

POWER RELATIONS AS THE CONSEQUENCE AND MIMICRY OF BRITISH
IMPERIALISM
IN VIKRAM SETH'S *A SUITABLE BOY*

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis analyzes the westernization of Indians as portrayed through the juxtaposition of the power relations between Western and Third world cultures, and the power relations between the characters of the novel. Indians had become so 'Anglicized' that some of them took the place of the British rulers after Independence. In the novel the relations between parents and children, elders and youngsters, employers and employees are seen to be quite similar to the power relations that exist between the colonizer and the colonized. In the thesis these relations will be analyzed as the result and mimicry of British colonialism.

Keywords: Colonialism, Power Relations, Mimicry

ÖZ

VIKRAM SETH'İN *MÜNASİP BİR DAMAT* ADLI ROMANINDA İNGİLİZ EMPERYALİZMİNİN SONUCU VE TAKLİDİ OLARAK GÜÇ İLİŞKİLERİ

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Bu çalışma romanda, roman karakterleri arasındaki güç ilişkileriyle Batı ve Üçüncü Dünya ülkeleri arasındaki güç ilişkilerinin yansıtılması yoluyla Hintlilerin batılılaşmasının işlenmesini incelemektedir. Hintliler öyle 'İngilizleşmişlerdir' ki içlerinden bazıları bağımsızlığın ardından İngiliz yöneticilerin yerini almışlardır. Romanda ebeveynler ve çocukları, büyükler ve küçükler, işverenler ve işçiler arasındaki ilişkiler sömürgeciyle sömürülenler arasındaki güç ilişkilerinin hemen hemen aynıdır. Bu ilişkiler İngiliz sömürgeciliğinin sonucu ve taklidi olarak incelenecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sömürgecilik, Güç İlişkileri, Taklitçilik

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In order to analyze the juxtaposition of the power relations between the West and the East and between the characters of Seth's novel, first it is essential to have a clear-cut idea of what colonialism is and what the before and after of Independence in India was like.

Colonialism is defined in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English as "the principle or practice in which a powerful country rules a weaker one and establishes its own trade and culture there". Ania Loomba also defines colonialism as "the conquest and control of other people's land and goods" (2). Therefore it is the usurpation and exploitation of a country through interference with its culture, language, education and administration. It is the dominance of a country over another in which case ordinarily the former is a Western and the latter an Eastern country. Therefore colonialism can be explained basically as the West's control over the East.

Although the main object of the Westerner was to exploit the East and benefit from its people, lands, resources and whatever they could take out from it, they never admitted this fact but called what they have been doing their 'mission':

Since the industrialized and modernized West gained wealth and power that allowed it to dominate the globe, a myth was created that there was something

inherently superior about Western civilization. As a consequence, the purely exploitative element of imperialism came to be masked by the theory that the white man had a mission to civilize the colored natives by bringing to them the benefits of Western culture (Vohra, 52).

Thus they disguised themselves as the benefactors of the natives and presented their exploitation as a humane mission. Through the West's exertion of power over the East's culture, economy and education, in this hypocritical manner the Westerner maintained its dominance without facing any resistance. Another way of justifying their exploitative acts was to portray the people of the East as degenerate, uncivilized, inhuman creatures:

The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction (Bhabha, 1994, 70).

Under such circumstances they had every right to conquer and govern those Eastern countries in order to 'civilize' them. Besides, this was a great favour that they were doing for the Easterners.

Said calls such discourse 'Orientalism'. Said points to the fact that in European writing the mindlessness of European authority can be seen in their recurrent "theme of Europe teaching the Orient the meaning of liberty, which is an idea that Chateaubriand and everyone after him believed that Orientals... knew nothing about"(Said, 1995,172). The great paradox here is that they are eager to teach liberty to the Orientals but they do it by imprisoning the people, imprisoning them in European culture. The way they defend themselves is very well put by Said: "It would be important, nevertheless, never to let the Orient go its own way or get out of hand, the canonical view being that Orientals had no tradition of freedom" (Said, 1995, 240-241).

In fact, this is quite true for India. A reading of history books suggest that Indians have had almost no tradition of freedom because throughout history the country has been conquered by one nation or another. However none of those nations could have been as effective and lasting as the British Empire. India was, and still is, a country which embodies in itself many religions, many languages, many different ways of living. As a matter of fact the British, to a certain extent, helped India form a unity by imposing on them the European way of living. Indians who speak different languages started to communicate with each other in English.

Yet one day came when those Western-educated, English speaking generations of Indians realized what the concepts of freedom and democracy really meant. So they decided to take action and “to use the conqueror’s own political ideology as a weapon to force the conqueror to make concessions” (Vohra, 103).The acts that were passed between 1913-1919 gave the British enormous power over Indians, but they also led to Indians’ riot under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Finally in 1947 they gained their independence. Nehru, who is also a character in *A Suitable Boy*, was the prime minister from 1947 to 1964.

The most important part of their history for this thesis begins with Independence, first because of the situation of the country after the British left and second because Seth’s novel takes place three years after Independence. When the British left India they left behind a “nation that belongs neither to the colonizer nor to the colonized” (Ashcroft et al., 1995, 113). It was impossible to get rid of everything that was British. Not only because they were everywhere but also because Indians

had long before got used to them and now it would be almost impossible to give up their habits. They didn't change the central and state services such as railways, income tax, provincial police service etc. They didn't change the army's structure and its traditions of training and service and Vohra's following statement is a proof of this unchanged status of India:

The name Indian Civil Service was changed to Indian Administrative Service (IAS), and Indians replaced the departing British officers, but the 'steel frame', as the British had called it, continued to serve in its multifunctional national capacity (193).

They were freed. However, rather than going ahead from where the British had left they came to a halt and started mimicking instead. As Spear argues, Indians did make some additions after replacing the British, but it was not a replacement of the bad by the better. It was just a change of names:

Much of the British contribution has become the working capital of the new India. The administrative and judicial framework remains the same. In the educational and industrial fields there has been expansion, but not supersession (Spear, 348).

Thus a new generation emerged in India. The generation of the "in-betweens", people that were neither British nor Indian, people who went through "colonial depersonalization" as Fanon called it (qtd. in Bhabha, 1994, 40-41). They had got used to European traditions but now they should turn back to their origins since India is a free country. However, as Goethe suggests:

nations could not return to their settled and independent life again without noticing that they had learned many foreign ideas and ways, which they had consciously adopted, and come to feel here and there previously unrecognized spiritual and intellectual needs (qtd. in Bhabha, 1994, 11).

This is valid not only for the colonized nations but for the colonizers as well, because the two of them are dependent on each other, they are both equally affected by the results of colonialism. Since no culture is pure whatsoever, as Said claims,

interaction is inevitable: “All cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogenous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic”(Said, 1993, XXV).

India has never been pure and single but the British effect is the greatest and latest one. It caused hybridity which can be described briefly as “the situation whereby individuals and groups belong simultaneously to more than one culture” (Barry, 198). This is what is observed in *A Suitable Boy*. The characters of the novel are all Indians who are experiencing hybridization. In the thesis some of these characters’ projection of the power display that they had witnessed during the time of the Empire on each other will be discussed with reference to Said’s theories on colonialism, Bhabha’s on hybridity and mimicry and Foucault’s theories on power relations. Bhabha says that “colonized societies had ‘multiculturalism’ imposed upon them from above, and they evolved an ethic of survival that encompassed the presence of ‘otherness’ as a practice of everyday life and language”(qtd. in Goldberg and Quayson, 23). So when the colonizer leaves, the ‘other’ turns into an active part of the colonized and comes to the surface as the mimic of the colonizer.

Many theoreticians think and claim that colonialism is not over yet and I agree with them. Said thinks that the workings of the colonizer continue under different headings and he calls this ‘neocolonialism’(qtd. in Goldberg and Quayson, 2). The above-mentioned fact about Indians’ hybrid culture is a proof for the continuance of colonialism. Similarly, George Lamming in his essay “The Occasion for Speaking” expresses the fact that “Britain without its Empire can still maintain cultural authority in post-colonial societies”(17). Therefore, Independence has not

solved the problem of domination. It has only led to “overt or subtle forms of neocolonial domination”(Ashcroft et al., 1995, General Introduction, 2). Indians contribute to this domination by acting like British colonizers towards each other, just as the characters in *A Suitable Boy* do.

CHAPTER II

THE WEST AND THE EAST

“Isn’t power simply a form of warlike domination? Shouldn’t one therefore conceive of all problems of power in terms of relations of war?”
(Foucault, 1994/2, 123-124).

Power relations can be defined as struggles for domination; struggle between individuals, between groups, between countries or simply between the West and the East parts of the globe. The battle for domination in the East started, since the West, being superior, had decided that it was their right to dominate and govern the Third World countries. Thus a war began; the West fighting to subjugate the East and the East fighting to preserve their freedom.

Most probably the West came to regard itself as the ideal example in all aspects of life with the beginning of colonialism and consequently began to spread its culture all over the world. Thus, a binary division of the world came into existence: the Western culture and the Third World- the Eastern- cultures. The West was, and still is, everywhere. Very subtly they imposed on the whole world the idea that their culture, their economy, their education system, their politics were the best and should be imitated and assimilated. Meanwhile they regarded the East as primitive, uncivilized, savage and detestable.

The West, while conquering the East, had developed a sense of superiority, which accordingly led to a feeling of contempt for Eastern people. It is a kind of a “self-image of cultural, moral, and intellectual superiority” as Vohra puts it, and, this sense of superiority is “paralleled by a contempt for non-Western peoples for lacking these high qualities” (51).

As a result of such feelings, the West saw itself as a teacher, a father to the East, believing that those primitive, savage people should be educated and made civilized in a proper way. Thus they felt it their mission to Westernize the people of the East: “If the whole world is inexorably moving toward a common universal culture of modernity, surely the West is nearer to the ideal than the Third World. So why not Westernize?” (Vohra, 53).

They began their task of civilizing the East first by bringing their religion as the most important sign of civilisation. Bringing together these people, who believed in different gods or objects, under Christianity would provide the Westerner with the opportunity to create a disciplined group. They would use the Bible as the textbook to teach their language, so that after providing discipline they would be able to communicate with them and consequently begin to know them better. And since knowledge means power, the more they knew the more powerful they would become: “Knowledge of subject races or Orientals in what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge” (Said, 1995, 36).

The Bible was “the book of God” and therefore the European missionaries were God’s angels, coming from heaven, from up above (Bhabha, 1994, 102-103). Thus was the beginning of the Westerner’s high status among the Third World people. He was God’s angel, he was holy, he was a kind of father who came to teach. In this way they gained Eastern people’s respect. Being respected, it was easy to take control of those countries. First they got hold of education:

By 1817 the Church Missionary Society ran sixty-one schools [in India], and in 1818 it commissioned the Burdwan Plan, a central plan of education for instruction in the English language (Bhabha, 1994, 106).

Thus “the English book” became “the presence of authority”(Bhabha, 1994, 110). The teachers, the authoritative fathers gradually took positions in the police force, the army and finally in the government.

This slow process of domination turned into a hegemony due to the respect of the natives for the Europeans. Although “the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony” (Said, 1995, 5), there is also the element of ‘consent’ that is present in Gramsci’s definition of hegemony. According to Gramsci, hegemony is “dominance by consent” (qtd. in Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 44). The proof of this is the fact that the British were so small in number compared to the natives when they conquered India that as Sir Reginald Coupland claims “so small a ‘garrison’ would have been an absurdity if the mass of the Indian people had felt that British rule was intolerably unjust or inhumane” and therefore the British Raj was “government with their [Indians’] acquiescence” (Coupland, 30). They gained their authority by the consent of the Indian people. Theoreticians like Barry Smart, Michel Foucault and Antonio

Gramsci point to the fact that a domination by consent or even by force is only possible through the domination of cultural and social practices. In fact that is how the native people of a conquered country consent to subjugation. The invaders, that is the Westerners, present the situation in such a way that the others really believe that it is for their own good, for their benefit and for the good of the whole country. So the changes- which are made by the West- in the economy, the government, education system etc. are presented as useful and beneficial for the natives. As a result the natives take these changes for granted believing that it will be good for their nation. However this is only a subtle means of the West's invasion. Through hegemony the Westerner makes such a room for himself that he is even able to affect the Easterner's tastes and habits:

Hegemony contributes to or constitutes a form of social cohesion not through force or coercion, nor necessarily through consent, but most effectively by way of practices, techniques, and methods which infiltrate minds and bodies, cultural practices which cultivate behaviours and beliefs, tastes, desires, and needs as seemingly naturally occurring qualities and properties embodied in the psychic and physical reality (or 'truth') of the human subject(Smart, 160).

The West entered into the lives of these people and had a huge impact on their culture. It was in fact a violence that had been committed on the traditions and even personalities of those people. Yet it was very subtle and gradual as well, so it went unnoticed. An illusion was created; all that was going on was a favour for the East. However the reality was far from that:

Modern colonialism did more than extract tribute, goods and wealth from the countries that it conquered- it restructured the economies of the latter, drawing them into a complex relationship with their own, so that there was a

flow of human and natural resources between colonised and colonial countries (Loomba, 3).

The West's main aim was to maintain its own needs, which means that the huge transformation that was supposedly taking place in the Eastern societies was actually a lie. The West's own benefits were of greater importance and therefore had to take precedence over the East's needs: "Cultures have always been inclined to impose complete transformations on other cultures, receiving these other cultures not as they are but as, for the benefit of the receiver, they ought to be" (Said, 1995, 67).

