

## Nation and Narrations: Capturing Crucial Themes of Post-Colonial Literature in the Context of 'Hybridity'

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**Abstract:** In this paper the researcher has endeavoured to discuss the four major themes of postcolonial literature with the central concept of 'hybridity'. Hybridity is the creation of new cultural forms and identities as a result of the colonial encounter. The said themes are 1) Alienation and hybridity 2) Conflict, rebellion and the process of hybridization 3) Crisis of identity and cultural hybridity 4) Linguistic hybridity in the postcolonial literature with special reference to Homi Bhabha's concept of 'Hybridization' or 'Hybridity'. The concept is applied to the selected literary works in order to describe the relation of these themes of the literature from the decolonized countries.

**Keywords:** postcolonial, hybridity, alienation, crisis of identity

**Introduction:** Generally, it is observed that the theory regarding the Post-colonialism is not properly employed in the works of literature and main impact of the theory is not also put forth by the leading thinkers or critic. Therefore, Homi Bhabha invented the important theory and basic concepts to highlight the main aspects and the impact on the present postcolonial countries such as India. <sup>1</sup> Homi Bhabha opines that the nation, is "a system of cultural signification that must be understood as it is written, through its narrative address as a form of social and textual affiliation, and as a narrative strategy." In view of the above, the Hybridity too is closely related with culture, it is perceived as the creation of new cultural forms and identities as a result of the colonial encounter. Thus, the concept of 'Hybridization' or 'Hybridity' is discussed in relationship with the selected literary works dealing with the decolonized countries.

**Discussion on Alienation and Hybridity:** The afore mentioned themes are studied from the perspectives of Homi Bhabha's concept of 'Hybridity'. The first major theme in postcolonial novel is Alienation and its relation with the concept of hybridity. <sup>2</sup> Townsend refers to alienation as:

*"An extraordinary variety of psycho-social disorders, including loss of self, anxiety states, anomie, despair, depersonalization, rootlessness, apathy, social disorganization, powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism, and the loss of belief or values"*

(Townsend 12-13).

Further, the major theme of Alienation and Hybridity can be fused with the most prominent concept of 'othering' or 'otherness'. The feeling of otherness is beautifully presented in the novel, "House of Mr. Biswas".

The main character in the novel Mr. Mohun Biswas feels lonely in the alien world. His search for his true identity is visible throughout the novel. His struggle to achieve his own house and his journey in the quest of his own identity in the land where he himself become 'othering' or 'other'.

The following discussion is based on the terms as defined by <sup>3</sup> Professor Janis (Jan) Johnson. The subpart of the concept of 'othering' or 'otherness' are 'Exotic Other' and 'Demonic Other'.

'Exotic Other' i.e. "The view that those who are different from oneself possess an inherent dignity and beauty, perhaps because of their more undeveloped, natural state of being." Further, by and large, the term "Exotic Other" is use for "Non-native" in a very positive way. "Sailing to Byzantium" is best example of Exotic Other by the Irish poet W.B. Yeats, whereby the poet describes the trouble of poet/speaker as a mortal. His struggle to become immortal by keeping his soul alive are very much evident. He went to the search for Byzantium, a holy city, there he wanted to become immortal as a work of art. It is observed that there is continuous discussion between Eastern Europe and Western Europe where Western Europe rule over the Eastern Europe. Description of eastern culture, history, religion, architecture, food, art etc. are portrayed by the poet in a very positive way and in a very grand manner. Despite of all grand depiction of eastern countries, there is the feeling of separation left between colonizer (Western countries) and colonized (Eastern countries) in the poem. Thus, this feeling of separation can be called 'Exotic Other'.

The other subpart of 'othering' or 'otherness' is 'Demonic Other' i.e. "The view that those who are different from one-self are backward and savage, even evil." The term, 'Demonic Other' is used for non-native in a very negative way. Here, there is a consideration that the people who are different are wild, evil and dangerous. The best example of the 'Demonic Other' is Joseph Conrad's novella, "Heart of Darkness" which was published in 1899. Joseph Conrad was a polish-English writer. Charles Marlow, narrate the story of the novel. Conrad finally present the idea of difference between civilized people and uncivilized people, here civilized people symbolize as people of London and Uncivilized people Symbolized as a people of Africa. Heart of Darkness proves perfect remark on imperialism and racial discrimination and here the novella appropriately fits into the category of 'Demonic Other'.

Thus, it is marked by the researcher that the influence of hybridity is growing rapidly in the recent