

The Struggle Of South Asian Women: Gender Subalternity In Postcolonial Fiction

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Abstract

The current study is qualitative in nature and is based on a close textual analysis of five novels that were chosen from five distinct south Asian countries. These novels serve as the research's primary source. In the light of a selection of south Asian literature, the aim is to evaluate the subaltern's silence, resistance, and transformation as well as its agency and society reaction. The main goal of the analysis is to show how certain works of fiction reflect the various facets and how diasporic fiction writers reflect the silence, resistance, struggle, and agency of subaltern subjects speculating on the postcolonial subaltern theory (1988). The study examines the voiceless and submissive position of female subjects experiencing both patriarchal oppression and postcolonial sadness at the same time, all under the auspices of Spivak's subaltern theory (1988). The research primarily examines the hardships and discrimination experienced by women who are doubly subaltern due to the effects of patriarchy and colonialism.

Keywords: *qualitative, South Asian, postcolonial subaltern theory, Spivak's subaltern theory.*

INTRODUCTION

This is an introductory chapter prefacing the background, development and the key elements of postcolonial subaltern theory that provides the basis to my research. It substantiates the ideology of subaltern studies from its fundamental conceptualization to its progressive realization by the subaltern studies group led by Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. It introduces contemporary south Asian fiction elucidating status and struggle of postcolonial subaltern subject facing discrimination and injustice at colonial diasporic lands and at postcolonial native lands. It underscores the role of society in disparaging a group of people of a certain class who has lack of power and wealth. It measures the social resistance to distress a subaltern if it gains agency.

Under the generalized rubric of 'subaltern', my research aims to delve into interpretive and exploratory realms, seeking to understand the perspectives of the subaltern, their real-life experiences, endeavors towards agency, rejection and resistance of society, the unending struggle for representation by analyzing the selected south Asian fiction conceived by south Asian diasporic novelists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SUBALTERN POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

Subaltern theory as a critical response to colonialism and its enduring effects, is intermingled with postcolonialism since its emergence in 1988. Postcolonialism explores the multifaceted impact of colonialism on postcolonial societies whereas subaltern theory keeps its focus on the experiences and struggle of oppressed marginalized people within these societies. In the field of postcolonialism, the subaltern refers to a specific group of people that has been historically marginalized, neglected or outcast powerful politics of

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elite and dominant people. The current study infers the postcolonial people in the realm of subaltern group of marginalized people and seek to highlight their voices and struggle.

GENDER SUBALTERNITY BY SPIVAK'S "CAN THE SUBALTERN SPEAK?"

The representation and struggle of subaltern has examined under the umbrella of postcolonial subaltern theory by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988). Study uses the lens of Spivak's theory to analyse gender subaltern subject of selected fiction in particular hence the theory is also applied to examine subaltern subject in southasian societies in general. Spivak pens down in her essay "can the subaltern speak", Although the title indicates the silence of subaltern, spivak emphasizes more on the unheard subaltern in the essay. She opines that the subaltern actually speaks if not verbally but physically or symbolically.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher aims to examine the novels on multifarious levels. This study is unique as it highlights variant features of southasian diasporic fiction opposing Said's theology of orientalism. The researcher selects five groundbreaking and internationally award-winning novels from five diasporic novelists belongs to different countries of Southasia. This provides an extensive platform of speculation and meditations to the researchers and readers for the understanding of global capitalism employed by southasian diasporic writers. A significant dimension of present research originates from the hypothesis that diasporic orient writers are still under the influence of colonialism and seem convinced to the dominance of imperialism.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions of the current study are formulated in relation to the research objectives which are given below:

1. How does the gender subaltern subject of the postcolonial fiction "speak" through the works of South Asian novelists?
2. What are the responses a subaltern gets after raising voice against suppression?

SELECTED NOVELS

A fictional work is a true reflection and a real representation of contemporary social structure exposing its values, beliefs, conflicts and aspiration. Authors draw inspiration from their surroundings and readers can gain a better understanding of diverse societies through the characters, settings, and events depicted in fiction.

