

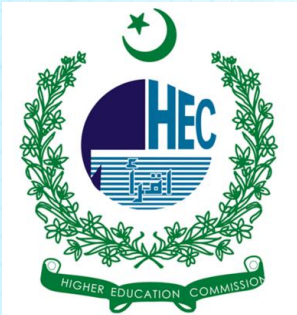
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Identity Crisis: A Postcolonial Critique of *A Bend in the River*



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Abstract

This research paper studies Naipaul's *A Bend in the River* through the lens of postcolonial concepts like Othering, Hybridity, Exile and Dispossession. Naipaul depicts postcolonial diasporic literature which exhibits mixed feelings marking the lives of émigrés through the essential dichotomies. The contradiction between *Self* and *Other*, hybridity, nostalgia, sense of alienation prevail throughout the novel in one way or another. The relevance of the study is Naipaul's postcolonial perception and to understand the typical postcolonial halfness which gets a fair response through the hands of the author. The postcolonial jargon makes Naipaul penetrate deeper into the lives of the colonized affected by the colonizers. The so-called civilizing mission's absurdity is exposed in the novel. This research paper tries to explore the theoretical nuances of postcolonial terms in the perspective of Naipaul's novel *A Bend in the River*. Naipaul has presented a condemned, fragmented society that lacks creative potential, a society that is black and cannot govern itself, a society that is ruled by an external power. The conclusion is not different from the racist ideology of colonialism that justifies the occupation of other lands and defends the so-called human face of western colonialism.

Keywords: Identity Crisis, Postcolonial Critique, *A Bend in the River*, Othering, Hybridity, Exile

INTRODUCTION

Colonialism brings distinctive and diverse cultures from various countries and nations close to one another. That is why there is a wide scale culture that is put together and further processed in the postcolonial period too. The world of post-colonialism is basically a polarized world in which numerous cultures struggle but do not overlap into each other to frame some higher cultural frame. This is written by those people who are colonized and they portray colonial people as its subject matter. Post-colonialism is a rejection and resistance of colonizers. It deals with specifically postmodern intellectual discourse produced in the once colonized countries. It contains response and analysis of the cultural legacy of colonialism. A key goal of

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Post-colonialism is clearing space for multiple voices especially those voices that have been previously silenced by the foremost ideologies. Edward Said says in his famous book *Orientalism* that there is a strong image of the ways social scientists specifically Orientalists do not give importance the remark of those the study preferring instead to depend on the intellectual superiority of themselves and their peers. Postcolonial writers take it upon themselves to speak on behalf of a group of people the formerly colonized ones, i.e. the strategic essentialism according to Spivak while using a clear image of identity to fight opposition. They aim at combating the legacies of colonialism on culture. This research paper examines effects of these cultural identities upon national identities. This research is based on the belief that no culture can claim its immaculateness in postcolonial world and no culture loses its identity during the time spent hybridization. Bhabha's theory of cultural hybridity supports this research. Bhabha (1994) in *The Location of Culture* proposes that diverse cultural cannot be burdened together agreeably in a pretty mosaic. Cultural contrasts are dependably there in the procedure of culturalization. Bhabha says whenever at least two or more than two cultures go along each other, a space is created. This space is called by Bhabha as the space of enunciation. He is of the view that:

Social personalities are shaped and limits are re-referred in this opposing irresolute space. In postcolonial literature the cultural hybridity is a major factor in defining man's identity. Post-colonialism in English literature tackles those countries that were once colonies of other countries. (Bhabha,1994,p.39).

Post-colonialism is a way of catharsis against the Western imperialism. It may also be stated that now the Western imperialist is same as the Western imperialist which is now ruling as the most powerful and exalted nation all over the world. The Western is also ruling overseas and their existence is one-fifth of the whole world. The Western initially entered into the Asian continent and later occupied the Indian territories. These colonizers rewarded the people who adopted their culture and followed their teachings. While punished those who refused to admit their authority and disobeyed them. The colonizers were considered as 'invaders' due to their occupancy on Indian's two basic societal and cultural facets which were language and

