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This issue of *Explorations* is dedicated to the fond memory of
our very own Professor Dr. Surraya Shafi Mir sahiba who
passed away on November 15 2019.

(Teacher & Scholar)

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Editorial

In pursuit of our commitment to publishing articles in the field of postcolonial writing and related fields of study, this issue of *Explorations* brings to the reader research on various aspects of postcolonialism. These include the politics of language and its role in identity formation in the postcolonial context, the various aspects of identity politics among south Asian Muslims in America, the ecofeminist dimensions of white supremacy in South Africa, and a comparative account of the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Langston Hughes.

In her article ‘Denouncing the Imperial/Colonialist English Lexicon Through an Active Decolonization of Language’, Haniya Humayun focuses attention on the postcolonial subject’s linguistic anxiety and its impact on their identity formation. Sonia Zafar in her article ‘Religion as a New Model Minority Dimension —the Muslim South Asian on Stage in Ayad Akhtar’s *Disgraced*’ focuses on the religious dimension of the model minority stereotype of the good south Asian Muslim in America with a focus on the assimilation challenges faced by these Muslims. In her article ‘Eco-feminist Critique of J.M Coetzee’s *Disgrace*’ Sahar Hashmi conducts an eco-feminist study of the novel to highlight the overlapping dimensions of rape and rapacious colonization, treating women as a symbol of the land of South Africa in the chosen text. Mahwish Abid and Hazrat Umar conduct a comparative survey of the poetry of Faiz and Langston Hughes to show the subversive potential of this literary genre. Their article ‘Revolutionary Ideology and Power Dynamics in the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Langston Hughes: A Comparative Study’ features a parallel weighing of the selected poems of the two celebrated poets thereby bringing this literature of resistance from disparate societies into interesting dialogue with each other.

We welcome you to peruse the contents of this issue of *Explorations* and hope that it will add sundry new dimensions to your existing understanding of the subjects dealt with in these articles.

Warm Regards,

Saira Fatima Dogar

Editor

Denouncing the Imperial/Colonialist English Lexicon Through an Active Decolonization of the Language

Haniya Hamayun

Abstract

The violent impact of colonization on the linguistic subject, preceding the social construction of identity is still extant. Its nuanced understanding can be found in various terminologies and theoretical positions which postcolonial authors focus upon. Epistemic violence, decolonization of the mind and postcolonial language anxiety are a few of these academic orientations postcolonial authors have worked on to underscore how the detachment and obfuscation of linguistic identity impact the postcolonial subject. By drawing on these aspects of postcolonial theory, this essay will investigate how some authors of colour have struggled with the inadequacy of conventional literary language and literary forms. It will analyze various modes, mediums and subversion of conventional literary forms which have been deployed in *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko, *Olio* by Tyehimba Jess and *The Wake* by Paul Kingsnorth.

The above-mentioned works struggle to resist the language of hegemonic discourse which they consider insufficient for the articulation of the plight of the postcolonial subject. They use gestures, silences and music among other ways to express what cannot be expressed through conventional literary forms. By reading into these alternative modes of literary articulation and expression the readers can come to an understanding of how the language of hegemony and literary dominance has rendered the suffering of postcolonial subjects invisible and almost mute in various instances. It has further restricted its possibilities to engage and communicate with the native and global audience. By identifying how postcolonial language anxiety struggles with visibility and an apposite lexicon, this essay will attempt to de-normalize the hegemonic linguistic practices which limit the visibility and articulation of the postcolonial subject which remains outside the domain of the dominant discourse and narratives.

Keywords: Postcolonial, postcolonial language anxiety, epistemic violence, lexicons, decolonization, literary style

I devoured the theoretical positions of decoloniality, decolonization, deconstruction and, postcolonialism when I was introduced to these theories as an undergraduate student of English Literature in Pakistan. They seemed to construct the bridges (or at least substructures to them), which had been burnt over a period of five generations. For it had taken five generations for the British to play linguistic politics and reify Urdu as the hegemonic language of the subcontinental

Muslim, at the expense of demeaning/eradicating several local vernaculars. The locals were then systematically trained to give English a higher status than Urdu and to uphold that status even after the British left. Among the vernaculars which were systematically left out was the vernacular spoken in my region, Seraiki. So by the time I started to articulate my thoughts in verbal language, I was always left feeling insatiable about the potential of verbal expression and communication. The language I heard around me was Seraiki. The language my parents spoke to me was Urdu and the language taught in school was English. Each language had its own way of constructing a different reality. The food I ate, the style of clothes I wore and the proverbs I heard, had a Seraiki nomenclature. They could not be translated into Urdu or English. Urdu was the language used by my parents to discipline me, for the language of discipline is the only language they knew of to speak with their children. Urdu was also the language of games I played with my age fellows. And then there was English, the academic language which had little to do with my culture and my life beyond the walls of my school. And yet as I grew older, English became my first act of rebellion. Knowing that my grandmother did not understand it at all, I started answering her back in English when she became too strict with me. I started writing my diary in English so that my mother would not understand it if she found it. Using English served me a purpose but its disconnect with all the other constituents of my reality and identity gradually seeped into my linguistic reservoir. The more the disconnect, the more my reservoir depleted, making it difficult for me to express and articulate in a manner that did not seem shallow and alienating.

Concepts of decolonization and postcolonialism then, helped me make sense of the linguistic macabre that had troubled me for so long. When these concepts were applied to literary texts, however, especially the postcolonial anglophone literature of Pakistan, I was again left with perplexity. While the texts were supposedly 'writing back to the empire' their language and by

extension, their representation of reality mirrored British culture more than any one of Pakistan's cultures. The characters of most of the novels referred to British metaphors, idioms, adjectives and descriptions. And when the authors wrote about Pakistani cityscapes, their language felt like that of a tourist. The texts that were supposed to be relatable to me by virtue of their authority of representation, were more isolating than the unrelatable British literature itself. In the absence of an alternative frame of reference, the understanding of what a decolonized language appears to be like remained equivocal to me. There were exceptions like Arundhati Roy's *Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and Mohammad Hanif's *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti*, but these books were never taught to me in an academic environment from where I could better understand how these authors had played with the politics of language.

In the USA when I was introduced to certain texts, particularly *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake*, in an academic environment, I began to grasp the mechanisms involved in constructing new lexicons within existing languages. Even when those languages are marred by the history of colonialism. In *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake* in particular, what appealed to me the most was each text's innovative engagement with the language and the way authors were subverting conventional literary forms to decolonize the lexicon of English in order to make English their own language of expression; one that did not disconnect them from any constituent of their reality and which did not seem alienating. A close reading of these novels provided insight into how such languages are contrived which stand out for their active resistance to cultures in which they have originated. Such languages are symbolic and/or representative of historical and socio-political realities and yet evade representational paradigms of any specific race.

In her lecture "What is the Morally Appropriate Language in Which to Think and Write?" Arundhati Roy notes that "Writing or speaking English is not a tribute to the British Empire, as

the British historian had tried to suggest to me, it is a practical solution to the circumstances created by it” (Roy). The problematization then does not rest with the question of whether to use English, but with how to use it. It lies in using English in a manner that encompasses different cultures rather than dividing them. In *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake*, the language is used in a deliberate way to purge it of the imperialistic, oppressive traces. It introduces the reader to the potential to use English in a way that decontextualizes it from its British-American hegemonic status in a meta-contextual way.

Broadly speaking, in *Ceremony* the English language is speaking through landscapes and elements of nature. In *Olio*, it attempts to bring focus to the source of the pain through which words derive their context. And in *The Wake* English is consciously redefined so that many of its definitions which were not only a failure but an active way of oppression, are redacted. The impact and reception of these works as innovations in English literariness demonstrate how diverse cultures or races’ languages have been so obliterated that now endeavours to signify this oppression seem something new for the language. So, using these three primary texts *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake* I am looking into ways that conventionally accepted styles and lexicon of language mould vocabularies and normalize or obscure for us, the languages of those who have yet to recover from a philological, epistemic violence that burnt the bridges which connected historical-cultural linguistic identities with articulation in the present, postcolonial, globalized world.

Said’s *Orientalism*, Ngugi Wa Thionongo’s *Decolonizing the Mind* and Fanon’s *Black Skins White Masks* are some of the works which help understand what is going on with the politics of language as deployed by Silko, Tyehimba Jess and Sharpe. And what is going on is not a construction of a new language that is apposite for the articulation of new grievances. It is the

reclamation and reformulation of forms of articulation which had been captured by the Orientalists. In *Orientalism*, Said brings to light the case of philologist Renan whose work in philology is seminal. Renan was a classic example, a product of modernity who advocated the replacement of religion with science. And philology for him was an important science for such a project. For it was the study of philology which debunked the myth of a Divine language and revealed the potential of the human mind to construct language and by extension, complex thought processes. And these complex thought processes then enabled scientific discoveries. According to Renan then, it was of paramount importance that languages have the capability to keep evolving as human beings progressed scientifically. While for him European languages, particularly French, fulfilled these criteria, there were other languages of the Orient which revealed the inferiority of the races speaking in them. According to him, the races speaking Sanskrit and Hebrew in particular, were inferior because these languages are inorganic by virtue of their inability to “produce no mythology, no art, no commerce, no civilization; their consciousness is a narrow and rigid one” (Said 142). Renan took it upon himself to study these languages and their speakers as subjects, particularly Hebrew and Jewish culture, Semites and Semitics. These subjects were no less than what Said calls specimens which are created in the laboratory. He asserts that the “philological laboratory has no existence outside the discourse, the writing by which it is constantly produced and experienced” (Said 146). So it is through writing that an object for inspection is created. What is written about it then materializes tangibly in the way it is perceived and interacted with in society. Consequently, although its existence as perceived in society may be, entirely socially constructed, the possibility of an alterity of its existence is not imagined if there is no writing for that alterity. And what was produced in the philological laboratories by Orientalists like Renan and William Jones was a linguistic subject whose language and culture had become outdated and

stagnant. So much so that they could be exhibited in museums and studied as historic artefacts. From epistemologically constructing the antiquity of indigenous languages and cultures of the colonized, the next step was displacing them with aspirations to internalize the language and by extension, the culture of the colonizers. An analysis of how colonization took over the social structures of communities and institutionalized their ethos can be found in a large body of literature, particularly from the scholarship of subaltern studies groups. The institutionalization of English in particular is of my concern here because it was through this institutionalization that the epistemic approach of Renan and other Orientalists was materialized into tangible cultural practices.

In his work *Decolonizing the Mind*, Ngũgĩ Wa Thiong'o argued that "The domination of a people's language by the languages of the colonizing nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonized" (25). In *Black Skins White Masks* Fanon has argued similarly, "A man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language" (18). The dominance of one language over the other through which epistemic violence was conducted was achieved by educating the subsequent generations of colonized people in English and making them see their mother tongues as inferior languages which pose a barrier to success in this world. Ngũgĩ coins the term colonial alienation for the split it created in the generation's cerebral abilities as the language which preceded their entry into the world and the language which was taught to them in the written word was the social antithesis of each other. Today many African Americans and other Americans who identify as people of colour, may not know the language of their ancestors. But the cultural connotations of American English whose lexicons are produced and perpetuated for a worldview that does not favour people of colour make articulation difficult without being disparaging towards their own race. The irony is that today it

is the European languages which have exhausted some of their potential in comparison to other languages which are now re-imaging, restructuring and reinventing in an attempt to decolonize their minds, identities and languages. Even if the language to decolonize is English itself but of Southern American areas, Indian American or any other part of the world. So much so that today in India, and South Asia, a new name has been given to the English spoken in the context and with the accent of India. The term is Hinglish. Orientalists like Renan certainly did not anticipate this inevitability of certain aspects of language to survive epistemic violence and carry the potential of metamorphosis.

