Colonialism and Cross-Cultural Ties in Sea of Poppies

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The present study will emphasize Colonialism and Cross-cultural ties in the Sea of Poppies of Amitav Ghosh. "Colonialism" describes a trend that emerged towards the latter of the 20th century. Modernism was in decline after modernity, and postmodernism emerged. Postcolonial literature, mostly novels, addresses important human concerns including culture across borders and the quest for identity. This paper aims to show how differences merge in the novel to create a mixed society made up of persons from varied social and geographic backgrounds who voyage on the ship Ibis to a distant land where they unwillingly forge new identities.*

Design: *Peer-reviewed journals, educational websites, research articles and both national and international periodicals were used to compile information needed for this topic. The methodology used for the study is done by gathering, analyzing, and comprehending prior knowledge. Amitav Ghosh's selected works are thoroughly understood and read, besides research papers on related topics. The researcher will adhere to the guidelines in the APA Manual during the study.*

Findings: *The purpose of the study will be to find out about Colonialism and identity in Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, after reviewing many publications, like essays, theses and books. It is proved cross culture is not a static presence; in each given circumstance it differs from one person to person, region to region, culture to culture, and country to country.*

Originality: *The proposed study is unique as it will focus primarily on colonialism and cross-cultural ties in sustaining identity, which will be achieved by understanding why Nations were eliminated, including individuals and communities.*

Paper Type: *Analytical Paper*

Keywords: Colonialism, Culture, Postmodernism, Post colonialism, ABCD analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION :

The novels of Ghosh are characterized by rigorous research, particularly anthropological and historical, and a focus on how different cultures interact with one another. Ghosh consistently creates individuals that come from many places and transcend borders for a variety of reasons. Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies (2008)* is an exceptional work of fiction that draws on extensive research on both the marine routes of the day and various facets of colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. These migrants, cut off from the traditional national, family, and personal ties, create a fresh identity and embrace the Ibis as their different cultural group. It is about the political and socioeconomic circumstances that prompted a ship called the Ibis to transport a great number of Indian peasants to a foreign land [1] [2]. This paper would examine how characters mentioned in the novel make an attempt to hide their names, castes, races and places of origin while recreating identities.

Ghosh emphasises the historical impacts of imperialism causing migration and population displacement against the backdrop of colonialism. He explores the formation of identity and the notion of the self in his book Sea of Poppies. Different characters try to adjust all of the internal and external factors which contribute to their identity formation, particularly historical context, ties to family, and lastly their memories. The Ibis ship is where this change takes place. Every person leaves his/her home country to avoid a certain circumstance. The idea of national identity, which is based on the idea of borders, is

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rejected by Ghosh. The entrenched conceptions of national and cultural identity are dismantled by him [3].

2. RELATED WORKS :

The below mentioned table 1 includes the study of Research articles, books and dissertation the reference of national and international journals which has made possible to arrive at this Research article. After a detailed study keywords used in the related works are Colonialism, Culture, Identity, Postmodernism, Transformation, and Post colonialism, Resistance, Land, River, Sea and Labour. ABCD analysis. In order to know more about the proposed topic an effort has been made to refer related articles published since 2000-2022.

Table 1: Related work on Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies.

S. No.	Focus	Contribution	References
1.	Caste and oppression	Changes that occurred due to the cultivation of opium. People were compelled by the British to grow opium in their fields.	Johal, (2016). [4]
2.	Exploitation and identity.	Indenture labourers, journeys and transformation of self and giving voice to the involvement of coolies while opium trade.	Yesapogu, (2016). [5]
3.	Redesigning new identity	Victimisation by different power structures, and find space in the sea.	Gangopadhyay, (2017). [6]
4.	Transformation of Identity	People of the margins with a new identity. The identities of the characters are pushed to the periphery as a result of oppression, emigration, and colonization. These people from the margins attempted to make their way into the heart of things.	Sheela, & Jaisre, (2022). [7]
5.	Cultural multiplicity	When reconstructing their identities the deconstructive techniques utilised will emphasise on how the protagonists to their best to escape their names, races, castes and places of origin.	Sreelatha, (2013). [8]
6.	Mass migration of peasants	Society is populated by characters hailing from a variety of backgrounds, all of whom meet on the ship, which is destined to take them to an unfamiliar land where they create new identities for themselves.	Guilhamon, (2011). [9]
7.	Indian immigration	Migration and transformation of self and standing by the coolies who faced bitter times while in opium trade.	Rai, & Pinkney, (2012). [10]
8.	Colonization and Oppression,	Colonization as well as Oppression faced by the characters are highlighted.	Jouzaee, & Jamili, (2014). [11]

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

This paper which is taken for the study is analytical in nature with below-mentioned objectives:
(1) To problematize and know the concept of Post Colonialism
(2) To interpret the need to break away from Colonial Oppression
(3) To understand Cultural Ties and the need for freedom
(4) To recognise the need for freedom and yearning for a homeland.
(5) To list the advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages of the proposed topic.