The study chooses subaltern fiction from five different countries of South Asia for the sake of valid and holistic nature of the research. The detail of the selected novels is as follows: Maps for lost lovers, Kiran Desai (India), Monica Ali (Bangladesh), Brick Lane, Kite Runner.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The current study is qualitative in nature and based on close textual study of five selected novels from five different countries of south Asia, the primary sources of the research. Gail Cresswell and Megan Poore in *Writing for Academic Success* define, "The aim of a qualitative research is to provide a holistic picture and it is an inquiry process that explores a social or human problem"

The purpose is to analyze the silence, resistance, transformation of a subaltern, its agency and societal reaction, role of fiction writers in creating negative image of orient and its influence on psychology of south Asian readers in the light of selected south Asian fiction. Selected text is the main source of discourse and has a great tendency of applications and interpretation.

Main purpose of analysis is rationalized the productivity of such techniques and methods and justifies their application and practice in the ongoing research.

The thematic categorization of the selected texts forms the basis for the scrutiny of the textual content. It is structured by the selection of certain subjects from Subaltern Postcolonial Studies and delimited to the discussion of Spivak's concepts of gender

subaltern, Said's philosophy of Self with common set of shared features in postcolonial background, function in both diasporic and south Asian societies. The textual content comprises of five novels by five different south Asian novelists is thematically analyzed on the strategies of the specific theoretical framework within subaltern postcolonial studies.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research focuses mainly on two major theories akin to postcolonial subaltern studies delineated in the selected fiction under scrutiny. The Subaltern theory of Spivak has been employed to form the foundation of this research. The study mirrors its analysis from two different rather interconnected angles. On one hand, it delves into the challenges and struggles faced by postcolonial subaltern subjects in South Asian fiction and on the other, it critically examines rather exaggerated and unrealistic depiction of south Asian societies at international platform by diasporic writers.

DATA ANALYSIS

FEMALE SUBJUGATION IN PATRIARCHAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Selected fiction represents various postcolonial social structure where female entities have been oppressed and marginalized by male dominant communities. Unfortunately, multiple female characters have found under the pressure of patriarchal structure. The absolute power of male gender is only them being "male" and this status has thwarted the powerless female gender for only being female. Study sorted out suppression of women in five different social set-ups described by five different novelists of South Asia. The selected writers portrayed a similar setting opposing female independence and representation on equal basis. Study reveals the fact of social constraints and limitations for female at every step from home to state. This is elaborate evidence of female subjugation practiced at postcolonial societies and also at diasporic lands expounded in south Asian fiction. Female subaltern suffers at their own lands as well as at diasporic lands.

BRICK LANE (Bangladesh)

Nazneen is a little educated, submissive and a coward young woman from Bengal who moves to London at the age of eighteen after her marriage with Channu. She has no much dreams of future except that she wants to be a good mother and obedient wife. She is born to accept her subaltern identities facing double oppression of male-dominant culture and elite western English culture. She grows up in a patriarchal social set-up suppressing the voice of female members and not letting them opine or suggest in any family matter or family decision.

When Nazneen asks her mother Rupban about her father, she replied, "If God wanted us to ask questions, he would have made us men (page 80)."

This dialogue from Brick Lane by Monica Ali gives us enough subject matter for understanding the condition and status of a subaltern woman in a south-Asian society. Nazneen is the main character and protagonist of the story who has brought up in a family fully oppressed by the supremacy of gender and culture. She was born to obey, submit, follow, accept and only to nod the orders of men. Ali has portrayed a real example of subaltern female gender who has no desire and opinion for her own life even and she is trained only to show her consent for men's decisions. Due to her submissive personality, she has no development of confidence or courage. She remains silent, repressed and timid in her native subaltern Asian culture. When Nazneen moves to London, she feels herself more inferior and powerless in a new elite western English culture. Life becomes a bigger challenge for a subaltern woman who moves from a post-colonial society to a colonial country. Among her contemporary post-colonial theorists, Spivak is the pioneer of feminist agenda in South Asia. She is the one who declared that the women from postcolonial lands are doubly subalternized. She considers colonialism venturesome and challenging to woman more than men. She criticizes the history of subaltern subjectivity for neglecting females in the very process of rewriting.

The readers realize the tension and clash undergoes in the life of a postcolonial woman who finds herself inferior and marginalized under the influence of gender and culture. Ali

portrays a fascinating glimpse of dialogues and negotiation through the character of Nazneen who is trapped between the cultures of two different lands; postcolonial and colonial. Moreover, social and cultural background of characters exposes their subaltern identities into the dilemma of tradition and transformation.