This metamorphosis is what makes *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake* stand out amongst so much literature being produced today. *Ceremony* starts with the acknowledgement of the complexity that arises when a linguistic, and cultural war is waged within oneself. So much so that different experiences of different realities, often contradicting each other, become entangled. And the image Silko uses for this is that of the coloured thread of grandma's wicker basket. For a long time, Tayo the protagonist is not able to express himself in words and thinks, mostly, in images from his childhood when concepts of colonization or war were not part of his vocabulary. When he does find his language, it is the one that syncs with the ceremonial poetry of his native culture. The journey of reconciling with grief is in stark contrast to the writings of Wordsworth or Walt Whitman for that matter. Wordsworth romanticized the age of innocence in his "Ode to Imitations" and nature itself and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* emphasized the multitudes of nature and self in isolation. Silko chooses similar subjects from the language, the age of innocent childhood and the language of nature. But he treats them in an entirely different manner by revealing the complexities of childhood experiences and the role of nature which is transformed by human wars. So, nature speaks differently to a person of colour and to a white person. However, while much of what has

been written by white authors has a canonical space in literature, the changing, transformative experience of nature by people of colour, especially indigenous people remain peripheral to the lexicon of narratives generated in English. Furthermore, the English-speaking colonizers have altered the landscapes for the indigenous in a way that the indigenous population has been alienated from its own land. Its connection to nature which had a language of its own has been altered, creating disconnect between the language being spoken and the reality being experienced. For the language of the indigenous community has evolved around their experience with nature which is a crucial part of Native American culture. But as the nature around them has transformed in the aftermath of colonization, with landscapes changing due to modernization, wars and environmental crisis, the language which is rooted in a culture whose cynosure is nature, alienates its speakers. An example of this is the conversation between *Ceremony*'s protagonist Tayo and the old medicine man who comes to heal him. The old medicine man's method is that of native Americans' but Tayo is not able to benefit from his method of healing due to the barrier posed by language, "He spoke softly, using the old dialect, full of sentences that were involuted with explanations of their own origins, as if nothing the old man said was his own, but all had been said before and he was only there to repeat it. Tayo had to strain to catch the meaning, dense with place names he had never heard" (Silko 31). Even the old medicine man is aware of that as he states, "There are some things that we cannot cure like we used to," he said, "not since the white people came. The others who had the Scalp *Ceremony*, some of them are not better either" (Silko 34). This disconnect is gradually resolved as Tayo begins the process of remembering and tries to understand and connect with the rituals, and the ceremony in his culture. We see a trajectory where Tayo spends his childhood among trees, hills and forests which become an important part of his identity. But his participation in the war alters that connection with nature. The forest which had

been a place of familiarity transforms into a horrible labyrinth during the war, where enemies are hidden and friends are killed. This disconnect coupled with the trauma of war crushed Tayo's identity, so much so that he started to feel as if, "he had been white smoke. He did not realize that until he left the hospital. Because white smoke had no consciousness of itself. It faded into the white world of their bedsheets and walls; it was sucked away by the words of the doctors who tried to talk to the invisible scattered smoke" (Silko 13). Here 'becoming white smoke' is not an arbitrary metaphor. It reveals how the violence of wars fought physically and ontologically, turns colonized into a medium which reflects the White culture at the expense of losing one's own identity and meaning. Tayo's journey from being that smoke, back into a conscious, aware human being whose disconnect with linguistic and subsequent cultural identity is predicated on his endeavours to relearn the language of the ceremonies through which he had been alienated.

In *Olio* as well, we see that the language of the artist is coming from a place of pain and alienation. The language is not constructed by amiable, regular social interactions but rather by social ostracization. The focus then is to show the absences, the gaps that enable the quest for newer, apposite language, "Even a blind man might run away, from folks that won't see things his way" (Jess 112). And then it is the language of Wind, Rain and Thunder which is heard and translated into music by Blind Tom, "Was it a sound past pain or a hurting that knew no surrender? The music's title seemed to beg the question: What the Wind, Rain and Thunder said to Tom" (Jess 119). The use of language here is appropriated in two ways. Firstly, to show the ostracization from conventional, socially acceptable languages of communication and then to describe another language, that of music that results from the struggle to overcome that alienation. As an act of resistance, we also see how blind Boon makes a conscious decision to not use the language of music in the manner of his masters require, " -I'll just play the notes inside my skull, alone in the

dark where they roam around loose. ‘Cause playing like a slave, I’d just step myself straight into a hangman’s noose” (Jess 116). The narrative construction at work here is to not denounce the language, any language, altogether if it has been used for crimes against humanity. Rather, one has to use the language differently, appropriating it and equipping it in a manner that it becomes desideratum to their unique expression. An example of this is Sissieretta Jones singing, “With the legacy of bones wrapped in ocean. With a national healing hogtied to song. Let me hum it to you sweet with vivace; let me scrape it into our history” (Jess 158). And then a couple of verses ahead, “Let the country be mine. Let this country be mine” (Jess 159). Here ‘country’ is a synecdoche for an entire race, culture and the system it operates within. By enriching that culture with their own voice and their own narrative, in their own language, the former slaves hope to become a part of the country along with its culture and language. And the space for their language to enter that country requires emptying it of its racist language so that a space can be created for a new language. *Olio*’s characters focus on introducing the sources of this new language. These include the flesh and blood of the slaves and the aftermath of brutalities that altered their lives. When this language finds its momentum and expands its vocabulary further, it can be hoped that one day it will be able to replace English’s problematic lexicon with its new anti-racist lexicon.

Similarly, *The Wake* tries to reimagine and rewrite several definitions. And in this project Christina Sharp changes the context and lexicons of certain words, appropriating them for the description of details and conditions which are systematically being erased. Furthermore, she questions the language for words that are absent to describe certain situations. And words that are used with no less brutality than weapons. For example, the label of ‘ship’ on a human forehead. Her attempt to resist systematic invisibility assigned to the perpetual suffering of Africans, which she calls Wake work, includes thinking about the language that provides us with information and

language which shapes our perceptions and by extension, actions. A similar proposition is given by Spivak in her essay “The Politics of Translation” where she writes, “Rhetoric must work in the silence between and around words in order to see what works and how much. The jagged relationship between rhetoric and logic, condition and effect of knowing, is a relationship by which a world is made for the agent so that the agent can in an ethical way, a political way a day-to-day way; so that the agent can be alive in a human way in this world” (Spivak 181). The act of being alive in a human way is carried out by Sharpe when she rejects the understanding of English in solely British and American way and instead, supplements in English with a vocabulary that can articulate atrocities on the Black community, “I am not interested in rescuing Black being (s) for the category of the ‘Human’, misunderstood as ‘Man’, or for the languages that they re/produce continue to produce our fast and slow deaths. I am interested in ways of seeing and imagining responses to the terror visited on Black life and the way we inhabit it, are inhabited by it and refuse it” (Sharpe 116). This refusal is not easy as Sharpe points out that people are conditioned to speak and write along certain parameters. Academics in particular need to adhere to specific modes of articulation if they want their work to be taken seriously. Over time with repetition and practice, this conditioning becomes so internalized that the possibility of an alternate way of articulation and a new set of vocabulary that caters to subjects which are beyond the lexicon of the language being reproduced in the current system, becomes impossibly difficult, “Despite knowing otherwise, we are often disciplined into thinking through and along the lines that reinscribe our own annihilation, reinforcing and reproducing what Sylvia Wynter (1994, 70) has called our “narratively condemned status” (Sharpe 13). The refusal of a particular way of using language informs Sharpe’s *Wake* work. She tries to reimagine English in a way that transforms its lexicon

to explain the disconnect between the reality of Black oppression and its false, diluted articulation in English (or its absence from it).

What I learnt from the use of language deployed by the aforementioned texts has been instrumental in my learning of the practicality of decolonizing the language. While I had read in theory what decolonizing the language was and what the branches of post-coloniality dealing with the question of language, try to achieve, I did not have a frame of reference about what the application of these concepts looked like. I also did not know how it could look different for different texts and how it could be so innovative and experimental in its form. *Ceremony* with its form of a novel, *Olio* with its mélange of poetry and fiction, and *The Wake* with its prose, had vastly different forms. Their relation to language and their application of language did not have any similarities of form. What they achieved, however, was very similar. They denounced traditional forms because they were insufficient for their content. Their content was not new but it was still unexplored to a great degree in the written medium, as compared to other literature, particularly the one written in English. For relatively unexplored content then, they explored new forms which employed a decolonized yet literarily aesthetic language. This has helped me to better understand my own disconnect between the language I think in, the language that informs my cultural identity and the language I write in. The authors and characters of *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake*, all belong to a generation similar to mine. A generation that exists at the nexus of their mother tongue's increasing irrelevancy and the inescapability of using English to survive in the reality we inhabit today. While English thrives as a global language embodying privilege and isolation, it is also a language that can be infused with new lexicons so that it connects to a global audience. By using it as Silko, Jess and Sharpe have done we can perhaps hope to de-hegemonize it.

It is interesting to see that the kind of methodology that was adopted by orientalists with the intent to colonize, is now being used to resist it. The languages in the philological laboratories today are those of resistance and innovation. And using the postcolonial framework to analyze *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake*, we can better understand the mechanisms of the processes that are enabling this innovation. Learning from these methods keeps optimism alive about such work shaping narratives that future generations will have internalized instead of internalizing the linguistic structures today, which have several problematic lexicons and produce and perpetuate problematic practices and cultural norms in turn. It will also help bridge the disconnect between the myriad cultural realities that colonization fragmented.

A further step could be to introduce these texts in the academic culture of postcolonial, and third-world countries where students like me still grapple with the epistemic violence on our socio-linguistic identities. The previous centers of imperialism and colonization (Britain and then the US) have transformed into neo-imperial and neo-colonial centers today, but they have also created spaces of dissent where authors can actively engage in decolonial resistance. These spaces remain absent in the postcolonial, third-world countries where texts like *Ceremony*, *Olio* and *The Wake* are required to teach students how to actively resist and appropriate the language of their colonizers in the process of building bridges between the traces of identities that remain after surviving the trauma of colonization and the present where engagement with a global language is a requirement for them to survive. And these bridges can lead to sites of healing where using English is neither alienating nor devoid of cultural meaning for them. Instead, it's a medium to express, reflect, resist and change.

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Religion as a New Model Minority Dimension —the Muslim South Asian on Stage in Ayad Akhtar's *Disgraced*

Sonia Zafar

Abstract

The stereotype of the Model Minority (MM) serves as evidence that the realization of "the American dream" through educational and socio-economic accomplishments is a real possibility for all Americans of colour (Chou and Feagin x). These success indicators of attainments associated with the MM label are also attributed to the South-Asian diaspora populations (Shams 3). However, for the South Asian 'Muslim' immigrants, in the aftermath of 9/11, an additional religious dimension can be detected within this stereotype. As a result, the Muslim image has been recalibrated as a 'good/modern' Muslim— assimilated into conventional American secularism (Gotanda 194). This added religious dimension is problematic and divisive and can be observed and analyzed in the South-Asian Muslim's post 9/11 diaspora works such as *Disgraced* by Ayad Akhtar. The play responds to post-9/11 Islamophobia and is one of the first portrayals of South Asian Muslims on Broadway. It grapples with the post 9/11 suspicion, scrutiny and surveillance, and reveals how assimilation struggles result in identity ruptures through ongoing religious discrimination against South Asian Muslims in America. This paper investigates Ayad Akhtar's *Disgraced* to underscore the religious dimension in the Model Minority stereotype. This inquiry of the play from the model minority trajectory reveals assimilation challenges within the post-9/11 USA for South Asian Muslims. The protagonist, Amir's struggles for assimilation as a model minority, are thwarted due to the collective social suspicion towards the South Asian Muslim identities. Akhtar presents these struggles through two common alternatives that many model minority South Asian Muslims in the US face when confronted with prejudice and hostility. Firstly, assimilation is — due to social pressures of fitting in — often a retreat from Muslim identity. Secondly, embracing Muslim identity—and rejecting the model minority stereotype—risks looking like radicalized Other. This study, therefore, undertakes a review of these South Asian Muslims' current, ongoing pressures to capture the dilemmas of a South Asian Muslim identity caught between these two choices and amid extremism from both sides.

Key Words: Minority model, Muslim minority, diaspora, hybridity, stereotyping

Disgraced by Ayad Akhtar reveals religion as a key factor in the model minority stereotype by presenting the binary of the good — secular — Muslim and bad — non-secular Muslim(s). This added binary in the model minority stereotype is highly problematic and adds to the assimilation challenges of rapidly increasing South Asian Muslim populations in post-9/11 America. Applying

the ‘model minority’ stereotype as it bears on South Asian Muslim Americans helps examine how Akhtar’s play dramatizes the model minority myth and its effects. Proposed by William Petersen in his 1966 *New York Times* article “Success Story: Japanese American Style”, the model minority stereotype associated statistics such as higher education achievement levels, high representation in technical and managerial white-collar jobs, higher household income, as indicators of success for an ethnic minority (specifically Japanese Americans). However, these statistics are accompanied by a perceived political passivity on the part of minority populations. While the idea of a ‘model minority’ traditionally focused on East Asian communities, Tahseen Shams in “Successful yet Precarious: South Asian Muslim Americans, Islamophobia, and the Model Minority Myth” points out that due to their high socioeconomic success and political docility, the model minority label also routinely includes South Asian communities. She explains:

Indeed, their education and professional credentials were all the kinds of indicators of immigrant success that help portray South Asian Americans as a model minority. And yet, while their educational and socioeconomic background gave these immigrants some recognition and privilege, their “Muslim-ness” exposed them to Islamophobic contexts, setting their experiences apart from other Asian model minorities. (3-4)

Attributing the stereotype of the model minority, a mythical status, the critics of the Model Minority stereotype such as Bob H. Suzuki, Varaxy Ye and Samuel D. Museus over time have argued that the Model Minority stereotype is an ideological construct with the socio-political operation to preserve and reproduce the centrality, the status, and the dominance of whiteness. Thus, the stereotype serves as a tool for perpetuating racial inequality in American society. This damage from this myth has taken on new dimensions in the wake of 9/11, as it has reinforced a set of assumed stereotypes towards the Muslim South Asian populations. Neil Gotanda explains in his

article “The Racialization of Islam in American Law,” the Muslim image has been recalibrated into a limited, acceptable role as a ‘good/modern’ Muslim— assimilated into conventional American secularism (Gotanda 194). This stereotyping, explained by Gotanda, forces a new subject position for Muslims in post-9/11 America that emerges from religion-based racialization.