4. METHODOLOGY :

Large number of research articles, pertaining to the primary text, Amitav Ghosh's *Sea of Poppies* is reviewed. The study includes a review of pertinent secondary materials such as national and international papers, interviews by the author himself, and reviews by scholars relating to the text is taken into consideration. Google Scholar was used to do an online search of relevant databases. The

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studies gone through are research papers, peer reviewed journals and articles in national and international publications. An effort is made to relate postmodernism theory to understand the subject and the text chosen. In the references the works citied in this article are mentioned. APA Manuel is used for the citation of the research papers.

5. MAJOR ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED IN SEA OF POPPIES :

5.1 Post Colonialism:

The novel *Sea of Poppies* depicts colonial tyranny and stands out as a very powerful example of postcolonial writing. The argument made in this work aims to address post-colonial issues, such as economic disparities and cultural hegemony that excludes large sections of people on the basis of caste, gender, etc. while deconstructing the Eurocentric colonial discourses, Ghosh exposes the domination of the powerful over the marginalised within the family as well as the society [11].

It is a realistic representation of individuals suffering under the clutches of colonialism. The subalterns' struggle to adapt to new ways of life is violently dislocated by upper and lower castes, such as Dalits, as well as the British trade and opium business in India. His characters are both wealthy and socially disadvantaged. They belong to both the top and lower castes. Some of them are high-caste Rajputs while others are low-caste Dalit Chamars are emigrants; Ghosh's protagonists form unexpected caste, race, and culture-spanning relationships [12]. Having been colonised for a long period it has made the affected people take steps to control injustice and defend acts of tyranny. The novel depicts the colonialism that occurred in India and indigenous people who accepted a lot of injustices. The domination was carried out with the intention of mass human and natural resource exploitation that would benefit the British while harming the Indian people greatly. This study makes an effort to examine the impacts of colonisation on native people and how resistance to colonisation arises as a means of achieving justice for all people [13]. While analysing this work the study relates to the theory of resistance and the postcolonial theory of Homi K. Babha. The study shows that Deeti, the protagonist, and Indian society were subjected to colonialism and resisted to combat injustice. This demonstrates that Deeti's situations are appropriate and accurately relevant to the theory. When European writers like Joseph Conrad, E.M. Forster, and Rudyard Kipling wrote about the colonies, they put white men at the hub of their stories. Ghosh, on the other hand pushes British imperialists to the edges of history and focuses on the people who were ignored by colonial hegemony. Ghosh has used a large canvas to represent the process of colonisation as well as the revolt against casteism, irrational belief, and the coloniser over different castes and cultures [14][15].

5.2 Colonial Oppression:

In *Sea of Poppies,* the colonial past is looked at with a critical eye and rethought. The Anglo-Chinese war with China over the opium trade lasted from 1838 to the early of 1860's, the novel tells the story of the colonial trade and its effects. During the opium war, the British, China, and India were all turned into battlegrounds. The main thing that paid for the British Raj in India was opium. When Warren Hastings took over as the governor general of British India in the 1600s, he initiated trade first with China by transporting opium to them. In Britain, people bought a lot of tea, silk, and porcelain. Because people in the east didn't buy many things from Europe, Britain had a big trade deficit with China [16]. Hastings decided that the East India Company should have a monopoly on selling opium in Bengal. He thought that the only way to make trade fair was to send opium to China. The British capitalists desired to accumulate wealth from cash crops, so they forced the Indian farmers to grow crops that the colonials liked. This meant that the farmers had to give up wheat and paddy, which they needed most to survive, and plant poppy, even though they didn't want to. As a result of this, widespread poverty and hunger ensued as a direct consequence of the fact that 'fields that had once given food were now flooded with the growing wave of poppies' [17].

Hastings insisted Indian peasants to cultivate vast swaths of poppies, which was later illegally shipped to China in order to lower Britain's trade imbalance. An arrangement like this reveals the imperial exploitation of the native poor by the moneylenders. Opium trading became widespread very quickly, and this caused a shift in the flow of silver. The book *Sea of Poppies* portrays a disturbing representation of the human destruction that is brought on by imperialism. The notion that China has had a limitless desire for opium since ancient times is focussed by the book *Sea of Poppies* which exposes that the import of opium to China was the invention of American and British businessmen [18] [19].

