 2004). According to Roudometof, (2005), A place may also be referred to as cosmopolitan, which is another word

for "diverse," or "bustling with people of various nationalities."

Globalization promotes cosmopolitanization (Beck, 2002), which may in turn promote a nationalistic response. Therefore, it can be anticipated that some people, but not all, may develop a new global identity. The decreasingly complex interplay between societal – social, literal, profitable, ideological – changes and individual agency in terms of adaptation to new realities will obviously lead to different issues for groups and individualities who have throughout their history developed different individualities, social representations and therefore, individual differences are anticipated. Whereas Nationalism always entails a strong emotional attachment and allegiance, thus it cannot be fully grasped in purely rational terms.

However, Nussbaum (2002) contends that the foundation of a healthy society should be global citizenship rather than nationalism or patriotism (a feeling of devotion and pride toward the group of which one is a member). She views nationalism and patriotism as built on exclusive notions of belonging, and cosmopolitan ideals have no place for either of them.

U.A.Sawant remarked on the challenges faced by the internationalized Indian lives. The living 'in-between' situation could be very painful and marginalized for the diasporas. U. A. Sawant, in his article, "Indian Writing in English & Globalization", qualitatively analyzed the impact of globalization on culture and economy and found out the challenges faced by the Internationalized Indian lives.

Anusha Hegde, in the paper entitled, "Globalization and diaspora in Indian Literature: A Study of "Ila" on Amitav Ghosh novel, *The Shadow Lines*" discussed the problem of assimilation and cultural rootlessness in globalization era as a Qualitative study and presented the image of cultural diaspora. Surekha and M. Mangrulkahr examined how world culture influences Indian culture and about the futility of globalization in the paper titled, "Impact of globalization on Indian Culture & English Literature" in 2020 by finding the reflections of globalization themes on Indian fiction.

In the article, "Literary Cosmopolitanisms of Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, and Arunthathi Roy", Sunil Samuel Macwan under critical-research qualitative analysis examined contemporary cosmopolitanism's relationship with globalization from postcolonial

perspectives and identified postcolonial authors are themselves products of globalization and a Eurocentric cosmopolitanism in the literary market.

Elizabeth Jackson (2021) in her article, "Cosmopolitan Attitudes and Cosmopolitan Identities in Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*", she distinguished between cosmopolitan attitudes and cosmopolitan identities and her findings showed various forms of expulsion, othering and global upbringing favors cosmopolitan identity.

In "Cosmopolitanism in Indian English Fiction" (2016), Mostafa Azizpour Shoobie discussed with a view on globalization and its effect (cultural, economic or otherwise) with varying degrees of fluid forms of belonging and border-crossing and enquired how a nation to be made while recognizing its relation to globalization.

Pranav Jani in his publication, "Decentering Rushdie: Cosmopolitanism and the Indian Novel in English" focused on the forced expulsion to voluntary emigration and postcolonial capitalist modernity—urbanization, industrialization, & globalization.

Several researches previously conducted so far indicate that for several years, great effort has been made and devoted to study on globalization and many researchers had demonstrated the various study on hybridity, ambivalence, Cultural Conflict, diasporas' problems and sufferings in Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* under various lens using many theories but the focus of the recent study is on hybrid's "in-between" global identity and the marginalization of nationalism by the advent of globalization aka Cosmopolitanism and studies how the living 'in-between' situation could be very painful and marginalized for the diasporas.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

The Previous researchers have observed the troubles of the diasporas and their survival technique in assimilating conventional lifestyle and language and worldwide identification. But the proposed study concentrates on how Cosmopolitanism affects nationalism and national identity. It examines Desai's hybrid-character, the retired and 'English- fied' judge who, a pre-independent Indian, leads a lonely life after a bitter past.

The judge, Jemubhai, is neither a cold-blooded, furious old man who hates himself because he is not

accepted by either British culture or his own society. The company of his dog, Mutt, and later his granddaughter is his only source of comfort. The main figure who directly encounters colonization is the judge, Jemubhai. He must confront his mistreatment of his wife and the oppression he perpetrated on others as a result of being forced to accept British society, despite the fact that he gains from it.