Thus the West transformed the Eastern culture for its own good, beginning with religion and language, and they continued with education, politics, economy and everyday practices, until the recreation was complete:

If you take three great societies of the East- India, China, and Japan- and study the impact on them of the Western way of life, you will see the extent to which we have taken them, as it were by the shoulders, and shaken them with such violence that little is left intact of their traditional structure (Ward, 42-43).

The Easterners did not react at all because first they thought that they would prosper thanks to the European Sahibs and second it was too late to resist when some of them realised what was really going on. They had already been transformed into a new culture and the effects were permanent.

This recreation was achieved by replacing the native scholars, soldiers and judges with Westerners, who would modernize and Westernize those institutions. As Said suggests, "since one cannot ontologically obliterate the Orient, one does have the means to capture it, treat it, describe it, improve it, radically alter it" (1995,95).

They had to alter the East because they couldn't have controlled those people without exerting the Western power on their culture.

Culture has this important role in the power relations between countries. Once a nation establishes domination on another's culture, he can control everything else: "It is through culture that the assumption of the 'divine right' of imperial powers to rule is vigorously and authoritatively supported" (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 85). Through the impact on culture, the Westerner imposed the idea of his superiority. They were thus admired and imitated by the Oriental, and since everything they did was right and admirable, there was no need to question the European Sahib's acts. Furthermore, the Easterner assimilated this sense of superiority in such a way that at one point he felt the need to become one of them in order to have authority in his own country:

It was the key to greater material or political freedom. The seats of power were filled with Westerners or the Western-trained. The only way to authority or position in one's own society was to make oneself able to compete with the Westerner on his own ground (Zinkin, 60).

The feeling of inferiority, insecurity and lack of self-confidence had made the East even more exploitable. A time came when the people of the East needed reassurance from the Westerner for everything they wanted to do. As a consequence, the Europeans began to think of themselves as heroes, as saviours of the East: "The modern Orientalist was, in his view, a hero rescuing the Orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he himself had properly distinguished" (Said, 1995, 121). However they did not realize at the time that while these people were being Westernized they were actually getting alienated from their own culture and

tradition. They were turning into strangers to their own beliefs, they were getting confused.

The self-proclaimed hero was in fact trying to justify his conquest. His disguise was that his “spring of action was to promote native welfare, and to prepare the peoples for self-government” (Zinkin, 63). Of course that never happened and the Easterner had to fight to get his independence back.

Transforming, recreating a nation is a huge liberty, but doing it with such subtlety and without facing any opposition is a success. It was not only a matter of money and power but also a matter of self-identification. The West recreated the East as his other: “the creation of the Orient as the ‘other’ is necessary so that the Occident can define itself and strengthen its own identity by invoking such a juxtaposition” (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 64). So the West recreated the East as it did, so as to see its own superiority and strength in the other’s inferiority and weakness.

Yet, however different they are, they still reflect each other and exist together just as a man and his other. As Said suggests, the East for the Westerner was also a means of confronting his other and thus “a career , one in which one could remake and restore not only the Orient but also oneself” (1995, 166). It is not only the East being affected by the West’s impositions. The West is almost equally affected by the Eastern culture as well: “Postcolonial studies have shown that both the ‘metropolis’ and the ‘colony’ were deeply altered by the colonial process. *Both* of them are, accordingly, also restructured by decolonisation” (Loomba, 19). Neither of them is

the same as before. Although it was a power relation in which one dominated and the other submitted, still neither one went unchanged.

These two “geographical entities” exist in each other and they give each other a reality (Said, 1995, 5). And since culture is alive and “not the exclusive property of East or West” (Said, 1993, XXIV), it is open to changes and effects. As Foucault believes, in order to have social existence there have to be relations of power. Therefore, where there is a relationship, inevitably there is an exertion of power. Since this is a fact and has to be accepted as such, then the important thing is the way people handle these interactions.

Bhabha talks about the colonizer and the colonized as the “enslaved master” and the “unmastered slave” (1994, 131). Power requires freedom because “power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free” (Foucault, 1982, 221). That is why the two parties are both slaves and their own masters at the same time. The slave is unmastered because he is a slave by consent, a slave of the changes in his culture. He tries to keep up with the transformation. The master is enslaved because he is the master insofar as he stays in the game. This means that he has to take his share of the transformation as well.

If power relations require free individuals, then sooner or later the one who is dominant will meet with resistance, which in India resulted in independence from the British. More about resistance later, but first it is essential to have a view of the British rule in India.

The British entered India first as merchants, traders with the East India Company. However, as the power of the Company turned from economic to political, they also became invaders who were beginning to take administrative positions. Either way the British were the power holders; initially as traders who had the money and later on as rulers who had the authority. Jawaharlal Nehru says that what the British were doing was actually “plunder” and that it “lasted, under various names and under different forms, not for a few years but for generations” (15).

They easily found excuses for establishing their own religion and culture in India. One such excuse was that it would be the only way to abolish “such inhuman, cruel, and barbaric practices” as sati which is the act of burning a widow with her husband’s dead body (Vohra, 74). Such an interference by an outsider was a great offence to Indians because sati was a very important tradition which had to do with their beliefs and religion. A foreigner’s abolishment of this ritual was such an insult that it even led to the Mutiny. Thus the British started with religion and rituals, and went on with language and education.

With the domination of the British in India, English language took a leading position as well. This was not surprising or provoking since there were so many different languages all over India and since they really needed a unifying language. However, the British used English education as a means of causing competition between the natives: “In 1844 the Company [East India Company] gave further impetus to the study of English by declaring that preference for administrative jobs would be given to English-educated candidates” (Vohra, 102). So it was essential to know English and to have a Western education in order for an Indian to get a good

position. The British went so far as to make English the official language, which shows the extent of power they were able to exercise in that country.

The existence of a power relation was so obvious and the British felt so superior that it even led to a feeling of contempt for and casting out of the natives. Consequently it turned into an actual master and slave relationship:

The British attitude towards things Indian changed from disapproval to contempt...The superiority complex grew, and so did rudeness of bearing. British life centered around clubs open to any European, but closed to any Indian no matter how distinguished...the British themselves fell into the trap of acting like a separate and superior caste within that system. (Lamb, 71).

They were so superior that it was unthinkable to have Indian administrators while there were British men around. Indians could only be “the agents of British rule” (Nehru, 20).

Since power requires knowledge, the British had to know Indians. By restructuring their culture and society they made Indians quite like themselves but still they needed more knowledge. Thus they headed on to create mediators: “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” (Macaulay, 430). These Western-educated Indians would not only be the tools of exerting British power but some of them would also serve as spies on the side of the ruler. The British presented their superiority in such a way that those Indians who were granted higher positions took it as a favour and felt grateful toward their employers. Therefore it was not

incomprehensible to see “that Indians so employed were so dependent on the British administration and rule that they could be relied upon and treated as agents of that rule” (Nehru, 23).

Apart from the employees, the British made favours for another class of Indians, that is, the former tax collectors who were turned into landlords by the British. Therefore, while promoting a group of people and presenting them with much better opportunities, they deprived another group of people from control over the land they had been tilling and from profiting out of it. This led both to the poverty of the latter group and also to a clash between Indians which was of course contributive to the power of the British. These new owners of land were “a class created by, and therefore to a large extent identified with, the British government” (Nehru, 19). This identification was as useful for the British as the gratefulness of their spies, because all those Indians helped them to increase their authority on the land. Having natives on their side was a great advantage to get over slight uprisings.

The British thus created a new class of Indians who would later on take their place. Besides using them as agents and mediators, the British also used this new established class to encourage power relations between the natives. Those Indians who became landowners and who became Western-educated administrators, had the power to dominate the rest of their fellowcitizens, just as the British dominated them.

Furthermore, they established another power relation which would weaken the nation; they intensified the struggle between Hindus and Muslims. They achieved this through various ways. First they arranged the landownerships in such a way that the

landowner would be a Hindu where tenants were mostly Moslem. Then they organized the police force in such a way as to place opposite forces against each other. For instance, when the rioters were Moslem they made sure the police that were sent there were Hindu. Thus “a new vicious spirit of rivalry and intransigence between the Moslem and Hindu communities of India” emerged (Ward, 45).

The Indian Army was being controlled by British officers as well. This was another means of exploitation. On one hand they increased their power and authority over the natives by taking hold of the army; on the other hand they made Indians pay for the training and expenditures of the British Army: “Indian taxpayers also had to pay for the upkeep of the Indian army, thus shouldering the entire cost of various military expeditions outside India in which the Indian army participated” (Lamb, 73). So in fact Indian soldiers were fighting for the Empire and Indian citizens were paying for it. The British were the only profiteer.

Although they attained their powerful status through promises of improving India, the British most of the time used their power rather to exploit Indians and make profit for themselves. It was not just a matter of government, but on individual grounds as well there was abuse of power: “some of them used their power to enrich themselves without any sense of the duty towards the Indian people which the possession of that power implied” (Coupland, 27). They started out as teachers of civilisation; however, later on the feeling of superiority made them so proud that they preferred using Indians as servants, slaves, workers who had no right to enter their clubs, houses, companies or to be on equal terms with them in any way. The British were taking advantage of the power in their hands. They had such a power over the

nation that they were even able to slow down the pace of the process of change which they had started, both to profit more and not to cause any riots.

This situation did not last long. They interfered with the Indian social life so much that it led to the Mutiny of 1857:

The causes of the revolt were many. Chief among these were the British social reforms such as the abolition of child marriage and the self-immolation of widows. Such changes seemed an interference with religious practices... The soldiers had been required to serve overseas in Burma and elsewhere... There were rumors of enforced conversion to Christianity (Lamb, 68).

At the beginning Indians were not uncomfortable at all, because they had always been conquered by one nation or another throughout their history and as a result of the existence of various religions, languages and cultures they didn't have a sense of nationalism. Thus "lacking a sense of state and nationalism, and having experienced rule under a variety of foreigners, Indians did not find anything particularly repugnant in the 'foreignness' of the British" (Vohra, 68). Moreover, the invasion was presented in such a way that it would even be absurd to reject the help of a civilized nation. However, when the British began to treat Indians like second class human beings and began to make as much use of them as they could, then some Indians realized what was going on and decided to take action. The British were putting into prison those who were fighting for their independence. So they were being imprisoned in their own land if they acted for the sake of their freedom. Although the Mutiny did not end successfully, nevertheless it was a reaction and it showed that Indians did not want the British in their country any longer. This result was inevitable following Foucault's theory: "Wherever domination is imposed, resistances will inevitably arise" (qtd. in

McNay, 101). Furthermore, a power relation without “the potentiality for resistance” is not possible either, since “it only arises between two individuals each of whom has the potential to influence the actions of the other and to present resistance to this influence” (qtd. in McNay, 127). Thus the British influenced the actions of Indians and the latter showed resistance to this influence at the end.

Sir Reginal Coupland believes that India would have been much more prosperous and freer, and “far more advanced in science and art and all that makes life worth living” if the British had not meddled with their government (26). This, one can never know but what is obvious is that Indians were very much affected by the changes that the British had made in their country. During the time of the Empire the Indian public was divided into three groups: those who served the British willfully, those who consented to the ruler and those who rebelled. The ones who served for the Empire were the landowners, the princes and the agents. They all remained loyal to the crown. Interestingly the ones who rebelled against the British were “the Westernized, middle-class intellectuals who had received an English-type education” (Lamb, 70). This was because those Indians had learned through their education what democracy really was and thus realized the sordid reality of their situation. They fought for real freedom and real democracy, and they won. They gained their independence.

However, some changes were permanent. It was not possible to turn back to the original. They had turned into a different nation and there could have been “no return to the old static theocratic society of traditional India” (Ward, 46). They had been Westernized. The British brought Western culture to India. Indians tried to learn

and live with that culture but they also tried to preserve their own traditions. They attempted to make “a synthesis of East and West” (Zinkin, 92). The results of this attempt were not encouraging at all.

Indians, vacillating between the East and the West, began to live two completely different lives simultaneously:

the static, religion-oriented, caste-bound, family-centered world; and the new rationalistic world of dynamic individualism and social progress. In daily life, they may repeatedly move back and forth from the one world to the other (Lamb, 166).

These back and forth movements were the proof that Indians had become in-betweens who belonged neither to the East nor to the West.

In the twentieth century to these individual struggles for identity were added conflicts between family members due to the clash between young and old generations. Although the old were still confined to their traditional Indian way of life, the young who were educated in Western style tried to combine their Western outlook on life with their Eastern backgrounds. The elders, who were traditionally regarded as the authoritarian leaders of a family, were not able to understand and accept the individualist behaviour of the new generation. So these people had to reconcile both the two cultures and the two generations. While doing this they unconsciously formed a new, hybrid nation.

The clash of Indian and British cultures resulted in hybridity. Since they had to live together, each side would change their way of life in order to compromise. Change is inevitable, so it is quite natural for two clashing cultures to be affected by

each other and thus to change so as to conform with each other. As Papastergiadis suggests “all encounters produce change” (266). Culture is a living thing and as such it is always changing and evolving. It cannot be static and besides for a nation that embodies two different cultures in itself, interaction and change are inescapable because “despite the illusion of boundedness, cultures evolve historically through unreflective borrowings, mimetic appropriations, exchanges and inventions. There is no culture in and of itself” (Werbner, 4-5). Such a change took place in India during the process of decolonisation. They had begun to use the language of the colonizer but had not forgotten their own language either. Therefore they had to make a synthesis of both. The result was ‘in-betweenness’. They were no longer Indians with their own, pure, original culture, traditions, beliefs but they were not Englishmen either. They were a mixture of the original and the imitation.