Being an influential critic of postcolonial studies, Spivak advocates feminist vision and emphasizes the practices where gender and class complicates the understanding of colonial and postcolonial situations. She believes in the power and representations of women in the social mainstream of politics and economy. In 1988 when Spivak got popularity because of her world-famous essay, "can the subaltern speak" and questions the postcolonial theory to articulate the unspeakably of subaltern subjects particularly women. She questions the colonial discourses for erasing women and also criticizes postcolonial responses to those discourses.

Through the character of Nazneen, we can see a true picture of subaltern woman living in a patriarchal structure of society.

Society's treatment with Hasina (a character with subaltern agency) and with Nazneen(a subaltern) are the examples of society's stereotypical attitude towards women. Both girls are grown up in a male dominant social structure and they were supposed to bow down against the decisions taken by their men.

In the history of India, the subaltern historiography approach commanded by Guha rewrites the imperialist and nationalist constructions of the colonial era. Soon after its inception, subaltern studies attain global attention.

The Bangladeshi immigrants in Brick Lane often occupy low-wage, precarious jobs. Economic subalternity is reflected in the struggles faced by characters like Chanu, Nazneen's husband, who grapples with financial instability and unfulfilled aspirations. Economic challenges contribute to their overall sense of marginalization and powerlessness. The novel also touches upon the postcolonial context, as the characters deal with the legacy of British colonialism and its impact on their lives. The experiences of the characters are shaped by historical and geopolitical forces, reflecting a broader narrative of subalternity within the postcolonial framework. "Brick Lane" thus explores the multifaceted nature of subalternity, examining how individuals and communities navigate their identities and aspirations in the face of cultural, gender, and economic marginalization. The characters' struggles and resilience highlight the complexities of subaltern existence in the diasporic context of Brick Lane.

Study prevails that female subalterns are victims of racism, particularly due to the predominant subjugating ideology of patriarchy. Since centuries, Subaltern women remain in the dilemma of transcending the powerful oppression of superior forces. The selected fiction documents the resistance of subaltern subject for social discrimination and validates their struggle inaccessible against the establishment.

THE KITE RUNNER (Afghanistan)

An Afghan born American writer Khalid Hosseini unveils Afghan culture by weaving a real picture of oppression where a female subaltern suffers in a male-dominant society. His novel "The Kite Runner" has been selected for the current research on the basis of themes and motifs interweaved in the story of the novel. Kite Runner exposes Afghan patriarchal structure, racism and caste issues, gender bias and class discrimination that accentuates the miseries of a subaltern. Novel is all surrounded with male characters with a very few females who represents quite negative picture of women. Suraya and Sanauber are the two rebellious characters who transgress and defame their society. Both are guilty afterwards but their feelings of regret could not lessen their hate and insecurity from the society. Sanauber is forcefully married to his handicapped cousin because being a woman she is powerless to decide for her life in a patriarchal set-up.

"You will stay inside your homes at all times. It is not proper for women to wander about the streets" (Hosseini, 271).

The following line from Hosseini's novel is a good instance to evaluate the level of subaltern subjugation in a Southasian society.

Gender violence like intimate partner violence, spousal violence and domestic abuse is practiced not only in Afghanistan but also all over the southasia and women are kept under subordination only based on gender.

In the selected novel, a portrayal of Afghan society including the issues of patriarchal family structure, gender subaltern, subaltern struggle and agency, foreign invasion, ethnic tensions and hybridity has been shown.

The novel is compelling and thought provoking with the deep understanding of social and political issues in Afghanistan. Protagonist of the story is from a privileged, elite, rich and powerful family. Contrary to Amir, Hassan is the representative of subaltern, oppressed, less privileged and a poor family. He is totally deprived of power, prestige and property. He has no participation in public discourse as he is born to believe that his voice would remain unheard. The novel explores the concept of subaltern identity in many ways, most notably through its exploration of the oppression of the Hazara people.

In “The Kite Runner”, Hosseini’s characters bear adversities of hybrid culture both at post-colonial and colonial lands. There is cultural clash and racial tension between Hazara and Pashtun in the setting of Afghan society whereas the Pashtun, the natives are dominant over Hazaraz, the migrants due to the power of money and politics.

The character of Assef is the representative of Pashtun people who shows their abhorrence for Hazara people. Assef was born in a hybrid family where he has German and Afghan parents. Amir narrates that, Assef was “Born to a German mother and Afghan father (31).