One of the most important factors that are associated with the postcolonial impact is hybridity. The process of undergoing hybridization is through cultural homogenisation. As a result, Postcolonialism hybridity led to loss and deformed identity. Identity is a national sense of belonging to a certain nation, ethnic, cultural group, or a language. In this regard, it is necessary to highlight and analyze the postcolonial impact on the identity of both individuals and nations to perceive the degrees of this postcolonial impact. Hence the national identity is distorted and a mixed hybrid identity is newly formed.

The study examines Desai's character, Sai's grandfather, Jemubhai or Jemu, who is the head of the home in flashback episodes. He is raised in a caste of peasants, and his family does everything in its power to make sure he has a good education. He enrolls in a missionary school before continuing on to Cambridge University on a scholarship with the intention of joining the Indian Civil Service. He marries fourteen-year-old Nimi before leaving in order to receive a dowry, but the two do not actually wed. Even though he is an outsider in Cambridge, he makes an effort to adopt British culture. He succeeds in his tests and is admitted to the ICS. When he returns to India, he feels humiliated.

The judge was the first victim of colonial asperity and experienced the disparity. He was compelled by the situation which made him to adopt British culture. Jemubhai, being an angry old man filled with self-loathing in "in-between" states in accordance with Bhabha's third-space theory as a hybrid out of colonial ideological Homogeneity, however he was in-between state as a hybrid, not wholly acknowledged by both cultures. He leads a snail-pace life with no hurrying to speed up his life. With not much change in his schedule throughout the story, his usual and routine habits keep on repeated with repetitions except his occasional ranting. He feels irritated if his routine is dislocated, advanced or postponed.

Judge's personal life was an absolute failure. His relationship with Nimmi did not last. Despite the fact that his wife's parents had paid for his trip to England, he had no affection for her. After she passed away, he felt guilty. His wife had been crushed by his misguided ideas. He feels a lot of guilt when he thinks back on past events.

When he got to England, he understood that the England in his dreams was not the same as the England in real life. He started studying since that was the only ability he could use in England. He forced himself for long working hours at night and cut his bond himself with the outer world and engaged in a solitary commitment. Instead, he realized that his breathtaking arrogance and loneliness had been captured over. He retreated into a solitude that grew in weight day by day as a shadow.

In Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, characters all yearn for love and acceptance while searching for their identities in a strange environment. They have all been relocated. Though to various degrees, they have grown to feel a feeling of loss. All of the characters are affected by the postcolonial predicament.

The retired and secluded judge Jemubhai Popatlal Patel resides with his well-bred dog, Mutt, his chatty old chef, Pannalal, and his teenage granddaughter, Sai. Jemubhai Popatlal Patel is a peculiar man who frequently dwells in the past. His flashback reveals that when he was a young man, his family sent him to Cambridge to pursue a legal education. But because of his accent, he received abuse in England. As he passed, young girls in England stuck up their noses to demonstrate how strongly he smelled like curry. He developed shame and contempt for his background, his native culture, and the color of his skin as a result of being rejected:

Likewise, more tragic than any other character in the novel is Biju, the cook's son. One of the most terrifying moments in the narrative is when Biju rushes to join a group of Indians rushing to the visa counter at the American Embassy. Kiran Desai describes the process of migration from the poor third-world countries to the immigrant-filled basements of New York City in numerous pages. Biju joins a large line of Indians scurrying to the visa counter at the American embassy in Kathmandu. Biju reflects on these uncivilized Indian applicants' desire to humiliate themselves in order to obtain an American visa: "In this room it was a fact accepted by everyone that Indians were willing

to undergo any form of humiliation in order to get into the States. They would beg to climb in even if you piled trash on top of their heads (184).”

