



A Conflict Arising from the Interplay of Cultural and Hybrid Identities in Wajahat Ali's "The Domestic Crusaders"

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Abstract

The present research study presents in depth analysis of Wajahat Ali's play "The Domestic Crusaders" (2005) which is, concerned with hybrid identity and cultural identity and its effects on the lives of inflicted persons. The story revolves around a Muslim Pakistani American family that is caught up in a serious cultural conflict and consists of three generations: the parents, grandparents, and the younger generation. The younger generation, having partially abandoned parental norms and embraced Western principles, struggles to balance the intricacies of straddling two very different cultural systems, while the seniors obstinately uphold their traditional cultural ideas. The play depicts a palpable tension emerges as the older generation clings persistently to its cultural heritage, while on the other hand the younger members undergo a transformative process and adepts to the imprints of western cultures. The young minds, deviating from parental traditions, resulting in the formulation of a distinct identity. This merging of traits from both parental and Western cultures flowed into a mixed culture which is termed a "Hybrid Identity." It is within this hybridization that a conflict arises, as the newly crafted identity contradicts the traditional cultural moorings.

The narrative exposes a grand generational and cultural clash, igniting the struggles of individuals between established traditions and the appealing of a western ethos. Through the characters' experiences, the play encapsulates the complexities inherent in navigating dual identities, offering a compelling portrayal of the conflicts that arise when cultural values collide within the intricate tapestry of familial relationships.

Keywords

Shifting Identities, Cultural Identity, Hybrid Identity, Third Space, FOB, Third Cultural Kid.

Introduction

The present research study constitutes a textual and thematic analysis of the comic play "The Domestic Crusaders" written by Wajahat Ali, a Muslim American playwright originally from Pakistan. The play displays a distressing exploration of hybrid identity and the challenges confronted by Pakistani nationals residing in Western nations especially in USA after 9/11 horrific incident. Written in the aftermath of the 9/11 incident, the play premiered in 2005 as a two-act production at the Durham Studio Theatre, Berkley University, California. The title, "The Domestic Crusaders," serves as a prescient descriptor of the pivotal events within the narrative, encapsulating the essence of each character and their inherent nature. According to Ali, every character assumes the role of a crusader in their own right.

The play presents in a Kodak pattern the upheavals in the approaches and life perspectives of non-native dwellers in compact spectra. The play unfolds as a snapshot of a day in the life of a sophisticated Pakistani American Muslim family. Comprising six diverse and distinctive members, the family congregates at their home to commemorate the twenty-first birthday of the youngest member.

The characters struggle to maintain their distinct identities and experiences inside a close-knit family while promoting a modern Islamic lifestyle in a non-Muslim nation against the backdrop of post-9/11 America. At the same time, Wajahat Ali adds components that help family members with divergent ideologies to overcome their ideological divide. The play portrays, in graphic detail, the ongoing discrimination against Pakistanis living abroad on the basis of race and ethnicity, both historically and currently. The purpose of this portrayal is to make the audience more conscious of and sensitive to the injustices done to Pakistani Muslims living in the US. Moreover, "The Domestic Crusaders" sheds light on the characters' hybrid identities. The central figures embody hybrid identities, navigating between cultural ideologies and concurrently existing with two distinct identities. This duality prompts an identity crisis in the minds of these hybrid individuals, leading to internal conflicts and, at times, violence.

Statement of the Research Problem

There have been available considerable research studies and its drastic effects on hybrid identity and cultural identity individually. There is a dire need of research study to evaluate and investigate the crucial tussle and conflict between these two identities and the ensuing consequences. The coexistence of these two identities often gives rise to internal and external identity crises, precipitating conflicts that have yet to be comprehensively explored in existing research.

Research Objectives

The following were the targeted objectives of the research:

1. To explore the factors contributing to the emergence of an identity crisis.
2. To the consequences of the conflict between cultural identity and hybrid identity, using the character of Fatima in the play "The Domestic Crusaders" as a focal point.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are:

1. Does Fatima personify hybridism in Wajahat Ali's play "The Domestic Crusaders"?
2. How does hybrid cultural identity impact the lives of overseas Pakistanis residing in the United States?