INHERITANCE OF LOSS (INDIA)

In the very beginning of novel, relationship among the Judge, Sai and The cook exhibits the relationship between the subaltern class and elite class of India very clearly.

An aged man who is poor, lives in a bamboo hut, with few minor belongings, serving since decades as a submissive servant to a powerful, unkind master who demands him to fulfill the said tasks within primitive facilities.

Sai is the granddaughter of judge who dislikes his behavior with the cook and keeps a soft corner for the poor powerless old man serving them twenty four hours at very little amount of wages. She feels pain at his poverty.

The character of Nimi represents the female subaltern group facing suppression by male community. Nimi’s life is filled with deprivation, injustice and estrangement. Perhaps, Desai portrayed her character to give voice to female oppressed group of society. Desai has described womanhood through various directions but she displays the subservient status of woman by the character of Nimi. Nimi’s character elaborates how frequently women’s rights are denied by the patriarchal society.

Character of Nimi is better analysed in the light of Spivak’s comments when she states, “female is even more in shadow”.

Nimi is under the influence of traditions and culture that have placed restrictions and limitations for her life circle.

Inheritance of Loss set in the Eastern Himalayas at Kalimpong in the year 1980’s.

The setting exhibits postcolonial tension between the judge and Sai residing in a town lies close to the border of India and Nepal. Apart from this, we find oppression and injustice for Nepalis diaspora in India. Gyan, Sai’s tutor and Bengali sisters Noni and Lola exemplify some other subaltern characters in the Indian society.

Desai adeptly narrates the circumstances of Biju at foreign place quite parallel to his father’s sufferings at native place. Both are facing suppression, inequality, inferiority and resistance that clearly demonstrates their subaltern status at both lands marked as colonial and postcolonial. Globalization cannot solve the trapping of class differences.

The readers takes impression from the novel that large, magnificent and grand buildings are constructed for commoners from colonial enterprise. The discourse of the novel beautifully portrays the western influence on the grandeur of the buildings that an unimportant edifices turns into the most significant structure.

MAPS FOR LOST LOVERS (Nadeem Aslam)

Nadeem Aslam is a well-known Pakistani born British author who has achieved great applaud across the world by creating various masterpieces in literary fiction.

Maps for Lost Lovers is the story of a Pakistani family migrated to Britain and we find cultural tension between the two generations, who are managing to live together at colonial land with great conflict of ideas and beliefs.

Kaukab is the one among the leading characters of the novel. She is wife of Shamas and mother of three young children. Her diverse character revolves around the goodness, safety and inviolability of her family. She feels like a stranger and becomes so isolated in a different ethnic society especially due to being incommunicable to English language. She is unable to present herself in terms of culture and language.

In house-hold matters, Kaukab, to somehow, seems a dominant woman. She is confined to her little house while living in a very clannish community at the land of western people. Her character bears depression of a post-colonial subject due to facing the crisis of identity and cultural tension. She is the character also representing the category of the subaltern as in the course of novel, This is the situation Spivak warns about when she highlights the danger of constructing the subaltern's identity based on her words, as her biography may result from a misinterpretation of her actual statements. Landry and Maclean shows their concern about the interpretation of utterance as they believe that certain kind of utterances are constructed by a particular psychobiography. So they put stress on the understanding of utterances in a fine way of interpretation as one does in an historical way. (291) Spivak explicates in a formal conversation about her use of term "speaking" "a transaction between the speaker and the listener" as she does not mean the actual utterance of this word. Kaukab understands fully her weak position when she admits, "You men can do anything you want but it's different for us women" (Aslam, 61). Here Kaukab's claim can be taken as feminist but only to the extent that the patriarchal system lets her, since she places herself in a 'subaltern' position as 'only a woman.'

The novel elaborates actually the limitations and barriers Pakistani community faces in an enclaved residency in Britain. During the course of story, only successful integration of subaltern post-colonial subjects seems their learning of coloniser's language. Kaukab's character is greatly affected by her post-colonial context and also by south-asian background. Living in an imperial colony, kaukab's character truly exhibits the susceptibleness, powerlessness and vulnerability of a post-colonial subaltern yield to submit, suffer and succumb the power of imperial society.

