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A Colonial Desire of Amitav Ghosh Selected Fiction

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Abstract

The title of this essay is A Colonial Desire in Amitav Ghosh's Selected Fiction. Gender issues, migration, repatriation, exile refugees, assimilation, multiculturalism, and social realism were among the topics studied by the academics. However, no one was able to deal with the subject of Colonial Desire. As a result, the current study will concentrate on the aforementioned ideas.

Keywords: Amitav Ghosh, Colonial Desire, assimilation, multiculturalism, and social realism.

1. Introduction

Post-colonial literature is the literature of the colonies from throughout the world that is still studied by colonisers today. Only post-colonial literature captures the true image of man. The book *Colonial Desire and Hybridity* has become a staple of this genre. The term "colonial desire" refers to the desire to establish a colony and reign over it. The *Glass Palace*, *The Shadow Lines*, *Sea of Poppies*, and *In An Antique Land* by Amitav Ghosh are outstanding examples of Colonial Desire.

2. A Critical study

The Glass Palace is a world-famous novel by Amitav Ghosh, released in 2000, about a family of three generations travelling and going forward and backward in three nations during the twentieth century: Burma, India, and Malaya. The main goal of this chapter, however, is to concentrate on a critical examination of *The Glass Palace* and to elicit conceptions of Colonial Desire.

Amitav Ghosh's second novel, *The Shadow Lines*, is a Sahitya Akademi Award-winning novel. *Going Away and Coming Home* are the two sections of the book. It seamlessly transitions from the

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past to the present and from the present to the past. In recall, an unnamed narrator tells the storey. It's the storey of a Bengali family from the middle class who live in Kolkata.

Amitav Ghosh's novel *Sea of Poppies* was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize in 2008. It is based on the historical context of colonial Desire and its desire for opium supplies to China. The main goal of this chapter, however, is to concentrate on a critical examination of *Sea of Poppies* in order to uncover conceptions of Colonial Desire.

3. Colonial Desire

The novel starts with a teenage boy called Rajkumar running through the city of Mandalay to find a woman called Ma Cho. He is the last surviving member of his family and comes to Burma from India with a bright entrepreneurial spirit and a hunger for success. Rajkumar's work as an assistant on Ma Cho's food stall takes place in the shadow of The Glass Palace, in which King Thibaw and his wife reside with their daughters, the princesses.

The novelist portrayed the life of the narrator-Rajkumar, who is an orphan boy of Indian origin, after facing lots of trouble becomes a successful teak merchant. Regarding the marginalized identity of Rajkumar, Rukmini. Rajkumar, originally a subaltern comes out as a true transnational post-colonial subject firstly by being a *Kalaa*, a foreigner in a foreign country, then by being subjected to the colonization of a more ruthless kind in contributing to the great national upheaval that the British occupation of Burma involves.

With the colonial desire, the British captured the Burmese Empire, humiliated them and tried to enslave them. They had intended to discourage, deject, demoralize, control them, by humiliating them. Like this approach, 'One of the King's senior ministers, the kinwun Mingyi, had suggested discreetly that it might be best to accept the terms; that the British might allow to Royal Family to remain in the palace in Mandalay, on terms similar to those of the Indian princes- like farmyard pigs, in other words, to be fed and fattened by their masters; swine, housed in sites that had been tricked out with a few little bits of finery.' (Ghosh: 2000: 21-22)

It shows the humiliation of the Burmese Empire. The abrupt removal of the king and the pregnant queen from Mandalay to distant Ratnagiri on the west coast of India by the conquering British, successful in humiliating the royal couple completely, also is erasing them from public memory at home. The avarice and greed inherent in the colonial practice are seen in Burma. As the British invasion comes to depose the present rule everyday citizens of Mandalay can enter the enshrined building, and since began the revolt against the Empire. The people come to know it is the end of their Empire so get our thing back from the palace which belonged to them in the past.