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The colonial rulers not only exploited the lower classes, such as Deeti, mother of Kabutri and a widow, who eloped with her lower caste lover Kalua, a leather worker, to escape together, but they also exploited the wealthy Indians, in particular the landlords, who had relentless hope in the policy of the company and great regards for the Queen's rule. Rich people like Rashkhali landlord Neel Rattan Halder fell prey to British merchants because they refused to face facts. Burnham used Neel Rattan to accuse him of forgery [20]. American sailor Mr. Zachary Reid, French botanist's daughter Miss Paulette Lambart, and others. The novel's title, *Sea of Poppies*, conveys the idea that the story is about a journey taken by a group of poppies, each of whom has their own story to tell. They were all from different walks of life and social classes, yet they were all referred to as 'Jahaz Bhai' on board. The novel's primary settings,   including Calcutta and the Ibis, are multilingual towns whose residents speak a variety of languages and dialects, including pidgin, Bhojpuri, and distorted English Bengali [21] [22].

5.3 Cultural Ties:

Sea of Poppies clearly illustrates the manner in which the farmers and agricultural labours in colonial India were compelled to become coolies and sent to Mauritius and other places as girmitiya mazdoor (slaves) from the rural belt of Western Uttar Pradesh and Bengal, which was also the hub of the movement of manual labour out of India. The social and economic difficulties of the people, compelled them to move away from their homelands. The characters are learning new things about themselves [23]. A journey of self-discovery is being undertaken by one of protagonists. One victimized farmer depicted in the novel is the Bhojpuri woman Deeti, who saw an Ibis. After her husband's death, who worked in the opium factory and had his land used to grow opium against his will died, she was ready to sacrifice herself on her Pyre to avoid her brother-in-law's demands. But a man of the lower caste named Kalua, saved her and secretly married her. When Deeti and Kalua elope with each other they become mindful that they have transgressed the rules, customs and rituals set by the caste system [24][25]. Having been victimized and abused by the 'powerful' caste people, Kalua is well aware of the possible consequences of abandoning caste norms and traditions. So when the opportunity to escape comes she and her daughter take it, changing their names and signing on as indentured laborers to become coolies in a foreign place. Paulette, the daughter of a French trader, attempts to avoid her benefactor's sexual advances by integrating in with Indian society. Paulette, who was abandoned as a child, boards the ship dressed as a male to hide her gender identity from the crew. These intruders tried to go from the margin to the middle. According to law, Zachary Reid is a white man, unexpected relationships between characters of different races and social classes occur [26].

The novel portrays a disturbing image of the corporal suffering enforced on the natives in the ship by the white men as well as their agents. We notice liberal captain of the Ibis accepted Bhyro Singh's thrashing of Kalua, who had escaped with a woman of high caste and should be punished for it. When Zachary protested against him in favour of Kalua, highlighting that the choice of one's life partner may possibly not be the authority's concern, then the captain told him of the practice prevalent in the United States, where a Negro was never secure if he took courage to marry a white lady. He also made himself clear about the British doctrine of 'divide and rule,' according to which the British must support the class of Indians who helped them maintain Colonial authority in their country. Thus, Ghosh has analyzed the colonizers mind and revealed the many means by which they exploited the natives to enrich their fortunes [27][28].

5.4 Yearning for Home:

The longing for home, the possibility of them returning home, and a desire to create home in a new place, which we characterize as a 'motherland', or as a 'home, is been effectively portrayed through this fiction. The yearning for home, the interaction concerning the diasporic group and the alienated land, and the Trans nationality of home are clearly described in Ghosh's works. Both approaches of home, such as homesickness and the ability to create a home away from their own, are characteristics in his works. In his novels, protagonists are capable to overcome their diasporic feeling with the assistance of their adaptability to a new country and their effective assignment in search of family in global settings [29].

In *Sea of Poppies*, the importance of home as a factor in displaced people's lives is brought up repeatedly. No matter what the circumstances are at home, leaving will almost always be a painful

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experience. In the case of indentured labourers, who were brought to distant places as a result of colonialism, this misery and longing for home is a terrible experience [30]. The indentured labourers had feelings of homesickness and melancholy as they were leaving their place of service. They are unable to move on from their history and their homeland since there are so many happy memories connected to it. These memories include time spent with family and relatives, as well as time spent within the embrace of their nation. The women who worked at Ibis were similarly lamenting the fact that they would never be able to experience the simple happiness of life again. Being removed from them elevates the significance and significance of even the most basic and mundane activities. The echoed of temple bells at sunset, the evening azan; late nights in the courtyards, listening to the stories of the elderly; the colour of poppies spilling over the fields like abir on a rainy Holi; the haunting smell of cooking fires drifting across the river, news of a wedding in a distant village [31][32]. So, it was clear from *Sea of Poppies* that the people who were dispelled off the ship created their own world, even though they felt like they didn't have a place to call home. Amitav Ghosh portrayed them as people who got adjusted to their new surroundings and made a home away from home. To get over the pain of diaspora, Ghosh says that home is not just the place where you were born, but that it must be remade through the process of adjusting to displacement. So, his idea that the characters in his fictional world are "more interested in routes than roots fits well with his idea of a transnational home. His home can be moved across borders, beyond his country of birth, or to different locations [33].