Delimitation and Limitation of the Study

The present research paper deals with the singular play by Wajahat Ali with the title of "The Domestic Crusaders". Within "The Domestic Crusaders," multifacial issues are intermingled but this study specifically delimits its focus to the investigation of identity crisis emerging from the conflict between cultural and hybrid identities. The aim of the study is look into the issue with explorative manner to highlight the existence of this particular issue in the contemporary world.

Significance of the Study

The research study is a useful document for future researchers to abreast with the consequences of identity crisis in western society with special reference with USA. The study instigates the importance and need of an analysis of identity crisis through the detailed scanning through Homi K. Bhabha's theory of Hybridity, the research highlights that the conflict between cultural identity and hybrid identity is a significant concern in contemporary society that requires proactive addressing.

Literature Review

The term "Hybridity" initially found its roots in the field of Biology, originating from the Latin word "Hybrida" translates to "the offspring of a freeman." When the term "hybrid" was first used in the early seventeenth century, it meant, in terms of biology, the combining of many components or species to create a new creature with a variety of characteristics. The phrase eventually moved beyond its biological roots and entered the field of linguistics to denote the blending of various languages to produce a new linguistic variety. The term 'Hybrid' encompasses not just language and biology but also tradition and culture.

The term "Hybridity" is an amalgamation of two words, Hybrid and Identity used by notable biologists, a Homi K. Bhabha in his book "The Location Of Culture" (1994), a collection of essays that explores culture from a post-colonial perspective, specifically within the context of language and culture (Kraidy, 2005, ix). As a result, Hybridity has become a pivotal concept, contributing to the understanding of cultural dynamics and identity formation, particularly in the post-colonial framework.

Strong and Kapchan expanded the scope of Hybridity beyond its biological context by importing and asserting its integration into cultures, people, and discourses in a dominant shape. They

evoked the drastic influences as the process mixes differences in similar minds and cultures (Kapchan & Strong, 2009, p.240).

Bhabha (1994) and Clifford (1998) highlighted the robust influences of hybridism in her notable literary work "On Theoretical Impurity". She emphasized the scrutiny of cultural blending patterns to highlight and sustain cultural changes, advocating for the use of tactics such as multi-locality and contrast instead of outright merging (Strong, 2006).

In the realm of Post-Colonial criticism, Hybrid identity is intricately connected to various significant terms, including Bhabha's conceptualization of hybridity in Linguistics. Bhabha also introduced other noteworthy concepts like 'Ambivalence,' 'The Stereotype,' 'The Uncanny,' 'Mimicry,' 'The Nation,' and 'Otherness.' Bhabha referred to Hybrid identity as "In-betweenness" in his book "The Location of Culture" (1994).

In cultural criticism, the concept of Hybridity, as articulated by Bhabha and highlighted by Mizutani (2008), is deemed particularly noteworthy. Mizutani characterizes the position of Hybridity as "a currency for theoretical debate" (p.5), underscoring its pivotal role in his work. The concept of Hybridity, intricately linked to Bhabha's "third space," forms a complex relationship with other elements of his theoretical framework.

Hybridity, in essence, entails the formation of a 'Hybrid Identity' resulting from the amalgamation of diverse cultures, existing in an "in-between" state. This intermediate position engenders a partial double view in individuals, facilitating a nuanced understanding of different cultures and racial perspectives. W.E.B. Du Bois' concept of 'Double Consciousness' aligns with this hybrid moment, suggesting that Hybrid Identity emerges contextually rather than persisting consistently. Contextual nurturing or pressure brings forth the two or more parts of a Hybrid entity, creating a third entity that simultaneously dismantles and merges the original components. Robert Young, a Post-Colonial scholar, terms this phenomenon the "Third Space," contextualizing identity within culture.

