

# Hybridity in Postcolonial Indian Novel: The Novel *Heat and Dust* in Focus

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**Abstract:** Hybridity has become a fashionable and recurring theme in the modern world, particularly in the area of postcolonial studies. Hybridity help us reading and scrutinizing postcolonial texts, which thus reveals issues of intermixing, mode of resistance and voices of the marginalized. Accordingly, this paper tries to show hybridity in a postcolonial situation, by scrutinizing *Heat and Dust*, a postcolonial Indian novel in English. It has used the critical arguments and concepts of theorists, basically of Homi K. Bhabha, who expounds his ideas on hybridity in his seminal work, *Location of Culture* (1994). Applying descriptive-qualitative method, the study shows the contemporary world embraces East and West are inextricably intertwined and hybrid in their culture, language and identity. *Heat and Dust* explores hybridity, one of the key elements of postcolonialism, and throughout the novel the writer explicitly and implicitly expounds cross-culturalism, interdependency and coexistence between the two cultural elements, colonizer and colonized, Britain and India. In this analysis it is revealed that characters, basically western characters, as the major narrative of the novel is from this view, transform and change in terms of their identity, culture and even outlook. The analysis brings forth how the two entities, colonizer-colonized are intermingled and interdependent, instead of the notion of binary opposition, harsh category, and depicts India, both in its colonial and postcolonial period home as well as strange to westerners.

**Keywords:** Hybridity, Cross-Culturalism, Ambivalence, East-West

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Background

Modern Anglophone Indian literature has been associated with the English education in India under colonial rule of British. As a result of English education, English literature, especially the novel emerged to be prominent as Naik [12] points out that “*One of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling, the novel, as we know today, was an importation from the West*”. In his other extensive study, *A History of Indian English Literature* (2009), Naik also adds “*Indian English literature began as an interesting by-product of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between a vigorous and enterprising Britain and a stagnant and chaotic India*” [13]. Another important critic of Anglophone Indian Novel K. R. Iyengar says, “*For the novel, properly so called, we have to wait till*

*the latter half of the nineteenth century*”, and he goes on to add “*The early Indian English novel is derivative and imitative of English models*” [10]. Indian literary tradition witnesses, prior to the rise of the novel, many Indian writers composed poetry and short stories in native languages of India like Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Hindi, Malayalam and etc [16]. Prose fiction, especially the novel, outgrow as intellectuals as a result of British education in India began to write in English, both fictions and non fictions in the 19<sup>th</sup> C. Gopal states that “*the rise of prose and prose fiction in nineteenth-century India is intimately connected to the growth of a bilingual native middleclass, specifically a Hindu middle-class intelligentsia in Bengal, the West region to come under formal British rule*” [8].

Among the various themes, East west encounter has a basic position in Anglophone Indian literature particularly in the Postcolonial novels. In the Postcolonial situation, the encounter between west and east in terms of race, language, culture has been common. On the one hand, the encounter

result chaos, crisis and conflict from the assumption that “groups, categories or classes of objects have one or several defining features exclusive to all members of that category” [3]. This tension in the encounter is further substantiated from the hegemonic view that the west is superior and the east is inferior, from which the very essence of colonialism, from the European point of view, can be drawn. Ashcroft et al believes “In India and the Caribbean, Europeans encountered attitudes to the natural world that differed radically from their own, and was more generally ‘conservationist’, respectful or animistic. European policies in the colonies frequently had to reach compromises with these differing attitudes” [3].

On the other hand, this essentialist perspective (subjective, independent and pureness between the two) has been considered to be flawed; rather, “a third space” which is the hybridity of the two became pertinent issue for the encounter. According to Bhabha, the leading theorist dealing with hybridity, it is beyond a simply cross-cultural ‘exchange’ in postcolonial discourse. It is for him much more than that. He argues in his seminal work, *Location of Culture* (1994), all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space and that space according to him is the “Third space of enunciation”. It is this space that carries a hybrid of culture, identity, race and language between the two, which better describes the contemporary postcolonial world.