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popular mass culture. *A bend in the river* by Naipaul is a very jarring depiction of postcolonial existence. Postcolonial diasporic literature deals with issues like hybridity, liminality, identity crisis and self. So *A bend in the river* deals with such issues which are successfully handled by Naipaul. Here the so-called mission of civilizing the people is presented by satirizing the Whiteman's burden. The natives are shown to be shipwrecked and trapped in their native land where the borrowed culture, language, style and fashion are their destiny. This ever-prevailing and ever-tormenting ambivalence makes their lives devastating and destructive. In this novel, Naipaul inquires the existential exile of the protagonist, Salim, who engages with his natural surroundings and landscapes in order to construct a new postcolonial identity. Naipaul's Salim aestheticizes the landscapes which remind us of eighteenth-century of sublime, the picturesque and beautiful. As Naipaul himself has visited several landscapes in England and its former colonies, therefore, his exile-subject follows the postcolonial-self which is inevitable hybrid, as the protagonist is a victim of two conflicted cultural identities that form the third identity. The othering is the manifestation of power relations which consider the colonizers as 'they'. This distinction is drawn due to the classic axes of discrimination like sexuality, gender, race, class and so on. *A Bend in the River* is a clear representation of Naipaul's ideology that colonizers or westerns regard that third world people are not genuine or authentic human beings and the protagonist Salim becomes the victim of hybrid culture. Naipaul realizes that Africans are quite helpless to avoid such political and social disorder and they have no existence in the world. In *A Bend in the River*, Naipaul calls Africa a black society which is greedy, backward, possesses various cultural identities and has consumptive cravings but again at another place he condemns the rule of westerns like postcolonial writers and is the victim of dual identity. Similarly Salim, an Indian African, is also not happy with his lot, so he prefers to go to postcolonial Africa to find a better job to earn money but here his own identity is threatened by the Big Man, African president, by considering him a non-African Indian so he leaves for England and returns to Africa and at the end of the novel as we assume he is in Africa to earn livelihood for the sake of his life.

Research Statement

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This research helps in understanding the dilemma and mental state of the colonized when they have to bear the trauma of being an 'other' among colonizers. This research discusses problems which colonized have to face at a new place as compared with the opportunities, values and the culture available in their own country.

Research Questions

This study investigates the given questions

- i- How does cultural hybridity shape the identity of the protagonist as 'Other' in Naipaul's novel *A Bend in the River*?
- ii- How does the memory of past history shape and reshape the identity of a man?
- iii- How does *A Bend in the River* with its frequent shifting identities create a sense of Dispossession among the characters of the novel?

Research Objectives

- I. To highlight the circumstances that make Naipaul's protagonist feel like an 'Other' in the novel *A Bend in the River*?
- II. To highlight the 'hybridity issues' drawn by the writer in the novel *A Bend in the River*
- III. To discuss the character's exile and dispossession in the Novel.

Research Methodology

This research is a qualitative and critical investigation of the post-colonial marginalization's, exile, indenture politics and hybridity which victimized the people. A qualitative research paradigm is best suited for descriptive research questions whose focus is to identify important patterns and to document them. It explains the possible casual contexts surrounding the phenomenon being researched.

Significance of the Research

In the post-colonial research, the writer shares the experiences of displacement, exile and dispossession and the ideological force for a homeland for immigrant communities. This article shows that how Indian Muslim immigrant youth feels about their nation, state and engages with national and local politics, challenging their perception of 'enemy threats' or 'indifferent outsiders' informally in their everyday life. This research's basic objective is to explore the issues faced by the Indians who are treated as the 'Other' by the colonizers. Naipaul explores their dilemma of the

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othering, hybridity, exile and dispossession. The sense of displacement and multiculturalism are also the concerns of the writer. The Indian English writers like Naipaul have made their significant contributions in highlighting the multicultural identities of Indians living in alien lands. So this novel provides an understanding not only about the diverse people but also about their daily conduct of trade, conflicts and heartrending emotions due to the feelings of otherness, exile, and dispossession caused by a particular migrant community.

Delimitation

This research focuses only on terms of postcolonial theory's identity crises' issues i.e. concept of Other, Hybridity, Exile and Dispossession.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Othering

The recognition of 'Other' has a contact or relationship with self. Actually Othering is a manifestation of power relations. When we start to present ourselves as 'We' and others as 'They' it means that we are using a powerful weapon that might present to legitimate others. Often these distinctions are drawn as powerful axes of discrimination and power differences like gender, sexuality, race, class, and ethnicity and so on. Othering is strongly associated with knowledge and power as well because we use 'Other' for another group to point out its weaknesses and to show it inferior as compared to ourselves. It implicates hierarchy and keeps power where it already lies. Colonialism is an example of 'Othering'. According to Hall (1996):

Identity is not only essential for its political perspective, but also for the foundation of culture and representation of society and the individual. In real, identity, this is the definition of the "Other" and "Culture" are strongly interconnected and strongly contribute in the explanation of international relations and cultural diplomacy.(1996,240).