According to Judith Butler, identity is made up of a sequence of habitual behaviours that people participate in to maintain a socially constructed identity. Prabhu (2007) argues that dominant types of hybridity allow for power subversion and reshaping and provide an escape from "Binary Thinking." She makes a distinction between hybridity as a theoretical idea and as a social and political reality. According to her, the world values hybridity now because of its diversity, uniqueness, and heterogeneity. Prabhu explains hybridity in post-colonial studies, citing its close connections to multiculturalism, globalisation, and ethnicity in post-colonial theory while drawing on both the English and French vocabulary. Her investigation goes into the social environment of the theory and how various components of the theory (Creolization & Diaspora) are located. Clark (2009), in her examination of Nicholas Wolf's ideas within the context of the British Empire in her book on Hybridity in languages, commends Wolf's creative analysis. She highlights his blending of jokes and puns from English and Irish languages. Clark contends that historians have observed an affinity between the Irish language and the English language, characterizing it as a comparison between "dominant contemporary and a beleaguered traditional way of speaking" (Clark, 2009, p.1).

Yazdiha (2010), a prominent figure in Race and Ethnicity studies, communal movements, immigration, discrimination, and cultural practices, acknowledges the existence of Hybridity in modern society. She emphasizes that cultural Hybridity predates the prominence of Post-Colonial theory and has permeated every aspect of society. According to Yazdiha, Hybridity serves as "an instrument for deconstructing boundaries" and contributes to social discrimination based on differences in language, race, and nation (p.34). She describes contemporary culture as a multifaceted blend of ethnic aspects, portraying it as "Blended-Patch-worked and layered one upon another" (p.32). Yazdiha views culture as a liberated entity, free from restrictions, and defines it as "Hybrid and interstitial, moving between spaces of meaning" (p.34). In conclusion, she posits that Hybridity involves the assimilation of symbols and cultural practices from both colonizers and the colonized.

In his exploration of "Hybridity and Third Space," Meredith (1998) delved into the concepts of Third space and hybridity, offering initial insights into their manipulation of commandments and institutions in New Zealand. Meredith labels Hybridity as "a term of abuse" (p. 23) within the historical context of cross-breed individuals. He cites Rutherford (1990), who posits that "all forms of culture are continually in the process of Hybridity" (Rutherford, 1990, p.25).

Vuornos (2015) also examines the concept of Third Space in a novel, tracing Cultural Hybridity into this realm. She contends that new meanings gradually emerge as traditional cultural stereotypes are surpassed, marking the point of articulation of cultural differences without hierarchies. Vuornos (2015) elucidates the boundaries of the Third Space, noting that they are outlined and replaced by an interim experience.

Foreman and Whetten (2002) interpret multiple identities in organizations, scrutinizing how the management faculty navigates challenges in the professional sphere, resolves conflicts, and brings about changes. They explore how organizational identity intersects with social identity, determining how individuals identify themselves with organizations. The researchers develop a model to identify multiple organizational identities, operating in two ways: (1) by analysing organizational identity in comparison to an individual's self-identity and (2) by comparing the organization's current identity status to the one it prefers. Additionally, they define a Hybrid Identity Organization as one composed of two or more kinds that are unable to coexist. According to Whetten and Foreman (2002), "An organization with multiple units is not merely an organization; rather, it reckons itself (and others reckon it at the same time) to be two different types of corporations" (p.625).

For a more nuanced understanding of organizational identity, Brickson (2005) contends that stakeholders primarily maintain their identity within an organization, as their work is predominantly identity-oriented, showcasing identity construction. He categorizes identities into three groups: "Relational identity, Individualistic identity, and collectivistic identity" (p.580). Brickson's assessment revolves around the examination of the feasibility construct and its characteristics, revealing the intricate relationship with both internal and external stakeholders. Additionally, Brickson argues that in various types of organizations, both hybrid and pure identities commonly coexist.

Cultural hybridity is not limited to novels; it is also obvious in dramas and plays. Cakirtas (2017) investigates cultural identity in a Turkish play titled "Kunye" by Necip Fazil Kısakurek. Cakirtas aims to present the realities associated with the political, cultural, and communal context of Turkey in his article, "The Dramatization of Cultural Hybridity and 'In-Between' Turkey in the play Kunye by Fazil." His nationalistic spirit successfully portrays Turkey's transitional epoch, depicting the country as experiencing a novel identity. Cakirtas asserts the emergence of cultural hybridity in Turkey during this transitional stage—an "in-between" phase where some characters embrace "westernization" (p.3), while others uphold the "old-rotten" (p.6) cultural practices of the country. In this transitional phase, people become hybrid and find themselves in-between. Fazil's characters emphasize the struggles of a "double identity" (p.8), replacing the 'in-between' phenomenon as described by Bhabha (Cakirtas, 2017).