An Island of Thousand Mirrors (Sri-Lanka)

Nayomi Munaweera is a Sinhalese Sri-Lankan American writer who gained popularity by her novels "An Island of Thousand Mirrors". Primarily, the novel revolves around the sufferings of subaltern subject facing marginalization in the backdrop of Sri-Lankan civil war. Sri Lankan civil war began in 1983 after passing of "Sinahla Only act" between Tamil and Sinhalas. During civil war, Tamil community is generally treated like subaltern due to its historical marginalization whereas their voices for struggle are repressed and perspective of independence is overlooked by the ruling power.

The story delves into the complexities of circumstances faced by two young women with two different perspectives. Both of them keep positive ambition for their future and dream for their peaceful happy successful life in future life. The story revolves around the two young women on opposing sides of the devastating Si Lankan civil war. The story of the novel begins with the life experiences of two girls named, Saraswathi and Yasodhara. Yasodhara is from Majority powerful Sinahala community while Saraswathi has her roots from Minority Tamil group. Munaweera is at her best in creating dexterously the two female young characters who have similar indistinguishable dreams, ambitions and fantasies of life but their upbringings took place in an absolute different social status. Both have beautiful dreams of marrying, making family and living to the fullest of life unaware about the fact that their dreams apart from their expectations and they see their homes fall apart.

Yasodhara and her sister Lanka moved to America from their war destruction country. After the migration, yasodhara keeps adoring her memories of Srilanka with childhood friend Shiva and her real sister Lanka. Ignorance, hatred and oppression towards minority powerless people has been practiced by society since centuries. Island of Sri Lanka remains in fatal destruction of war that was based only on class differences. A group of people with

lack of power, voice or wealth automatically falls in the subaltern group of suppressed people. Resistance of minorities and subjugation of their rights can be smelled from the very beginning of the novel. Munaweera describes the rudimental differences between Sinhalese and Tamil in a very comprehensive way. The novel opens with the communal war between two ethnic races, here, the tiger represents the minority Tamil community and the lion represents the majority Sinhalese community. The novel narrates the communal war between two ethnic races as Historically, the majority Sinhala- Buddhist community has always created an 'other' based on identity.

Though the setting of the novel opens up in the calamitous atmosphere of Civil war, the novel presents a thorough picture of the subjugation and suppression of subaltern Tamil. This picture genuinely shows the resistance and struggle on the part of subaltern subject facing racial discrimination.

After the establishment of an independent government in Sri-Lanka, a very distinct classification of women rights was observed due to Sinhalese domination. The upper class Women attain privilege almost in every field of life. on the contrary, women from minority groups endure double marginalization. First protagonist Yasodhara is from Majority powerful Sinhala community. Their meritorious upbringings worthy to respect humanity and flourish values of people and culture. Unfortunately, their life experiences the deadly destruction by war and disappoint by their passion of nationalism. Saraswathi feels ashamed of her friend Parvathi who could not bear the burden of her shame and anxiety and finishes her life to escape from this world of cruelty and dominion. Paravati and Sarashwathi both are victim of rape and sexual assault by Sinhalese soldiers.

Female militants of Tamil killers becomes an example for the empowerment of women across the world, yet their merciless performance and heartless attacks to Sinhalas proves them furious and implacable. Logically, the implication of power and authority upon the livings of helpless Tamil leaves them to die with no other option of survival likely the Pravathi.

Equivalently, the Story of the novel revolves around another protagonist, Yasodhara. Yasodhara belongs to powerful Sinhala community whose life gets scattered by the calamities of war and she with her family is bound to leave their homeland and live in a hybrid community in America after immigration. Hybridity and imperialism is another topic of discussion that Munaweera implies upon the sufferings of immigrants facing discrimination and subaltern status at colonial land. Munaweera weaves a plausible connection between the two protagonists who have no apparent link with each other. Transformation of a Tamil girl gives her power to take the life of Sinhalese girl.

Munaweera justifies the agency and transformation of Saraswathi as she escapes from the patriarchal dominant structure and becomes an independent lady. She emphasizes at the brilliance of her decision that bestows her power and dominance instead of living a powerless submissive domestic life. Munaweera's skill of writing converts the violent and merciless character into a justified and logical lady who gains pithy and sympathy of readers instead of being a savage killer.

FEMALE SUBJUGATION AT DIASPORIC LANDS

BRICK LANE

Nazneen, an immigrant from Bangladesh, represents a subaltern in terms of culture. As she tries to navigate life in London, she encounters challenges related to cultural differences, language barriers, and the clash between her traditional values and the modern, Western lifestyle. Within the broader context of subalternity, there is a gendered aspect to Nazneen's experiences. As a woman, she faces additional layers of oppression and marginalization.