Hybridity

The postcolonial fiction of Naipaul has become very well received and admired by people as his works show his devotedness for the issues regarding migration, globalization, repartition, assimilation, exile, multiculturalism and hybridity. He highlights the trauma; dilemma and predicaments of colonized who are the victims of

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the cruel treatment of colonizers. The term 'Diaspora' is used to highlight the diversity of languages, culture, places, people and time. And mostly it discusses the dilemma of colonized in interacting and accepting the diversity of people who belong to diverse cultures. So diaspora is typically a site of hybridity which questions fixed identities based on essentialisms. Bakhtin(1981) considers it as 'Hybridity' is in fact a blend of two social languages within the boundary of a single articulation, an experience, within the territory of an utterance, between two distinct linguistic responsiveness, or by some other influence"(Bakhtin,p.358).

Exile

Edwar Said's(2000) book *Reflections on Exile* has an essay about exile:

Exile is strangely compelling to think about the terrible experience which is no doubt an unbearable rift between a human being and native place, between the self and its true home; its essential sadness can never be surmounted. And while it is that literature and history contain heroic, romantic, glorious, even triumphant episodes in an exile's life, there are no more than efforts to overcome the crippling sorrow of estrangement.(Said,p.5)

Dispossession

Naipaul has presented a very real image of the society of non-western world where the dispossessed people struggle for the order in their lives. His struggle for rootedness represents the search of colonial people for their identity. He encloses his views about dispossession, the colonized who are struggling for their identity. He uses a very critical and empathic language to describe the failures of developing societies. So in Naipaul's novels we see that west is presented as an inchoate cluster of culture and technology. Fanon's colonialism argues the projects of self-born and the origin of nationhood. The desperate classes and groups of colony accepted this anti-colonial nationalism. Fanon again argues that the tribal feud can help in relieving the tension of colonized. The natives can use all their force to persuade him that no colonialism exists, and his and his tribe's culture and history goes on as before. So fanon proposes a 'national literature', a negritude that would work for the development of a national consciousness. Nationalist consciousness counters the colonialism. This anti-colonial nationalism helps to prevent and overcome the cultural and psychological damage of

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colonialism. In colonized countries the birth of colonialist parties helped in provoking the formation of intellectual elite engaged in trade. Fanon again argues that the nationalist parties exhibit elitism, so they very rarely propagate the country's masses. In nationalistic movements the individual stands aside in favor of community. So, this spirit of nationalism is charted by Fanon "Tribalism in the colonial phase --- regionalism in the national phase --- federalism in the decolonized phase" (Fanon,1963:92). Edward Said, with '*Orientalism*', inaugurated the postcolonial field in 1978. Edward Said himself gives the best definition of 'Orientalism' "a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the orient's special in European Western Experience... the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience..."(Said,1978,p.1). He further comments:

Orientalism is a style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinction made between "Orient" the phenomenon of Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and ideas about the Orient despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a "real" Orient. (p. 1).

Said further demonstrates that how a range of texts philological, literary, administrative, ethnographic functioned as a way on walking on which Orient started ruling. Stereotypes—their oversexed nature, ignorance of the natives, their indolence and effeminacy, their unworthiness, the superiority of the European and his knowledge--- helped West to get strong, rule and occupy them. Said suggests a need for contrapuntal perspective--- in order to think and decide together the experiences. Said suggests a unified approach by which marginal and master narrative stop the contradictory battle.

Spivak is famous for her deconstructive critical thought, Marxism, Feminism for postcolonial perspectives. Spivak, the professor of Humanities at Columbia University is best known as the translator of Jacques Derrida's first major work, *Of Grammatology* into English (1976) and Mahashwets Devi's work from Bangla into English. Her most provocative essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Spivak shows her concern about the subaltern or oppressed to represent themselves. She again argues