Lo and Gilbert (1997) examined hybridity from a monodramatic perspective, analysing it through "Dialogic Devices" (p.3). Their analysis focused on four monodramas by women from Canada, Singapore, and Malaysia. They explored how women's bodies become specific sites for the propagation of culture, leading to what they term "hybrid subjectivity" (p.4). In their assessment, hybridity is described as "positive contamination" (Hellen Gilbert and Jacqueline Lo, 1997).

Berry et al. (2006, 71) briefly touch upon "cultural identity," which encompasses both 'ethnic identity' and 'national identity,' creating a challenge in resolving issues related to cultural identity. Consequently, individuals in such cases may display "identity diffusion" (2006, 5), experiencing an immigrant-like feeling of uncertainty about their place in society and an inability to connect with the larger community. Identity diffusion reflects a lack of commitment to a purpose or direction in immigrant lives (Berry et al., 2010, 104).

Bill Ashcroft and Berry et al. discuss cultural identity in "The Empire Writes Back," noting that despite many nations gaining independence and shedding colonial status, they find themselves in an economic and cultural dilemma, grappling with the on-going shaping and reshaping of their lives.

This process of forming a new identity leads to a conflict between cultural identity and hybrid identity. Wajahat Ali, a Pakistani playwright, captures these complexities in his play "The Domestic Crusaders," the first significant work about Muslim Americans post-9/11. The play portrays a multigenerational immigrant Muslim American family striving to preserve their distinctive experiences and identity while navigating the challenges of modern Islamic life in a non-Muslim country.

Laurie Goodstein's study, "A Pakistani American Family Caught in Some Cultural Crossfire" (2009), suggests that there is a third element contributing to the conflict (Laurie Goodstein, 2009).

Similarly, Afsin Yurdakul (2009), in her study, refers to Wajahat Ali's comic yet poignant play "The Domestic Crusaders" as one of the first depicting Muslim life in the United States. The play explores the experiences of a migrant family akin to "Crusaders," where each character crusades to assert their voice, giving rise to an identity conflict (Afsin Yurdakul, 2009).

In a comprehensive review by Devi Barker (2010), the SF-Muslim examiner recounts the pleasure of attending a two-act play by Wajahat Ali at Durham Studio Theatre, Berkeley University, on a Saturday. Barker draws parallels between the play and 'The Fiddler On The Roof,' noting that while the latter centers around a Jewish family and the Russian Revolution, Ali's play focuses on a Muslim family amid the War on Terror. "The Domestic Crusaders" delves into various themes such as gender roles, religion, ambition, career, racism, and the hidden secrets within the family. The play grapples with the everyday experiences encountered by Pakistani families in Western countries. Importantly, the narrative extends beyond the Pakistani context, offering a reflection of the stories of all immigrants.

Methodology of the Research

In the contemporary world, researchers pursue knowledge not only for personal enlightenment but also to contribute to the community. Every day, thousands of texts are scrutinized in the research realm, encompassing traditional academic texts and research journals that often overlook the significance of both moving and static images. However, static and moving images, such as paintings and plays, are recognized as artistic expressions serving as tools for entertainment and education within the community. A play is a distilled representation of life in a community, shedding light on social issues prevalent among all humans. In today's context, plays are regarded as texts, making them a viable source of information akin to other textual documents.

The nature of the present study is descriptive, evaluative and qualitative. It is focused on the investigation of hybridism and consequences of the people using the play "The Domestic Crusaders" by a Pakistani playwright Wajahat Ali. The primary data source is the text of the play, while secondary data collection involves consulting library books, online resources, dissertations, journals, online reviews, and newspaper articles about the play. The study's focus is not solely on demonstrating how textual and thematic analyses are conducted but on interpreting the profound message embedded within the text. The nature of the study is qualitative, and the notions expressed are highly subjective. Consequently, various assessments are conducted during the analysis of the play.

The research tool of the Textual Analysis Technique has been applied for analysis of primary and secondary data. Halliday and Hassan (1976) conceptualized text as a semantic unit, emphasizing its status as a unit of meaning rather than form. In their view, a text is a linguistic unit encompassing any written or spoken passage, regardless of length, that forms a unified whole—a unit of language in use. They argue that text is a functional form of language, a tool that communicates something about someone.