6. ABCD LISTING :

ABCD is a kind of qualitative analysis that talks about important advantages, benefits, constraints, and disadvantages of every identified determinant issues. Analyzing the planned study with the ABCD Analysis framework is a good concept that needs some serious thought. In this paper, a qualitative analysis of a system or concept termed ABCD analysis framework/listing to investigate these five indices developed by, Aithal, P. S. is used to find out the advantages, Benefits, Constraints, and Disadvantages of the research. Below is a qualitative analysis of the proposed research using ABCD Analysis [34], [35].

In this paper, a qualitative analysis of a system or concept termed ABCD analysis framework/listing to investigate these five indices developed by, Aithal, P.S. is used to find out the advantages, Benefits, Constraints, and Disadvantages of the research. ABCD Analysis is used to do a qualitative analysis of the proposed research, which is shown below.

Table 2: ABCD listing the Colonialism and Cross Cultural Ties.

ADVANTAGES	BENEFITS
• Utilisation of the ABCD framework. • It is used to evaluate the findings of their research projects in a wide range of academic fields regarding Colonialism. • It helps to examine the Cultural Ties with ABCD analysis.	• Understanding the use of Theory of Postmodernism. • It attempted to analyze Colonialism in this study. • It is used to evaluate the present and future significance of the natives
CHALLENGES	DISADVANTAGES
• Lack of records during the people migrated. • Classification of themes from the perspective of space • Scarcity of sources regarding the treatment of traumatic victims	• It needs to achieve valuable information. • Difficulty to implement this through the character analysis. • Implement relevance of the topic.

Advantages:

The paper aims for a better understanding how cultures meet and how we live in, identify and depict new places to others. It allows academics to conduct new research to fill in the gaps left by earlier studies.

It's helpful to understand the ideas, points of view, and methods used to study the meaning of place and identity in different kinds of stories.

Benefits:

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The paper aims to be beneficial in order to comprehend identity creation as a sociocultural component, with a focus on how its character changes over time and takes different shapes. An attempt to look into the depths of identity and give people chances to look into the many ways people build their identities.

Constraints:

Many study projects on the authors' postmodern novels have focused on postmodern themes of identity, but experimenting with and examining these themes from the perspective of space is the most difficult component of the research and necessitates extensive investigation.

Disadvantages:

Though there are many researches discussing the cultural aspects scholarly research on something valuable is not achieved, there is a need for coming up with explanations in a time when people's views change about research.

7. FINDINGS :

It has been found that despite the severe oppression faced by the natives, there are instances by which they have endured the situation and struggled for search for identity. The studies have focussed on concepts like Colonialism, migration, multiculturalism, exile refugees, and social realism. But not much importance was given to look into the issue of Colonial Desire and cultural relations. Therefore, the present research is going to focus on the above notions and understand the scenario.

8. SUGGESTIONS :

It was found that various interpretations of Amitav Ghosh's works tried to portray the numerous characters, places, and events in a true postcolonial spirit. Through the examination of important works of literature do there is a need to understand Colonialism, multiculturalism and the search for identity from a post-colonial perspective. Through instances of cross-cultural ties, the work would reveal major postcolonial questions about colonialism and multiculturalism.

9. CONCLUSION :

This study analyses how colonization affects indigenous peoples. With the help of his book *Sea of Poppies,* it is understood that British occupation had a damaging impact and resulted in injustice in the form of exploitation of human beings. This resistance began when the colonizers came and brought their land experts, built factories to process opium which resulted in polluted air, water which could automatically interrupt the survival of humans and animals. The ship's most distinguishing feature now is its diverse crew. Everyone who was thrown off the ship probably felt like they had nowhere to go, but *Sea of Poppies* shows that they made a home for themselves anyway. The marginalization of the characters' identities stems from exploitation, migration, and colonialism. Ghosh's perspective stands out because he explores the whole humanity of the dehumanized subalterns and then takes the ground to construct their identity in a way that will allow them to establish gaps in the mainstream of caste, the best oppressive mechanism for sustaining social order.

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