Spivak's words from "can the subaltern speak" better explains the character of Nazneen in the term of her subaltern status under the influence of patriarchy and post colonialism.

Whereas she emphasizes on the ideological construction of gender subaltern that keeps the male dominant over female.

Nazneen faces a lot of cultural discrimination at hybrid community in London. Being a submissive girl from patriarchal social structure of southasian land, Nazneen suffers more at colonial place. Soon, she realizes her marginalized status at her home and land both. Language, communication, norms and culture of powerful dominant western people makes her feel inferior rather subaltern in almost every field of life. Her identity of being an immigrant from third world country ultimately positioned her in the category of subaltern subject at hybrid community where dominance of English culture makes her confused. Ali's selection of subaltern characters is so apt that almost every immigrant has been found in a state of struggle for its identity and existence. They are struggling to assimilate with the culture of dominant society. Guha's mediation in the context of such hybrid situation of a hegemonic culture explicate the challenges of immigrants from third world country. Ranajit Guha describes the characteristics of a hegemonic setup and throws light on the significant part of subaltern studies group played in the study of historiography. He proclaims the concern of subaltern studies group is to sort out the status of subaltern subject in any field of history, politics, economics or sociology on the grounds of cultural context "whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way".

He is so broken heart when he visualizes his pathetic residency as an immigrant at this riches country of the world. He tells Nazneen about a tiny room allocated to about five persons.

Within a global society, the danger of losing identity and recognition transcends because of the dominance prevalent around. Influence of hegemonic society employs more inferiority and misery to subaltern subject.

While narrating his journey from a southasian under privileged country to this globally rich country, Chanu considers it a success story at the end. Hence, he grieves that life of every successful immigrant must have experiences of bitter tragedies.

The novel highlights the challenges a subaltern faces in a cross-cultural hegemonic relationship at a hybrid community where differences of beliefs, traditions, culture and norms creates an atmosphere of two distinct communities, one is dominant where the other is marginalized. Initially, immigrants try to assimilate the dominant culture but sooner they realize the loss of the own identity. Although, Sometimes, they maintain their diversity, but their primary focus is on building a mutual relationship to share a unified cultural lifestyle. But they disappoint at the dominance of culture conventions of western world.

MAPS FOR LOST LOVERS (Nadeem Aslam)

He introduced characters with different background, circumstances, family set-up, social status and personal goals but all in the state of suffering and struggling for survival. Setting of the novel introduces south-asian immigrants from Pakistan and India inhabiting in a British society where everyone seems combating for their social, religious and political rights against an established state of imperialism. While exposing a hybrid community, Aslam seems completely amenable in describing the sufferings of powerless, voiceless and unprivileged subaltern subject of society. Postcolonial people living at some colonial land confronts cultural resistance, social hindrances and political prejudice for their identity and representation. Maps for Lost Lovers is the story of Pakistani immigrants residing in a hybrid community of England. We find cultural tension between the two generations, who are managing to live together at colonial land with great conflict of ideas and beliefs.

The prison guard criticizes their language and openly asks them to talk in English otherwise they are not allowed to meet their sons. This infers the situation at hegemonic place where silence for marginalized subject has been preferred over speaking their southasian languages.

Kaukab's character is greatly affected by her post-colonial context and also by south-asian background. Living in an imperial colony, kaukab's character truly exhibits the susceptibleness, powerlessness and vulnerability of a post-colonial subaltern yield to submit, suffer and succumb the power of imperial society.

KITE RUNNER (Afghanistan)

To comply with the presumed methodology of the current study, a world famous novel “The kite runner” by an Afghan Born American writer has been selected for the south Asian representation from the land of Afghanistan. Khaled Hosseini is an Afghan born American writer and is famous worldwide for his three bestselling novels *The Kite Runner*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* and *And The Mountains Echoed*. During his studies in medical college, Hosseini had interest in writing stories and he wrote many short stories in the mean of his medical studies. Hosseini shares his passion of writing while giving an interview to Penguin.com USA that although medical profession was his professional dream but whenever he gets spare time he tries to soothe his passion of writing. He compares his passion of creative writing with his character of Amir, the protagonist of *The Kite Runner*. He feels to be honoured and blessed to keep both passions together with dignity and success.