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that Subaltern cannot raise their voice as they are oppressed because the 'double bind' of colonialism and patriarchy silence her. She very interestingly argues and condemns the perpetual marginality. She also writes about the homogenization of postcolonial cultures. Spivak rejects Edward Said's idea that there is a recoverable pre-colonial past. According to him the past of our natives have been thoroughly interpreted and reinterpreted that it is now impossible to recover. So Spivak argues that as it is impossible to recover the past of marginalized, yet they must try to make their position visible. She is the first person who consistently inflects a feminist agenda into postcolonial studies. The basic intent is to highlight the rights of women who are considered subaltern. Like Spivak, Bhabha also pays gratitude to Said's vital role in the field of postcolonialism. According to Bhabha, "Orientalism inaugurated the postcolonial field." (1992:456). Bhabha makes his subject to search the contemporary Western theory in a postcolonial perspective. Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* presents a number of accounts of postmodernity inclusively Foucault, Benedict Anderson and Fredric Jameson who according to him were failed to give adequate weight to the legacies and histories of colonialism. So like Spivak, Bhabha also extends and revises the aspects of colonialism. Bhabha in his first instance praises the account of colonizer's identity and agency. However Bhabha was dissatisfied with the mentors of his era and tried to revised the account of the agency of postcolonial and the aspect of identity which is incredibly different to Spivak's. Bhabha contemplated the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized as dissimilar, nuanced, complex and mostly ambiguous. For Bhabha this conflict presents that the colonizer is inferior, less secure both potentially and physically and this is what Orientalism inferred.

Bhabha also reappraises the psychoanalytic perspectives of Freud and Lacan. Bhabha's interest in Fanon's theory is only because of the latter's application of Lacanian theory, in particular for the analysis of the latter's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) which according to Bhabha presents a starting point for his own project *The Wretched of the Earth*. Bhabha presents a second account of mimicry which is derived from Lacan's Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis (1973) which enunciates resistance to colonialism quite different from the first. So according to

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Bhabha the element of “cultural difference” on which the colonized insist, actually challenges the “universal values of western culture”. Postcolonial theory is committed to discuss the plague of colonialism which is coupled with critically reflective, dialogic and a portal to “the full range human wisdom essential for the health of our planet its inhabitants” (Kelbessa, p.305). Ashcroft (2000) further intensifies this conflict by presenting it as the development of a new culture and identity due to a close connection between two nations and the two cultures. “Post-colonial studies stands at the intersection of debates about race, colonialism, gender, politics and language... explaining what it is, where it is encountered and why it is crucial in forging new cultural identities.”(p.186).

Significance of the study

Postcolonial theory demands justice as it raises voice against horrific social injustice, psychological suffering, violence, exploitation and enslavement done to the powerless victims of colonization around the world. The superiority of the dominant Western perspective is challenged and aims to reposition the marginalized and subordinated Other.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The most of the researches on Othering, Hybridity and Dispossession deal with the study of the function of subject or self. French poststructuralist Foucault defines the ‘subject’ as quoted by Bennett and Royle (2008) “There are two meanings of the word ‘subject’...subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to one’s ‘identity’ by conscience or self-knowledge”(p. 125). Whereas ‘subjectivity’ is a much broader and multifaceted term. It is social and personal being. The concept of subjectivity invites us to consider the question of how and where the identity arises, to what extent it is understandable and to what degree it is something over which we have influence or control. My aim is to present here a cursory review of the theories about the self and identity keeping in view the issues of Othering, Hybridity and Dispossession, which were propounded in the past up to the 20th century and to relate these concepts to Naipaul’s notion of identity presented in his most important novel “*A Bend in the River*”. The concepts of traditional notions of identity as well as the postcolonial ideas about subject may be discussed as in the following. Liberal