Indians used Western ways to get rid of the British: “anti-colonial movements and individuals often drew upon Western ideas and vocabularies to challenge colonial rule” (Loomba, 174) and as a consequence they became hybridised. Therefore it was the result of self-defense. This is what Said suggests to the colonized cultures for salvation: “post-colonial peoples may resist most effectively by engaging that dominant culture, by embarking on a ‘voyage in’, a powerful variety of hybrid cultural work which counters dominant culture without simply rejecting it” (qtd. in Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 116). Whether consciously or unconsciously Indians did it. They assimilated the dominant culture and thus established those power relations between themselves which previously had been between them and the British.

According to Foucault there is no way out of power relations because existence otherwise is impossible. Furthermore, these relations require freedom and if there is freedom, “the exercise of power will invariably meet with resistance, which is the manifestation of freedom” (qtd. in Hoy, 139). In the case of Indians resistance was achieved through mimicry. They had to struggle with the dominant power and their most effective weapon was to imitate the oppressor. Thus they tried to reverse the forces of the relationship, that is, they would replace the ruler by acting like the ruler.

The function of mimicry differs in different theoreticians’ views. For instance, though Fanon believes that it is for the benefit of colonial authority that black people mimic the whites, Bhabha holds the contrary view that such mimicry “undercuts colonial hegemony” (qtd. in Loomba, 178). Since hybridity is a sign of reaction and resistance against domination, then mimicry is a means of resistance as well. Bhabha considers mimicry “as a site of successful resistance by the colonized subject to the dominant” (qtd. in Moore-Gilbert, 181). It was encouraged by the colonizer at the beginning as a tool for control, because it would have been easier to manipulate the colonized when they were copying the colonizer’s culture. However, in India things turned the other way around. Let alone contributing to colonial authority, mimicry led to the independence movement. It turned out to be “an anti-colonial tool” (Loomba, 178). Once Indians started copying their Western ruler, they also copied his ideas of freedom, democracy, equality and nationalism, which ended in an uprising.

Mimicry has this effect of changing the roles of the two sides of a power relationship. Lacan likens mimicry to camouflage and it makes more sense when

Foucault's idea that power relations are like wars is taken into consideration (qtd. in Bhabha, 1994, 85). Thus the colonized natives had the power to fight back with the colonizer using the colonizer's own weapons. In India it was not only a tool for self-defense but also for some natives the only way to cope with the oppression. They had to be in harmony with the rest of the society because otherwise they would have been lost. The power of the dominant culture was so huge that the colonized had no other choice than imitating the colonizer either to fight them with equal powers or just to live comfortably.

Hybridity of a culture can thus be a strength rather than a weakness. For Bhabha hybridity "rather than indicating corruption or decline...[is] the most common and effective form of subversive opposition" (qtd. in Ashcroft et al., 1995, 9). He defines the situation of hybridity, the condition of the in-between as the 'Third Space'. It is the space of the hybrids and it is in this space that differences face and transform each other. It is the point where cultures clash and form a third one which "carries the burden of the meaning of culture" (Bhabha, 1994, 38). During the interaction between cultures there is tension in that space and because of this tension the colonized people fail to create their own social consciousness in the process of decolonisation. They only mimic what they had come across and thus their decolonisation "merely becomes the replacement of one form of domination by another" (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 114).

Indians gave different reactions to hybridisation. Some of them cherished and imitated the West while rejecting their own culture, whereas others kept and protected the Indian values and condemned the West. However, none of these responses were

able to produce “a confident, well-defined sense of self-identity” (Vohra, 51). Without that it was impossible for Indians to be completely independent because independence, just like power relations, requires freedom. Therefore without a sense of self-identity Indians cannot be free: “it is the construction of identity that constitutes freedom, because human beings are what they make of themselves, even if they are subjects of repressive discourses” (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, 112). That is why de-colonised nations are still dominated in a way although they are politically independent. Said even believes that they are “as dominated and dependent as they were when ruled directly by European powers” (1993, 19).

They are still dependent because although the actors have changed, the power relations have remained the same. Those Indians who chose to imitate the Western rulers took the place of the dominant power and the others went on being oppressed by another group of people. The former even copied the superiority of the British and thus felt themselves to be much better than the latter.

The imitation of the power relations between the British and Indians was reflected on personal relationships. The relations between parents and children, employer and employee, husband and wife, brother and sister, Hindu and Moslem, urban and villager, politicians, colleagues are all metaphors for the kind of power relation that Indians experienced with the British. In these relationships one side takes the place of the oppressive, aggressive, commanding, demanding British ruler and the other side is the submissive, meek, obeying native. Phillip Darby argues that it is a tradition to portray “Britain’s involvement in India as a relationship of the kind that

exists between individuals” (113). Similarly in Seth’s novel the characters are portrayed in such power relations.

CHAPTER III

SETH'S CHARACTERS

We who were helpless were accused of independent thought and deed.
They did whatever they desired, and us they smeared with calumny.
(A Suitable Boy, 94).

Homi Bhabha points to the fact that “the migrant’s double vision” is the “truest eye” for presenting the hybridity of a nation, and that in the imagined communities of literary works “there is overwhelming evidence of a more transnational and translational sense of the hybridity” (1994, 5). Vikram Seth uses this double vision in portraying a large number of characters viewing them from different angles in his own imagined community. They are Indian in blood but they are “Anglicized”. They are independent but they are still dependent on British habits:

The pattern which emerges in the literature is that many of the issues arising from British intervention in the subcontinent have now been internalized, at least within the life of the élites. Processes and values once tied to imperial penetration are seen to have taken root, and they are treated with little reference to British action and motives. (Darby, 103)

They have relationships as individuals but these relationships are at the same time power struggles in which one individual dominates another.

As Bhabha puts it, mimicry is an “ironic compromise” (1994, 86). It is ironic because it emerges as a desire of the colonizer to appropriate his Other in order for

the Other to be recognizable. However, not as much to be recognizable as to resemble the colonizer because in that case they would be the same, they would be identifiable. Thus the characters of the novel are “appropriated” by the British, they have reached a compromise through mimicry and at the point where the novel begins mimicry has already turned into menace and resulted in Indians’ independence.

Darby argues that British imperialism is personalized in post-colonial literature through Indian characters:

Our attention is directed not so much to the relationship between Britain and India as to that between different generations and classes of Indians...The various tendencies and pressures are explored between father and son, between male and female characters, between those carrying the stamp of the city and those rooted in the village, and within the make-up and life experience of a single character(102).

This is how Seth’s characters are presented. The characters can be divided into two groups when the nature of their relationships is taken into consideration. Since some Indians are imitators of the British, their relations resemble that of the colonizer and the colonized. The Indians who mimic their former rulers treat their fellow citizens just as the British used to treat them during the time of the Empire. That is why they will be grouped as the “colonizers” and the “colonized”.

3.1 The “Colonizers”

The group which consists of the “colonizers” is divided into two sub-categories: those who have internalized the British attitudes and combined them with

Indian traditions, and those who mimic the British with all their aspects. The characters in the former category are attached to their native traditions, especially within their family units. However, they are people who have acquired some British features during the years they have lived under British rule. Therefore they mimic out of habit. The latter are people that have lost their identities as Indians and almost consider themselves British. They use mimicry for self-identification. The characters in both categories, though in different ways, use their power over the “colonized” group of characters. They dominate the latter, each in his/her own way, using the power of their status as parents, elders, rulers etc.

While the “colonizers” are thus divided according to the way they mimic the British, the “colonized” are divided according to the way they react to the “colonizers”. Thus they can be classified as the obedient, the rebellious and the in-between. The first group, as their name suggests, do not react to the oppressions of the mimic people whereas the second group do react and radically. The in-betweens are those who belong to neither party but vacillate between the two. They neither accept the doings of the “colonizers” nor take any action against them. However, unlike the obedient ones who resemble Chekhov’s lethargic characters, the in-betweens have the potential for a rebellion.

The “colonizers”, in other words the mimic people, are native Indians that were once made to imitate the British culture for the sake of colonial control. As Lacan’s definition of mimicry suggests, these people used it as camouflage in order to become a part of the picture (99). However, becoming a part of the picture for survival does not necessarily mean “harmonizing with the background”. It is a

necessity and in India it resulted in the independence of Indians, because through mimicry natives got more empowered day by day and threatened the authority of the colonizer. Thus mimicry caused what Bhabha calls a “resistance from within” (qtd. in Moore-Gilbert, 131). Since those who resist resemble what they mimic only *in part*, the outcome is impure, artificial and second-hand. The result is the presence of two kinds of mimic people.

3.1.1. The “Colonizers” Who Combine Indian Traditions With The Mimicry of the British

As mentioned before, the “colonizers” are divided in terms of how they mimic the British. In *A Suitable Boy* some important characters that belong to the first type of “colonizers” are Mrs Rupa Mehra, Mahesh Kapoor and Rasheed’s father. These are conventional, traditional Indians with an inclination to mimic the British-Indian power relations in their family lives. They are all parents who dominate their children: “In many of the novels...the British are presented as akin to a parent and the Indians as children. The point is invariably to show the need for parental authority lest the children run riot and their emotions go unchecked”(Darby, 91). To that, in the cases of Mahesh Kapoor and Rasheed’s father, is added the former’s political life and the latter’s power relations as an employer.

The fact that they are old people may be the main reason why they have combined their native traditions with the British attitudes they have internalized. They cannot easily, at least not as easily as youngsters, give up their traditions, their beliefs, their customs. It is harder for a person to change as he/she gets older. That is the

reason behind the clashes between generations. But on the other hand, these people have spent a major part of their lives under the British rule and for the sake of self-defense they have imitated their rulers. They had to be like one of *them* in order to survive. After long years of camouflage it is quite normal for them to have turned imitation into habit.

Mrs Rupa Mehra's personality is revealed right at the beginning, in the opening lines of the novel: " 'You too will marry a boy I choose' said Mrs Rupa Mehra firmly to her younger daughter." (A Suitable Boy, 3) She is a widow with four children. Her family is her kingdom. She rules there. Although nobody asks her to do anything for them, she feels it her duty to organize things for everyone around. As the British once did, she tells her subordinates that she is doing everything she does for *their* own good: "I do know what is best. I am doing it all for you" (ASB, 3). She knows the best, she is superior to all of them, she always does the right things and everyone else who contradicts her is always wrong. She feels the need to control everything and everyone. Finding the man that her daughter will marry is a very good example of colonizing in an Indian way. She wants her daughter to make a conventional marriage which will be a marriage of convenience. This is typically Indian. However, what she does to her daughter is not different from exploiting or ruling the natives of a colonial country. She makes crucial decisions about her children's lives. She does not let them make their own decisions. She is the dominant side in most of her relationships except for her relations with her son Arun and her father Dr Kishen Chand Seth.

Arun and Dr Kishen Chand Seth are exactly like Mrs Rupa Mehra in terms of their personalities. They are also “colonizers” and that is why the three of them cannot get along with each other and cannot colonize each other: “Dr Kishen Chand Seth was an impossible man to live with...everyone was scared of him and obeyed him tremblingly” (ASB, 34). He bullies everyone; his grandchildren, his daughter, the servants, all people that he gets in touch with. The same thing goes for Arun as well and in fact the only person that Dr Seth has a good relationship with is Arun because the two of them resemble each other very much and this makes the old man proud: “Arun was the only one in the family who could defy his grandfather and get away with it, indeed was loved the more for it” (ASB, 419). It is not possible for Mrs Rupa Mehra to control these people who are just like herself. They do whatever they want to do. She needs people to subjugate in order to be able to establish her power. For instance, the reader is told that once in the past Lata wanted to become a nun and of course Mrs Rupa Mehra was against this decision. Knowing that she could easily mould her obedient daughter, she took action: “Mrs Rupa Mehra too had a will, and she was determined to have her own way, even if she was under no illusions as to Lata’s pliability” (ASB, 24).

The people that Mrs Rupa Mehra is able to control, especially Lata, can do nothing that Mrs Rupa Mehra does not approve of and most of the time she does not. She would rather die than accept that Lata loves a Muslim boy. That is why she uses her authority and first imprisons her daughter for meeting Kabir secretly and then orders Lata to go to Calcutta with her where she would be away from Kabir and forget him. Imprisonment and exile were the punishments for the Indians who had fought for their freedom. The same thing happens to Lata because her mimic mother

cannot stand her daughter's free ways. This is both British and Indian at the same time. She treats her daughter in a British ruler sort of way, but the motive is Indian because it is traditionally wrong for a young girl to date a boy, even if there were no religious differences.