Data collected by the Pew Research center¹ presented through “Demographic portrait of Muslim Americans” reveals that “3.45 million Muslims of all ages are living in the U.S. and among them U.S. Muslim adults who were born abroad (first generation), more come from South Asia (35%) than any other region.” However, the study also reveals a sheer lack of data regarding the current status of the rapidly increasing South Asian Muslim populations in the USA. In addition, “there are no U.S. government statistics on the number of Muslim Americans...because the Census Bureau does not collect information on the religious identification of residents” (pewresearch.org).

This absence of representation for South Asian Muslims is also evident in their limited and curated media² representations. These restricted and rationed representations obscure racial violence, civil liberty, and human rights violations encountered by the United States’ Muslims on the whole, including South Asian Muslim communities. Saif Shahin and Tahseen Shams point out how media images contribute to the stereotyping and homogenization of Muslims as a group that is somehow inherently inclined toward extremist violence. Thus, the lack of previously mentioned substantial demographic data and sparing yet misleading media representation(s) hinders a data-centred study of these populations in what Shams describes as an “ongoing terror-panic climate.”

¹ Pew Research Center is a US based “nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the world.” They collect data through “public opinion polling, demographic research, content analysis and other data-driven social science research.” For more information please see: <https://www.pewresearch.org/> esp. <https://www.pewforum.org/2017/07/26/demographic-portrait-of-muslim-americans/>.

² The term media representation(s) here specifically refers to the representation of Muslims through the following medium: cinema, television, radio, newspapers and magazines.

Consequently, Shams argues, that “South Asian Muslim Americans face [an] additional challenge with regard to the Muslim identity... akin to the model minority stereotype” (Shams 4-5).

The factual data and media representations — their lack thereof, especially regarding the assimilation pressures of South Asian Muslims and the effects of these pressures — can be observed, analyzed, and addressed through insights from South Asian Muslim’s post 9/11 diaspora literatures. Among the South Asian Muslim diaspora literatures, the 2013 Pulitzer prize-winning play *Disgraced* by Ayad Akhtar — a second-generation American diaspora writer of Pakistani heritage — was among the first-ever widely acknowledged depiction of a South Asian Muslim protagonists on Broadway. Its critical and commercial success enabled the projection of the South Asian Muslim diaspora's apprehensions on the American stage and, through it, reached a wider American audience. *Disgraced* grapples with the post 9/11 suspicion, scrutiny and surveillance and reveals how assimilation struggles through ongoing religious discrimination affect South-Asian Muslims in America. A close reading of the efforts of assimilation by Akhtar's protagonist Amir Kapoor through the proposed secular dimension of the model minority myth makes visible the effects of this stereotype on South Asian Muslims in American society. The plot of the play and the characters' dilemmas effectively portray religion as the added dimension to the model minority and reveal the problematic aspect of this added dimension to the model minority stereotype, which in both cases is a rupture in the protagonist’s identity.

The play is set a decade after 9/11 in a luxury Manhattan apartment. The plot focuses on a South Asian Pakistani-born American and a lapsed Muslim, Amir Kapoor (formerly named Amir Abdullah). Per the model minority indicators, Amir is a corporate lawyer rapidly climbing the ladder of socio-economic success. Akhtar depicts the unravelling of Amir’s world when he

unwillingly — on the insistence of Emily, his white Caucasian American artist³ wife — pays a seemingly harmless visit to a hearing of a local Imam. The Imam was accused of terrorism for collecting alms for a mosque. Akhtar purposely does not clarify whether the allegations against the Imam were real or a result of post-9/11 Islamophobia. His brief, unintentional, and seemingly insignificant association with the Imam creates a domino effect that unhinges the foundations of Amir's carefully built model minority status. This association with a Muslim cleric is interpreted in the context of his Muslim identity and does not sit well with the predominantly Jewish firm he is working with. As a result, he is perceived as a terrorist sympathizer, discriminated against, and eventually fired.

Akhtar further explores this religious dis/association and their effect on the protagonist's identity over a dinner party, where a casual conversation turns into a heated debate on religion and politics. The guests are Issac, a colleague and friend of Emily and the secular Jewish curator of a renowned Art gallery, and his African American wife, Jory, who is also Amir's colleague at the law firm. The dinner takes place right after Amir loses his job, and Akhtar adds to his protagonist's misery through a bombardment of information. During the course of the evening, in the backdrop of his visit to the Imam, he learns first about losing his previously expected promotion to Jory. Amir then further learns about his wife's affair with Issac. As a result, the veneer of civility is lifted—ironically through Amir's indulgence in alcohol, a marker of his distance from his Islamic heritage—and in a fit of rage, he strikes Emily. This violence on Amir's part ultimately results in Emily leaving Amir. This reversion from a perceived model minority caricature 'good Muslim' to a racialized stereotype of a 'bad Muslim' also affects Abe, Amir's nephew. After being a witness to Amir's battering of Emily, he begins to assert more passionate ties to his Muslim identity,

³ Emily Hughes Kapoor's character by Akhtar is rendered as a Caucasian white female painter obsessed with neo-oriental tropes that leads her to romanticize Islam.

leaving behind his earlier commitment to a secular and assimilated life. The play ends on that note of extreme polarization of identity, with Abe's arrest over suspicion of terrorism and Amir's unambiguous conflict between his identity's religious and secular parts. These divided identities are built into the play through the use of model minority motifs.

Amir Kapoor, the protagonist's character as Boyd Chris points out, "with his Upper East Side apartment, his \$600 Charvet business shirts, his Brylcreem-tamed hair, his [white American] artist wife and his en-route-to-partner career as a litigator is the definition of the first-generation immigrant made good" (Boyd). Akhtar shows how Amir's professional choice as a lawyer at a renowned Jewish-led firm requires a complete disassociation from his Muslim identity. Amir has changed his last name purposely to pass himself off as a Hindu. Akhtar reveals Amir's willingness to be misrecognized, in terms of his religious identity, through a loaded event in the plot: his reception of Shiva's statue as a gift from Mort, his Jewish boss and mentor at the firm. Emily, unaware of Amir's reasons for this purposeful projection of a different identity, asks her husband whether Mort thinks Amir is Hindu, and Amir replies, "He may have mentioned something once...." (Akhtar 11). This disassociation from Muslim identity by Amir shows, on the one hand, that Amir's decisions and rationale behind the name change were his alone. On the other hand, it shows that this estrangement from self did help him earn his desired success in his professional life. This estrangement from his Muslim identity is clearly intentional as he does not disabuse Mort of the presumption that he is Hindu.

This moment informs Amir's deliberate attempt at erasing his Muslim identity to succeed as a model minority. Mona Bagato, in her article "Exploring the Theme of Neo-Orientalism in Ayad Akhtar's *Disgraced*," writes that Amir "tries hard to hide his racial and religious background in order to gain acceptance into the mainstream society; however, his performance does not ensure

successful assimilation in society. Unfortunately, his society can't accept his brown skin, his origin, and his Pakistani and Muslim roots" (Bagato 129). As a result, "he [remains] the unassimilable other in spite of his perfect American accent," and in spite of his carefully decorated abode exuding multiculturalism, which becomes a microcosm for the idea of America as a melting pot (Bagato 129). Through Amir's character, Akhtar examines the conflicts within the cultural and religious identity of South Asian Muslims presented as a secular model minority adhering to the 'good Muslim' model minority stereotype. He also addresses — through recurring motifs — how even discarding the religious identity does not allow disposing of the label associated with Islamophobic and racial perceptions.

From its first moment to when the final curtain falls, the play's setting and scenery are fraught with symbolic allusions. The first view of the stage reveals an Islamic painting on the wall. Notably, this decorative choice is not deliberate on Amir's part but is, in fact, a tribute to Islamic orientalism from his artist wife, Emily. The first glance also reveals a statue of Lord Shiva on a marble mantle above the fireplace and some bottles of liquor on a small table. This diverse cascade of imagery brings out internal confusion in the character while projecting his outward struggle for assimilation as a model minority. Throughout the play, Akhtar's use of art and paintings play a pivotal role, as they symbolically reassert the characters' multifaceted identities created due to assimilation pressures and highlight the resulting conflicts within and without.

Less symbolically and more literally, they also exhibit how culture can be abstracted or de-particularized by aestheticizing neo-oriental elements. The central case in point is Emily's portrait of Amir, modelled on Diego Velázquez's *Portrait of Juan de Pareja*. Amir, in the very first scene, is posing for this portrait as Emily paints. As Basu notes, "the painting of Amir by Emily" based on the portrait of Juan de Pareja "is a motif that structures the organization of the play" and is

crucial for the analysis of the racialized lens of model minority identity of the protagonist (Basu 64). Pareja, a Spanish painter of Moorish descent, was born enslaved and freed by Velázquez. For Emily, the inspiration for this painting came from Amir being racially profiled and discriminated against by a waiter at a restaurant. The waiter's derogatory attitude towards Amir is situated in the Western perception of brown bodies and Muslim identities after 9/11. Because of racial bias, the “waiter could not “place” Amir properly. Specifically, from the perspective of the model minority as means for asserting white dominance as the waiter’s “focus upon Amir’s race... makes him believe his racial identity gives him power over Amir (Field 52). Nitasha Sharma, in “Racialization and Resistance: The Double Bind of Post-9/11 Brown,” tries to explain the historical and contextual reasons fueling discrimination towards brown bodies in America in the post-9/11 era, as she explains:

The racial project of the post-9/11 Brown also wedded older stereotypes of East Asian Americans (the model minority myth and the perpetual foreigner) to stereotypes of West Asians (terrorist, oppressed veiled woman, religious fanatic) grouping together people who come from a vast landscape including Eastern Europe, Asia, South Asia, and East Asia (their Americanness unrecognized). (139)

This perception of a lack of Americanness in the brown bodies of the South Asian Muslim feeds into the perceived self-superiority of the white Americans in the play, since “in foregrounding only Amir’s Brown identity over all of the factors comprising his identity, the waiter relies upon a script of whiteness as the essence of being American” (Field 52).

From the perspective of the racialized bodies, Amir and Pareja serve as a parallel to each other as Pareja is posing for his Master. Emily, through her insistence and positioning of Amir for her painting, parallels Velázquez. Pareja, a man of Moorish descent, represents power dynamics

that Emily takes as the opportunity for a painting, but in some ways still seems oblivious to. And Amir, a previously colonized South Asia representative, is thus presented through Emily's western/colonial gaze. These parallels are minutely illustrated by Akhtar throughout the entire play, as Pareja is shown fashionably dressed in a shirt with fine embroidery and a lace collar just as Amir, a South Asian Muslim from once colonized Pakistan, is similarly dressed "in an Italian suit jacket, a crisp collared shirt" from above the waist (Akhtar 6). The internal recognition of this marginalization is evident in the play where the logic Emily provides in the ensuing dialogue—as she and Amir discuss the incident with the waiter:

AMIR

The guy's a racist. So what?

EMILY

Sure. But I started to think about the Velazquez painting. And how people must have reacted when they first saw it. They think they're looking at a picture of a Moor. An assistant.

AMIR

A slave.

EMILY

Fine. A slave.

But whose portrait - it turns out - has more nuance and complexity and reality than his renditions of kings and queens. And God knows how many of those he painted.

(Akhtar 7)

It is not only Emily who accords this racialized positioning of a slave to Amir by painting his brown body in the same vein as Pareja's portrait and reinforces the white dominance over model

minority stereotypes by refuting any protest from Amir by basing her response on the historical importance of Pareja's portrait and not on Amir's own concerns about being racialized. Emily's friend and her boss Isaac, the Jewish-American character in the play, also questions this model minority dilemma of Amir as he comments on the paintings:

ISSAC:

So, there you are, in your six-hundred-dollar Charvet shirt, like Velázquez's brilliant apprentice-slave in his lace collar, adorned in the splendours of the world you're now so clearly a part of...

And yet...

AMIR:

Yeah?

ISSAC:

The question remains.

AMIR:

The question?

ISSAC:

Of your place.

For the viewer. Of course. Not you.

It's a painting, after all.

Akhtar's message here is patently clear and can be read through the lens of the model minority stereotypes — passive acceptability of assigned positionality. It reveals that even for the most privileged second-generation Pakistani-American, there is no comfortable post-ethnic cosmopolitan space to inhabit. Amir's representation as a brown body helps Akhtar examine the

impacts of racialization based on the religion and culture of model minorities. It portrays the implications of model minority theory through the prospect of becoming, if not white, then a racial identity that successfully approximates whiteness. This approximation is held out to those who perform their model minority status most successfully. The prospect is often used as bait – offered, withdrawn, offered again – in service of manipulating particular kinds of social and political performances. In the aftermath of 9/11, the possibility of achieving some empowering proximity with whiteness is withdrawn from Muslims, particularly those who can be visibly identified as Other. Thus reinstating the social and political operation of the Model Minority as an idea and ideological construct is to preserve and reproduce the centrality, the status, and the dominance of whiteness.