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Humanists assume that all of us are essentially free and we can create ourselves on the basis of our individual experiences. Because of that freedom, we ourselves are the source of the value and the meaning we attach to the things; means we are autonomous entities. Human nature is essentially unchanging. The same passions, emotions and even situations remain unchanged throughout the human history. So to conclude Bertens (2001) remarks, “We are not defined by our circumstances but are what we are because our self has been there all along and has, moreover, remained remarkably inviolate and stable”(p.6). One possesses individuality as a unique essence which transcends our environmental influences. As Barry (2002) says “The discipline as a whole believed in what is now called ‘the transcendent subject’ which is the belief that the individual (the subject) is the antecedent to, or transcends, the forces of society, experiences, and language” (p.18). **Understanding of the self underwent the remarkable change in the historical period of the enlightenment in Europe with Descartes’ (1596-1650) statement (Cogito, ergo sum) which implies “I think therefore I am” Descartes declared that my identity was independent of whether I am a man, or woman, black or white, Muslim or Jew, American or German, a teacher or a doctor. His I am thinking (Cogito) and existence (Ergo Sum) implies that “Subjectivity is the intersection of two lines of philosophical inquiry: Epistemology (the study of how we know what we know) and ontology (the study of the nature of being or existence)” (Hall 2004: 4). English empiricist philosopher Jhon Locke’s (1632-1704) concept of the individual as having an identity that remained stable highly influenced the theorists. According to Taylor’s view Locke and his contemporaries advanced the ideas that through ‘Disengagement and rational control’, the self is fully within our power to perfect. Moreover he comments that “Locke’s theory generates and also reflects an ideal of independence and self- responsibility, a notion of reason as free from established custom and locally dominant authority.”(1989: 167) To sum up Locke stressed the understanding of the ‘sovereign individuals’ as a unified whole, a concept which remained acceptable in the subsequent centuries. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) also favoured the ability of individual’s reason to decide between right and wrong. Though differing from Locke in many aspects, Kant reaffirms the concept of rational agent. So rational self-**

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determination is an element of Kant's philosophy. The concepts of Lockian 'Sovereign individual', Kantian 'rational self' and Descartes' Cartesian 'subject' emphasized greatly the stability and coherence of the self and further on the role of self in the determination of one's individuality and identity. Till the end of the 19th century, self was considered as a unified whole.

Marxist theories owed much to those of key philosophers like Hegel (1770-1831) who put forward his idea of thorough historicizing of existence and self-conception. Hegel argues that self-consciousness never exists in isolation that it always exists in relationship to an 'other' or 'others' who serve to validate its existence and this relationship always results in a struggle for domination and this relationship finally develops into temporary master/slave relationship with the dominated other and the victor. Existentialist philosophy is the manifestation of an existential attitude, a spirit of the 'present age'. By the turn of the 20th century existentialism¹ became a fashionable mode of thinking. Kierkegaard (1813-1855) became the pioneer of modern Christian existentialism. To him the term "existence" implied being a certain kind of individual who strives, who considers alternatives, who decides and makes a commitment. In describing human existentialist situation, the self struggles to preserve itself and at times this struggle takes the form of an escape, a flight from itself. In his view, people's anxiety over their finitude becomes the cause of their alienation from their essential being. In an attempt to overcome their finitude, they aggravate their problems by adding despair and anxiety. Having deep understanding of the Christian understanding of the human kind, he regards its existentialist condition as a result of its alienation from God. In short, Kierkegaard's central point is that each person possesses an essential self, which he or she ought to actualize. This essential self is fixed by the very fact that human being must inescapably become related to God. In my research paper I will deal both aspects of the subject i.e. social and the personal. To prove the decentred notion of human subject from autonomous, free, unified, solid, self-determined to non-unified, shifting,

¹existentialism is the branch of philosophy that holds as its core principle that "existence precedes essence" or in other words that human beings came into existence through natural evolutionary processes and then created myths and religious beliefs to explain their uniqueness and importance.

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other-determined and fragmented subject, I am going to discuss the postmodernist and poststructuralist theorists like Jacques Lacan, Louis Althusser, Michael Foucault and others. Before I move to Lacan's theory of identity formation, let me have a quick and brief analysis of Freud who talked about the influence of biological instincts and drives over the self and behaviour of the person. He divides the self into three interlocking parts: the id, the ego and the super ego. The id is operated by the pleasure principle, ego is operated by reality principle while super ego is geared by morality principle. The ego acts as a mediator between id and the super ego. These aspects of the self facilitate it to operate it in the environment. So all these aspects interact with one another in such a form to develop a balanced and unified self. For Freud new born babies live in an instinctual world dominated by oceanic desires and feelings and everything is geared towards fulfilling its boundless desires which don't go away but take refuge in the part of our mind that is beyond our conscious control, the unconscious. So unconscious is a store house of our repressed desires which mostly play an important role in shaping our identity. To sum up the Lacanian theory of identity formation, we can say that he proposes a relational structure that follows for difference, as opposed to universal, valid and fixed development scheme of identity construction by Freud. By deploying both Freudian Psychoanalysis and Structural linguistics, Lacan permits us to explore the relationship between the unconscious and the human society. According to Freud, it is the primary repression of our desires which makes up our unconscious which situates in ourselves but according to Lacan, the unconscious is not some kind of region inside us but an effect of our relation with one another. So the unconscious is outside rather than within us but it exists between us as our relationships do. This discussion implies that the human subject is not centered in itself but centered in relation to the surrounding world and this decentred notion of identity is the main characteristic of postmodern thought. So the language, the unconscious, the parents and the symbolic orders may not be exactly synonymous but they are intimately allied. The term 'Symbolic order' by Lacan may be roughly analogous to Foucault's term of 'discourse'. So the 'symbolic order' may consist of language, beliefs, ideologies and all other means of cultural valuation which an infant encounters very early in life and through which she or he is given social identity.