When Lata imagines the scene in which her mother learns that Lata is in love with a Muslim boy “she could see her mother's tears as she faced the horror of her beloved daughter being given over to the nameless ‘them’” (ASB, 168). Here the word ‘them’ that refers to the Muslims shows another aspect of Mrs Rupa Mehra's ‘Anglicized’ personality. She is so much influenced by the British that besides imitating the British in her relations of power, she sees Muslims from the point of view of an English person seeing an Oriental. She considers ‘them’ as others, just as the British see Indians. When she learns that the Union Minister of Communications has raised the postal charges, she protests just because the man is a Muslim: “Rafi Sahib was the most secular-minded, least communally impassioned man possible, but he happened to be Muslim. Mrs Rupa Mehra felt like hitting out, and he presented a direct target” (ASB, 185). She is so prejudiced against and hateful for Muslims that she thinks “it was one thing to mix socially with Muslims, entirely another to dream of polluting one's blood and sacrificing one's daughter” (ASB, 197).

It is not only a matter of Muslim-Hindu conflict for Mrs Rupa Mehra. She is against everything and everyone that is different. She behaves in exactly the same way when she senses a threat from Amit who seems interested in Lata. This time the reason for Mrs Rupa Mehra's rejection is that she does not like Meenakshi's family

and as a dominant, powerful, authoritarian parent she will not let fate destroy her future plans for Lata:

‘I have no intention of accepting things as they come,’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra, the unsavoury vision of sacrificing yet another of her children on the altar of the Chatterjis making her flush with indignation. ‘I will take her back to Brahmpur at once.’(ASB, 523)

Such acts make sense when they are regarded as a conventional, anxious mother’s endeavours to protect her daughter and to provide a fine future for her. However, when considered as a power relation, their relationship, almost tragically for Lata, turns into a master-slave one rather than a mother-daughter relationship. Mrs Rupa Mehra is happy and confident that “Lata is a sensible and good girl, and she will do as I tell her” (ASB, 523). People are sensible as long as they obey Mrs Rupa Mehra.

Mrs Rupa Mehra herself occasionally compares her acts to the political events of the Empire. For example in a letter to Savita and Pran, while complaining about the difficulties of finding a suitable match for Lata, she says:

One day I was so hurt that I said to Lata, it was all very well to have non-cooperation in Gandhiji’s time against the British, but I am your own mother, and it is very stubborn of you that you are doing this (ASB, 335).

So basically she is saying that Indians might have refused cooperation against the British, but in this business Lata has to cooperate with her mother. She is the ruler and Lata has to follow the rules. In fact , just like the British colonizers, she is being selfish. Behind all this display of power is the satisfaction of her own needs. She is trying to fulfill her traditional role as a mother. There are conventions that she has to follow and in doing these she never thinks of the happiness of her daughter. She will be relieved once she completes her duty. How Lata feels is of no importance. The important thing for her should be to marry a ‘suitable’ man.

When Mrs Rupa Mehra has an obedient subordinate like Lata she does what she likes with him/her, but when there are obstacles in her way -such as another dominant character- then she has to find indirect ways to reach her goals. One such example is her relation with Meenakshi. Mrs Rupa Mehra is against everything that Meenakshi does, says or thinks. The young woman acts like a fake Englishwoman. She speaks English and raises her daughter Aparna as an English-speaking child. Mrs Rupa Mehra cannot tolerate this. Since she cannot control Meenakshi and persuade her to teach Aparna Hindu, she chooses a subtler way: "I am teaching her not to call me 'Grandma' but 'Daadi'" (ASB, 334).

Paradoxically, although she opposes Meenakshi's English manners, she scolds Pran when he calls Lata's prospective husband a "cobbler": "I wish you wouldn't call him that...He has a degree from England" (ASB, 826). So westernization is something to be proud of in the case of Haresh, whereas in the case of Meenakshi it is detestable. Again Mrs Rupa Mehra is being selfish and vacillating between mimicry and traditions. The same woman who praises Haresh for having an English education, rejects at once her daughter's desire to take a part in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* : "'No,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra vehemently, shaking her needle for emphasis. 'My daughter is not going to act in any play. No.'" (ASB, 843).

It is impossible to argue with Mrs Rupa Mehra because she doesn't give anyone any chance to prove their points. She is right and that is all that matters. Savita and Pran, Mrs Rupa Mehra's favourite subordinates after Lata, cannot name their newborn baby as they like. First they have to take Mrs Rupa Mehra's permission

which is something she does not easily give: “ ‘You cannot name her Maya, and that is that.’... It was no use arguing. The parents were overruled, the name Maya had to be scratched, and the search for a new name began” (ASB, 967-968).

Thus Mrs Rupa Mehra colonizes those who are easy to push about and deceive by an old woman’s whinings. Most of the time she gets what she wants through exciting pity on others. Sometimes she gets angry and creates terror to achieve her goals. These are her indirect ways of exploiting her subordinates. With people whom she can easily command, like Lata and Savita, she does not need such tricks. A simple command is enough to make them do what she wants. She is a traditional, conventional woman but in order to put her life in the kind of order that her beliefs and outlook require, she has to mimic the British and play the part of the colonizer.

Mahesh Kapoor does the same thing both as a husband and a father, and also as a politician. Like Mrs Rupa Mehra, Mahesh Kapoor belongs to the first category of the “colonizers” who mimic the British in their Indian ways. Mahesh Kapoor is traditional in his family life, as a father and a husband. However, in his business life he is a ruler just like the British. In both cases he colonizes certain people. An important element that differentiates Mahesh Kapoor from other “colonizers” in terms of his mimicry of the British is that in politics he imitates the ex-rulers genuinely for the good of his people.

In his family he is the head, the master. He has two important subordinates, one a rebel and the other an obedient woman: his son Maan and wife Mrs Mahesh

Kapoor. He has to control everything and everyone as the master of the house. Most probably his commanding attitude is a reflection of the political on the personal. He came across strong power relations first under the British rule. Then he began to apply it to his independent government and consequently its effects are felt back at home.

Mahesh Kapoor's relationship with his wife is precisely a power relation in which the male is dominant and the female obedient. That is why Lata thinks that the name of their house, 'Prem Nivas', is ironic. Because it means "the abode of love" (ASB, 16) but the old couple of this house do not have a love relationship at all. They just tolerate each other for the sake of convenience. Most of the time Mahesh Kapoor treats his wife as a stupid inferior and she does not object to that. She is that much obedient. However at the end she can no longer obey and dies. Even at that point Mahesh Kapoor commands her: " 'Dying!' said her husband, impatiently. 'There is no question of your dying.'" (ASB, 1328). That is the only time Mrs Mahesh Kapoor refuses to obey her husband: " But Mrs Mahesh Kapoor for once defied her husband and did die that night" (ASB, 1329). Until that night she has been a devoted wife no matter how she was treated. The words that Mahesh Kapoor uses to address his wife are always demeaning, insulting, such as "that weak-willed woman" (ASB, 7).

Whatever Mahesh Kapoor does, his wife takes for granted. She never stops respecting her husband and she never complains. In the first chapters of the novel the nature of their marriage is revealed. The narrator describes Mrs Mahesh Kapoor as "Pran's much-shouted-at mother, subdued yet happy" (ASB, 18). Mr Kapoor uses his power as a male to control and exploit his wife. He obviously sees her as an inferior

and that is why he insults her and shouts at her so much. They cannot even argue a matter because all the time Mahesh Kapoor is right and her suggestions are out of question. Such an incident occurs when Mahesh Kapoor invites Saeeda Bai to sing in Prem Nivas. Mrs Rupa Mehra is not comfortable with the situation and implies to Mrs Mahesh Kapoor that such a woman should not have been there:

It was a little unfair of Mrs Rupa Mehra to make such an objection known to her quiet, much-put-upon hostess, who had in fact spoken about this very matter to her husband, and had been impatiently overruled by him on the grounds that the times were changing (ASB, 89).

While Mahesh Kapoor treats his wife as the British treated Indians, and while he calls her names, Mrs Mahesh Kapoor is always careful in addressing her husband: “When referring to her husband, [she] often called him ‘Minister Sahib’. Sometimes, in Hindu, she even called him ‘Pran’s father’. To refer to him by name would have been unthinkable. Even ‘my husband’ was unacceptable to her” (ASB, 191). He does not belong to her. He has titles which connote his power. He is Pran’s father’ and as such he has to be respected and obeyed. The name ‘Minister Sahib’ is quite British not only because of the English word but also because it brings to mind the former Minister Sahibs whose relations with Indians were very much like Mahesh Kapoor’s relation with his wife. He scolds her for many things, sometimes for being too conventional and sometimes for not being westernized enough:

...he had often rebuked her for her dowdiness. But since this was only one of many rebukes, just or unjust, she felt that she had neither the energy nor the taste to act on it. It was like her lack of knowledge of English. What could she do about it? Nothing, she had long since decided. If she was stupid, she was stupid; it was God’s doing” (ASB, 927).

Mahesh Kapoor colonizes his son Maan as well. However this time he is not as successful as he is with the wife because Maan is not an obedient subordinate. Just like Mrs Rupa Mehra, Mahesh Kapoor wants his son to make a suitable marriage with the girl he has chosen. Mahesh Kapoor has fought for his country's independence, he has even been in jail during the struggle "[b]ut freedom for the country did not mean freedom for his younger son, Maan, who even now was being told by his father" (ASB, 6) that after his brother, Pran, it would be his turn to marry and he should not be complaining about it. Thus not only the girls but also the boys are patronized. It is a matter of parents exploiting their children: "We chose well for Veena, we have chosen well for Pran, and you are not to complain about our choice of a bride for you" (ASB, 7). Love is out of the question. Even seeing each other is unnecessary once the parents decide that they are suitable for each other.

Maan at first takes it lightly and does not give it much thought. However, when he falls in love with Saeeda Bai, he becomes a rebel. Unlike Lata, Maan uses his love as a stimulus to react and defy his father:

[he] became depressed about his engagement...His father had arranged it, as he had threatened to do; Maan, taking the path of least resistance, had gone along with it; and now it was an ominous fact of life. He would sooner or later have to get married to her (ASB, 107).

But he does not because he has the power to refuse, like the Indians who rebelled against the British and were awarded by their independence. Though Mahesh Kapoor was one of those rebels, he cannot see that he is being a "colonizer" to his own son. When Maan turns back home only for a dinner a long while after he had left for Rudhia, Maan is so fed up with his father's interrogations that "he was glad he was not going to live under the dominating eye of his father" (ASB, 881).

Mahesh Kapoor is not only a father and a husband. He is also a politician, the Minister of Revenue of the state of Purva Pradesh. After spending some time in British jails during the struggle for independence, Mahesh Kapoor has turned into someone who likes power. That is why he enjoys being a minister. It gives him the opportunity to reflect what he had been exposed to on others beneath him. It is a kind of revenge:

Pran had never been able to understand why people loved power, but he accepted it as a fact of life. His own father, for instance, was greatly attracted by it: his enjoyment in its exercise went beyond the pleasure of being able to realize his ideological principles...Perhaps it was true to say that Mahesh Kapoor had contemplated the world sufficiently long from the calm vantage point of his cell in a prison in British India, and now required what he had in fact acquired: an intensely active role in running things (ASB, 54).

He has been pacified for such a long time that after taking action for once, he does not want to stop ever again.

First he tries to establish the 'Zamindari Abolition Bill' which is "a bill to abolish large and unproductive landholdings in the state" (ASB, 19). The existing system is a feudal system in which landlords called 'zamindars' own the land and have it tilled by their tenants, but take all the profit themselves. What Mahesh Kapoor tries to do is to take the land from the zamindar who does nothing, and give it to the tenant who actually deserves it. Thus he uses his power to stop the exploitation of a class of people. While doing this he sacrifices certain people as well, such as his friend the Nawab Sahib of Baitar. Mahesh Kapoor feels that it is a cost that they have to pay because:

with his own eyes he had seen the lack of productivity and the consequent hunger, the absence of investment in land improvement, the worst forms of feudal arrogance and subservience, the arbitrary oppression of the weak and

the miserable by the agents and muscle-men of the typical landlord (ASB, 283).

So he oppresses the exploiters in order to save the real victims.

Mahesh Kapoor's intentions are always good, but the system has turned out badly and he is a part of that system. He is a member of the Indian government which has become worse than the British as an old teacher reminds Mahesh Kapoor: "The old man was now talking to Mahesh Kapoor, trying to persuade him that the Congress Party had become as shamefully vested in its interests and as shamefully oppressive in its rule as the British had ever been" (ASB, 349).

After Mahesh Kapoor's Zamindari Abolition Bill is passed, some landlords begin to evict their peasants, so that they would maintain the land as their rightful possession. Therefore once again Mahesh Kapoor has to use his political power to save the tenants and he threatens the landlords. However, being a good man, he never uses his political power to keep Maan from imprisonment. He is not an opportunist, or an exploiter.

Mahesh Kapoor uses mimicry, he imitates the British only for the benefit of the public. In politics he has no other choice than being a "colonizer" in order to survive. However, as a husband and a father, he is not that justifiable. His dependence on Indian traditions and conventions, together with his habit of mimicking the British, makes him a commanding, aggressive, vain, authoritative man. He follows the traditions when he orders Maan to marry the girl he has found for his son or when he tells Mrs Mahesh Kapoor to be quiet on manly matters. These are normal behaviours

in Indian culture, but his way of doing these, just like Mrs Rupa Mehra, is British. He controls those people like puppets. He is the puppet-master.

Rasheed's father is the last example of the first group of "colonizers". Like the other two characters, this man is also a family leader and he is at the same time an employer. Similar to Mahesh Kapoor, his reasons for being a "colonizer" at home lie in his traditional way of thinking. He is also a very religious man and this affects his behaviour as well. As an employer he imitates the British and colonizes his employees, especially Kachheru. Thus, he too combines the two cultures in his relations of power and becomes a "colonizer".