For South Asian Muslims, 9/ 11 shattered the illusion of achieving any empowerment through approximation with whiteness, thus rendering the security associated with model minority status a temporary delusion. For Amir, everyday racism and his struggle not to be typecast as ‘the Muslim attorney’ serve as reminders of his inoutsider status. His wife’s religious-themed art continuously forces Amir to reassert his position between a discarded Muslim past and his all-American success story. Thus, for Amir, dissociation from his previous identity becomes a logical solution for providing a pathway to success. Stepping into this new world is only possible through severance from his old world, which is his religious identity as a Muslim.

A close study of Amir’s character in the context of the plot reveals his “absolute repudiation of Islam,” which for Aroosa Kanwal and Saiyma Aslam in *The Routledge Companion to Pakistani Anglophone Writing* – in the post 9/11 context – “appears to be a defence mechanism” (Kanwal and Aslam 63). It renders his character a hybrid identity. This hybridity exists both on the part of Amir and Emily, as well as other characters in the play and “rubs up uncomfortably against not

just the fantasy of the white and black, Christian/Jewish/atheist/secular characters of the play toward the Muslim(s) in their midst—but, more importantly perhaps, against the self-Orientalizing fantasy that the main character [...] succumbs [to] with tragic effect” (Kanwal and Aslam 192).

The term ‘self-Orientalizing’ here works in a manner similar to internalized racism: in his attempts to efface his own cultural and religious identity. Amir has built a defence mechanism against his identity by perceiving the worst in it and defining Islam by its most extreme stereotypes. This conflict with religion and the price associated with the betrayal of self and the discarding of one’s own cultural/religious identity for successful assimilation comes to a head in the play’s climax over the previously mentioned dinner party in scene three of the play.

In the climax of *Disgraced*, Akhtar explores the model minority stereotypes beyond the religious dimension of Islam by representing orthodox and reformed characters of other backgrounds through a mix of Jewish, Christian and African American characters. Akhtar carefully positions a quartet of actors, all accomplished New Yorkers, representing varying cultures, creeds and colours to participate in an explosive conversation over a dinner table. However, their casual conversation soon turns into a heated debate on secularity, religious minoritization, and Islamic identity between Amir and Isaac. Amir, already shaken by the events at the firm and under the influence of alcohol, discards any filters of sensitivity and becomes ruthless in his criticism of Islamic ideology (and, by extension, of his own Islamic heritage). At the same time, Isaac and Emily rise to its defence. Isaac argues that the problem is not with the religion itself but specifically with Islamo-fascism. This back and forth argument establishes that Amir, as a fundamental model minority, harbours similar Islamophobic tendencies that are part of the post-9/11 American climate. Isaac identifies Amir’s hatred towards his own Islamic identity and points out that Amir seems to be “full of self-loathing” (Akhtar 61).

During the course of his explosive tirade, Amir's disgust towards Islam is replaced with another misconstrued identity as he claims that being a Muslim means striving to create a similar world even if one has to fight for it. He adds that to be Muslim is to feel pride in the purity of the emotions of those willing to act out those beliefs—with which he begins to sound like he is passionately identifying with Islam, rather than critiquing it. Just to drive the point home, Amir touches upon his Oriental identity, which leads to the most controversial dialogue in the play:

AMIR

...And this is the real problem: It goes way deeper than the Taliban. To be Muslim — *truly* — means not only that you *believe* all this. It means you *fight* for it, too. Politics follows faith? No distinction between mosque and state? Remember all that? So if the point is that the world in the Quran was a better place than this world, well, then let's go back. Let's stone adulterers. Let's cut off the hands of thieves. Let's kill the unbelievers. And so, even if you're one of those lapsed Muslims sipping your after-dinner scotch alongside your beautiful white American wife — and watching the news and seeing folks in Middle East dying for values you were taught were purer — and stricter — and truer ... you can't help but feel just a little a bit of pride.

ISAAC

Pride?

AMIR

Yes. Pride.

ISAAC

Did you feel pride on September Eleventh?

AMIR

If I'm honest, yes.

EMILY

You don't really mean that, Amir.

AMIR

I was horrified by it, okay? Absolutely horrified.

JORY

Pride about what? About the towers coming down? About people getting killed?

AMIR

That we were finally winning.

JORY

We?

AMIR

Yeah.... I guess I forgot... which *we* I was.

JORY

You're an American...

AMIR

It's tribal, Jor. It is in the bones. You have no idea how I was brought up.

You have to work *real* hard to root that shit out.

JORY

Well, you need to keep working.

AMIR

I am. (Akhtar 62-63)

Akhtar's replacement of Amir's resentment towards extremism with a confession of pride exposes the rupture within his model minority identity by exposing the physical, cultural and psychological impacts of forcing an internalized assimilation on the part of South Asian Muslims in post-9/11 America. It reveals how the discourse attributing Muslims as terrorist threatens Muslims' already tenuous option to identify as a model minority and a successful immigrant group. It also exposes how the religion-based binaries between 'good' and 'bad' Muslims in America jeopardize the fragile sense of identity that ethnic and religious minorities feel in the United States and create an atmosphere of unrest for Muslim immigrants by forcing model minority assimilation on them. As a result of this pressure to either assimilate as a 'good Muslim,' or else be labelled as a 'bad Muslim' that is a threat to American society, South Asian Muslims often struggle to assimilate where any efforts of assimilation through this ruptured identity continues to make 'Muslim' and 'American' into extreme and incompatible binaries.

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Eco-feminist Critique of J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*

Sahar

Hashmi

Abstract

Colonization is deemed as an unnatural and brutal act perpetrated against the people of the colonies and the land that is colonized, amounting to the illegal occupation of land. In the book *Disgrace* by J. M. Coetzee, the rape of two women is allegorically synonymous with the act of rape of the land that is South Africa. The craft of the colonizer lies in his ability to seduce the subject and make it subservient to his power. A power dynamic thus created, in which the subject has no other alternative besides subjecting itself to the will of the master, is a relationship of duress. By using human beings that exist in a power dynamic Coetzee deconstructs the colonization of South Africa. It can be argued that the rape in *Disgrace* is not merely a physical or a symbolic act but an act of violence on a conscious and subconscious level. South Africa is a vulnerable woman subject to the coercion of the body as well as the collective consciousness. Through the subject position of David Lorrie, Coetzee depicts the exploitation of the subject and then reduces the exploiter to the status of the exploited to subvert binaries thereby creating textual resistance. The trauma of colonization is encapsulated as the trauma of rape in the novel. The gaping wounds of this act are irreconcilable. The objective of this research paper is to eco-critically analyze the novel *Disgrace* and also to explore how the subject moves from a position of power to powerlessness in post-Apartheid South Africa. The rape of the slave and castration of the master become gaping wounds that Africa must live with. My argument is that the act of violence against Africa is an act of violence against nature herself, both being characterized and personified as a female. The case of David Lorrie, a fifty two year old divorcee who either buys physical intimacy or seduces women into the act of sex offers a critique of the ageing colonizer that has lost his magic touch or the ability to seduce a woman and must now use coercion. This research intends to scrutinize the movement of David Laurie from the seducer to the coercer and ultimately the one to ask for forgiveness. Moreover, the textual resistance is evident within the language of the text that creates binaries of 'us' and the 'other', the 'possessed' and the 'dispossessed', 'black' and 'white'.

Key Words: Vulnerability, Rape, Reconciliation. Women, Nature, Land, Textual Resistance, Violence

Introduction

The eco-critical approach has not been used to deal with *Disgrace* as a text although South Africa is signified as a woman in previous research on the novel. Reconciliation remains a central concern in the South African context and has been a subject of academic inquiry in various

disciplines of Humanities and Social Sciences. This research attempts to analyze the South African land represented in the novel eco-critically and to highlight the atrocities that the African land suffered at the hand of the colonizer. This research puts forwards certain problematic questions: Can reconciliation be made possible? Can the gash of colonization be filled? Can the shift of power of white domination be blood free? Is co-existence possible for the white colonizer and the Black Africans? Can the land forget the act of exploitation it suffered over hundreds of years? The paper answers them by using the theories of Helen Cixous in “The Laugh of the Medusa”, Carolyn Merchant’s “Nature as Female”, Jonathan Bate’s “The Ecology of Nature” and Bell Hooks’ “Post Modern Blackness”.

The act of colonization, has left its marks on the collective psyche of the people and left behind a history of atrocities. The post-apartheid world attempts to deal with this trauma through text as well as through discourse. David Lurie in the novel *Disgrace* is the symbol of the receding colonial system but there is no other system that could replace it. The gap or the gash that is left behind by the empiricists was created as a result of hundreds of years of subjugation and will take hundred years at least to reconcile. This pain can only be answered by silence; a silence that speaks manifold and is deep rooted. Women become the symbol of national self-assertion and struggle. Lucy for instance, in the novel, struggles to keep her land and to protect herself but must agree to the terms of her former black manservant to survive in the South African countryside.

In his book, *The Age of Iron* Coetzee writes “To whom this writing then? The answer: to you but not to you; to me; to you in me” (Coetzee 5). The African case is something that Coetzee describes as both the master and the slave being part of each other’s consciousness and being almost intertwined. The choice of David Lurie to move away from Johannesburg is the movement away from his position as the master and his first move forward into the acceptance of the Black

man having his own power and consciousness. As Friedrich Hegel opines in his essay “Phenomenology of Spirit”,

the relation of both self-consciousnesses is in this way so constituted that they prove themselves and each other through a life-and-death struggle. They must enter into this struggle, for they must bring their certainty of themselves, the certainty of being for themselves, to the level of objective truth, and make this a fact both in the case of the other and in their own case as well. And it is only through staking one’s life that freedom is won. (Hegel 543)

Coetzee’s preoccupation with language and his use of language to establish the African voice is evident throughout the novel when he notes: “Human society has created language in order that we may communicate our thoughts, feelings and intentions to each other” (Coetzee 3). The language is used not only to create resistance but also to seduce the subjects to subvert their position and to rationalize their animalistic instincts.

Africa has often been called a woman, a land that is vulnerable and at risk of being violated. An eco-critical approach to analysing Africa in the text of *Disgrace* is an attempt to chronicle the effects of the imperial occupation of the land herself. The colonizer uses rationality to occupy it hence violating it. As Lurie says: “Because a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it” (Coetzee 16).

Using this rationale, the white man plundered Africa for all her beauty, riches and glory. Taking her passiveness as acceptance, her silence as assent, exploiting her unprotected, exposed self to the outside world. Coetzee then shows the opposite, when the tables turn on the White man

and South Africans have equal rights as the white man. Where the white man must be subject to the will of his former slave and must maintain silence in order to survive.

The notion of rape in *Disgrace* has received critical attention in various theoretical frameworks; however, the eco-critical approach has not been brought to light. The term “eco-criticism” was coined in the 1970s and later “1980s saw the enormous influence of the deep ecology movement which called for a radical reevaluation of the relationship that human beings have to the environment, especially particular places on the globe that we inhabit, in part through a staunch rejection of anthropocentrism” (Hiltner 1-2). Human beings have been considered the apex of creation giving them the right to exploit nature for economic purposes, disregarding the damage done in the process to the natural world. This research paper is based on the feminine aspects of the land that is South Africa which has been the center of conquest since colonization began. The argument is that little or no significance is attached to the female agency of land and to link the rape of the two women in the novel with the land of South Africa. Furthermore, the movement of David Lurie from the urban center to the countryside is shown as his withdrawal from his position as the master and ultimately acceptance of his slave (Black man) as his equal. This process is slow and laborious, one accompanied by denial and then later acceptance.

Carine M. Mardorossian in her article “Rape and the Violence of Representation in J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*” notes that although *Disgrace* won accolades in Britain but to the South Africans it was a dark representation of the post-apartheid South Africa. The violence of the colonizer is countered by the violence of the newly decolonized; this is not an organic outcome but is an outrage and is the result of the lack of ideology and the gap of the absence of a system of governance. She argues that “*Disgrace* demonstrates that rape is not primarily a gendered crime that is then complicated by considerations of race or class, but a deeply discursive phenomenon

whose material consequences are constituted by the profoundly racialized discourses that give it meaning” (Mardorossian 73).