Hybridity, its discussion as well as practices, is not new in itself. It has been common and far from being a recent invention; it has been a common feature of ancient communities and civilizations. Ancient civilizations like Egyptians and Greeks “developed and thrived through the incorporation of foreign ideas, philosophies, and technologies. In a sense, these ancient societies widely practiced hybridity and produced, to varying degrees, hybridized cultures” [2]. The practice of hybridity, Amar states, was a key feature of those civilizations, whereby ideas, values, traditions have been incorporated and intermixed with foreign entities, though sometimes may be unconsciously. The modern use of the term has been used by Charles Darwin in his extensive experimentation of the inbreeding of species in his *Origin of Species* (1859). Concerning the term’s proper application of its biological dimension, “it was Charles Darwin who first employed (the term) in his experiments with cross-fertilization” [2].

The term, hybridity, was originally meant to refer to racial intermingling with negative connotation, infertility and contamination. In the Orientalist assumption, for England’s “pure” blood was asserted as the higher race, hybridity has been negatively interpreted to mean bad, loss and contamination. First used in botanical terms, hybridity refers to the genetic combination of two species to produce a third entity which has characteristic features inherited from both components. Robert Young in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1995) argues that the term “hybrid” emerged in the early seventeenth century as a Latin word; “in Latin it means the offspring of a tame sow and a

wild boar, and hence, as the OED puts it of ‘human parents of different races, half-breed’ [17]. Young adds that Hybridity, in the nineteenth century, came to be a popular concept to refer to “a physiological phenomenon, and in the twentieth century it has been revived to describe a cultural one” [17].

Hybridity in the post-colonial discourse is basically different from its biological conception of race and it became an assertive term primarily to refer to issues of cultural and identity politics. “Postcolonial discussions of hybridity have moved from the earlier focus on race and bio-politics to a strictly semiotic, discursive, and cultural realm” (Amar 89) Therefore, from its first usage as racial mixture with negative implication, hybridity has basically shifted to be considered as a metaphor for cultural identity which is constructed through a continuous process of negotiation of differences. A clear shift from its controversial usage as a racial mixture in the nineteenth century to a conceptualization of hybridity in its cultural version has been prompted by critics in the twentieth century. “Today hybridity is widely debated in most intellectual circles. In the last three decades in particular... in the humanities as well as in politics, communication studies, and economic discourses what could be called a scramble for hybridity and the third space” [2].

Hybridity questions pureness. Bhabha argues in *The Location of Culture*, “We begin to understand why hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures are untenable”. [4] After the colonial rule ended, former colonies found themselves in a new mood that bringing back their pure culture, identity and language either impossible or insignificant. Their identity, culture, language and even race were mixed with the colonizers, and that was quite problematic for them who pursued maintaining pure culture after decolonization. In his essay *Signs Taken for Wonder*, a sub essay in *The Location of Culture* (1994) Homi K. Bhabha also suggests a counter argument to the hegemonic attitude, the “traditional discourses on authority” [4]. For Bhabha, whereas in the past the colonial culture was considered to be separate from the native culture is really untenable; there rather is a deep connection between them. This connection results from the fact that the colonizer and native cultures have been intermingled with one another. This mixing, this interrelationship between the two, Bhabha argues, is not one-sided, but two sided or ‘ambivalent’. That is, it is not only the former colonies left with mixed up with different aspects of their colonizers, but the colonizers too get blended with what they considered “other”, the colonized. In his analysis of Bhabha’s works, David Huddart remarks that “Bhabha looks back to the histories of colonialism... Yet the consequence of this...was not simple domination...we might also see a period of complex and varied cultural contact and interaction” [9]. Therefore, it implies that hybridity makes room for both to appear next to each other in a rather equal manner. Hybridity encourages the mingling of cultures in the colonial and postcolonial cultures. Robert J. Young argues that it is with hybridity that the postcolonial writer and critic are able to “trace complex movements of disarming alterity”

[17]. Young wants to suggest that hybridity makes cultural diversity possible and even to larger degree fruitful.

### 1.2. Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How is hybridity depicted in the Novel, *Heat and Dust*?
- 2) What is the nature of interaction of confrontation in the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized in the Novel?
- 3) How the notion of western cultural hegemony has been challenged as interpreted in the Novel?
- 4) What can be understood in post (colonial) literature beyond the oriental view of polarity whereby the west is privileged and superior, and the east is inferior from the reading of selected Novel?
- 5) How difficult it is for formerly colonized nations, India being the case, to retain their assumed “pre-colonial pureness” and “originality”?