Rasheed's father is a zamindar. Like most other zamindars he is also an exploiter. He exploits his employees, makes them work hard but does not pay them back. It is not important for him whether their living conditions are terrible. The important thing is his own profit. Rasheed explains this as follows:

the zamindars do nothing but make their living from the misery of others; and they try to force their sons into the same ugly mould as themselves...If their sons want to do anything else, they make life miserable for them too (ASB, 364).

Apart from exploiting his workers, he also tyrannizes his own son for not being like his father. Rasheed is very much modernized compared to his father. This is unacceptable for the father but Rasheed does not argue. When he is in his father's house he plays by the father's rules. However the life he lives in Brahmipur has nothing to do with his father's pious life-style. Rasheed is so used to changing roles and he is so indifferent to it that he says to Maan "I take everything about my own home for granted" (ASB, 555). His father maintains "purdah" [the practice that

includes the seclusion of women from public observation by wearing concealing clothing from head to toe and by the use of high walls, curtains, and screens erected within the home (Arnett, 31.07.2003)] at home. This is another kind of power display, a way of showing how powerful they are over their women. Rasheed tells Maan that purdah is “a matter of honour, of being the big people in the village” (ASB, 555). The more they oppress, the more honourable, respectable they become. Rasheed does not accept any of these, he believes in equality and that is why he is colonized by his father.

He oppresses Rasheed by his words:

...this man with his black, curly, balding hair and thick-set, belligerent face was forever provoking and lecturing him- and had done so from Rasheed's infancy to his adulthood. Rasheed could not remember a time when he had not been lectured to by his father (ASB, 581).

His father has always been dissatisfied with Rasheed and he does not refrain from expressing his dissatisfaction in a manner that foregrounds his superiority in contrast to Rasheed's inferiority. So much so that he makes Rasheed feel that his father has contempt for everything he reveres (ASB, 707). He cares only for money and because Rasheed is just the opposite, his father does not like him or approve any of his actions. This is like the kind of contempt that the British felt for Indians just because they were not like them. They scolded Indians for that, as Rasheed's father does. Maybe those scoldings and degradations by the British were the reason for the father's and also the grandfather's bitterness. However, there is no excuse for their inhumanity.

When Maan asks the father where Rasheed might be, he answers with anger and contempt: “He is probably taking a walk around the village... talking to all the

low people. That is his style. He should show more sense of discrimination” (ASB, 729). For him Rasheed is as low as those villagers. He is angry at Rasheed for not being a “colonizer” like his father. He talks of the villagers as if he himself was from another nation, as if he was British. He does not refrain from admitting that he discriminates. He does everything wilfully and consciously, and he is proud of himself. His colonialism parallels the British colonialism in such a way that there is an independence movement against him as well. Earlier, Indians rebelled against British oppression and this time they rebel against the zamindars who are replacements of the British rulers.

When Rasheed’s father learns that his land will be taken over by the government, he is furious and makes plans immediately. He will not let his tenants stay and work permanently in one field, so that he will not have to give it over to the tenants. Meanwhile what Rasheed thinks about is Kachheru because he is a devoted, loyal, hard-working labourer and deserves the field that he has been tilling for fifteen years. However, there is no way for Rasheed’s father to see Kachheru as a human being with his own rights. He thinks it his right that he should exploit his workers, cares only for his profit, ignores their miserable living conditions. He considers Rasheed’s interest in Kachheru as a communist idea (ASB, 585).

Rasheed is so appalled with his father’s inhumanity that he cannot even believe it: “it was unimaginable that his father should so indifferently have suggested shifting him about from field to field in his old age” (ASB, 586). He has the money and the status, therefore the power, so he can do anything he likes. He bribes the

necessary people and changes the records, so that his tenants are shown as hired employees which is just like the subtle games of the British.

Rasheed can bear neither his own exploitation nor of the tenants' but as Baba later tells Maan "anyone who had dared to stray from the path of obedience had been thrown off his land" (ASB, 1288). There is no room for the rebels in the village. There are only the powerful and the weak, the ruler and the subordinate. When they come across resistance they immediately eliminate the source. Thus they expel Rasheed and later on he expels himself out of life.

Rasheed's father, like Mahesh Kapoor, likes power. He colonizes his son because he wants Rasheed to conform with the conventions of his family. He colonizes his tenants because first, this is what he has learned from his father and second, this is what he has witnessed during the colonial rule. He has internalized the rulers' attitudes and uses them ruthlessly.

Thus the first group of "colonizers" are all the heads of their families. They oppress their sons and daughters relying on their traditionally respectable and acceptable status as parents, elders. They colonize other people, who are not family, solely because of their habit of imitating the British. Mrs Rupa Mehra has acquired the discriminative attitude towards Muslims, Mahesh Kapoor has acquired the cruelty of the politics and Rasheed's father the cold-heartedness towards everyone he sees as inferior.

3.1.2. The “Colonizers” Who Consider Themselves ‘British’

The second group of characters who are “colonizers” not only internalize the British attitudes but they also give up their Indian identities altogether. These are ‘mimic men’ who “act English but do not look English nor are accepted as such” (McLeod, 54). They try to be ‘one of them’ and the way of doing this is imitation. They do not see themselves as Indians nor as in-betweens. They had seen during the imperial rule that the British were superior. They yearn for this very feeling of superiority. They need to establish their high status in society. They can do this only by being ‘English’. According to Darby, this urge to be dominant results from insecurity:

the exercise of power is tinged with insecurity. The public face of dominance is about the capacity to determine, but dominance has another face, more often glimpsed than seen in full view, which expresses anxiety, inner uncertainty and doubt (55).

Lack of self-confidence and a feeling of insecurity make these people identify themselves with certain people whom they see as their opposite and consequently whom they admire. This paradoxical situation has its explanation in psychoanalysis as well:

...in the psychoanalytic sense, to ‘imitate’ is to cling to the denial of the ego’s limitations; to ‘identify’ is to assimilate conflictually. It is from between them, where the letter of the law will not be assigned as a sign, that culture’s double returns uncannily – neither the one nor the other, but the imposter- to mock and mimic, to lose the sense of the masterful self and its social sovereignty (Bhabha, 1994, 137).

Since these people see the British as superior, they are not satisfied with their own egos and therefore they disavow it. Though they do it as a ‘replacement’, in fact it is

‘displacement’. That is why they turn out to be disturbing, irritating people who have no personalities of their own. Such three examples from the book are Arun, Agarwal and Meenakshi.

Arun Mehra mimics in such a way that he almost believes he is English. Obviously he is very much affected by the despotism of the Empire and imitates it vehemently: “The elimination of the Mughal Empire and the assumption of direct authority over India by the Crown of Great Britain in 1858 introduced British-style despotism to the subcontinent” (Vohra, 95). Arun is an admirer of this British-style despotism, most probably because he believes that it is the only way to climb up in society. Bhabha argues that “the fantasy of the native is precisely to occupy the master’s place” (1994, 44). It is Arun’s fantasy not only to take their place but also to become one of them. However, he can only be one of those “Macaulayesque brown Englishmen” as Spear calls them (363). The narrator as well uses the word “brown-white” when talking about the Indian executives in Bentsen & Pryce where Arun works (ASB, 457).

Arun has internalized only the negative attributes of the colonizer. He looks down on everyone around him, he is always aggressive, he orders people around, he reproaches people. He sees himself as the supreme power in his house and in his family: “Arun was twenty-five, a tall, fair, intelligent, pleasant-looking bully who kept his siblings in place by pummelling their egos” (ASB, 10). So he is introduced at the beginning as a bully. He is proud of himself for being an executive in Bentsen & Pryce which is a British firm. So proud that he feels like one of them and is disturbed

at Savita's wedding that "there was hardly an English face in this whole provincial crowd" (ASB, 11) as if he *were* English and felt alienated among Indians.

He bullies Lata and especially Varun as their elder brother. He tries to bully his wife as a male, he bullies his workers as their manager and he denigrates each and every Indian who is not 'Anglicized' enough. Lata describes him as a vehicle that crushes everyone on his way: "Arun Bhai tries to crush everyone around him like a steamroller, and it's up to us to remove our egos from his path" (ASB, 27). He is so dominant that it is not easy for any of his subordinates to find the strength to defy him. He is all over them. They are even afraid of his bullet-like words as Mrs Rupa Mehra admits to Arun when talking about Lata: "She is quite afraid of your comments, sometimes even I am afraid of them" (ASB, 46). For instance, when Varun, Lata and Aparna return home an hour late, Arun is so furious, even mad with anger that he calls Varun a "damn irresponsible fool" and Lata a "damned idiot" (ASB, 33-34) and he does that in front of everyone.

Arun wants his wife to be like himself as well and to that end he educates her as the British educated Indians: "Arun...had the irksome habit of throwing an improving book her way now and then, and Meenakshi felt his suggestions were more in the way of subtle commands" (ASB, 64). Thus he educates her by force. He has no sense of nationalism and if he does, it is for the wrong nation. When Savita and Pran are talking about their prospective baby, Pran says that he will disown it if it resembles Arun but then he realizes that if the baby turns out to be like Arun the baby will have disowned his parents long before they do. Then he jokes about what the baby must be thinking at that moment in the mother's womb: "Awful service in this

room...But what can you expect in India? Nothing works at all in this damned country. What the natives need is a good solid dose of discipline” (ASB, 332). Arun obviously sees the natives from the point of view of an Englishman. He has contempt for Indians and this is quite pathetic considering the fact that he is an Indian.

It is revealed later in the novel that Arun’s admiration for the British and his desire to mimic them goes back to his childhood. He is a lover of power and because it was represented by the British when he was a child, he idolized the white man. The reader is told that when Varun was rebuked harshly by the headmaster at school for scrawling ‘Pig’ on the two Bibles out of an anti-imperialist rage “Arun too had bawled him out after that incident, using every possible hurtful reference to his pathetic childhood and past felonies” (ASB, 408). He was actually mimicking the white master. He had identified with the British so much that he “used to listen to Churchill’s speeches on the radio during the War and murmur, as he had heard the English murmur, ‘Good Old Winnie!’” (ASB, 409). He says this for a man who hates Indians.

From the outside Arun is so British that people almost take it for granted and when they are made to remember the reality they are shocked. For instance, Basil Cox is surprised that Varun is Arun’s brother, because they are so unlike each other. Between the two of them one can see the contrast of an Indian and an Englishman: “I’d never in a hundred years have guessed that Arun had a brother like that. And dressed in crumpled pyjamas!” (ASB, 436). Similarly, both Haresh and the Khandelwals are stunned when they learn that Arun has never been to England (ASB,

1014). It is almost impossible to think that a man so British in his attitudes, a man who talks of England and the English so knowingly has never set foot on the land.

As a mimic man who is so fond of power, Arun colonizes every single person within his reach. Just as Lata is Mrs Rupa Mehra's favourite, Varun is Arun's favourite subordinate. Once he reproaches Varun for using his own knife instead of the butter-knife to butter his toast (ASB, 400). He is angry that Varun does not know anything about table manners, which is so unlike the British gentry and therefore unacceptable in Arun's house. His dominance is so deeply and disturbingly felt in the house that everybody is relieved when he goes off to work: "The atmosphere had lightened since Arun's departure" (ASB, 401). He makes people tense and they expect a shout from him each minute.

Arun not only colonizes but at the same time lectures like Rasheed's father. For instance, he lectures Pran about the future of India and says that what India needs is a dictatorship (ASB, 1207). Because he is so dominant, it is hard to avoid or object to his lectures. He always treats Varun badly, because he is ashamed of Varun for not being westernized enough. He does not like Haresh for that matter either. Haresh has to have "his majesty's" approval in order to marry Lata but Arun thinks that Haresh is not English enough. In his letter to Lata, Arun emphasizes the fact that Haresh's "use of the English language leaves a great deal to be desired. This is no trivial point" (ASB, 1413). He feels so superior to Haresh that he describes him like a low-class labourer for whom it is impossible to reach their status. Savita at once understands the reason for Arun's dislike. She asks Arun if it is "that he isn't 'one of us'?" (ASB, 1414). Precisely. Haresh is a tradesman and as such he will never be able to "move in

the same social circles as [they] do” (ASB, 1414). Though he has had an English education and tries hard to be a fine mimic man, he is too Indian. This is sufficient reason for Arun to dislike and reject Haresh.

Thus Arun colonizes and downgrades everyone who is unlike himself. He uses his power in every possible way, for any reason, on any possible person- the servants, the family members, the workers, the people on the streets. He loves imitating the British and does so on every occasion. He talks of England as if he knew the country like the back of his hand. The thing he admires most about the British is the way they use their power over Indians and Arun assimilates this attitude in such a way that he even imitates their hatred and contempt for Indians. It is revealed towards the end of the novel that he has been liable to this use and abuse of power due to his raving nature. When a friend of his father’s shoots himself after an incident of rage, Arun is the only person who understands the motive of the act: “Rage did act like this. Sometimes he felt so angry that he wanted to kill himself or someone else, and he cared neither what he said nor what he did” (ASB, 1190).

Arun seems to believe that his strength depends on how much power he displays. His whole life is based on power. He likes using it and when he cannot use it on someone, he gets madly angry. As Said claims “the construction of identity is bound up with the disposition of power and powerlessness in each society” (1995, 332). Since for Arun power means being a Westerner, he mimics the British in every possible way he can.