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Textual Analysis and Discussion

The novel *A Bend in the River* takes place in a town at the bend of the great river; it is a newly-independent nation which has escaped from British domination. Salim the narrator emphasizes on his conflict between two cultures --- Western culture and subaltern culture, and Naipaul shows his own point of view through Salim about a contradiction of postcolonial world. Now I shall prove that “*A Bend in the River*” by V.S Naipaul is a Post-Colonial critique by quoting the text and describing the story and shall intend to highlight the dilemma of the "other", hybridity, exile and dispossession.

Salim’s Dilemma of the ‘Other’

“The world is what; men who are nothing, who allow themselves to become nothing to become nothing, have no place in it.”(p.4)

Salim is often stopped by the Men with guns who want money and supply it as well. Here, Salim realizes himself as a slave and as an ‘Other’ and also thinks about slaves who were by force taken from their villages and driven on foot to other places and directions. His self is hurt on daily basis and he is insulted in many ways. His identity is crushed and he has to camouflage his identity under masks in order to avoid repression.

“And then I had to talk even harder, and shed a few more bank notes and give away more of my tinned food, to get myself--and the Peugeot--out of the places I had talked us into”(p.4).

Salim becomes a Moor in Zabeth and is called by them “Miss” which was the short form of “mister”. As Salim was a foreigner and was considered an alien there. These remarks clearly reveal his “Otherness” because he is suffering from an unseen fear all the time. He is afraid not only physically but also financially because his income can be grabbed by the natives at any moment. He feels himself alone even among the native people and he feels himself insecure even among the crowd of natives.

“Mis’,” as used by Zabeth and others, was short for “mister.” I was a foreigner, someone from a far-off coast and an English speaker; and I was mister in order to be distinguished from the other resident foreigners, who were monsieur.”(p.5)

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Here Salim himself admits that he is a foreigner but his status is never welcomed by any native because the native do say him miss not mister. This word was just like a slang for the people who had come from the other areas out of Africa. Even he was treated as a third rate citizen because he was not among the wealthy foreigners, who were entitle as Monsieur with respect. We can say that he was suffering from a double colonization at the moment because he was a non-native as well as a poor person with short income and limited opportunities of getting any fortune even in future.

Hybridity in the Novel

“Like the slave far from, I became anxious only to arrive. The greater the discouragements of the journey, the keener I was to press on and embrace my new life.”(p.4)

As Salim furthers moves deeper to Africa, he realizes and even wonders that he has made a mistake by coming here. When he reaches the town he finds it even more than half destroyed. He realizes that he is going in wrong direction but he is unable to resist himself. His thoughts of starting a new hybrid life with new financial plans are dashing to grounds with the passage of time. He feels himself in a distress which is disturbing his future course of action. This change of place is bringing a shift in his identity, too.

“These were also the lands of our ancestors. But we could no longer say that we were Arabians or Indians or Persians; when we comported ourselves with these people, we felt like people of Africa”(p.8).

He says that although they are from northwestern India but they are considered Arab. They are the victims of hybrid culture as they are Muslims with customs and Hindus with attitudes. He narrates that he does not know even about them as they were not that kind of people who recorded the past. They live in present moment. He only knows that Europeans who took the area from the Arabs havewritten many books about their history but now the Europeans have been driven out, too. The protagonist feels ashamed on the fact that they their ancestors have not written even a single book about their own history and now the next generations are getting information about their ancestors from the books written by Europeans.

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Salim is rather pessimistic, has weak religious beliefs. He is rather materialistic kind of person and a representative of bougeva culture. He dreams for a better place where he could get the luxuries of life, that is why decided to migrate to a new place, at 'A Bend in the River':

"I could never rise so high. My own pessimism, my insecurity, was a moral terrestrial affair. I was without the religious sense of my family. The insecurity I felt was due to my lack of true religion, and was like the small change of the exalted pessimism of our faith, the pessimism that can drive men on to do wonders. It was the price for my materialist attitude, my seeking to occupy the middle ground, between absorption in life and soaring above the cares of the earth."(p.11).