Catherine Belsey's approach to Textual Analysis is adopted for exploring and extracting meanings from a text. According to Belsey, viewers and readers have the capacity to derive meaning of their choice from a text, whether visual or written. She contends that the interpretation of the text by the reader may diverge from the author's views. Belsey suggests that researchers should seek new and distinct information independently, without being overly influenced by others' perspectives. Furthermore, she encourages researchers to prioritize primary data (text), as an excessive reliance on secondary data can hinder the development of a singular opinion (Belsey, 2013).

In addition, the researcher has incorporated the Thematic Analysis Technique to delve into the themes that foreshadow certain events in the story.

Theoretical Framework of the research

This study applies the Theory of Hybridity proposed by Homi K. Bhabha, as introduced in his book "The Location of Culture," to analyse the identities of the main characters in the play "The Domestic Crusaders." Bhabha's Hybridity theory holds a paramount position in cultural criticism, and in this research, it will be juxtaposed with the narrative of the play. Utilizing the concept of Hybridity, the researcher seeks to understand how the characters maintain their Hybrid Identities, which Bhabha conceptualizes as "something different." The study relies on textual analysis, where specific elements are examined to represent a Hybrid Identity. It scrutinizes how the characters converse, live, and express their opinions, delving into the choices made by the main characters to discover their true

selves. The paper expounds on Hybridity and concludes on its perception in contemporary Pakistan, drawing insights from the dialogues among the characters in the play. The nature of the study is evaluative and analytical, centered around a play by a Pakistani writer based in America.

Thematic Analysis of the Research Study

A major contribution to the knowledge of theme analysis has been made by Hayfield, Braun, Terry, and Braun's book "The Handbook of Research Methods in Health and Social Sciences" (2019). As to their assertion, thematic analysis is a methodical process that entails the identification and arrangement of themes within a dataset. It makes it possible for the researcher to understand both the general and shared meanings that the text conveys. The themes used in the text make the patterns in which a topic is introduced or addressed visible. The most useful and adaptable method for addressing research topics in qualitative research is frequently thought to be thematic analysis. As for the play "The Domestic Crusaders," the story is told through the representation of characteristics associated with cultural identity and its effects.

Analysis of Data and Discussion

"The Domestic Crusaders," authored by Wajahat Ali, stands as a testament to his perspective as a Pakistani American playwright. The genesis of this two-act play traces back to the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 incident, with Wajahat Ali prompted by his teacher Ishmael Reed to address and counter the misperceptions of Islam prevailing in the American psyche. The play, with its multigenerational portrayal, encapsulates the dynamics of the older generation (grandparents), the parental generation, and the younger generation (children), featuring six central characters: Hakim (the grandfather), Salman (father of three), Khulsoom (mother of three), Salahuddin (27-year-old son), Fatima (24-year-old daughter), and Ghafoor (21-year-old son). Premiered in 2005 at Durham Studio Theatre, Berkeley University, the play unfolds a rich narrative.

The opening scene sets the tone as Khulsoom, the mother, listens to the 'Adhaan' (Muslim call to prayer) on the Clock Radio, later switching to a station broadcasting classic music by Tom Jones. Singing along with Tom Jones, Khulsoom sets the stage for a family gathering in celebration of Ghafoor's 21st birthday. This familial reunion becomes the focal point where cultural, religious, linguistic, communal, and political dimensions collide, creating an intricate tapestry of complexities. Wajahat Ali's narrative skilfully navigates through these collisions, unravelling a nuanced exploration of what it means to find a sense of belonging in a foreign land. The play masterfully reflects the cultural intricacies and the reverberations of this complexity on the characters.

Identity Crisis in "The Domestic Crusaders"

The examined play intricately delves into the cultural intricacies among the three generations within the family, comprising six individuals. Each member grapples with asserting their perspectives for acknowledgment and seeks acceptance of their distinctive identities. Mercer posits that "Identity becomes an issue only when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent, and stable is displaced by the practice of unpredictability and diffidence." Consequently, it evolves into a challenging matter, giving rise to conflict. Similarly, the characters in "The Domestic Crusaders" find themselves entangled in an identity crisis, making it a central concern.

