

HYBRIDITY IN ANAND'S UNTOUCHABLE

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Abstract

The entire world is colonized by trends. Being humans, we always possess within us all the experiences which we go through as impressions on us. In this case, hybridize is one of the key concepts in the Postcolonial theory, showing the mingling of the cultures in different ways. This concept of cultural hybridity is highlighted by Homi K. Bhabha in his famous work *The Location of Culture* (1994). In this paper, the researcher tries to show the 'hybridist' of them in the Postcolonial Indian English literature. by referring to Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*.

Keywords: Colonialism and post-colonialism, hybridist, Indians.

Introduction

We generally view that colonization is a process of conquering a nation by another nation. The broad idea of colonization is the dominance. Colonization is a politico-economical process. Since European countries have exhausted from the resources and the customers they have started looking for colonies.

All most in all the places of medieval centuries, 16th and 17th century's colonisations of Europeans have started in the name of trade. European markets could not get the profits in Europe; they started looking at Asia, South America, and Africa. And the irony is they have looted the resources from colonized countries and sold to colonized people in the form of new by making raw materials into different shapes. And the European market is so stronger even today that their coke cola products and ITC products can reach the remote places where Indian government policies cannot reach at all.

After the colonial time has gone intellectual people have come up with the theories which are known as postcolonial theories, where the theories show how the natives and have been exploited since centuries and the effect on their culture because of the colonization. The important works to be noted in this discourse is Said's Orientalism and Home K. Bhabha's The Location of Culture. We can see the cultural hybridity in our day to day lives. This aspect of cultural hybridist will be discussed here further.

What is Colonialism, Postcolonialism, and Hybridist?

The basic definition for colonization is the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.

-Oxford Dictionary

The natives have been subjects to the masters or colonizers. The surface level of colonization is entertained in the European books. Colonialism according to Pramod K. Nayar is "Colonialism can be described as the process of settlement by Europeans in Asia and South America territories. Colonization found its climactic moments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was an exploitative mechanism- economic exploitation of resources, the use of native people, the conquest of territory and markets-based on the difference in ace, culture, forms of knowledge, technological advancement and political systems between the Europeans and the natives." Nayar Pramod K. Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory- From Structuralism to Ecocriticism, (Pearson India Education Services Pvt.Ltd, 2010), pp.154.

This definition gives the idea of the colonization briefly. The critique of colonial radicalized acts of representation in law, history writing, literature, religion, and educational practices provides the opening moves to postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory is an interpretation of

Colonization. Postcolonial theory questions the practices of colonization. And in a way, Postcolonialism is a step towards to reclaim the past of the natives of colonized places. Postcolonial theories question the very existence of the rich culture of the natives and the exploitation of the third world countries and the colonized countries and it questions the socio-cultural practices, radicalized and unequal representation of the colonized by the colonizer. Pramod K. Nayar states Postcolonialism as

"Postcolonial theory is a method of interpreting, reading and critiquing the cultural practices of colonialism, where it proposes that the exercise of colonial power is also the exercise of racially determined powers of representation." Nayar Pramod K. Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory- From Structuralism to Ecocriticism, (Pearson India Education Services Pvt.Ltd, 2010), pp.154.

By colonizing the natives for decades and centuries, Europeans had devalued the native culture and tradition. Colonizers had devalued the glorious past of the nations. Therefore Peter Barry suggests a few steps and characteristics of Postcolonial criticism.

"If the first step towards a postcolonial perspective is to reclaim one's own past, then the second is to begin to erode the colonialist ideology by which what past had been devalued."

"The emphasis on identity as doubled or hybrid, or unstable is a third characteristic of the postcolonial approach."

"The stress on "cross-cultural" interactions is the fourth characteristic of post-colonialist criticism." Barry. Peter, Beginning Theory, third edition. (Manchester University Press), pp.186, 188, 189.

Postcolonial theories explore these characteristics within a framework. Most of the writers like Chinua Achebe, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Salman Rushdie have shown this identity-crisis which they experienced in their works or better to put it like their works are the result of this identity-crisis which was an effect of colonization which leads to globalization. Homi K. Bhabha has given the detailed theory on hybridity.

Homi K. Bhabha explained the element of cultural hybridity in his famous work The Location of Culture. He calls hybridity, referring 'to the state of being at the border of two cultures, marked by a sense of "double consciousness" and "in-betweenness" in the migrant giving way to the luminosity of identity. Hybridity, therefore, is a subversion of single, unified, purist notions of identity, in favor of multiple cultural positions. Postcolonial theories preserve the idea of hybridity.

Hybridize in Anand's Untouchable

We can examine the hybridity factor in Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*. There are instances which show the hybridists in character of Bakha, the protagonist of this novel.

"But then he had been working in the barracks of a British regiment for some years on a sort of probation with a remote uncle and he had been caught by the glamour of the 'white man's' life. The Tommies had treated him as a human being and he had learned to think of himself as superior to his fellow outcasts."(Pp.1-2)

This stark simplicity had furrowed his old Indian consciousness and cut deep new lines where all the considerations which made India evolve a skirty costume as best fitted for the human body, lay dormant."(pp2-3)

"Ever since he was a child he had walked past the wooden stalls on which lay heaped the scarlet and khaki uniforms discarded or pawned by the Tommie's, pith solar topees, peak caps, knives, forks, buttons, old books and other oddments of Anglo-Indian life. "He just could not summon sorrow to the world he lived in, the world of his English clothes and 'Red-Lamp' cigarettes, because it seemed she was not of that world, had no connection with it."

These above-mentioned lines from the text show the hybridity in Bakha's thinking and behavior, the way he wants to change his lifestyle and eating style. Bakha wants to dress up like a sahib, Bakha wants to wear boots and coats like THEM. In the novel, Bakha's friends call Bakha as an imitator of sahibs. This limitation is not a spontaneous act rather it develops gradually as hybridity in thoughts.

Conclusion

Colonialism is not just a political process rather it leaps into a social change as well. Among these socio-political changes, cultural hybridist is also one. The novel *Untouchable* shows the twenty-four hours life of the protagonist Bakha and just within this span of a day, it shows the complete effect on his psyche of the time and a society where he is living in.

It is actually the portrayal of the making and the development of this Bakha from an untouchable to the untouchable. His sensitivity leads him to develop himself as a better individual in spite of the filthy environment he is living in. This sensitivity of Bakha is a result of the postcolonial hybridity.

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