L. N. Agarwal, the Minister of Home Affairs and an ultimate opponent to Mahesh Kapoor, is another “colonizer” who mimics the Indo-British power relations for political superiority. Agarwal is an evil man who can employ all kinds of intrigues in order to eliminate his rivals and rise to the top in the government. He is glad that Maan has a relationship with a prostitute because this will have a bad influence on Mahesh Kapoor’s reputation: “Good! He thought. Mahesh Kapoor may starch his delicately embroidered kurtas into rigidity, but his son lies at the feet of prostitutes” (ASB, 277).

He stops a riot by ordering the police to fire right at the rioters, thereby killing a number of people. He is proud of this decision because he thinks the British would have done the same thing in a similar situation: “A lesson here and there...never did anyone any harm. Either you rule, or you don’t. The British knew that they had to make an example sometimes” (ASB, 278). This is his understanding of administration. If he is in power, he is right and since those who rebel are wrong, they have to be cleared off.

Agarwal’s dictatorship especially affects Muslims because, like Mrs Rupa Mehra, Agarwal sees Muslims as the British saw the natives: “They were all fanatics, these Muslims, who appeared not to realize they were here in this country on sufferance. A calm dose of well-applied law would do them good” (ASB, 273). So when he decides to take revenge on Begum Abida Khan by using his force, it is not only because she rebuked him in the congress meeting but also because she is a Muslim and a woman:

I wonder if some part of Baitar House could be construed as evacuee property now that that woman's husband is living in Pakistan, thought L. N. Agarwal. A word to the Custodian, an order to the police, and let's see what I am able to do (ASB, 278).

Begum Abida Khan detests Agarwal for the ruthless, British way he treats the rioters. Agarwal is one of those mimic "colonizers" who, let alone improving the country as an independent nation, on the contrary, causes it to become more and more decayed, corrupted day by day. This is explained very well by Rasheed:

'This is like the days of the British,' continued Rasheed furiously, staring at the man who had justified the police firing in Chowk, and perhaps seeing embodied in him the image of other arbitrariness and authoritarianism. 'The British used lathis on us, they even shot at us, at us students, during the Quit India movement. Our blood was spilt by the British here in Brahmipur' (ASB, 886).

Agarwal wants to be the next Chief Minister and to that end he can sacrifice anyone . that is why the present Chief Minister Sharma is very anxious when Mahesh Kapoor resigns, because he knows what kind of a man Agarwal is:

Sharma felt that he could not in conscience hand his state over to this shrewd and rigid man who, for all his intelligence, lacked any human touch...a state could not be run on kindness alone. But he dreaded to think of one run on nothing but discipline and fear (ASB, 893).

Discipline and fear are what Aagarwal dreams of establishing in India, just like the British once did. Though Sharma feels like a father towards his citizens, Agarwal feels like an employer free and willing to exploit his employees. Sharma's attitude is similar to the way the British tried to present themselves to the world; however, what they really did was to realize Agarwal's dream. That is why he mimics, admires and praises them.

Agarwal is hated by everyone because his power reaches everywhere and he always gets what he wants: "L. N. Agarwal was not popular with the students of

Brahmpur. He was disliked both for his authoritarian ways and for his manipulateness on the Executive Council of Brahmpur University” (ASB, 807). Just like the British, Agarwal is able to manipulate all offices of the state through his schemes. He resembles them so much that his every move parallels the empire’s acts. For instance, he tries to establish a bill that will turn the official language to Hindi. This action is very much like the British rulers trying to spread English everywhere. Thus Agarwal follows the Westerner’s moves, changing them occasionally for appropriation’s sake. He tries to change the language as the British did, however, the language this time is not English but Hindu.

The Indian government has become worse after Independence because of people like Agarwal. They mimic the British in a terribly menacing way. The words of the speaker in the meeting of the Socialist Party point at this situation:

Is this what we threw the British out for? Is this what the people deserve? Such a government that cannot make sure that its people are fed, that cannot make sure that its students have jobs, such a government should die of shame, such a government should drown in a handful of water (ASB, 1276).

The British did not die of shame, neither will L. N. Agarwal. Agarwal adores the British for their capacity to rule people and that is why he will never see any wrong in what he is doing and he will never stop mimicking his idols. All he needs in life is power and status. He needs to rule, to be the only authority and being an evil, selfish, arrogant person he can do anything to obtain these.

The last example for the second group of “colonizers” is Arun’s wife Meenakshi. She mimics rather the social attitudes. She acts like an upper class English lady and humiliates the people she sees beneath her. She is very much like

her husband and a great deal of her imitation may be Arun's influence. Meenakshi almost believes that she is an Englishwoman, like her husband. Together they live a pretentious, fake life. She has completely lost her Indian identity. She even wants her daughter to call her "Mummy".

Meenakshi loves social gatherings, tea parties and modern society where she can wear whatever she likes and can tango. At Savita's wedding, like Arun, Meenakshi is bored by the traditionalism of the crowd: " 'How fearfully dowdy!' said Meenakshi wearily to herself, encapsulating her husband's thoughts. 'And how utterly unlike Calcutta.'" (ASB, 11) Because in Calcutta there are more people like herself.

She likes colonizing her servants with Arun. They treat the servants not like human beings but just like employees who deserve every single reproach: "They sometimes screamed at each other, and often at the servants" (ASB, 13). Most of the time she seems to take pleasure from such power displays. For instance, between themselves Arun and Meenakshi call their servant Miriam by the nickname T.C. which means toothless crone. They are thus humiliating the woman but Meenakshi enjoys it so much : "Living with Arun was full of sudden delightful moments like that, thought Meenakshi" (ASB, 65).

She constantly neglects her daughter, losing herself in clubs and parties. She is too selfish to be a mother. The child is always looked after by nurses: "One simply couldn't let one's life come to a standstill because one had a child. What, after all, were ayah's for? What, for that matter, were younger brothers for?" (ASB, 69). She

has to socialize, she has to live a life like the ones she reads about in books and witnesses in her British acquaintances. She wears her little blouse leaving her belly naked, gets in her sky-blue Austin and goes to the club to tango (ASB, 467). Despite Mrs Rupa Mehra's criticisms, Meenakshi will have nothing to do with traditions, conventions or anything Indian. She just wants to live the way the British live.

When Meenakshi goes to Brahmpur with her sister Kakoli to visit Savita and Pran, Kakoli suggests that they could stay at Prem Nivas. Meenakshi's reply sounds like coming from an English lady: "That's impossible...The mother doesn't even speak English. And they won't have western-style toilets- just those dreadful holes in the ground" (ASB, 959). Thus Meenakshi is as British as her husband.

The episode in which Arun, Meenakshi and Haresh are invited to the Khandelwals turns around a typical pretentious Victorian conversation. The only subject matter is England. Meenakshi is interested in the decoration of the house and the manners of the servants and the hostess (ASB, 1009-1014). Like her husband, Meenakshi does not give her approval easily because she does not see anyone as her equal. She feels that much superior due to her perfect 'Anglicization'.

One person that Meenakshi menacingly colonizes is Billy Irani with whom she has an extramarital affair. The man is anxious and does not want to continue the affair but Meenakshi does not let him go. She forces him to meet her. She treats him like a little child, manipulates him and gets whatever she wants. In fact she manipulates everyone around her. She never does anything that she does not want to do. She is a dominant character. Even Mrs Rupa Mehra cannot cope with her because

Meenakshi simply does not care what anyone says to her. She is her own master all the time.

Since she considers herself quite British, her aspirations and dreams are always related to England, to Englishness: “I am so looking forward to going to England. I shall visit Amit’s college at Oxford. And marry a duke” (ASB, 1319). It is not clear whether this mimicry of the British is completely an influence of her husband, or related to her bringing up, or to her English education through which she had access to the idea of women’s freedom. It can be any or all of them. There are not many clues to her psychology or to her inner world. The only thing that is obvious is that like all the other “colonizers”, she likes being superior and ordering people about. She wants always to be on top of society.

Thus the second group of “colonizers” mimic the British to the extent that they lose their Indian identities and become one of ‘them’. Arun, Meenakshi and Agarwal are only three examples among many others. They all love power and use it without giving any thought to its possible consequences. They are selfish, self-righteous, self-governing, dominant, commanding, demanding and aggressive people. The first group’s main object in using the British-style power display was to get their traditional demands fulfilled. However, the second group uses it mainly to be superior in society.

3.2 The “Colonized”

Foucault claims that power is not possessed by any person or institution but “power is better conceived as a complex, shifting field of relations in which everyone

is an element” (qtd. in Burke, 229). Some people, like Mahesh Kapoor or Arun, like power and they prefer using it on others whereas some like Varun or Pran do not care about power at all and prefer not to use it in any way. Thus they are divided as “colonizers” and “colonized”. The “colonized”, who do not use power but always have the potential for resistance, are divided into three groups among themselves: the obedient, the rebellious and the in-between.

3.2.1. The Obedient “Colonized”

The obedient characters take everything for granted, accept the attacks of the “colonizers” as their fate and avoid any reaction against them. These characters are lethargic. They do not resist the things that prevent their happiness. Lata, for instance, though in love with Kabir, marries Haresh at the end just because it is Mrs Rupa Mehra’s wish. She does not have the power in her to say ‘no’. Lata and her brother Varun, very much like each other and unlike their elder brother, submit to being colonized by their mother, by Arun and sometimes even by Meenakshi.

Though Lata and Varun are also educated in the Western style, they are not the type to mimic the British. They belong to the other category of people who do not have any tendency to be powerful and dominant. They just obey, even when the commands are against their happiness. However, their obedience is not only out of a sense of duty towards their elders. It is not only what they have been taught to do, but also a matter of self-interest: “ ‘I always obey my mother, ‘ said Lata. ‘And besides, who will pay my hostel fees if she doesn’t?’” (ASB, 9). So it is a business relationship. She lets her mother use her power over her and in exchange for that she

is free to go to school. It is a deal. Similarly, Varun in exchange for obeying the rules, is permitted to live in their houses, eat and drink. He does not have a job. He is tolerated as a parasite but in return he has to put up with Arun in silence: “He [Varun] was too well aware that while he lived in his elder brother’s house he was subject to his elder brother’s will” (ASB, 27).

Thus two “colonizers”, Arun and Mrs Rupa Mehra, colonize two obedient subordinates, Varun and Lata. Varun actually is very much afraid of his brother and since he also lacks self-confidence, Arun can easily bully him: “He [Varun] was thin, unsure of himself...was terrified, in different ways, of both Arun and Meenakshi” (ASB, 11). The husband and wife use Varun like a servant. He is so obedient that they can make him do anything they want. He does not have any friends and Arun makes him miserable with his reproaches. Varun does not even complain: “ ‘Well, in the evening Arun Bhai and Meenakshi Bhabhi are often out and I have to mind Aparna,’ said Varun, smiling weakly. ‘Not that I mind,’ he added” (ASB, 27).

Although Lata is very sorry for his brother and tells him not to let Arun bully him, she experiences the same thing with her mother and like Varun, she does not react. She lets her mother make the most important decision of her life, that is, her marriage. As Malati points out: “Your mother will get you married off within a year, I’m sure of it. And like an obedient little mouse, you’ll obey her” (ASB, 33). And she does. Lata cannot even get her mother out of her mind when she does something that she knows Mrs Rupa Mehra will not approve of, like when Kabir talks to her for the first time in the Imperial Book Depot: “Visions of her mother’s disapproval floated across her mind. She made an effort to push these away” (ASB, 53). Her mind is

altogether gotten hold of by Mrs Rupa Mehra. She is so under her mother's control that Mrs Rupa Mehra's physical presence is not necessary to feel the oppression. During her exams, she is not worried about failing her courses but she is anxious about what her mother will say about the results: "What will Ma say" (ASB, 148). Whatever she does, good or bad, Mrs Rupa Mehra's image is always in her mind.

Everything happens in Lata's mind and that everything includes her reactions as well. She does not stand up for her rights but she gives passive reactions in her thoughts only: "She felt a great burst of pride for Savita's father-in-law who had played his part in throwing the English out of this country, and she momentarily forgot all about Sophia Convent and *Emma*" (ASB, 636). Of course this is as temporary a reaction as it is passive, because she will go on taking delight from English literature, especially with Amit.

Another act of obedience occurs when Lata is brutally "colonized" by Mr Sahgal. He uses his power as a man and an elder to sexually abuse Lata. Lata is able to get rid of him but she never tells anyone what has happened. She is so oppressed and subjugated that she cannot even react against such a terrible situation. She just tries to forget what has happened and does not tell anybody.

Her submission to authority may be explained with reference to group psychology. Lata belongs to the group of oppressed Indian women and also to the group of the colonized Indians in general. Either way she follows the herd instincts and possesses the feelings of guilt and of duty, because in order not to be alone, opposition to the herd should be avoided. Otherwise the herd would leave her since

“the herd turns away from anything that is new or unusual” (Freud, 64). Thus for the sake of conformity with society she alters her personality and sacrifices her personal interests. However, her real self comes to the surface occasionally as sudden outbursts which she immediately suppresses. She protests or acts freely only when she is encouraged by someone out of the group such as Malati. Her ego is formed by her Indian nationality, her class as a woman, her status as the smallest child of the house. “The individual gives up his ego ideal and substitutes for it the group ideal” (Freud, 78). This is exactly what Lata does.