The rapid growth of immigration and brain drain has led to the establishment of diverse cultures and hybridism which is filtering its deep rooted effects to the concept building of homelessness among the immigrants. People grapple with a distressing sense of homelessness, torn between two conflicting cultures, a state aptly termed "Un-homeliness" by Bhabha. This sense of un-homeliness leads to what some post-colonial critics refer to as "Double Consciousness." The Domestic Crusaders, as portrayed by Wajahat, find themselves in a dilemma and crisis of identity, mirroring the broader issues prevalent in today's multicultural societies.

Both the elder and younger generations in the play exhibit signs of identity crisis. The first act, "Tom Jones and the Biryani Surprise," opens with a furious argument between the mother and daughter about a seemingly unimportant issue. The 24-year-old daughter, Fatima, calls her mother a "FOB" (fresh off the boat) and calls her outdated for listening to music composed by 90s musician Tom Jones, which Fatima considers to be out of style. "Ugh, I hear old people music," says Fatima in Scene 1, Act 1 to convey her contempt. Any alternative to Tom Jones, please, Ami, stop it.

The reference to Khulsoom attending a Tom Jones concert in traditional Shalwar Kameez attire becomes a point of contention, with Fatima mocking her for being an "FOB." She remarks,

"Abu took you all to Tom Jones concert. You and grandmother in Shalwar Kameez and Dupatta, the only desi FOBs there."

In response to being labelled an "FOB," Khulsoom reacts with irritation but also asserts pride in her identity. She defends herself by stating,

"That's right—we wore our clothes. And why not? Your ami is an FOB and proud of it. Fresh... Fresh on the... what is it?"

This interaction highlights the clash between traditional cultural values and the evolving perspectives of the younger generation, contributing to the overarching theme of identity crisis in the play.

Analysing these lines, it is apparent that Khulsoom, who seemingly symbolizes traditional Pakistani culture, also harbours an attraction for Western culture, although she denies admitting it. Following criticism from her daughter Fatima, Khulsoom retaliates by criticizing Fatima for attending rallies instead of focusing on her law school studies and discussing feminism. According to Khulsoom, Fatima, a 24-year-old still single woman, lacks suitors because she is not interested in acquiring traditional cooking skills for her future husband. The issue of marriage proposals and marrying young is considered a significant matter by the parental generation, while the younger generation views it as normal. This difference in perspective results in a clash between the mother and daughter, highlighting the generational gap between the older and younger generations.

Similar to Fatima, the elder son Salahuddin, who has rejected all traditions and identifies himself as an independent individual, is solely interested in economics and his own business. He mocks the on-going squabble between his mother and sister in the opening scene, calling it the "battle of Hijabi versus Non-Hijabi round one." Salahuddin, embodying a Western lifestyle and believing in the American Dream, distances himself from family traditions, including forgetting his father Salman's contact number. He engages in a clash of interests with his family, particularly his father, and adopts an American way of life, including flirting with white girls and wearing designer jeans and belts. When offered Lamb Biryani by Khulsoom, Salahuddin refuses, citing it gives him gas and bad breath, indicating his disinterest and clash with the traditional culture upheld by the older generation.

While Salahuddin represents a new identity conflicting with the cultural one, he criticizes his sister Fatima for her feminist ideas and encourages her to conform to traditional expectations, adding to the tension within the family. These domestic clashes contribute to a generation gap among the multi-layered generations of the family. In "The Domestic Crusaders," each character creates a distinct identity, leading to conflicts of views, ideas, and ideologies. This identity crisis extends beyond the confines of overseas Pakistani households, permeating their social, political, and economic lives.

Cultural Identity Vs Hybrid Identity

In the contemporary world, grappling with an identity crisis, Ashcroft, in "The Empire Writes Back," attributes this dilemma between Cultural Identity and Hybrid Identity to colonialism. Despite gaining geographical independence through decolonization, many nations remain culturally and economically subjugated due to the dominance of the majority ethnic group. This cultural dominance leads to the creation of diverse cultural identities that clash with existing ones, exemplified by the conflict between Tom Jones and The Biryani in act 1 of the play.