Aparna Mishra Tare in her article “Postcolonial Studies as Re-education: Learning from J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*” discusses the relevance of postcolonial studies in the realm of the school system, in aesthetic and artistic movements, and in the political arena. Using J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* as an example, she argues that “the main characters in Coetzee's novels are failed teachers who manage, despite their limitations, to move us to think otherwise by asking us to engage with the ethical, moral, and social conflicts leading to their undoing” (Tera 200). She talks about the universal appeal of the book that forces the reader to learn and unlearn what is held in people's minds as broader narratives and urges us to look at social and political realities differently. She writes: “*Disgrace* places the reader in a face-to-face encounter with the others suffering as and in the form of relearning” (Tera 202).

Ranjit Das in his article “Prophet of Pain—J.M Coetzee and His Novel *Disgrace*” talks of Coetzee's merit as a Nobel laureate, arguing for the merits of *Disgrace* as a tragic art making David Lurie the tragic hero with a ‘tragic flaw’. He goes on to describe the merits of Coetzee's prose but does not draw on a specific aspect of the novel. Sue Kossew in her seminal article “The Politics of Shame and Redemption in J.M Coetzee's *Disgrace*” opines: “*Disgrace* is a complex exploration of the collision between private and public worlds; intellect and body; desire and love; and public disgrace or shame and the idea of individual grace or salvation ... [set] in a recognizably post-apartheid South Africa” (Kossew 155). She goes on to explain that “Coetzee's novel also resonates with the national public spectacle of shame, confession, and forgiveness that was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, problematizing notions of morality” (Kossew 155). Mike Marais in his essay “J.M Coetzee's *Disgrace* and the Task of the Imagination” argues that “By constructing

a parallel between the two rape scenes in the novel, Coetzee thus places his protagonist in a number of roles and positions which are ironic reversals of those he has previously occupied. In so doing, the writer introduces his protagonist to realms of experience from which he has previously been excluded” (Marais 78).

David Lurie, he argues rationalizes himself by his European education calling himself the “servant of Eros” and Byron becomes the muse of his imagination. Employing Byron’s theories, he uses so many women to fill the void created by his two previous marriages and then divorces and as Marais puts it “the ethical trajectory of *Disgrace* is by no means this clear-cut. If anything, its movement is chiasmic and involves a doubling back on itself that disputes what it seems to assert even as it is asserted” (Marais 79).

The scope of this research adds to the growing critique of art through the lens of eco-criticism that aims to preserve the sanctity of nature so that future generations can enjoy the splendours of nature in the form in which this generation perceived it. South Africa with its indigenous flora and fauna can be preserved in its natural habitat and as a result, its human population can live in harmony with the White Afrikaans and the Native Africans.

Research Methodology

The primary text chosen to conduct this research is *Disgrace* by J. M Coetzee. This research paper uses the eco-critical approach of Carolyn Merchant, as well as the feminist theory of Helen Cixous and Bell Hooks as secondary texts making this an amalgamation of feminist critique as well as an eco-critical study which is now being termed as an Eco-feminist critique. I will discuss the displacement of David Laurie from an urban setting to the farmland under the master-slave paradigm of Fredrich Hegel which later I will relate to Eco-feminist concerns. Using

the qualitative method of research, this paper critically examines the South African Land which has been allegorically called a woman many times. The qualitative methodology of research is not a statistical analysis of the subject; rather, it studies an individual's relationship with society and social norms that determine an individual's role in the social construct.

Coetzee was born in the South African city of Cape Town in 1940 and educated in South Africa and the USA. He was a professor of general literature in Cape Town before moving to Australia. In 2003 Coetzee won the Nobel Prize for literature at the relatively young age of 63, which made him rise to worldwide acceptance and prominence. This paper discusses the land of South Africa as engendered as a woman subjected to violence by the White colonizers and the White Afrikaans. The rape of the two women Melanie and Lucy in the novel becomes an allegory of violence against South Africa.

David Laurie the principal protagonist of the novel is fifty two years old University professor who has 'solved the problem of sex' by having an escort whom he meets every week. His affair with Soraya is a matter of convenience which he has acquired as his old age does not allow him to flirt as easily as he used to. In this way, David Laurie becomes the symbol of the old colonizer who is living his life with ease and comfort enjoying the fruits of his earlier conquests. His physical appearance is described by Coetzee as "[w]ith his height, his good bone, his olive skin, his flowing hair, he could always count on a degree of magnetism. If he looked at a woman in a certain way, with certain intent, she would return his look...That was how he lived; for years, for decades, that was the backbone of his life" (Coetzee 7). The status of Laurie as the colonizer is represented in these lines; the ease of his conquest over the land is described in the way he manipulated women as being his sex subjects, mere objects to please his libido.

The allegory of Melanie as the representation of land is done in a very sophisticated way by Coetzee. He writes, “Her body is clear, simple, in its way perfect; though she is passive throughout, he finds the act pleasurable” (Coetzee 19). Her body is the one that is violated and silenced by this act of violence making her unable to write or speak. Helen Cixous writes in her essay “The Laugh of the Medusa”, that “by writing her self, woman will return to the body which has been confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display_ the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time” (Cixous 1946).

The idea of nature or land as a living organism has been a subject of philosophical debate since ancient times but the metaphor of nature as a woman has been in the English tradition of Literature since Shakespeare. As Carolyn Merchant notes in her essay “Nature as Female”:

Central to the organic theory was the identification of nature, especially the earth, with a nurturing mother; a kindly beneficent female who provided for the needs of mankind in an ordered, planned universe. But another opposing image of nature as female is also prevalent: wild and uncontrollable nature that could render violence, storms, droughts and general chaos. Both were identified with the female sex and were projections of human perceptions on to the external world. (Merchant 10)

David Laurie by using the seductive rationale of poets like Byron and Wordsworth, seduces Melanie using Language to fight and win his case for him much like how the colonizer used language to conquer the mind of the natives. He says: “Because a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has a duty to share it... She does not own herself. Beauty does not own itself...from fairest creatures we desire increase that thereby beauty’s rose might never die” (Coetzee 16).

‘Desire’ and ‘increase’ in the above lines imply exploitation and manipulation of the land at the hand of the colonizer. As Merchant describes, “The image of earth as a living organism and nurturing mother had served as a cultural constraint restricting the actions of human beings. One does not readily slay a mother, dig into her entrails for gold or mutilate her body” (Merchant 11).

The struggle for Africa to free herself from the colonizer and later from the apartheid is described metaphorically: “Averting her face, she frees herself, gathers her things, leaves the room. In a few minutes she is back, dressed. ‘I must go’, she whispers. He makes no effort to detain her” (Coetzee 19). Although the word ‘whisper’ and ‘no effort’ might be used here as a pun implying the opposite and contradicting implications. As the struggle to de-colonize Africa was a bloody one yet the metaphor of rape and silence still implies that the act is performed but not welcomed. As Cixous argues “A woman without a body, dumb, blind, can’t possibly be a good fighter. She is reduced to being the servant of the militant male, his shadow” (Cixous 1947). Melanie uses her silence to register her disgust with the act. As she cannot openly struggle, she uses the only language that can be used in silence which is her body. Coetzee writes: “She does not resist. All she does is avert herself; avert her lips, avert her eyes.” She makes her intentions clear and it resonates with her oppressor and Lurie realizes the act is not a desired one as he thinks “Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core” (Coetzee 25).

The narrative in the novel takes a metanarrative course when through the mouthpiece of Rosalind, Coetzee says, “Of course I blame her! I blame you and I blame her. The whole thing is disgraceful from beginning to end. Disgraceful and vulgar too, and I’m not sorry for saying so” (Coetzee 45). Melanie takes up her case against Laurie and registers a case of rape and wins it as well. As Cixous notes, the amount of courage and effort that goes into speaking in the following words: “Every woman has known the torment of getting up to speak. Her heart racing, at times

entirely lost for words, ground and language slipping away_ that's how daring a feat, how great a transgression it is for a woman to speak" (Cixous 1947). But she learns to speak and find her voice to win her case and live on her own in the world at large, leaving Lurie to deal with his castration anxiety on his own.

David Lurie is seen time and time again as the colonizer who is set in his ways and in his consciousness: the master as he chooses not to be reformed or ask for penance but moves to live with his daughter Lucy in the African countryside. He says, "I'm old fashioned, I would prefer to be put against a wall and shot. Have done with it" (Coetzee 66). Lucy, whom he calls a 'sturdy young settler', is a farm woman making her own produce and selling it in the market. She is of a generation that accepted the post-apartheid world and learned to live in it. As he says, "The more things change, the more they remain the same. History repeating itself, though in a more modest vein. Perhaps history has learned a lesson" (Coetzee 62). Lucy knows of the master-slave relation or the object and subject relationship that exists between the colonizer and the colonized, as she says, "they are part of the furniture, part of the alarm system. They do us the honour of treating us like gods, and we respond by treating them like things" (Coetzee 78).

The weakened power of the former colonizing masters is apparent in post-apartheid Africa. As David says: "he speaks Italian, he speaks French but Italian and French will not save him here in the darkest Africa" (Coetzee 95). He is helpless when he is attacked in his own residence and set on fire by the rapists and mutilators of his daughters and astounded by the decision of his daughter to remain silent on the case and not tell the police. He only realizes the extent of the loss of his power when three black men rape his daughter and impregnate her and he is unable to stop them. "My child, my child! he says holding out his arms to her. When she does not come, he puts

aside his blanket, stands up, and takes her in his arms. In his embrace she is stiff as a pole, yielding nothing” (Coetzee 99).

This incident serves as the castration of his time as a master and he realizes the effect first-hand of such an act of aggression and violation. He says, “it may take weeks, it may take months before he is bled dry, but he is bleeding” (107). This ‘invasion’, as he calls it, leaves him empty as a ghost without a soul, without purpose, and fills him with despair. The unborn child of Lucy becomes ‘His Disgrace and Lucy’s shame’. As he says “That is what their visitor has achieved: that is what they have done to this confident, modern young woman. Like a stain, the story is spreading across the district. Not her story to spread but theirs; they are its owners. How they showed what a woman is for” (115).

These plunderers not only violate Lucy but the land as well killing animals and looting senselessly and mercilessly. Even then Lucy maintains her silence (to her land and property is more meaningful than registering a complaint), she aims to reconcile with the disgrace that has befallen her by refusing to listen to the pleas of her father telling her: “Lucy from the beginning to the end I fail to understand. I fail to understand why you did not lay real charges against them, and now I fail to understand why you are protecting Petrus. Petrus is not an innocent party. He is with them” (Coetzee 133). He thinks he can make her understand by pleading guilty to the wrong he did to Melanie but that is not the case. She knows she has to survive in post-apartheid Africa and the only way to do this is by forming allegiances through blood and family. The master and slave cannot remain two different entities but must meet halfway for Africa to gain grace. As Petrus says: “the new pipe will go through Lucy’s land. It is good that she has given her permission. She is forward-looking” (Coetzee 136).

It is this insight into the future of Africa that leads her to agree to marry Petrus, a man of Black origin who not a very long time ago was working for her. Now they want to be their own ruler but as Hegel argues after the struggle for life and death only one master remains, as when David argues: “but this is new you are talking about. Slavery. They want you for their slaves to which Lucy says ‘not slavery. Subjection. Subjugation’” (Coetzee 159). Petrus becomes the voice of the Black oppressed people. Bell Hook writes in her essay “Postmodern Blackness” that “[r]adical postmodernism calls attention to those shared sensibilities which cross the boundaries of class, gender, race, etc. that could be fertile ground for construction of empathy_ ties that would promote recognition of common commitments, and serve as the basis of solidarity and coalition” (Hooks 2513). ‘Covered with blood’ becomes a resonating metaphor for the novel as the land is covered with the blood of one act of violence after the other, leaving a scarlet trail of bloodshed, misery and despair in its wake. This endless line of violence can only be stopped through redemption and forgiveness; eventually, David goes to Issac’s family to ask for forgiveness.

Apartheid was a system of governance from 1948 to 1994. Coetzee in the novel *Disgrace* (written in 1999) deals with the dilemma of the gap left by the colonizer. After decades of being ruled over by the English consciousness, the Africans do not have a sound system of governance for Africa. This research paper explores a detailed study of the feminine attributes of land that Coetzee is using in his novel. The female characters act as an allegory for the South African Land, which the colonizer cannot let go of and is unable to accept his new position as the equal to the Black man or a subject of the Black man. Coetzee in the form of a parable explores the effect of decolonization at a personal and private level. The novel derives its title from his act of ‘disgrace’ that has plagued South Africa. Following the teachings of Nelson Mandela, Coetzee seems to argue or hint at this case on a subliminal level, making forgiveness the way to redemption. Through the

rape of Lucy, Coetzee shows that violence bequeaths violence, and this endless line of violence can only be stopped if forgiveness is asked for and given.