Biju finally settles in New York illegally and works odd jobs to make ends meet: "Biju changed occupations like a fugitive on the run" (3). He moved employment so frequently that he was unable to establish himself anywhere. He held positions in a variety of hotels and eateries, including Indian, French, Mexican, and Italian. His experiences were not much different from those of the colonized. Ever since moving to America, he has felt lonely. The irony is that his father, the chef in the judge's home, believes he is doing well and is pleased that his son is a citizen of the United States. The cook had first made the effort to send his kid overseas for four years.

Everyone who travels abroad to live away from home worries about their safety and security. When they arrive in the foreign country, their relatives who have already made a home there provide for their daily needs. In the instance of Biju, he is not supported by any family members. He is left to fend for himself in order to survive. Biju traveled to various locations. His care for Harish-Harry demonstrates his concern for immigration security and safety. He had been beaten out by Harish-Harry without money or protection. Harish severely assaulted him and urged him to return to India. Biju joins a lengthy line of Indians hurrying to the visa counter at the American embassy in Kathmandu.

Homi Bhabha proposed the theory of the third space to describe the hybrid cultural identity that results from the fusing of features from several cultures. According to Bhabha, the Third space is a mode of articulation, a way of describing a productive, and not merely reflective, space that engenders new possibilities. It is an ‘interruptive, interrogative, and (Bhabha 1994) space of new forms of cultural meaning and production blurring the limitations of existing boundaries and calling into question established categorisations of culture and identity. According to Bhabha, this hybrid third space is an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representations have no ‘primordial unity or fixity’. (Bhabha 1994)

The third space is a means of expressing a productive, as opposed to just reflecting, area that inspires new possibility. It is a realm of new cultural meanings that is "interruptive, interrogative, and enunciative" (Bhabha, 1994). The theory blurs the boundaries

between preexisting divisions, challenging accepted definitions of culture and identity. According to Bhabha, this hybrid third space is an ambivalent location devoid of any "primordial homogeneity or solidity" in terms of cultural meaning and representation. (1994, Bhabha)

The idea of the third space is proposed as a valuable tool for analyzing the articulation, transgression, and subversion of dualistic categories that transcend colonial oppositional stance and binary thinking. (Law 1997) Henceforth each character interacts with a society engaged in strife. They are placed in the ambiguous terrain since that influences their identity. Another important notion in the postcolonial thesis is "hybridity." It alludes to the interdependence of two societies. i.e. Both acceptance and rejection happen simultaneously. The metamorphic process is not simple for Desai.

As there is a transcend of local cultures to more broader universal culture, this transnational cosmopolitan ideology has made the natives navigate between the dichotomy of identity – national vs. international impacting a complex world beyond their national boundaries and thus resulting in a crucial threat to the nations as postcolonial legacy, the marginalization of nationalism.

Nowadays, Migrants and the Diasporic communities, had forgotten the names of the nations and even dismissed their national identity by copying and assimilating the European cultures and became transnational and transcultural metropolitan elite for global connections. As there is a transcend of local cultures to more broader universal culture, this transnational cosmopolitan ideology has made the natives navigate between the dichotomy of identity – national vs. international impacting a complex world beyond their national boundaries and thus resulting in a crucial threat to the nations as postcolonial legacy, the marginalization of nationalism. Thus the outcome presumed is enquiring oneself:” Where does one fit in? Which cultural identity does one now possess? Which nationality does one belong to? Does Independence Day really mean the right thing to the hybrids? Do they reclaim my culture or revamp my ancestral culture in this new land?”

CONCLUSION

To conclude, one can try to drive a sense of belonging and identity on one's own land. One is frequently attracted by the material substance that the west seems to offer. It's indeed painful to abandon one's home country and re-root in a foreign one. The natives must determine to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, culture, and ethnic identity. Also, they should utilize the given rights in accordance with their own customs and practices and one should pave the way to live with national dignity. The study can be conducted as an empirical one by collecting real-time data through questionnaires, interviews etc. as interdisciplinary too

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