### 1.3. Purpose of the Study

The very purpose of this study is to explore *Hybridity in Heat and Dust (1995), a Postcolonial Anglophone Indian Novel*. By using the application and conception of hybridity in postcolonial discourse, the study attempts to scrutinize the intercultural exchanges and intermixing of India and Britain and to explore how the writer deploys hybridity as a tool of disrupting fixity, reconstructing identity and resisting hierarchy in the post-colonial world. To this purpose, the study basically relies on the theories of M. Bakhtin, Homi Bhabha, Robert Young, and others when the situation requires, in interpreting how the selected novel demonstrates hybridity as the means of reading postcolonial narratives.

### 1.4. Significance of the Study

The study is significant for it contributes by taking into concern a topic which has not received attention, particularly by local studies. Though Anglophone Indian literature is prominent and well acclaimed in the world literary milieu, it has not been read and studied, particularly in light of cross-culturalism, interactions and hybridity between the west (British) and the east (India). Most researchers seemed to concern on conflicting attitudes of the orient and the occident. This study offers a fresh insight. This study will have a great relevance particularly to Ethiopian readers, literature students and researchers to understand Anglophone Indian literature by filling the gap: given lesser attention to Indian literature, as compared to others. Moreover this study may trigger more scholarly studies and discussions on east-west encounters on the one hand, and the reading of the selected novel in other perspectives, on the other hand.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design

This study uses the general model of qualitative research

for its analysis. It tries to undertake the reading through the adoption of qualitative research because;

- a) The very nature of the study (reading and interpretation of novels) is more suitable for the qualitative method of enquiry. In its analysis and interpretation, the study applies a close scrutiny of the narratives in light with relevant postcolonial theory of hybridity, and
- b) The requisite for applying an exploratory, interpretive approach.

Therefore, the study is conducted according to the assumptions and procedures of qualitative research together with the general principles and approaches of postcolonial theory. The study thus interprets hybrid, using the novel *Heat and Dust* by Praver Jhabavalla, particularly by applying underpinnings of hybridity from Homi K. Bhabha's, and of other prominent theorists like M Bakhtin and Robert Young. Bhabha's critical approach which he expounds in the *location of culture (1994)* is the basic undercurrent for this research. Relevant excerpts from primary material (the novel) are selected based on their contribution to postcolonial hybridity, and then are read and interpreted accordingly. In doing so, various aspects of contacts which portray hybridity will be emphasized, like images, values, practices, and characters. As Camilleri F and Kapsali M in their recent study on the notion of hybridity on leitmotifs of the current world like Covid 19 and Black Lives Matter, hybridity has been understood to be “a generative process that “makes” culture and as such underpins a range of diverse practices” [7]. Drawing on ideas of the above critics, this study focuses on how the totalizing and fixation of boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized are disrupted as a result of colonial and post-colonial contacts between the two cultural worlds, India and English. Therefore, it is a content analysis by which details of hybrid events and characters regarding cultural identity are gathered and described.

### 2.2. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The study uses major postcolonial concepts so as to guide the researcher in comprehending hybridity and its features. Various positions of postcolonial theory guide this study, basically H. K. Bhabha's ideas of hybridity, third space and ambivalence. Though Bhabha remains the basic research guide to analyze and interpret the novel, position of other theoreticians like M. K. Bakhtin and R. Young are relevant and used in the study.

## 3. Result and Discussion

My study concerning Cultural Hybridity is in accordance with the novel, *Heat and Dust (1995)*, a historical Indian novel by a prominent novelist Ruth Praver Jhabavala. This novel is regarded as an exemplary postcolonial literature, manifesting an insightful study of both the colonial time and its aftermath. It particularly deals with issues of interrelations between the west and the east, and represents the interaction between the conceptual figures of the colonizer and the colonized. The concept of hybrid culture has been expressed

through the stands, acts and lives of characters; from “the dress, food habits, festivals, customs, and religious ceremonies” [11]. In *Heat and Dust*, it can be interpreted from the position of both Englishmen and Indians, in a way one is not claiming what is “self” against “other” one. Rather it is understood in scrutinizing how self and other, colonizer and colonized, east and west...are intermingled and blended in the postcolonial world as a result of their multifaceted contacts for years.