When Ghosh anxiously unravels the implication of the British invasion on Burma, he also exposes historical insinuation of the present condition of Burma. While Burma lost all hopes other side people made their mind to possess the things from the Palace. The loot symbolically suggests the loot of power itself. The colonial powers usually win not because their cause is just but because of superior power, manipulative skill, and weaponry. Ghosh is writing about the history of Burma that lost its age-old heritage, monarchy and the pathos of the royal family. Colonisation exposed Burma of its realm bringing unrest and instability to the entire country till today.

Amitav Ghosh reflected the ideology of Colonial Desire and Hybridity. The thematic selection of his selected fiction has accorded him a worldwide readership. He believes that the human sufferings and sacrifices, their trials and tribulations are left unrecorded in history. A critical reading of Ghosh's fiction opens up a new perspective in literary criticism. As many feminist historians point out that women have been pushed to the margins or wiped out by male historians.

The postcolonial re-interpretation of the past also reproduces postmodernist disbelief in traditional history, an indispensable characteristic of the re-inventing of history. The post-modernist school of

history challenges traditional history and its grand narratives, as one that is too limited and narrow. It questions the certainties of traditional modes of thinking, social organization and the human self as well. In subverting accepted modes of thought and experience postmodernism reveals the meaninglessness of existence. It is history that depicts human experiences of a kind that has not been registered or represented in any traditional historiography.

The major theme which forms a part of the post-colonial narrative is the struggle against imperialism. Therefore, Ghosh illustrates the predicament and internal conflict faced by the Indian officers in the British army. Through an analysis of selected fiction, the research has tried to unravel the various thematic concerns that have recurred in his novels. The universal travel theme and the desire to dream of a world free of divisions and separations have been inculcated in his works, though in varying manners. The predicament of the migrating subaltern and the changing perspectives of the post-colonial subject is discussed, involving a variety of characters in diverse and exotic geographical settings that change with each of his works.

Colonial Desire and Hybridity are recurrent themes that can be found in the selected fiction of Amitav Ghosh. Hybridity is a well-known phenomenon in post-colonial literature, which intend to explore the identity of the man. Man, as a whole has no religion, caste, creed etc. But when he shares his survival with any society, he has to follow social norms and traditions.

This article tells in detail how Amitav Ghosh has described varied characters with different themes throughout his novels. Fiction, having been the most powerful form of literary expression today, has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English Literature. It is generally agreed that the novel is the most acceptable way of expressing experiences and ideas in the context of our time. Indian Fiction in English has been attracting worldwide attention.

Ghosh has undoubtedly earned his position in the canon of Indian English fiction as a postcolonial writer. The analyses in the preceding chapters seek to establish the postcolonial idiosyncrasies of the works of Ghosh. It has been ascertained that he is relevant today as a postcolonial writer for the postcolonial themes that he chooses and for his techniques and treatment. He brings about the radical change that has happened during the colonial as well as postcolonial period.

Colonial desire may be a social development that has existed for centuries influencing and re-modelling the whole world in its wake. Literature has mirrored this influence through the writings of the colonial desire that features not solely Indians, however, conjointly folks from everywhere on the planet. Colonial writings from the African diaspora in America or the Indian or Sri Lankan diaspora in America or Canada, and so on.

4. Conclusion

Colonial want consciousness is mirrored in the search for the home culture, a means of displacement, alienation, fragmentation, and a fight to attain harmony between the house and host culture through assimilation in diaspora literature.

Colonial Desire has become a staple of this body of work. The term "colonial desire" refers to the desire to establish a colony and reign over it. However, in the latter decades of the twentieth century, both in Europe and in some Third World nations, like India, old, established value systems began to fade away as they were accused of catering to the demands of the wealthy few. Old literary theories were washed away by new concepts such as subversion, deconstruction, postmodernism, and postcolonialism. As a result, Colonial Desire ushered in a new era of literature in their respective fields.

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