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Revolutionary Ideology and Power Dynamics in the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Langston Hughes: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This research article investigates the works of Langston Hughes and Faiz Ahmed Faiz. They were both progressive thinkers as they wanted to revolutionize their society. This paper offers a textual analysis of the selected poems of these poets in order to compare and contrast the underlying power dynamics and revolutionary ideology in their poetry. This research article thus employs the Marxist theoretical framework by Raymond Williams in *Marxism and Literature*, which identifies Marxist concepts like ideology and classifies them into three categories as ‘Residual Ideology’, ‘Dominant Ideology’ and ‘Emergent Ideology’. Revolutionary ideology stands for the idea of radical change. Revolutionary ideologies have a major impact on society as they tend to reform people. Max Weber defines power dynamics as a continuum of power relationships where rulers are in a more powerful relationship than citizens but still, they can and do have an influence over their rulers. Similarities and discrepancies have been traced in order to compare and contrast their poetry. Textual analysis reveals that their poetry challenges twentieth century power dynamics. The poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz has undercurrents of Marxist revolutionary ideology whereas the poetry of Langston Hughes has an underlying strain of racial dimension. Their poems depict the power dynamics between the powerful and the powerless hence countering the power dynamics.

Keywords: Power Dynamics; Revolutionary ideology.

Introduction

Poets like Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Ahmed Faraz and Habib Jalib raised their voices against the oppression of the disempowered strata of society. Faiz witnessed the Russian revolution and was involved with the “Anga’re group” and “Progressive Writer’s Association” (Dryland 18, 33). These groups refuted the concept of “l’art pour l’art” while they embraced and promoted the concept of art for life’s sake in the 1930s (Dryland 34). Faiz aspired to Marxist ideology and his poetry is a blend of politics, Marxist ideology and the Muslim tradition of Ghazal or versification. His excellence in poetry also won him the Lenin Peace Prize in 1963 (Sarwar 1). He also speaks of the disadvantaged strata, the double standards of politicians and their corrupt practices.

Langston Hughes is an African American poet who played a crucial role in creating political awareness through his poetry. His poetry is grounded in revolutionary notions as he wrote verses that act as a sub-culture due to its individuality. He criticizes the American system of government and its double standards through his poetry (Scott and Shade 12).

Faiz and Hughes are revolutionary poets. Langston Hughes was marginalized because he was an African-American. So, his poetry highlights revolutionary notions by resisting power blocks by using Jazz and Black dialect in his works. Similarly, Faiz Ahmed Faiz was a Marxist and he wanted class equality. That is why the researcher feels that a comparison may be drawn between them so that their individual revolutionary ideas can be traced, since both poets wanted a revolution. However, their perspectives are different. Hughes resisted by asserting his sub-cultural ideology through means of incorporating Jazz and the Black vernacular in his poetry. Sub-cultural identities held by the African-Americans are different from those held by the White Americans. Whereas, Faiz revolutionized by constantly challenging power groups and giving a message of hope through means of vivid imagery.

Theoretical Framework of Study

This research talks about the relationship between the powerful and the powerless. Williams has further classified ideology into three types as 'dominant', 'residual' and 'emergent' ideology in his work *Marxism and Literature*. According to him, dominant ideologies are held by the powerful group in the society. Residual ideologies are those that were held strongly in the past. Finally, emergent ideologies are those that challenge the dominant or the powerful.

Textual Analysis:**‘To a Political Leader’**

Faiz Ahmed Faiz dedicates this poem to the ‘dominant ideology’ and the leader of the Indian National Congress, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as he terminated the “Quit India Movement” when it was at its peak (Nasir 62). This poem was a contribution to the freedom movement by the poet as he tried to raise awareness amongst the general population by presenting an ‘emergent ideology’ that rather than relying on the political leaders, they should become self-reliant. As a result, the two main political parties; i.e. Muslim League and the Indian National Congress parted ways. It is a political poem about ‘dominant ideology’ and oppressed humanity and was written as a satire on the situation. In power dynamics, the political leaders held power to alter the course of history and the people who relied on them were considered powerless. However, the poet wants the general public to believe in the ‘emergent ideology’ that they can alter the course of history by becoming self-reliant. He addressed Gandhi without naming him in the poem.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz talks about the ‘dominant ideology’ as people of the subcontinent looked up to their leaders to lead them towards an independent state. He states that people were deprived of their basic human rights as they were exploited by their rulers. It deals with the theme of self-reliance and the domination of the political leaders. He instructs people through his ‘emergent ideology’ to rely on their own effort and challenge the power dynamics.

The poet selects black as something strong and unyielding. He states ‘dominant ideology’ of the people of the subcontinent who were subservient to the dominant rulers. The power dynamics of the political game of the powerful ‘dominant ideology’ of the leaders makes people pessimistic as the darkness of negativity engulfs them.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz again draws comparison with the piece of straw for the helpless citizens who fight with the waves of the sea for the powerful rulers. He then uses an image of a flying insect trying to fight against a giant mountain to describe the defiance of the people of the subcontinent against the ‘dominant ideology’ of their rulers.

He promotes the ‘emergent ideology’ and advises people to keep their spirits high as he feels that people need all the support and encouragement to keep fighting out of the darkness. The ‘emergent ideology’ of the poet is to challenge the powerful by becoming self-reliant and becoming their own beacon of hope by working towards their goals. In dynamics of power, Faiz points out that the people hold the key to power in their own hands.

The poet concludes the ‘dominant ideology’ of people of the subcontinent challenging the powerful for their rights by establishing their own identity. However, the revolution resulted in the loss of humanity. He propagated humanistic revolutionary ‘emergent ideology’ as his heart went out to the people who were used by the powerful leaders and advises them to become self-reliant. The poet talks about the physical forms of revolt against powerful rulers. The ‘dominant ideology’ of the time was the freedom struggle from the powerful rulers. The reiteration of the powerful imagery of hands means becoming self-reliant to achieve the ultimate goal of freedom from oppression. The image of **باتھ** by the poet means the ‘emergent ideology’ of the unlimited power and potential in an individual and that he would like the people of the subcontinent to become self-reliant and protest against the mental slavery imposed on the people of the subcontinent. The ‘dominant ideology’ in those days involved the supreme power of the British then the power went to the Hindu opportunists and political leaders while the Muslims were marginalized.

The ‘emergent ideology’ of Faiz Ahmed Faiz was to become self-reliant and challenge powerful leaders. However, the ‘dominant ideology’ was the fight between the political leaders

who wanted to use the general public and revolutionary voices like the poet wanted people to realize their true strength and become self-reliant.

‘At the Execution Ground’

Faiz Ahmed Faiz was one of the founding members of the Progressive Writers Union in Lahore. Agha Nasir introduces the life and poetical inspirations of Faiz Ahmed Faiz in *Hum Jeetey Ji Masroof Rahe* (ہم جیتے جی مصروف رہے) and expresses that Faiz was introduced to Marxism by Syed Sajjad Zaheer. When he became a member of the Progressive Writers Union many people opposed it since this union was also related to the Communist Party. Most of the members of this Union were famous writers and poets. The slogan used by the Progressive Writers Union was “Art for Life’s sake” (Nasir 137). The goal of revolutionary writers in the Progressive Writers Union was to write about the condition of humanity in Pakistan and create social awareness regarding basic human rights. The ‘dominant ideology’ of the Nation was divided into classes where the higher strata were powerful whereas the rest of the citizens were powerless.

The poet protests against the ‘dominant ideology’ of the powerful rulers of his time. He demonstrated an ‘emergent ideology’ by creating awareness amongst the masses regarding basic human rights. He composed it in 1949 when the Progressive Writers Union organized a Conference at the Open Theatre in Lahore (Nasir 138). The agenda of this conference was to present the aims and objectives of this Union. Some people protested and created chaos. However, the Conference was a success as they challenged the ‘dominant ideology’ of the powerful protests. It was here that Faiz Ahmed Faiz recited this poem which was later published in his collection *Zindaan Nama* (Nasir 138).

The poet identifies the ‘dominant ideology’ of his time and attempts to challenge the power through his poetry. He contrasts the stars in the night sky which are a metaphor for the existence

of man and all creative arts. The illuminating stars are contrasted against the darkness of the night which stands for the powerful opposing forces. The illuminating stars stand for the illustrious goals of the Progressive Writers Union and its bright future in Pakistan. Since Faiz was an optimistic person he presents his 'emergent ideology' in the form of a poem. These stars can also stand for the powerful elite who do not see the darkness which surrounds the life of a common man. The 'dominant ideology' of the powerful is that they do not acknowledge other common people.

Even though there was disruption at the conference in the form of protests by the 'dominant ideology'. It was challenged by the presentation of the 'emergent ideology' in form of the aims and objectives of the Union and the recitation of this poem by Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

The poet opposes the 'dominant ideology' shaped by the Capitalist society which contributed to alienating the downtrodden people of the society. The revolutionary 'emergent ideology' represents the possibility for the powerless to challenge the powerful strata by becoming self-reliant.

The 'emergent ideology' of Faiz Ahmed Faiz is hope against all hopes. He expresses his stance that people need to remain optimistic and work persistently. The verses also stand for the strong opposition faced by the Progressive Writers Union and despite all the negativity, they managed to achieve their goals. The powerful elite did not want them to promote awareness as they saw it as a threat to their power. The 'dominant ideology' became fearful of a challenge in the form of self-reliance and humanity. There is no greater goal than serving humanity. He wanted people to respect each other despite their differences of opinion and strive for their goals.

His 'emergent ideology' challenges the economic, political and social domination of the public who do not take any pragmatic steps to challenge the 'dominant ideology'. The poet

preaches what he practices. Despite the protest, he remains hopeful about his ‘emergent ideology’. He believes that every dark night ends with a dawn that is brighter and he believes in his ‘emergent ideology’. He urges his readers to follow his example by becoming self-reliant and helping humanity.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz talks about the ‘emergent ideology’ of remaining steadfast in the achievement of the goals in life. There are hurdles in the form of a strong ‘dominant ideology’ but the dreams can be achieved by remaining persistent. The poet wants people to remain optimistic in their approach and become self-reliant so that they can achieve success. The poet believes that there is no greater goal than serving humanity and giving them a message of hope. The poem explores this relationship in the form of power dynamics between the ‘dominant ideology’ of the powerful forces and the ‘emergent ideology’ of the revolutionary thinkers who want a revolution and equal opportunities for mankind.

‘This Harvest of Hopes, Companion’

This poem was composed during the ‘dominant ideology’ of the times when political anarchy and chaos was rampant. The then Governor General Ghulam Mohammad wanted to extend his rule and ‘dominant ideology’ by adopting any means. This extension of the rule was challenged in the Sindh High Court by the then Speaker of the Assembly Maulvi Tamiz-ud-din. Various Government Officials opposed this appeal and convinced Chief Justice Muneer to change the decision in their favour. These were the first steps taken in the direction of the ‘dominant ideology’ of what is termed as an “Ideology of Need” meaning: if the law prohibits it, keeping the conditions of the Nation in view, such decisions could be made (Nasir 30). As a result, the new President Mohammad Ali Bogra merged the Western Provinces in to “One-Unit” (Nasir 30). The situation escalated his concerns as fire was opened by police officials on a procession of students

in Karachi. Many people died in the East Pakistan wing (Now Bangladesh) due to the dispute in the Kuranafl Paper Mills.

Whereas on an International front, the world was steeped in the ‘dominant ideology’ of the Cold War between the Socialist and the Democratic blocks – the Soviet Union and the United States of America. Korean War broke out between China and America which ended with the division of Korea into North and South Blocks. The ‘dominant ideology’ of the whole world was divided into blocks (Nasir 30).

On the personal front, the ‘dominant ideology’ of Faiz Ahmed Faiz also suffered huge losses. The decision on the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case on January 1953 countered all hopes which extended his stay in jail. Due to this Faiz Ahmed Faiz felt that the whole world is enveloped in agony and chaos. Furthermore, the deteriorating state of Pakistan and the world added fuel to fire and ignited the concerns of Faiz Ahmed Faiz when all his companions were lost as they were transferred to different jails. Faiz ended up in Montgomery Jail. Personally, Faiz Ahmed Faiz suffered many losses. He was sad at the demise of Urdu novelist Sadat Hasan Manto. Also, his friend Ustad Chirag Hasan Hasrat passed away in Lahore. The poem explores the ‘dominant ideology’ and the power dynamics between the powerful government officials and politicians versus the general public who had to bear the consequences of the policies put forward by the state.

Due to all of the above-mentioned reasons, when Faiz Ahmed Faiz composed this poem on 14th August 1955, he was in low spirits. Faiz Ahmed Faiz recommends removing all that is green and optimistic. Green is the colour of vitality but Faiz would like all humanity to cease to exist as the ‘dominant ideology’ of the humans globally was suffering and pessimism. The poet sounds desperate for any relief and expresses his dissatisfaction with the ‘dominant ideology’ of the world.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz offers his ‘emergent ideology’ and advises people to live each day at a time and not plan in advance as it is futile. The poet lost all hope due to the ‘dominant ideology’ by the powerful politicians of the Nation which dragged the country into chaos and led to the loss of its Western Wing, now Bangladesh.