Khulsoom, in this instance, concurrently embodies two cultural ideals. She represents her Eastern identity in the first scene by covering her head with a dupatta as a symbol of respect during Adhaan. She shows off her Western identity after Adhaan by taking off her drape, hanging it around her neck, and turning up the Radio Clock so she can hear Tom Jones's timeless songs. In an effort to unite the family, she simultaneously prepared Lamb Biryani as a birthday surprise for her son Ghafoor, demonstrating her steadfast commitment to her cultural worldview. During her arguments with Fatima, Khulsoom appears steadfast in her cultural practices and identity, accepting the label of an FOB (fresh off the boat) and showcasing herself as a skilled housewife dedicated to cooking traditional dishes for her family. Khulsoom's appearance in the play becomes a representation of her cultural identity.

Contrastingly, Fatima, the daughter, can be seen as a hybrid character. While she typically wears a hijab, covering her head, she also sports designer jeans and cardigans, which are unconventional in Pakistani culture. She criticizes her mother when asked to learn traditional cooking

for her future husband and consider marrying a young, stable, Pakistani Muslim man at a young age, reflecting the clash between cultural expectations and her hybrid identity.

Fatima: Ami, for the last time, I really don't care what "men" like. Muslim men are all boorish, sexually frustrated, horny juveniles. Plus, we all know they don't like "a good Muslim girl who can cook." All these FOB guys want is a good Muslim girl with light skin tone, an MD degree, long hair, stunning looks, among her other assets, and who must cook like their mother. Life doesn't revolve around marriage. Tell that to your gossipy aunty squad.

According to Fatima, life extends beyond marriage, and there are numerous other aspects to explore. She holds the belief that a woman's good fortune is not solely tied to marriage, and she remains indifferent to men's preferences.

Fatima adopts a liberal perspective towards Black people, openly socializing with them in town, a fact that disapproves of her mother, Khulsoom. For instance, when discussing her interactions with Black Muslims: Fatima: It's not a big deal, Mom. Blacks are people too, and they are Muslims.

In response to her mother's discriminatory views about Black Muslims in America, Fatima emphasizes that skin colour should not be a basis for discrimination; instead, Blacks are people deserving of respect. This creates a contradiction in views between Fatima and her mother, reflecting a generational gap. Analysing the psyche of characters from distinct generations, a sense of double consciousness, or what Bhabha referred to as "Un-homeliness," becomes apparent. This situation is also described as "in-betweenness." This double consciousness and in-betweenness initiate a transition in cultural identity, reflecting the concept of shifting identities and creating a third space where individuals seek to define their existence and anchor their identity.

Fatima as an Embodiment of Hybrid Identity

Hybridism and its effects are displayed through an illustrative instance of this clash is when her mother instructs her to fetch onions, and Fatima begins searching in the fridge. In Western settings, items are often canned and preserved in the fridge, leading her to look for onions there, whereas in Eastern kitchens, onions are typically found in vegetable trays. Though seemingly trivial, this incident hints at a broader concept: the character grapples with an internal clash of identities, navigating between the one they were born into and the one they have constructed for themselves. When scolded by her mother for not finding the onions, Fatima retorts, "This is not my house. This is your house. I only come here on the weekends." Much like children of Western parents, Salman and Khulsoom's kids are not permanently residing in the family house, living independently and only meeting their families on occasions.

In Act 2, Scene 3 (The History of the Masala Chaye), when Fatima learns about her grandfather's actions in the past and the challenges her grandparents faced during the partition of Pakistan and India in 1947, she expresses a sense of disgust towards her own family history. In denial, she disassociates herself from it by stating:

This is not my history. My history is just being an American Muslim who is in law school and the worst thing she has ever done is to be arrested for protesting and standing up for what she believes in.

Fatima, a law school student and activist advocating for the legal rights of individuals, particularly women, has been arrested for participating in a rally. She engages in arguments with her mother about the traditional expectations of learning to cook and marrying a Pakistani Muslim man. In Fatima's perspective, life's purpose extends beyond cooking for a husband and marriage; there are other meaningful pursuits. Additionally, she holds progressive views, considering Black Muslims as equals and rejecting her mother's disapproval of her association with them. Fatima, unlike traditional oriental children, openly criticizes her mother, deeming her views obtuse. Despite embracing some aspects of Western culture, Fatima doesn't fully adopt American customs, remaining in an in-between or hybrid stage, aligning with Kraidy's concept of Hybridity in Wajahat's major characters from "The Domestic Crusaders."