Varun, similarly, is so suppressed that after a while he begins to rebuke himself the way Arun rebukes him: “ ‘What am I?...I’m a bloody fool,’ he concluded, with the Arun-like condemnation pronounced in an Arun-like tone of dismissal” (ASB, 495). Let alone giving any reaction, Varun believes himself to be everything that Arun calls him. He takes all the things people say about him for granted and instead of rebelling, blames himself. It seems like he does not want to bother to have a quarrel even when he is right:

When Arun told him that if he hadn’t been ‘drinking around town all night there would have been someone at home to prevent the robbery,’ his face grew red. Arun too, after all, had been out having a good time. But instead of provoking Arun, who appeared to be at the end of his tether, Varun kept quiet and slunk into his room (ASB, 1017).

This much submission is almost incredible. Everytime he is scolded, he either bows his head or goes to his room. No reaction whatsoever. Only occasionally does he make angry remarks in his thoughts, like when he thinks of Arun as follows: “All he knows how to do is to suck up to the British and crawl in their tracks” (ASB, 409).

It is obvious that from a few experiences he had he knows that if he ever raises his head, Arun will make him pay for it badly. That is why he bottles up his anger.

As a matter of fact, Varun's non-reaction is itself a kind of reaction to authority; however, the problem is that such a reaction does not grant him his freedom. On the contrary, it makes him a slave. He is a frustrated young man. He is aware of the influence of the empire on his brother and since he hates the imperial rule, he hates his brother for his deeds as well. But being a frustrated person, he feels defeated like his country and therefore does not feel the need to take any action. "We are a failure as a country. We can always snatch defeat out of the jaws of victory" (ASB, 1242) he says. It can also be explained in Freudian terms as the alteration of his ego. Varun is a melancholic character and according to Freud, melancholia is caused by "the real or emotional loss of a loved object" and is reflected by the individual as a "cruel self-depreciation of the ego...relentless self-criticism and bitter self-reproaches" (Freud, 51). Varun's cause of melancholia may be either his father's loss or his disappointment with his country. As a result of the melancholia his ego is divided into two: one is the raging side and the other is the part that contains the lost object (Freud, 52). In that case Varun sees himself as a 'failure', identifying himself with either his father who achieved nothing but served the British and died, or with his country which is also a 'failure'. Arun, on the other hand, is the owner of the first part of his ego which rages against the second part.

Thus both Lata and Varun, obedient as they are, reject resistance. Though this may seem like the easy way out, their reasons for behaving that way are quite complicated. First there are their material needs. They are both young and jobless.

They have no other choice than living with their families. Since they live in the houses of dominant, powerful persons, they have to obey these persons' rules. Another reason is that they are brought up as subordinates. With two powerful "colonizers" in the house, they have been awfully suppressed: "Having been subject to his brother's authority since boyhood, [Varun] hated it- and, in fact, all authority" (ASB, 408). They have been taught since childhood to obey the rules and to let the "colonizers" shape their lives. Therefore their lethargy is not altogether of their own making, but something imposed upon them.

3.2.2. The Rebellious "Colonized"

As opposed to Lata and Varun, Malati and Maan are rebels. However their rebellions differ in that Maan rebels against his family and Malati against society. Nevertheless, they both show resistance to the "colonizers", and thus strengthen the power display they are subjected to because "the points at which power relations are exerted most forcefully are the points at which resistance to a dominatory force arises" (McNay, 6). The more they resist, the more display of power they are exposed to. Yet neither Malati nor Maan has any complaints. They do not care what people say or think, but they just do whatever they want. They are two modern, courageous, bold young persons.

Malati, because she has been brought up by a modern mother and because she is herself educated in the Western style, is a very broad-minded, rebellious, self-confident and self-contained girl. Education, though it is also a tool of the colonialist for providing domination, in cases like Malati's, can be a means of independence as

well. Malati saw in the books she read at school the examples of what she has been taught by her mother at home of individuality. “The whole range of Western ideas and attitudes was conveyed through English and European literature” (Spear, 361) and Malati has taken her share of those ideas and attitudes. Therefore she has educated herself as an independent woman whom no one can ever colonize.

Malati’s difference, from Lata specifically, is that she has been brought up in a family which consists of women only and these are all unconventional women: “‘How can you put up with them, Lata?’ asked Malati, who had been brought up, fatherless and brotherless, in a circle of very supportive women” (ASB, 9). So she has learned since she was a little girl that women can survive as well depending only on themselves.

Her difference can be felt especially when compared to Lata. Malati is very free. She does not hesitate in doing anything. She is comfortable among boys, she speaks as she likes, she does not refrain from expressing her thoughts. These are all because she is not colonized at home, she has not been brought up that way and because no one can ever colonize a person of her character. She studies medicine and this is almost revolutionary for an Indian girl. When her involvement with the Socialist Party is also added, she becomes a perfect rebel:

Malati Trivedi, apart from being one of a small handful of girls among the almost five hundred boys at the Prince of Wales Medical College, was notorious for her outspoken views, her participation in the activities of the Socialist Party, and her love affairs (ASB, 29).

She owes her independence mostly to her mother who “was remarkable in that she wished her daughters to be independent” and “made it clear to the girls that she

would give them the best education possible, but that they would have to find their own husbands” (ASB, 32). This is quite the opposite of Mrs Rupa Mehra and that is why Lata and Malati are so unlike each other. Malati is such a rebellious girl that in addition to standing up for her own rights, she participates in the Socialist Party’s activities and fights for other people’s freedom as well.

Malati is not contrasted with the other characters only by her actions but also by her appearance. When she sits next to Veena in Ustad Majeed Khan’s music lesson, the two girls make a contrast of the independent and the subordinate: “Malati with her fair, fine features, brownish hair, and slightly amused green eyes, and Veena with her darker, plumper features, black hair, and dark eyes, animated but anxious” (ASB, 315). It is almost as if their personalities are reflected in their physical appearances. Malati is not suppressed and dulled by society like most of the other women characters in the novel. On the contrary, she can be authoritative whenever she wants. For instance, when Pran faints during a lecture, being a medical student, Malati takes hold of the situation and “the boys, startled at the authority in the voice of this strange girl, stood back a little” (ASB, 857). They are startled because they are not used to such behaviour from a woman. They are startled because Malati is a ‘new’ woman.

She frightens people who are not used to such freedom and independence. Varun is made uncomfortable when she flirts with him just for fun, Mrs Rupa Mehra is constantly disturbed by her for her influence on Lata. For instance, it is Malati who encourages and persuades Lata to take part in a Shakespearean play.

Thus Malati stands out as a rebellious character. Since no one can colonize her, they try to ignore her or to accept her as a strange, eccentric person. She resembles the Indians who have fought against the British and gained their independence as a reward.

Maan resembles Malati in that he also resists oppression. However, his family and the way he rebels differ a lot from Malati's. The kind of oppression that he is subjected to by his family is very much like what Lata goes through. All that his parents want is to get Maan married off to a decent girl. At first he makes fun of everything like a little schoolboy. He just lets his father have his say. However, when things get serious, he has to do something.

As Malati constantly does, Maan falls in love too but only with the wrong person. Saeeda Bai is a prostitute and it is an impossible relationship. Maan is not allowed to love such a woman by the power that dominates him, that is, his father. Like Lata, he is left helpless and desperate for his love, but unlike Lata, Maan takes his stand and declares his love. Furthermore, he refuses to marry his fiancée, who has been found by his parents. Though he cannot prevent being exiled to Debaria with Abdur Rasheed, he at least challenges his father and when he turns back to Brahmpur, he does not stay at home in order to avoid his father. Being a rebel, he does not give up loving Saeeda Bai and keeps on visiting her. However he pays for it badly, almost causing the death of his friend Firoz.

It is not only love that makes Maan a rebel. It is in his nature to defy oppression, exploitation, inequality. For instance, in Holi, Maan treats professor

Mishra, a very serious “colonizer”, as an equal. He talks to him as talking to a close friend, without any sense of the other’s superiority or power:

‘So you are the notorious Professor Mishra,’ he said in delighted welcome. ‘How wonderful to meet so infamous a man.’ He embraced him warmly. ‘Tell me, are you really an Enemy of the People?’ he asked encouragingly (ASB, 82).

Thus he shares Malati’s outspokenness. He does not care who has the power.

Furthermore, he fights for those who are being oppressed by their “colonizers”. Malati’s fight is more social, whereas Maan’s is rather individual. For instance, at Nawab Sahib’s house in Baitar he witnesses the munshi’s inhuman behaviour towards an old woman. Maan is so furious that he almost frightens the munshi to death. He cannot stand domination in any way. For that reason he is quite uncomfortable and surprised at the atmosphere at Rasheed’s father’s house, because these people colonize everyone: their children, their women, their employees.

At one point he likens his exile to Mahesh Kapoor’s imprisonment, thus drawing a resemblance between his punishment for rebellion and his father’s for fighting for the country’s independence:

The thought struck him that perhaps his father’s acceptance of imprisonment had been something like this- except that Maan’s days were defined not by morning roll-call and lights-out, but by the muezzin’s call to prayer and the cow-dust hour when the cattle returned lowing through the lanes (ASB, 722).

Just as Mr Kapoor was punished for his rebellion, Maan is punished for his own. However, the former is for the sake of the nation and the latter only for going against his family’s dictates in his individual desires.

Although he is sent to the village to forget about Saeeda Bai, there he eagerly keeps on learning Urdu in order to be able to write to her. He is so obstinately rebellious that no matter what, he does not give up. He defies rules, traditions, moral values. With Maan defiance is mostly due to his young age and spirit. He has his own priorities and does not care about anything else. For instance, when he is talking to a farmer in the village, the farmer wants to engage him in a discussion on the importance of the English language:

Maan felt a sudden urge to explain himself. As he tried to think of what he should say, he heard the droning of flies getting louder and louder around him. It was too hot to think, and he felt overcome with sleepiness. His head sank on his chest. In a minute he was asleep (ASB, 544).

Thus he does not bother to think about anything serious. His sole object in life is to have fun.

So the two rebels, Malati and Maan, challenge the customs, traditions and conventions because it is not in their nature to yield. One is a rebellious, independent woman, raised by unconventional women, and the other is an indifferent, careless man always at his ease. Neither of them cares about what people think. They are their own masters. Some people try to colonize them but they cannot succeed because Malati and Maan are not the type to be subjugated. They live their lives the way they like, regardless of any rule. Whenever someone tries to draw them into a power relation as “colonized”, they rebel and always get out of it. With Malati it is rather a reaction against the oppression of women, whereas Maan’s rebellion stems from his energy and desire as a young blood.

3.2.3. The In-betweens

The third and last group of the “colonized” characters are the “in-betweens” who are the kind of characters that vacillate between the West and the East. They cannot decide which nation they belong to. They are neither British nor Indian, but a mixture of both. They are too ‘Anglicized’ to be called Indians but they are Indian in blood. Therefore, though they sometimes seem almost English, they cannot ever deny their origin. This confusion and conflict make it easier for the powerful people to colonize these in-betweens. Since they are not certain about their identities, they hesitate about how to react. They do not know who they are being colonized by and consequently they do not know who they should react to. Haresh, Amit and Pran are three obvious examples for this group.

Haresh is a ‘brown Englishman’, or at least tries to be one because *he* cannot decide if brown is more in his character or vice versa. Since the man himself goes through this conflict, it is all the more difficult for the other characters and also for the reader to come to clearcut conclusions about Haresh. In the novel Lata experiences this conflict about Haresh more than anyone else. After all, the man is chosen by Mrs Rupa Mehra as Lata’s prospective husband.

Haresh feels superior to other Indians just because he was educated in England. His pride results from his westernization. Therefore he does not feel superior as himself but as someone whom he is not, that is, as an ‘Englishman’. When Kedarnath asks him why he does not wear a pair of shoes that are manufactured by his own company instead of the English pair he wears: “ ‘I’m afraid my feet have got

used to these,’ said Haresh, returning the smile, though he knew as well as anyone that it was more his heart than his feet” (ASB, 222). Thus his heart has gotten used to ‘Englishness’. He has put himself in someone else’s shoes and that someone else is the British.

He feels so British that he uses English as if it was his mother tongue. He even makes his plans in English: “He got out a small card from his pocket and noted down in English” (ASB, 223). He thinks that using the English language will contribute to his superiority because most Indians believe English is “a language both of power and of prestige” (Kachru, 291). However, since Haresh is an in-between, he cannot use English in a proper way and as he makes a mixture of everything English and Indian, he mixes the language as well. For instance, although he tries to show off with his knowledge of the language, he always misquotes, as he had done in his Poetry paper at school (ASB, 224). He exaggerates his accent, calls “daal” ‘doll’ and Kanpur ‘Cawnpore’. He needs these exaggerations to seem less of an Indian. As a result he looks silly while trying to imitate them. Lata’s first impression about him is related to this in-betweenness as well: “She reflected that Haresh was not westernized in the proper sense: she sensed that in his manners and style he was a bit half-baked” (ASB, 627).

He messes everything up because he is trying to present himself as someone he is not. He is being pretentious and in doing that he looks ridiculous. A historian points out this fact about Haresh when Haresh criticizes the events at Chowk: “‘You’re Hindu, and you call it a damned temple- you should look at yourself in the

mirror. The British have left, in case you need reminding, so don't put on their airs. Damned temple, damned natives'" (ASB, 234).