Identity becomes challenging if it is integrated with other cultures and beliefs that in other sense renders its previous identity meaningless. Identification is the process of a person's identity being governed by a cumulative cultural consensus upon a set of forms and features that are compared to predetermined laws and standards.

In postcolonial studies the blend of eastern and western cultures integrated with race, language and ethnicity termed as “hybridity”. In the field of postcolonialism, this term is associated with Homi. K.Bhaba who emphasises the interconnectedness of coloniser and colonised and contends that racial or national identity cannot be claimed to be “pure.”

Dominant culture is the culture practiced at the present time. What cannot be expressed or verified in terms of the dominant culture are lived and practiced in the residual and what comes out of the dominant culture as new meanings and values, new practices and relationships are called emergent. (223)

In the later part of the Novel, both Amir and Baba have to take refuge in America. Baba's reputation in American society is affected by the circumstances in which he finds himself helpless. Baba, is really in a fix when living at a colonial land in a hybrid community. He was powerful dominant person back at his colonized country becomes eventually a powerless, voiceless and submissive person at colonial America. Baba's sense of integration is being shaken by the behavior of English shopkeeper who asks him about his identity card.

The experience of Baba in the new country is actually the representation of a post colonial subaltern. His status in America is altered drastically, as he is now viewed with distrust.

Moreover, the children play volleyball and soccer, the games of western countries. Western games becomes most favourite to new generation but the elders feel inferior when see their own traditional games being shadowed and darkened.

INHERITANCE OF LOSS (KIRAN DESAI)

The researcher considers “Inheritance of Loss” as an apt choice for analysis because of its relevant themes and characterization. The novel presents postcolonial subaltern characters struggling for their identity in a patriarchal social structure of India and at hybrid social structure of America.

In *The Inheritance of Loss*, Biju's residency at American land seems worse than Chanu's residence at UK in Brick Lane. He lives at a place that is a shifting area for laundry, house maids or pantries.

He states the situation of his living, “The men shared a yellow toilet; the sink was a tin laundry trough. There was one of fuse box for the whole building and if anyone turned on too many appliances or lights, PHUT, the entire electricity went and the residents screamed to nobody, since there was nobody, of course, to hear them”(52).

A hybrid society is the creation of a diffused culture of people from varied different ethnic backgrounds when they live and work together and share their ideas and beliefs. Multiculturalism results in division and conquest.

Diasporas are commonly perceived as troublesome due to the hardships they endure, including oppression, dispossession, and being uprooted from their homeland. Desai

portrays the terrible sense of humiliation that immigrants to America suffer when they come looking for a luxurious life style. Biju's experiences are representative of the 'shadow class' of undocumented migrant laborers who are forced to move around constantly in order to avoid detection by immigration authorities. Brown opines that some immigrants move for their own wish of better life and some move due to the better future of their families.

AN ISLAND OF THOSAND MIRRORS (SRI-LANKA)

Although the obvious reason for diaspora is the improvement of life to some way or the other. The history witnesses that the first ever diaspora involved groups fleeing persecution, primarily for religious reason. Afterwards, If one were to examine the history of diasporas, it would reveal that some of the earliest diasporas involved groups fleeing persecution, primarily for religious reasons.

History witnessed the revival of diasporas during the last decades of the twentieth century when people flee by their desire to escape politically or religiously. In contrast, they have mostly been waves with small differences. When closely examined, this diaspora may be seen as being defined by both numbers and individuals who have chosen—or been forced to choose—to leave behind the chaos, fear, and danger that have overtaken their lives.

The selected novel represents the southasian social structure of Sri-Lanka. Though the novel is set against the backdrop of civil war, it determines the cause and effect of such calamity on civilians. It reveals people began to migrate in the state of fear and anxiety.

Arteries, streams, and the rivers of Tamils flow out of the city. Behind them they leave: looted, soot blackened houses, the unburied or unburnt bodies of loved ones, ancestral wealth, lost children, Belonging and Nationalism. It is a list that stays bitter on the tongue, giving birth to fantasies of Retribution, Partition, and Secession. They flee to ancestral villages abandoned decades ago, and it is in these northern places that the events of that July will make them the most militant and determined of separatists (Munaweera,89)

Munaweera presented two life-ridden marginal women representing Spivak's speechless female who remains unheard by the male dominant society. Apparently, they do not keep uniformity in their life styles not merely their paths and dreams intersect, but that their personalities are developed by their circumstances and both are defined by their experiences of terror, trauma and loss.