Hybridity in the Domestic Crusaders

In "The Domestic Crusaders," cultural hybridity and fragmentation permeate every aspect of the play, from the settings to the characters' clothing and dialogues. The play unfolds in a contemporary subaltern home, featuring an open kitchen area leading to the family room, with a Middle Eastern coffee table in the living room. The décor, blending American and oriental designs, vividly illustrates the hybrid aesthetic of the family's residence to the audience or readers.

Upon examining the characters' external appearances, American fashion influences their outfits significantly. For instance, Fatima dons a stylish hijab and designer jeans, resembling Salahuddin, who opts for designer pants, banana republic business-type shirts, and Versace belts. Ghafoor, while wearing Western attire, also sports a black kufi (Muslim skullcap), symbolizing his Islamic identity.

Salman, the father, is portrayed wearing a white Hans's undershirt. Delving into the characters' attitudes, the opening scene features Khulsoom, the mother, playfully moving to the clock radio broadcasting the Adhaan, turning it off, and switching to a station playing classic music by Tom Jones. She sings along and enjoys the music. This dual manifestation in appearance and attitudes underscores the characters' struggle to navigate their identities in contrast to American culture. Through this portrayal, Wajahat directs the audience's and readers' attention to the bicultural, fragmented nature of the characters in "The Domestic Crusaders," revealing their sense of identity loss and their on-going struggle to establish a fixed identity.

Homi K. Bhabha's concept of Mimicry, in relation to multiculturalism, posits that Mimicry is the consequence of the doubling of things or concepts in a cultural context where one culture dominates another. Under this influence, certain individuals may attempt to mimic the dominant culture. The characters in Wajahat Ali's works resonate with Bhabha's concept of Mimicry. They imitate American culture but do not fully assimilate it, nor do they entirely embrace their own parental culture. When their efforts to integrate into the influential Western culture become weary and go unrecognized, they revert to what they find comfortable. They adopt specific traits from their parental culture and others from the dominant culture, thus forging a new identity for themselves. This new identity aligns with the concept of the Third Cultural Kid, which is not firmly rooted in either the parental or the dominant culture. Therefore, the third cultural kid shapes a novel identity by amalgamating traits from both cultures to which they are exposed at different times. This phenomenon is evident in Ali's "Domestic Crusaders," where all the younger generation kids have seemingly crafted distinct identities for themselves. However, upon introspection, they find themselves torn between these two cultural identities. This new identity intermittently clashes with one's cultural identity, giving rise to a Domestic Crusade.

Conclusion

Wajahat Ali hilariously depicts the enormous impact of these difficulties on the personalities of the characters in his play "The Domestic Crusaders," which discusses fundamental challenges experienced by Pakistani Muslims living abroad. Ali attempts to depict the brutal reality of life in his investigation of the Domestic Crusaders through fictional characters. A greater insight is provided by examining different scenes and dialogues through the application of textual and theme analysis. There are other instances throughout the play like this that let scholars evaluate and decipher the characters' blended identities.

The lives of a family of six are shown in this poignant and hilarious story, which also provides insights into their identity crisis issues. The experiences of hybrid people in modern-day Pakistan are similar to those of persons like Fatima, Ghafoor, and Salahuddin in this study.

In their quest for a stable identity, these individuals adopt specific traits from their parental culture and others from Western culture, crafting an in-between identity that goes unrecognized by either culture. The clash of these two cultural identities gives rise to a transition, resulting in shifting identities. Consequently, a fragmented and new identity emerges among the children, fragile in nature which is unable to sustain the blows of heterogeneous cultures and concepts. The fact is surfaced that the major characters in Wajahat's play evolved a third cultural identity that defies extremes and have lost their fixed identity. This in-between identity is identified as a Hybrid identity, reflecting the struggles of most overseas Pakistanis who struggle their utmost to safeguard themselves against it and maintain a singular and native identity.

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