Though he tries to mimic the British, Haresh cannot prevent being colonized because he is a clumsy, incompetent in-between. First he looks down on his colleagues in India, because he has been educated in England. However, this superiority does not help him when his senior Mr Rao oppresses and exploits him. His job is taken over from him and he is directed to another department of the company, although he was doing his work successfully. He is treated like that because of his proud, superior attitudes. However, when he decides to work for another company the managers of which are all Englishmen, he thinks that "he could not simply march up to the headquarters of the establishment and ask to speak to someone there" (ASB, 658). Thus his Indian side weighs heavier this time and he feels inferior.

In the Praha Shoe Company Haresh tries to find a place for himself. It is important because if he is accepted he will be the second Indian admitted to the company and this means a big step towards becoming one of 'them'. It is more important than the job itself. Haresh has one demand from the managers and that is to be accommodated in their colony. He is ready to accept a lower status and salary if only his demand for accommodation is fulfilled (ASB, 1003). He gives that much importance to this issue because if he is allowed to live among them, he will be able to identify himself with them. He does not want to be reminded of his Indian background when he is out of work. He wants to be surrounded by English people all the time. Only then will he get rid of his origins and put an end to the in-betweenness.

Although Haresh's proposal is accepted, he cannot become one of 'them'. He is not able to mimic them as "colonizers". He treats everyone as his equal and is scorned for it by his managers. He is accused of talking to Pavel Havel's driver and it was seen that the driver was sitting down. Mr Novak says: "You think that India is Europe, Mr Khanna? That there is equality between managers and staff? That everyone is at the same level?" (ASB, 1220). Haresh wants to be 'English' but forgets that he has to mimic them as "colonizers" in India and should therefore treat Indians as inferiors. However, at this point Haresh's traditional, Indian origin comes to the surface and he cannot help but respect the driver as an elder.

Arun as a complete mimic man detects in Haresh these vacillations and does not approve of him for this reason:

Neither St Stephen's nor the culture of London had had much effect on him. He dressed dressily; he lacked the social graces; and his English was oddly unidiomatic for one who had studied it at college and had lived two years in the country (ASB, 1018).

Haresh cannot imitate enough. He is too native. Thus he is in fact yearning for something unattainable and this makes him even more ridiculous and pathetic.

Haresh makes a last mistake as an in-between at his wedding. He invites Jagat Ram, a shoemaker, to his wedding. Haresh cannot understand that as an upper-class, 'Anglicized' Indian he should act like a "colonizer" and treat the rest as his idols treated the natives. Jagat Ram is aware of this:

Moved as he was, he had to refuse. The two worlds did not mix. He knew it; it was a fact of life. That a jatav from Ravidaspur should be present as a guest at

a wedding at the house of Dr Kishen Chand Seth would cause social distress that he did not wish to be the centre of(ASB, 1457).

Thus Haresh mixes the two worlds, the world of the “colonizers” and the “colonized”. He wants to belong to the former but cannot give up his habits related to the latter, and as a result is colonized himself.

Amit is, like Haresh, ‘Anglicized’ as his profession shows. However, Amit’s profession requires a greater commitment to the British, since he is a poet who writes his poems in English. Once again there is the connection between language and power. Amit, though an Indian poet, uses English language in order to express himself. This is the best example that proves he is an in-between. Said argues that “the works of even the most eccentric artist, are constrained and acted upon by society, by cultural tradition, by worldly circumstance, and by stabilizing influences like schools, libraries and governments” (1995, 201). Amit is acted upon by ‘Englishness’. These young people have all been educated in the Western style, through English language and English literature. Education is a means of domination, it was “a massive cannon in the artillery of empire” (Ashcroft et al., 1995, 425). Amit is one of those who were entrapped by means of literary studies. Viswanathan argues that the study of literature contributes to “the process of sociopolitical control” and that it has “gained enormous cultural strength through its development in a period of territorial expansion and conquest” (431). Amit thus becomes a “colonized” who is dominated by a culture that is not his. So, in fact, he is stuck between cultures.

The whole novel is ornamented with English literature: Lata studies it at school, Pran teaches it, Kabir is a member of Brahmipur Literary Society the members

of which write poems in English. They all adore English literature, read it and appreciate it. This may have its roots in psychology as well:

Recitation of literary texts thus becomes a ritual act of obedience, often performed by a child before an audience of admiring adults, who, in reciting that English tongue, speaks as if s/he were the imperial speaker/master rather than the subjectified colonial so often represented in English poetry and prose (Ashcroft et al., 1995, 426).

This act of obedience as a child may in future be replaced with a profession as in the case of Amit.

He is treated by everyone as if he was a British poet come to visit India, as if he was not one of them but someone superior. He does not complain about this situation, because after all, he lives most of the time in England and considers himself almost English. For instance, when he is talking to Lata, he gives her a lecture on the use of the language:

‘What I meant, ‘ said Amit, ‘was “I”, as opposed to “one”. If you meant the general “one”, that would be fine. But you meant “I”. I found them doing it all the time in England, and it’ll survive here long after they’ve given up that idiocy’ (ASB, 524).

He talks about English as if it was his mother tongue. He owns it.

A paradoxical matter about Amit is that he writes in English but his subject matter is India. His novel, for example, is about the Bengal Famine. So he is interested in his country, he writes about it, however he is too ‘Anglicized’ to write in any other language. When he is asked, in one of the meetings of the Literary Society, why he does not write in Bengali:

His answer was that his Bengali was not good enough for him to be able to express himself in the manner he could in English. It wasn’t a question of choice. Someone who had been trained all his life to play the sitar could not become a sarangi player because his ideology or his conscience told him to.

‘Besides,’ Amit added, ‘we are all accidents of history and must do what we are best at without fretting too much about it’ (ASB, 1369).

This reply enlightens the reader about the kind of education that Amit had. He was educated almost as an Englishman who cannot express himself in any other language. Furthermore, he believes that they should accept whom they have become without questioning it too much. He does not question his originality at all. He is happy as he is. However, this does not change the fact that he is a “colonized” and an “in-between”. He is dominated by the British culture. His life and works are under the influence of the British. He is an in-between because no matter what, he is still an Indian and, unlike Arun or Meenakshi, he does not try to be a mimic person but instead he combines the two identities and uses them separately depending on his necessities and capabilities.

Pran, similarly, is a literary person who is stuck between the culture of his native land and the culture of the country that he studies as a professional. He is too civilized a man to colonize anyone, therefore he is the one to be colonized. He is oppressed and manipulated at the university by his senior colleagues, especially by Professor Mishra. Pran’s waverings between the two cultures make him a somewhat weak character and accordingly easy to be controlled and subjugated.

At the university Pran is an open-minded educator whose primary interest is his students’ welfare. That is why he has long discussions with Professor Mishra on the subject of the syllabus. Pran wants James Joyce to be included in the syllabus and defends his idea by saying that academic studies on Joyce have increased in America. Professor Mishra finds it strange that Pran uses Americans to support his idea because

since Pran's father was one of the revolutionaries who fought for the country's independence it is odd for Pran to have a high opinion of the Americans (ASB, 56). Although Pran resists Professor Mishra's manipulations and even tells him that he would let his sister-in-law read *Ulysses* despite its inappropriety for young women (ASB, 57), he cannot show the same kind of resistance at home and marries the girl that his parents find for him. Thus he is a modern, western-educated, open-minded intellectual on one side and on the other side he is a traditional Indian man who follows the conventions of his race.

When he deals with something that is related to his job, that is, to English literature, he becomes an insubordinate. For instance, when he rebels against Professor Mishra to the surprise of his colleagues, he turns into a hearty supporter of the British and is filled with anger towards the Professor:

He is fifty-eight- he has two more years until he retires. How will I be able to put up with him for so long? A sudden murderous impulse seized Pran, whom murderous impulses never seized, and he realized his hands were trembling slightly. And all this over Joyce, he said to himself (ASB, 59).

This heartfelt defense is only for the sake of literature. However he does not feel the same urge when he is colonized by his father, by his mother-in-law or by Arun. Because at home he is an Indian and at the school he is a teacher of English. Thus he behaves like an Englishman while doing his job. His mind oscillates between the two worlds as well: "When he thought in English, it was the Ganges, rather than the Ganga, to him" (ASB, 56). He changes personality when he deals with anything related to the English language or to English literature.

His mother is aware of Pran's 'Anglicization' as well and she complains about this situation to Mrs Rupa Mehra: "...all this Angrezayat – this Englishness – has driven everything else out of his mind" (ASB, 783). She is worried because Pran lacks knowledge about their religion. Yet, he attends the rituals as an obedient son. He defies the oppressive Professor Mishra but does not challenge any of his family's demands. In one situation he is the protesting, 'Anglicized', English teacher and in the other the obedient, conventional son.

Whenever he is personated as the English teacher, he becomes powerful, strong and capable of resistance. For instance, when the Raja of Marh tries to manipulate Pran using his status in order to prevent his son's dismissal from school, Pran does not give in to his power display and rejects submission:

Your Highness, I would like to forget this conversation. But if you phone me up again at this hour without cause, or if I receive any further threats from you, I will have to report the matter to the police (ASB, 1180).

Thus Pran plays two different roles: one is the strict, self-governing man of character and the other is the mild, conventional husband and son. As the former he does not let anyone oppress him and defends his rights. However, as the latter, he cannot help agreeing to the demands of others. He marries a girl he has never seen until the wedding, he has a baby although he thinks it is not rational to bring a child into this cruel world, he cannot name his baby as he likes, he has to put up with his mother-in-law's and brother-in-law's bullyings. His personality differs at work and at home. He vacillates between these two different personalities and just like the other two characters, cannot prevent being a "colonized".

Haresh, Amit and Pran are all stuck between different identities. They do not belong completely to one nation but each is divided into two personalities. For all of them it has started with their education. They have internalized the culture they have been exposed to at school and assimilated it without giving up their native identities. As a result they are weak men with no integrity and are colonized by more powerful persons. They do not seem to be aware of either their in-between status or the fact that they are being colonized. That is why they seem contented and do not react when things do not work out the way they like.

CONCLUSION

India is a westernized country with its Gothic buildings, Christian influence, class-consciousness, cricket and polo. The West had such a deep impact on this country that some people even have two kitchens and two toilets in their houses; one Indian and the other European. They are living double-lives in all senses of the word.

Seth in *A Suitable Boy* portrays such people who live double-lives as a result of the British influence. His attitude towards his characters differs according to which group each character belongs. That is, he is more ironic and cruel towards the “colonizers” and to those who are striving hard to mimic the British. His portrayal of Arun, Agarwal, Haresh and the like is quite critical, yet he does not show any sense of compassion towards his “colonized” characters either. He is not judgemental; he makes few comments; it is only his tone that reveals his lack of sympathy for his characters’ behaviour and in some cases his anger. Thus he presents both sides of the coin almost objectively. He does not interfere much but still his tone of voice is quite angry and disapproving when narrating the stories of characters like Arun.

The characters have such relationships that it is possible to replace one component of a dual relationship with a British colonial ruler and the pattern of the relation will still be the same. The two relations, relations between the ex-ruler and

the native and relations between independent natives are that much similar to each other, because of certain characters' capacity to mimic the colonialists.

They mimic for several reasons: admiration for the British, the belief that if they are like the British they will be superior, habit of self-preservation, lack of self-identity. However, besides all these there is also the culture factor which plays a very important role in shaping people's lives. There is a great parallel between the traditional relationships of Indians and the relationships between the British and Indians as colonizers and colonized. Indians are not altogether strangers to power relations. They are culturally quite familiar with such power relations. They are used to it due to the caste system that they have been maintaining for many years. Therefore their acceptance of the British as the dominant side of a relationship and afterwards their adoption of the colonial power relations are not surprising. Even without colonialism power relations would still exist, but it would be different because there would be no mimicry of the British.

However, the fact that there is no hint of any hope for a change for the better in the novel makes the situation rather gloomy. The young generation are not promising; Lata is definitely going to be the next Mrs Rupa Mehra, Varun will keep on obeying everyone, Aparna is going to become a mimic Anglo-Indian like her mother Meenakshi etc. There are the rebels, but Maan is interested only in his own personal welfare and Malati is not capable of making radical changes since she is only one in a million. Although the novel ends with a marriage, it does not promise any hope because the marriage at the end, just like the one at the beginning, is one that connotes the power that is being used on a young woman so forcefully.

As Indian culture bears a great resemblance to Turkish culture in terms of its traditions and conventions, and since Turkish people have been experiencing the same clash of Western and Eastern cultures, it is easier for the Turkish reader to understand the conflicts that Seth's characters go through. Turkish people experience the same kind of power relations although they have never been colonized by any country. Empathy results from the resemblance of the two cultures. Furthermore, following Foucault's theories on power relations, every relationship is a relation of power in which one dominates the other and therefore these power struggles are universal. However, in India, as Seth's novel very well displays, these struggles occur as the imitation of the West's power over the East. Therefore, although other standpoints are possible, Indian culture makes it necessary to deal with the power relations as the mimicry of the British. What would have happened if Indians had never been colonized by the British remains an open-ended question, but Turkey's present situation as an Eastern country with a similar culture may give one a clue.

A Suitable Boy is a rich and thought provoking novel which can be approached from various angles. The subject of a following study on this novel could be the power relations between men and women.

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