*Heat and Dust* depicts the intercultural relationship and other issues; it basically narrates from the western characters’ point of view. It is Olivia’s account in the first part of the novel, and the Narrator’s in the second that dominantly cover the narrative. It is basically the Narrator’s investigation and attempt to rediscover Olivia’s story in the colonial period, which is mainly based on some letters of Olivia that the narrator investigated. Therefore, we find the reaction of Indian people to the British culture very limited in the novel.

The basic reference in discussing cultural hybridity is related to the unnamed narrator, and her step-grandmother Olivia, who the narrator is discovering by travelling from British to India. The story has been narrated shifting between two time zones, the 1920’s and the 1990’s (the former during colonial period, and the later the postcolonial period, narrators visit to India). The first time zone marks Olivia’s story, which represents the British Raj and its masters during the colonial time, and the second zone, during the independent period, marks the narrator’s visit to rediscover her step grandmother’s mysterious life at the colonial period. The story, first and foremost, describes both an interaction in time, past and present, and an interaction in cultures of different people at same period. The unnamed narrator says, “*They are no longer the same because I myself am no longer the same. India always changes people, and I have been no exception. But this is not my story, it is Olivia’s as far as I can follow it.*” [1] The sense of the narrator’s thought of her original and pure identity and Britishness has been substantially questioned, challenged and dismantled for “*postcolonial experiences encouraged the dismantling of notions of essence and authenticity*”. (Ashcroft et al 2002: 39).

In *Heat and Dust*, the status of the ‘Colonizer’ has been no longer a given, a stable, taking the hegemonic superior position. Here we can understand that the narrator, in her attempt to rediscover her step grandmother’s past story, has been influenced, shaped, and molded by the culture of an alien world, east, Indian, as the earlier heroine too was affected, though the degree may vary. From the first time zone, what has been interpreted as a form of interdependence is the necessity of knowing, exercising and applying the alien culture basically for achieving the political intent. Douglas, a European master, tax collector, who is Olivia’s husband, says, concerning the Hindu culture and language, “*‘yes you must,’ he said without enthusiasm. ‘It’s the only language in which you can deliver deadly insults with the most flowery courtesy’*”. Unlike the

imperial discourse that considers everything about the east: language, belief, ideology, irrelevant and flaw, cultural hybridity strongly argues that what is the feature of the east is not only relevant to the west, for the west to rely on, it also argues that one exists in the other into the extent that the two are inextricably interwoven. So, the above fact, even for delivering their purpose-‘insulting deadly’- the west is dependent upon the east. Douglas incessantly argues there is a need to learn and know Hindu for political control, for superiority by insulting the east, and it makes Douglas dependent, because “*the white man enslaved by his superiority*” [3]. This is quite different from Macaulay’s *Minute on Indian Education*. Macaulay argues, “*We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect*” [14]. Therefore, it is so significant to know and adapt the culture of the ruled, even for maintaining the colonizing mission effectively, though the interaction during the colonial time, from the colonizer’s perspective, is not from the ground of mutual understanding and negotiation. It can be understood from various stands of European characters in *Heat and Dust* their view towards India and Indians is negative, as the very myth of European supremacy against the east goes. For example, Dr. Saundere, another British officer opines that “*Like everything else in this country, plain savagery and barbarism, I’ve seen some sights in my hospital I wouldn’t like to tell you about*”. [1].

The myth of European supremacy which considers the orient as barbaric, gruesome and inferior is not only challenged by the inclusion and adaption of the other east for ruling and governing purpose, but also by the breaking and crossing of borders between the lives and cultures of the two, east and west, by western characters in the story, for instance, Olivia, the heroine in the former time zone, is seen becoming engrossed with Indian exotic life and cultural aspects, and interacting with the Newab, making this interaction secret to her husband Douglas, a European figure. Olivia was capable of familiarizing herself to the alien language, adapting the other culture into her own.

Those political and racial considerations never shattered her judgment of human relationship and people’s interdependency, whatever reason attached to it in the story: her loneliness, boredom or affection to the Newab. She crosses the border. She says, “*I don’t know India. It’s true I don’t, but what’s that got to do with it? People can still be friends, can’t they, even if it is India*” [1]. In addition, she stubbornly and strongly defends suttee, even to the surprise of her husband, Douglas and other fellows saying, “*its part of their religion, isn’t? I thought one wasn’t supposed to meddle with that.... And quite apart from religion, it is their culture and who are we to interfere with anyone’s culture, especially an ancient one like theirs*” [1]. Here, we read a foreign woman, from the colonizer camp, standing together with Indians, not with British, defending the native belief and tradition. Jhabavala uses *Heat and Dust* as a means of