Over and above these extremely powerful concerns though, Munaweera manages to convincingly bring in the much explored dilemmas that emerge as tropes, in most diasporic writing – chief among which unfold through the Manichean opposites of place and displacement, the changing notions of home, assimilation and alienation, belonging and loss, all of which are reflected through the challenges faced by both the parents of Yashodhara and Lanka and the girls themselves. The entire process of leaving and arriving, first physically and then metaphorically, in the diasporic space, is captured through pithy and arresting statements that touch directly upon the heart of the problem and links, this much decorated book, which was ironically accepted for publication in America, only after its success in Sri Lanka, to the emerging engagement with diasporic writing.

Munaweera drifts this sense of loss and agony into words of reality when a female is to leave its home and attachment in fire and dislocate herself for the sake of survival. Yasodhara and her younger sister Lanka are grown up in an educated and liberal family and they have liberty of decision for their future studies. Yasodhara agrees to her arranged marriage with Siddharte because of her parents' decision. But she finds him infidel to her and soon finds him inappropriate partner.

Conclusion

The research presented makes it clear that a common issue in many postcolonial South Asian contexts is the subordination of women within patriarchal social structures. The chosen literature sheds attention on the complex forms of oppression women experience as a result of culture, gender, and societal norms—often made worse by postcolonial and

diasporic circumstances. Across Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, women experience a lack of agency, identity, and autonomy due to patriarchal control.

The struggles of subaltern women are embodied by characters in these novels, like Saraswathi in *An Island of Thousand Mirrors* and Nazneen in *Brick Lane*, who both face double oppression from their native and colonial environments and whose transformation into a militant represents the desperation and resiliency of women in societies plagued by conflict. Comparably, the marginalization of female characters such as Kaukab in *Maps for Lost Lovers* and Nimi in *The Inheritance of Loss* shows how patriarchal structures and cultural norms force women into submissive roles where they are mute and helpless.

The approach also emphasizes how oppression is intersectional, with women being marginalized not only because of their gender but also because of their class, race, and economic status. This is demonstrated in *The Kite Runner*, where Hazara people experience discrimination based on their ethnicity as well as their gender, and in *Maps for Lost Lovers*, Kaukab tackles the challenges of being a diasporic subaltern woman in a Western setting. The study shows how subaltern women continue to struggle against deeply ingrained patriarchal systems and pursue their own sense of identity and agency through these tales. These women exhibit tenacity in the face of oppression, balancing tradition and change as they fight for equality and respect in both their home countries and the countries they have left behind. Thus, the analysis highlights how ubiquitous and long-lasting female subjection is inside patriarchal structures in postcolonial and South Asian contexts.

It is evident from the thorough examination of female oppression in diasporic contexts that women of South Asian descent who live in Western, frequently postcolonial, countries must contend with a complex array of issues, including patriarchy, cultural hegemony, and relocation. The double oppression that immigrant women face in both their adopted Western countries, where cultural dominance and marginalization further impede their identity and agency, and in their home patriarchal societies is illustrated in novels like *Brick Lane*, *Maps for Lost Lovers*, *The Kite Runner*, *Inheritance of Loss*, and *An Island of Thousand Mirrors*.

The protagonists in the other works, as well as Nazneen's journey in *Brick Lane*, represent the battle for self-realization as they continually balance their traditional beliefs with the demands of a new, frequently repressive cultural milieu. These women represent Gayatri Spivak's concept of the subaltern, as they are further hushed and marginalized in the diasporic regions despite already holding a subordinate position in their home cultures due to their gender. This is especially evident in their lack of agency and voice.

Through these women's distinct yet common struggles for identification, the writers' portrayal of them embodies the larger issue of alienation and displacement in diasporic literature. The experiences of these women are rendered even more painful by the combination of gender, culture, and power dynamics. The present analysis confirms that despite the characters' efforts to declare their identities, they are nevertheless entangled in a complex network of patriarchal and postcolonial power structures. Consequently, their quest for autonomy serves as a metaphor for the ongoing struggles faced by subalterns in a more globalized society. In the end, these stories demonstrate how important it is for minority voices to continue to be heard and given power in diasporic and hybrid communities.

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