Salim preferred change, and wanted to move towards 'A Bend in the River'. He wants to start a new business at the new colonial place. He opposes Indar's views, who insists him to stay there with his family,. He is attracted by the culture of colonized and is a victim of 'hybrid culture and identity':

"But I gave no sign that I understood what he was talking about. I behaved like the others who had infuriated and saddened me by refusing to acknowledge that change was coming to our part of the world. And when Indar went on desk, "What are you going to do" I said, as though I didn't see any problem, I'll stay. I'll go into the business."(p.13).

"It wasn't true at all. It was the opposite of what I felt. But I found that I was unwilling—as soon as the question had been put to me—to acknowledge my helplessness. I instinctively fell into the attitudes of my family. But with me the fatalism was bogus; I cared very much about the world and wished to renounce nothing. All I could do was to hide from the truth. And that discovery about myself made the walk back through the hot town very disturbing. Nazruddin has a hybrid identity, as according to Salim, whether he is the representative of colonized culture and identity, yet wants Muslim husbands and wives for his children: "(p.13)

Salim takes a picture of Hybrid culture of bougeva class who is interested in drinking bear and going in parties. Salim did not like these kinds of activities, rather warns Ferdinand and Metty to go there:

"It was a custom that had spread from the forest kingdom to the east. But it

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was a custom of the bush. It couldn't transfer to the town; and for someone like Ferdinand, especially after his time in the southern mining town, the child's gesture of respect would have seemed old-fashioned and subservient."(p.23).

"Beer was a part of the people's food there; children drank it; people began drinking from early in the morning. We had no local brewery, and a lot of the cargo brought up by the streamers was the weak lager the people here loved. At many points along the river, village dugouts took on cases from the moving steamer; and the steamer, on the way back to the capital, received the empties."(p.24).

"That was how—after early delight—I had begun to feel myself. But I couldn't speak out against pleasures within were also my own. I could warn Metty and Ferdinand against going to places I went to myself."(p.24).

There was no morality in the colonial place of Salim's 'A Bend in the River' where he saws no values, morality and there is only the custom of parties, drinking wine and indulging in sex. That is the reason that his father Nazruddin wants Salim to train Ferdinand, and to turn his mind towards education:

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Exile and Dispossession

Salim the narrator starts by sharing his experiences after a weeklong trip from Eastern coast of the Africa to the interior of the country. He decides to open a store which he buys at the bend of the river in a town. Nazruddin had sold him the shop to start a new business in Africa. Salim describes his feelings of dispossession like that:

“Nazruddin, who had sold me the shop cheap, didn’t think I would have it when I took over. The country, like others in Africa, had had its troubles after independence. The town in the interior, at the bend in the great river, had almost ceased to exist; and Nazruddin said I would have to start from the beginning.”(p.4)

He shares his experiences of colonialism, when the colonized are treated badly by colonizers. Salim sketches in that way:

“Too many of the places on the way have closed down or are full of blood. And even at that time, when the roads were more or less open, the drive took me over a week.”(p.4)

Salim is told by Nazruddin that no visa is necessary, just pay money and live there however it is not possible to leave the town....

“It was as Nazruddin had said, when I asked him about visas and he had said that bank notes were better. /’You can always get into those places. What is hard to get out. That is a private flight. Everybody has to find his own way”(p.4).

Salim describes the Europe colonial rule over Arabs, who were once at great power. The Arabs when ignored their culture and values and became interested in African women more than their own wives, then their downfall started:

“Once, great explorers and warriors, the Arabs had ruled. They had pushed far into the interior and had built towns and planted orchards in the forest. Then their power had been broken by Europe. Their towns and orchards disappeared, swallowed up in bush. They ceased to be driven on by their idea of their position in the world, and their energy was lost; they forgot who they were and where they had come from. They knew only that they were Muslims; and in the Muslim way they needed their wives and more wives. But they were cut off from their roots in Arabia and could only find their wives among the African women who had once been their slaves. Soon therefore, the Arabs, or the people who called themselves Arabs, had become

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indistinguishable from Africans. They barely had an idea of their original civilization. They had the Koran and its laws; they stuck to certain fashions in dress, wore a certain kind of cap, had a special cut of beard; and that was all".(p.10).