This poem is permeated with a sense of ‘residual ideology’ and melancholy of the time when the two Wings were part of Pakistan. Faiz Ahmed states his ‘emergent ideology’ as once a crop is destroyed beyond hope, mankind dwells in the efforts to regenerate and revitalize the land to make it fertile for the crops to grow. He instructs his readers to remain hopeful and become self-reliant. This metaphor of farming is used to teach ‘emergent ideology’ that failure is a process to try again harder so that one may achieve success in future endeavours. This was the ‘emergent ideology’ of Faiz as he kept fighting for the truth despite suffering its repercussions by enduring captivity – he never stopped trying. This is what he would like to pass on as a legacy to his readers, i.e. to become self-reliant despite adverse circumstances.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz seems to be of this opinion that there are some things such as a ‘dominant ideology’ which are beyond the confines of humans and it seems ridiculous to fight against the inevitable. However if one believes in the power of an ‘emergent ideology’ all forces can be challenged through perseverance and self-reliance.

‘Argument – White is Right’

Langston Hughes starts the poem by appreciating the Whites due to the conditioning that Whites are a superior ethnic group to Blacks. The dynamics of power indicate that any argument will end up favouring Whites because they hold considerable power over the African-Americans because of their socio-economic status. However, Langston Hughes attempts to challenge power dynamics through this poem.

The opening of the verse introduces the poet's state of mind to the readers or audience as he talks about the 'dominant ideology' of his time when the 'White' was considered superior in America. The poet then goes on to describe the second-grade citizens were those with 'Yellow' skin colour, as they had some rights. Third-grade citizens were those with 'Black' ethnicity and they barely had any rights. Since all these bad experiences are a thing of the past so they become the 'residual ideology' of the United States of America.

Langston Hughes reflects upon the plight of Black Americans in an age when they were powerless – politically undermined and racially sabotaged. Hence, he highlights the 'residual ideology' of his country as he talks about the time when Black Americans were considered worse than third-grade citizens in America. Since Whites were considered a superior race they, therefore, possessed the power to be considered 'right' at all times. That also makes the 'Whites' as possessing a 'dominant ideology' as this was a reflection of the majority in America. Then people having yellow tone on their skin were considered second-grade citizens; which means they had some rights to claim that they were humans (Riley 79). However, Black Americans suffered the worst fate of them all – they were shunned and marginalized in a corner and were denied even basic human rights. This talks about the stereotypical expectations that the Whites will always be in command and therefore correct. On the contrary, African-Americans were marginalized as the poet talks about the 'residual ideology'.

Langston Hughes talks about the 'residual ideology' according to which "Jack" stands for a stereotypical foolish Black man who is considered way beneath the White-Americans. Jack also stands for White Americans as "All work no play, makes Jack a dull boy" etc. This would suggest that anyone who believes that Blackness is inferior is foolish as intelligence is not determined on ethnicity. Additionally, all African-Americans were socially conditioned to view themselves as

inferior. So Langston Hughes has sarcastically reiterated the information that has already been drilled into the psyche of all African-American people “Do you get that, jack?” To which the reply comes in the affirmative as no one denies any segregation of the two races – namely African-Americans and White Americans. Power dynamics are explored in these verses as African Americans were exploited by the White Americans as the former was considered inferior because of their race and is reflective of the ‘residual ideology’ in America.

Langston Hughes reaffirms his belief in the revolutionary ideology that God created all humans equal and there was no discrimination in terms of ethnicity. That is why the poet shuns the view that anyone can be considered superior in terms of race, alone. Langston Hughes concludes the poem by reaffirming his belief in the ‘emergent ideology’ and pride in his race and owning it. Since God created everyone equal, therefore even those possessing Black skin have a right to stand with their heads held high. He believes that just rendering a person as inferior due to skin colour is unfair and this undue supremacy of the Whites has to end. Langston Hughes wanted the same respectable treatment of the Whites. This ‘emergent ideology’ of Langston Hughes has come true as African-Americans now have a better social standing since Barak Obama became the President of the United States of America.

Langston Hughes deviated from the ‘dominant ideology’ of his time which considered White Americans as a superior race and that African Americans were marginalized. However, the poet proudly embraces his race and establishes his racial ideology through this poem. This particular stance acts as a sub-culture which fights to stand against the dominant ideology that the White race is superior. Langston Hughes expresses that there is no need to feel an inferiority complex due to one’s race. He wanted African-Americans to resist the power of the White Americans. It could be stated that since Barak Obama became the president of America, the power

dynamics have shifted dramatically and now African-Americans have a much better standing in American society and the comity of Nations.

‘Mother to Son’

This poem was composed during the Harlem Renaissance. Harlem Renaissance brought the best out of those tough times. In those days, racial demarcation reached its peak and families suffered due to racism. It revolves around the central theme of powerful whites and the resistance of the Blacks. Langston Hughes has challenged the existing power dynamics in this poem. He has composed a poem based on his observations. Langston Hughes was a keen observer as he composed this poem which narrates the trials of a mother and son. Since this poem deals with the Harlem Renaissance and racial discrimination that is a part of American history, it falls under the category of ‘residual ideology’. This poem also describes the strong bond between a mother and her child. A mother suffers to raise her child. In this, poem a mother narrates her journey in life so that her child may not lose hope but work hard towards achieving success. The theme of this poem revolves around a determined mother who has single-handedly raised her son in the trying times when Whites were in power and the African-Americans challenged their power by asserting their individuality.

This poem is a dramatic monologue of a mother who narrates the story of her life to her son – the tale of the sufferings that she faced as a mother while raising her child has a universal appeal. The narrator addresses her son and describes her struggles and the lessons she learnt in life using the ‘residual ideology’ since the days of struggle are now a thing of the past for the African-Americans.

Her journey is described as an amalgamation of blocks and splinters of wood which pierced her. The floors of her residence were not covered with soft coverings like carpets or rugs. The bare

floors reflected her lack of resources and comfort in life. Her journey has been an incessant struggle due to the Harlem Renaissance when the African-Americans were struggling to raise their voice against the power of White Americans. This poem is a reflection of the struggle of all Blacks using 'residual ideology'. The narrator describes life by using the metaphor "crystal clear" which stands for a journey without any hindrances, like a road without any turns, road blocks and speed breakers. The narrator describes her life being on the opposing factions with the crystal staircase as she had to endure hardships while raising her child. This could be the 'emergent ideology' as the poet wanted the African-Americans to prosper. The 'stairs' symbolize ascension towards prosperity. She hopes that the life of her child will be better than hers and that the people of her ethnicity will have better opportunities in the future making it an 'emergent ideology'. Therefore, she advises her son to remain steadfast in the face of hardships and work consistently to achieve goals. Previously the Whites were the powerful elite and Blacks were marginalized so the poet talks about the 'dominant ideology' of his time.

The mother advises her child about the ways of the world. She instructs him not to give up on anything as it is not easy to pick up bits and pieces after a major setback and start again. Then she refers to herself as a source of inspiration and a role model as she gradually kept on moving forward towards reaching her goals and she has not given up on realizing her dreams. She reiterates the message of moving forward and not giving up in the refrain. The stanza ends with "crystal stair" which has been used as a metaphor for luxuries and comforts in life. This serves to remind us that life for African-Americans was hard in the early twentieth century and it was devoid of anything that represented comfort. Thus, it was the 'dominant ideology' of the time when the poem was composed as the Blacks were struggling to establish their identity and challenge the power blocks. They had to work hard and make to most of the resources that were available to them. The

stairs represent the journey in this life. They also stand for the ascension meaning the poet is hopeful and presents an 'emergent ideology' for the future as the treatment given to the Blacks was so inhuman that he believed that things can only improve. In the staircase called the 'dominant ideology' of the power dynamics, the Blacks were at the base and the Whites were at the top. It also means that things occur in phases. The narrator advises her son not to rush as success can only be achieved in stages and there is no shortcut to success as nothing can be achieved without hard work and determination. The poet presents his 'emergent ideology' for the two races in America to survive and overcome the power blocks. This could be seen as foreshadowing as the Blacks now have a better standing and the election of Barak Obama as a President of America is the fulfillment of the dream.

Towards the end of the poem the narrator reminds her son of the expectations and that she would like her son to look ahead in life as she has not given up hope in the future. Life is a complicated journey which is different for each individual. Langston Hughes used a didactic voice of a mother who offers sincere advice to her son. This poem could be taken as a piece of advice that relates to the philosophy of Booker T. Washington. Langston Hughes suggests people to endure hardships and remain steadfast in their goals while remaining grounded and humble. The revolutionary ideology of Langston Hughes is to work incessantly towards achieving the targets in life while enduring hardships like this mother. Whereas in the dynamics of power, the Blacks were mal-treated and were at the lowest rank and the Whites were at the highest rank in American society. Hughes challenged their power by presenting his 'emergent ideology' and raising his voice against injustice. It can be stated that he got his wish as the African-Americans now have a much better standing in America as they are now the rulers of the land where they faced hardships and maltreatment due to the election of Barak Obama.

‘Harlem – Montage of a Dream Deferred’

Langston Hughes composed this poem and dedicated it to the playwright Lorraine Hansberry when he got to know that she had been suffering from cancer he took the phrase “a raisin in the sun” which was the title of one of her plays and used it in his poem in order to pay homage to the writer. It metaphorically represents the power dynamics and the ‘residual ideology’ of America. The raisin is turned dark by withering in the sun. The sun is a powerful source of energy and it represents the Whites who are powerful and the raisin is small, inferior and insignificant as compared to the sun are Blacks, whose lives are exploited by the Whites. It also deals with the prolonged resistance of the African-Americans.

Langston Hughes questions the ‘residual ideology’ of the American dream and its turning sour due to multiple factors like the Great Depression, the stock market crash, Second World War, the Vietnam War and racism. All these factors contributed to people becoming sceptical about the future. This also includes the ‘dominant ideology’ of the time when Langston Hughes penned this poem people became tired of waiting for the American Dream of better opportunities to manifest itself and were involved in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

The poet has used the simile “like a raisin in the sun” to describe the effects of a dream gone sour. Langston Hughes talks about achieving the American Dream of equality and prosperity which eventually came true after giving sacrifices and sufferings from many generations. Raisin is a dried grape. The grape is a rich, fresh, juicy, sweet and verdant fruit which is a metaphor for the American Dream. The years it took the dream to be materialized along with bloodshed and suffering made the sun dry out the juicy sweetness of the fruit and turn it into a crippled mess called “raisin”. The “sun” stands for the ‘residual ideology’ of the powerful Whites who were responsible for the deplorable position of the Blacks. Langston Hughes used another repugnant

image of a “fester like a sore” to describe the delayed achievement. A “sore” gone bad due to the presence of infectious germs and lack of proper medical care results in causing infection which causes pain and trouble. He also talks about the presence of puss which would “run” if proper care is not given for a prolonged time.

Langston Hughes talks about ‘residual ideology’ through another repulsive image of stinking and bad-smelling meat after it rots to describe a dream that took too long to materialize. Such meat forms a crust due to the absence of moisture on the surface level and the presence of infectious insects like flies contributes to the formation of moulds and causes the juices to ooze out of the meat. This imagery does not seem appealing as the rights that were given to the blacks came too late and the damage to the psyche of humans was done. According to Langston Hughes, such damages are irreparable.

Langston Hughes describes the ‘dominant ideology’ where the long wait of achieving a dream causes them to sag due to the presence of a “heavy load”. Since African Americans were struggling for many generations with an ‘emergent ideology’ for a brighter future, the dream turned out to be a weight which made them sag. He concludes by using the metaphor of “explode” for the dream. If something is bottled up for long, there comes a time when it reaches its expiry date and simply explodes like an atomic explosion. Therefore, the ‘dominant ideology’ of racial equality was not a positive experience for African-Americans.

Langston Hughes concludes this poem by incorporating an ‘emergent ideology’ in the poem. The ‘dominant ideology’ of the poem in the current context could relate to the suffering endured not only by the African Americans who fought for their rights in movements like the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s and 30s and the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, but also relates to all the war veterans who fought in both the World Wars, Vietnam War but all those

people who wanted peace and their suffering passed on the future generations. The scars left by wars have lasting impressions. Every revolution demands sacrifices and Langston Hughes feels that there have been enough sacrifices on behalf of the African-Americans who dreamed of having their rights as they have played their part. The Whites ruled African-Americans for a long time as the Blacks were subservient to them and it is only recently that their power dynamics have shifted where each member influences the other in a positive light as both races are considered powerful in the 'dominant ideology'.

In this poem, Langston Hughes employed jazz rhythms in order to capture the vivid description of Harlem. The poet has used 'dominant ideology' and colloquial language of the American Blacks residing in the Waste Land (alluding to T. S. Eliot's poem of the same name) called Harlem. The poem is steeped into the 'residual ideology' and blues of the African-Americans who were denied basic human rights. This poem is a commentary on the social unrest in America. The 'dominant ideology' of the African-Americans who endured the psychological effects of marginalization and racial segregation for generations was to challenge the existing power dynamics. This poem deals with the theme of the power of the Whites and resistance by the African-Americans.