demonstrating British is Savior of Indian customs, norms unlike the nationalistic discourse assumptions. Douglas was trying to eradicate the dreadful ritual Sutte system in his district. When Olivia was stubbornly stand for suttee arguing how the British dare to interfere on the ritual and cultural practices, Douglas was opposing her, and argues it is a form of ruthless tradition, suicidal act. Dr. Saunders and Douglas were annoyed with Olivia (when she stands for it). Olivia's stand is a severe opposition and refutation against the very foundation of the British policy on India, it questions the European supremacy and pureness to monopolize, rule and anglicize the country. She was capable of negotiating herself to the alien world, India and its culture.

Major Minnies, too, argues: "*There are many ways of loving India, many things to love her for — the scenery, the history, the poetry, the music, and indeed the physical beauty of the men and women — but all, said the Major, are dangerous for the European who allows himself to love too much. India always, he said, finds out the weak spot and presses on it.*" [1] His position actually is in-between, ambivalent, in commenting India: dangerous while beautiful, lovable while dreadful for aliens, as Jhabavala wants to convey in her title *Heat and Dust*. So, as the major concluded his argument and judgment to India, "*it is all very well to love and admire India — intellectually, aesthetically... but always with a virile, measured, European feeling. One should never, he warned, allow oneself to become softened (like Indians) by an excess of feeling*" [1]. His judgment towards India seems positive; he loves India, on the one hand, and his European orientation makes him dubious to accept India wholeheartedly. As Bhabha argues, in *Nation and Narration*, "*the signs of cultural difference cannot then be unitary or individual forms of identity because their continual implication in other symbolic systems always leaves them 'incomplete' or open to cultural translation*" [5]. In other words, national culture is never absolutely defined; it is rather the result of a changing national culture, which denies binary notions of national culture, such as colonizer/colonized and British/Indian.

In the story, the cultural hybridity has been highly reflected in the second time zone, which is after India gained its independence, what has been mentioned as the 1990's in *Heat and Dust*. Here we read the experiences, exposures, and practices of the narrator, who went to India after independence to rediscover Olivia's past story in the colonial time. The narrator, commenting how an alien culture may shape people, says from the very beginning, "*They are no longer the same because I myself am no longer the same. India always changes people, and I have been no exception. But this is not my story, it is Olivia's as far as I can follow it*" [1]. Her basic stand and intent to go back to India is to rediscover and study Olivia's story, her step grandmother. She wanted rediscovering not her grandmother's (Douglas' second wife, Olivia being the first), but her step grandmother's, whom most of the narrative is devoted to. Jhabavala dealt on issues of hybridity, how people in an alien culture would respond to that culture, how they would be

immersed in the alien cultural environment.

Olivia has been such a character, an Englishwoman engrossed by Indian culture, lived as a native not as a symbolic to colonial master, defending native's culture, lived and left there until unmentioned time, but lived in India after independence, after British colonial rule ended, after English men and women left India. In the story, then, an emphasis is drawn by the narrator not to remember and rediscover the colonial era, not to narrate the good deeds of British colonialism, not the heroic anticolonial struggle by natives. But it is an emphasis to show how the two cultures have become interrelated, interdependent. That was the story the narrator is interested to reveal, to discover. This interrelationship in culture, this hybridity, can be interpreted being prevalent in the postcolonial time, for once their previous contact make them one, to the extent that differentiating between self and other problematic. In this, Jhabavala points out in her narrative the situation of allowing Other in the cultural discourse of the self as Bhabha argues, in his *Nation and Narration*, "*The 'other' is never outside or beyond us; it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse, when we think we speak most intimately and indigenously 'between ourselves'*" [5].

The unnamed narrator, in her attempt to rediscover Olivia, she too experienced her step grandma's live in India. Though at this time India is not the British India (the colonial India), the narrator has been shaped, influenced and engulfed into that alien culture because "*India (America, Africa, Europe too for that matter from hybrid perspective) always changes people*". People would adapt themselves into an alien situation. They would learn alien culture, they would make it their own, and there would be no room to distinguish this is mine, and that is theirs. The hybrid of both, however, would be their own. A very significant figure in cross-cultural contacts, Richard Brisline argues, "*People are active processor of information and do not simply surrender themselves to the situations they encounter. Rather they modify their behavior to cope with the sorts of new problems they will inevitably encounter as pan of their cross-cultural experience*" [6]. So the narrator, though her travel to India basically aiming to rediscover Olivias' life in India, years back to the colonial period, she too has been influenced, shaped and reshaped by India, and we read the narrator learning adapting and liking the alien culture, internalizing and remaking it her own.