"The authority of the Arabs...which was real enough when I was a boy ...was only a matter of custom. It could be blown away at any time. The world is what it is."(p.10).

Salim is also worried about Arabs as in Africa they lived under one flag of colonized Europeans who were ruling over them. They were also the colonizers like the Arabs in Africa. His family and the other nations living there had yielded to the colonial rule of Europe:

"I was worried for the Arabs. I was also worried for us. Because, so far as power went, there was no difference between the Arabs and ourselves. We were both small group living under a European flag at the edge of the continent. In our family when I was a child I never heard a discussion about our future or the future of the coast. The assumption seemed to be that things would continue the marriages would continue to be arranged between approved parties, the trades and business would go on, that Africa would be for us as it had been."(p.10).

"I used to think of this feeling of insecurity as a weakness, a failing of my own temperament, and I would have been ashamed if anyone had found out about it. I kept my ideas about the future to myself and that easy enough in our house, where, as I have said, there was never anything like political discussion."(p.11).

Salim is so much attracted by the offer of Nazruddin, his family member who once moved at 'The Bend in the River' for a better business and to flourish his future. When Nazruddin offers Salim to buy his shop and start his business at The Bend in the River', Salim at once accepts his proposal and decides to move to the new colonial place by leaving his family and memories there:

"I could no longer submit to fate. My wish was not to be good, in a way of our tradition, but to make good. But how? What did I have to offer? What talent, what skill, apart from the African trading skills of our family? This anxiety began to eat away at me. And that was why, when Nazruddin made his offer, of a shop and business in a far-off country that was still in Africa, I clutched at it.(p.13).

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Salim considers himself as unfit before Ferdinand, as the feelings of dispossession, otherness and hybridity are aching his mind. He analyses that in Africa they are considered as 'Moor' or aliens, than how could he be suitable to teach Ferdinand:

"What could Ferdinand learn from me? I had heard it said on the coast—and the foreigners I met here said it as well—that African didn't know how to "live". By that was meant that Africans didn't know how to spend money sensibly or how to keep a house. Well! My circumstances were unusual, but what could Ferdinand see when he considered my establishment."(p.25).

"Because I thought a lot about my refusal to say "the white men" when Ferdinand asked me to define "they" who were working on the new telephone. And I saw that, in my wish not to give him political satisfaction, I had indeed said what I intended to say, I didn't mean the white men. I didn't mean, I couldn't mean, people like those I knew in our town, the people who had stayed behind after independence. I really did mean the scientists; I meant people far away from us in every sense."(p.27).

"the European,"

"the white people,"

"the Belgians, "When we wanted to speak of the doers and makers and the inventors, we all—whatever our race—said "they". We separated these men from their groups and countries and in this way attached them to ourselves. "They're making cars that will run on water."(p.28).

The progression of science and technology, the effect of technology can be seen in the words of Salim:

"They are making television sets as small as a matchbox. The "they" we spoke of in this way were very far away, so far away as to be hardly white. They were impartial, up in the clouds, like good gods. We waited for their blessings, and showed off those blessings—as I had shown off my cheap binoculars and my fancy camera to Ferdinand—were as far away from "they" as he was."(p.28).

CONCLUSION

This research is helpful to understand experiences of otherness, exile and dispossession of the colonized and their inferiority complex caused by colonizers. This novel is a post-colonial critique by Naipaul by which he has tried to pinpoint the

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differences between the values, cultures and traditions of the Muslims and the West. This research shows that the evolution of otherness, includes doubleness, both identity and difference and has created the value and meanings of colonizing culture. This research will break the political and social disorder of colonized due to colonizers. This research will try to advise the colonized people that they should try to earn their livelihood at their own places as after moving to another place for a better future, they become the victim of double identity. Naipaul is a post-colonial writer, his works like *Mimic Men* and *A Bend in the River* are the best post-colonial works of him. He has thrown light on all the obstacles and hindrances which both mentally and physically a colonized has to face while moving towards a new colonizers place. This research has highlighted the importance of culture, language, fashion and style of Muslims, as they should not cross their boundaries. It has described about the love-hate relationships and the contradiction between self and other. The purpose of the research is didactic, to heal the hearts of colonized by protagonist Salim's isolated and lonely feelings, his search for identity and belongings and struggle against mercantile and foreign environment for existence. So it is highly penetrating study of the fear of the anonymity in the society that offers discontent and failures. It reveals the restlessness of the descendents of the new world.

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