Comparison of Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Langston Hughes

Both poets have manifested revolutionary ideology in their poetry. Faiz Ahmed Faiz foregrounded all the three classification of ideology by Raymond Williams - the 'residual ideology', 'dominant ideology' and the 'emergent ideology' in his poetry. He wanted class equality and freedom in all its connotations for everyone. 'To a Political Leader' is addressed to the political leader Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and is written as a 'counter-hegemonic' strategy towards

his ‘dominant ideologies’ and political policies. The power dynamics reveals that the powerful political leaders like Gandhi exploited the general public for their own ends and they forgot that it is the same public which gave them their power. He wanted to create awareness in the general public that they must realize their potential and power through the use of ‘emergent ideology’.

Langston Hughes has also used all three classifications of ideology namely: ‘residual’, ‘dominant’, and ‘emergent’. Langston Hughes writes about the ‘dominant ideology’ that is instilled in the minds of the Negroes in his poem ‘Argument – White is right’. In this poem, he talks about the power dynamics that are drilled in the minds of every African American that White Americans are superior to Blacks. He talks about how this ‘dominant ideology’ is that African-Americans are powerless and that Whites are superior to them. However, this situation has now changed due to the ‘emergent ideology’ of Langston Hughes African-Americans have a much better standing in America and Barak Obama is their President.

Faiz Ahmed Faiz composed ‘At the Execution Ground’ for the conference held in Lahore Open Theatre for the agenda of the Progressive Writers Movement in Pakistan. He recorded a historic event by revealing the ‘dominant ideology’ of the powerful rulers and offering an ‘emergent ideology’ by the revolutionary thinkers.

Langston Hughes discusses racial ideology in ‘Mother to Son’ and narrates the ‘dominant ideology’ and sufferings and hardships of a single mother raising her child despite her sufferings. Her advice to her child is to be strong and keep working hard towards achieving goals despite all odds. The ‘dominant ideology’ of the Harlem Renaissance was that Blacks were marginalized in the dynamics of power by the Whites.

‘This Harvest of Hopes’ talks about the ‘dominant ideology’ and the feelings of pessimism and loss due to the power dynamics and sheer injustice of the powerful rulers and the inaction of

the powerless citizens. He urges the general public to wake up from their slumber and act before it is too late through use of ‘emergent ideology’. He wanted a revolution but it only remained a dream.

‘Harlem – Montage of a Dream Deferred’ talks about the ‘dominant ideology’ of the racial segregation and dedicates it to playwright Lorraine Hansberry who died from cancer and used “a raisin in the sun” which is a title of one of her plays in the poem. He also talks about the ‘residual ideology’ of the Civil Rights Movement in America in the poem. He talks about the ‘dominant ideology’ and power dynamics where the Whites held power and manipulated Blacks.

When it comes to revolutionary ideology it is apparent that both poets have used underlying revolutionary ideology in their poetry. However, the similarity ends there – as the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz is predominantly backed by humanistic revolutionary ideology in all the selected poetry. However the poetry of Langston Hughes deals with racial revolutionary ideology in the selected poems. Both poets have used all the three types of ideology by Raymond Williams in their poetry.

Langston Hughes talks about the powerful White Americans and the resistance by the African-Americans. Similarly, Faiz Ahmed Faiz also talks about the power dynamics between the powerful administration and the resistance of the civilians, revolutionary leaders and the poet himself.

Langston Hughes was an optimistic person and he gave the message of hope for humanity when the Whites were clearly dominant. He also encouraged people to remain hopeful and become self-reliant by working hard to realize their dreams. Faiz Ahmed Faiz was a humanitarian at heart and always spread the message of hope and self-reliance through his work. He also talked about

the domination of the powerful elite and the challenges posed to the revolutionary leaders. He always dealt it with optimism.

Conclusion

This research article investigates revolutionary ideology and power dynamics. Both poets talk about freedom from mental slavery and oppression and their verses seem to challenge the power dynamics. The dichotomy of the powerful and the powerless and any change in consciousness enable the powerless to speak for their rights by resisting the hegemony of the powerful.

Raymond Williams and his classification of ideology as ‘residual’, ‘dominant’ and ‘emergent’ ideology helps to trace different events, people, their quotations, policies, practices etc. which either existed in the past, the time when the poetry was composed or will occur in the future like a foreshadowing of an event or wishful thinking. He used ‘dominant ideology’ as he wrote poems in light of the partition of the subcontinent and the social-political upheavals that caused turbulence in the region. He also used ‘residual ideology’ by mentioning past events like lamenting over sacrifices made for the creation of Pakistan. The poet also used ‘emergent ideology’ when he mentions his dreams and aspirations regarding the future of Pakistan and humanity.

Langston Hughes demanded racial equality at grass-roots level and not a façade like the Jim Crow Laws which stated “separate but equal” where the African-Americans were marginalized by the law enforced by the U S Supreme Court. He used ‘residual ideology’ to remind the African-Americans about their glorious past or sometimes their sufferings when they were slaves. He also used ‘dominant ideology’ to express the racial discrimination and its effects on children. Finally he uses ‘emergent ideology’ to reflect on the positive dreams for a future where

they had equal rights and respect. All of these dreams have been achieved and the future looks bright for African Americans.

The poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz challenges power dynamics by creating awareness. 'To the Political Leader' addresses the power dynamics where political leaders like Gandhi manipulate the general public. He advises people to become self-reliant and become powerful enough to cause a revolution against the forces of tyranny and oppression. 'At the Execution Ground' deals with the power politics of corrupt political forces against the power of revolutionary thinkers and activists. 'This Harvest of Hopes, Companion' explores the power dynamics between government officials and politicians versus the public that had to bear the brunt of the policies put forward by these officials. Their power can be negated when the people decide to become self-reliant.

Langston Hughes discusses power dynamics in 'Argument – White is Right' and talks about the time when the Whites were powerful and the Blacks were marginalized. Hughes wrote this poem to oppose this unjust power game. 'Mother to Son' was composed during the Harlem Renaissance and it traces the struggle of a single mother in a dramatic monologue. It explores power dynamics when the Whites were powerful and economically sound as compared to the African-Americans who were struggling to establish their own identity. The African-Americans challenged the power of Whites by establishing their own indigenous identity. In 'Harlem – Montage of a Dream Deferred', he explores the power dynamics where the Whites have been given undue power over issues of the State whereas Blacks are shunned in a corner. Their power is challenged when Blacks establish their identity and present an 'emergent ideology' and achieve it.

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Book Review

Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro

Fizza Saeed

“I keep thinking about this river somewhere, with the water moving really fast. And these two people in the water, trying to hold onto each other, holding on as hard as they can, but in the end it’s just too much. The current’s too strong. They’ve got to let go, drift apart. That’s how I think it is with us. It’s a shame, Kath, because we’ve loved each other all our lives. But in the end, we can’t stay together forever” (Ishiguro).

These are some of the poignant lines from the novel *Never Let Me Go*. They allude to the transience and fragility of love against the currents of life, of mortality and all the other forces that crash like torpid waves into the lovers, threatening to break them apart, to pull them deep into the dark waters. In a nutshell, this story is about love, its fragility, its strength, its ability to convalesce and heal wounds and its very fleeting and changing nature.

Set in England in the 1990s, Ishiguro’s novel revolves around the lives of three students Kathy, Tommy and Ruth raised in an institution called Hailsham, an institution that fosters clones who have been brought into existence through genetic engineering for the sole purpose of devoting their lives to donating their organs to other, healthier, superior members of the society. Told from the intimate first-person perspective, the reader immediately enters Kathy’s world, their seemingly stable yet shattered lives.

By virtue of the means and purpose of their birth, the orphan clones are treated as objects to be used for the good of others. Their humanity, emotions, desires, and fears are not seen or understood; they are a source of horror to their guardians. And the narrator, Kathy is mindful of this as she observes, “So you’re waiting, even if you don’t quite know it, waiting for the moment when you realize that you really are different to them; that there are people out there, like Madame, who don’t hate you or wish you any harm, but who nevertheless shudder at the very thought of you—of how you were brought into this world and why—and who dread the idea of your hand brushing against theirs” (Ishiguro). Theirs is a life lived in the shadows of otherization, of being thought differently and being excluded by socio-political structures and people. In addition, they inhabit the blurred lines between speculative fiction and realism and are meticulously autobiographical, rich with layers of meaning.

The story carries metaphors for the effects of many forces that inhabit societies: indoctrination, the creation of myths of honour, the inescapability of fate and cultural conditioning and how it shapes individual lives. Kathy, Tommy and Ruth are raised in a suffocating school-like environment where they are told repeatedly that their donations are their sole life purpose and that it is a matter of pride to do so. The same tactic is used with the art the children create. It is taken away and displayed in galleries to show the so-called normal world that these children might have souls. In turn, they derive meaning in their lives from being able to be a donor; anything else is unthinkable. Their lives are predetermined, and they cannot escape the story that someone else has written for them.

In almost every Ishiguro novel, there is a beautiful coexistence of hope amidst terrible melancholy. At its core it is about the life affirming nature of friendship and love. The bonds

between Tommy, Ruth and Kathy are made of a resilient love that embraces and goes beyond labels. Despite the degeneration of their bodies, Kathy's love for them lasts.

These children and later adults inhabit a contrived cocoon of life, bolstered by illusions of going to Norfolk, a place where lost things are somehow found, being a 'carer' (someone who takes care of donors until they die) and eventually having the 'honour' of being a donor. Even when it becomes clear to Kathy that their lives are not like others' she exhibits a placid acceptance of the course her life has taken. One often recalls George Orwell's *Animal Farm* which says "some people are equal, but some are more equal than others" (Orwell). Hailsham children's lives are a testament to this; from the first, they are objects to be used for organ donation and they are indoctrinated to accept the fate contrived for them. Their subservience is chilling, as though they are poultry raised for slaughter.

All of this has much politics woven into it. Their bodies are not their own but belong to the institution that created them and are controlled by them. They are mere puppets. Though fed the illusion that they are free, their birth and death and the interlude between them are mapped out by the cloning institution. They are so entangled in this conditioning that they are unable to see that they are enslaved in a rigged system. Tommy suffers from unexplained tantrums since childhood, which are a symptom of his unconscious knowledge of how imprisoned he is. After their last hope vanishes, he screams and flings his arms in pain, Kathy puts her arms around him to calm him, the rage ebbs and she realizes how alone they are in the night. Perhaps unconsciously he has understood that he is caged. One expression of his anguish is his screaming.

This happens after Tommy and Kathy visit Marie Claude and Miss Emily to get their donations deferred. The concept of deferral is that if two donors are in love, they might get some more years to live. Of course, the founders of the institute tell them this has been wishful thinking

on part of the clones, there was never any truth in it. This revelation unravels a long-buried ache inside Tommy, causing him to scream until Kathy comes to comfort him. They stand alone, holding on, abandoned by society.

Art is solace for orphans from the beginning. Though the motives of the guardians when they encourage art are self-serving, the children at Hailsham take pride in creating, a reflection of the richness of their inner worlds. No matter how stifling the world is, they are free when they create. In truth, art also conditions the children into thinking that what they create is made to be given away, as all paintings are taken away by Madame and they are told that it is an honour if someone chooses theirs out of many. Sadly, their art is only eye candy for spectators to see and comment on. It is taken to 'prove' to the world the humanity of children. The idea that they must testify that they are human tells us that they are on the margins, unseen and unheard, considered suspect. Whatever it is used for, their art is symbolic of their hopes and dreams and unconscious desires. For instance, Tommy paints metallic-looking animals who look alive. It is a sign that somewhere deep in his mind is lodged the knowledge that he has been cast into the role of a man-made toy to be used, all the while, he is alive.

When Ruth dies after donating and Tommy and Kathy admit their love for one another, Tommy painstakingly makes paintings to show the founders of the program that his and Kathy's souls were entwined, so that they would give him a deferral. His drawings reflect his stifled life, yet the effort he puts into crafting them speaks of his love for Kathy.

The lines, "I saw a new world coming rapidly. More scientific, efficient, yes. More cures for old sicknesses. Very good. But a harsh, cruel, world. And I saw a little girl, her eyes tightly closed, holding to her breast the old kind world, one that she knew in her heart could not remain, and she was holding it and pleading, never to let her go" (Ishiguro), are full of poignant urgency,

reiterating the cruelty of modern times. Despite a desire to hold on to the innocence of love, the steely cruel world is rising, and it towers over the narrator's desire for stability and love; she has no choice but to kneel before the fate that has been pre-ordained by bio-scientists for her. She cannot hold on, everything prised out of her grip. The reader experiences melancholia and the fleeting joy of a short-termed life and love. Despite everything, in Kathy's mind, the figure of Tommy appearing in the fields of Norfolk symbolizes a resilient hope in the face of the cruelty of mortality. The ending is emblematic of holding on to innocence as well as acknowledging that much has been lost; Kathy embodies the fragility of optimism.

If anyone wants to understand love on a deeper level or if someone wants to understand what it feels like to live on the margins, unseen and unheard, this is a must-read for them.

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