In an attempt to gauge hybridity in reading and interpreting *Heat and Dust* from the standpoint of the narrator, it can be revealed how the past is part of the present on the one hand and how people of different world intermingle, share and coexist in hybrid. The first, the past having place today, is read from how she brings forth her step-grandmother's rediscovery, and her inclination and lived life in India which seemed repeating Olivia's. Like Olivia, the narrator has been dating an Indian man, and also lived in Town X, without going back to England. The second can be understood from her act, life style, even dressing which she adopts the Indian way as her own. At

the very beginning of the narrative, she declares and acknowledges that people change; the way they live is not pure and static, but interdependent, intermingled and hybrid. She says, particularly referring her contact to India: “Fortunately, during my first few months here, I kept a journal so I have some record of my early impressions...If I were to try and recollect them now, I might not be able to do so. They are no longer the same because I myself am no longer the same” [1].

The narrator became intimate and friend with Indian people, particularly her host Inder Lal, and another spiritually gifted woman, named the Maji. With this people and the entire mood of India, she began enjoying life, liking the atmosphere and engrossed by her stay and her “rediscovery”, though there are problems and challenges, “Heat” and “Dust”. In a situation where she found herself slept under the same roof together with other people, known and unknown, Olivia feels, “I have never known such a sense of communion. Lying like this under the open sky there is a feeling of being immersed in space.... How different from my often very lonely room in London with only my own walls to look at and my books to read” [1]. It shows the narrator come into a situation which favors her; she feels the sense of communion here in the east to her heart, whereby she might have been bored of the fragmentation and alienation in the western culture. She experienced alienation in her own city, London, while feel comfort and communion in the alien nation, India. She liked this communion. Finally to the narrator, we read she became pregnant to an Indian father, and she decided to stay and give birth there, like her step grandma’s final days. A new baby has to come, a hybrid child who thus makes India and England not two, but one.

#### 4. Conclusion

The issue of cross cultural encounter in Jhabavala’s *Heat and Dust*, showing Anglo-Indian interaction, is one of the major issues of colonial and postcolonial conditions. In Jhabavala’s *Heat and Dust*, we find interconnection and reciprocal relationships between the colonizer British and the colonized India as Young [17] says, “you became undecidably mixed with otherness: an occidental and an oriental at once”. The myth of colonialism presupposes that the west colonizer is superior, pure and civilized, while the east is barbaric and inferior, so entitled to be dependent, needing the western help, civilizing mission. Therefore, there is clear self and other dichotomy, whereby the east suppresses its cultural notion (said to be barbaric, uncivilized), and adapt and learn the cultural pureness of the west. Of this, Edward Said, the author of *Orientalism* (1978) observed a struggle of the colonizers to attain not only physical control over the native people, but also over their knowledge and tradition, Thereby, the Western invaders were able to re-define the Oriental reality and control more efficiently the imperial colonies [15].

However, Jhabavala makes their colonial position in the story ambiguous with regard to exercising control and violence

against the natives. It has been contended that colonization complicated the concepts of nation and nationalism by challenging the notion that the two are absolute and unitary. The story is interpreted as showing hybrid and ambivalent circumstances in the postcolonial India. In the narrative, India attracts as well as poses signs of danger to those who came to contact into it. Jhabavala depicts the notion of the West as hybrid; the writer brings into discussion the intermixed of the Easterners and the Westerners and her text allows an interpretation that India is both the home and exile to the Westerners. The West loves India but their tradition and culture come on their way to accept India wholeheartedly. They try to defend themselves and make a compromise and the same compromise we perceive from the part of the East too. The novel also shows the hegemonic superior and inferior narratives as Bhabha puts “hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation...that reverses the effects of the colonist disavowal, so that other ‘denied’ knowledge enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority” [4]. The hybrid aspects of the novel doesn’t state that east and west are not different, it rather reiterates the fact that East is east and West is west but there is a place where East meets West.

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