

Identity Crisis in Amithav Ghosh's "Sea of Poppies"

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Abstract

The current study examines the individual's quest of representing themselves in different scenarios. The characters in Amitav Ghosh novel '*Sea of Poppies*' strive to reconstruct their identity by hiding their name, caste, culture, and race are finally seen restarting their lives in a new way.

(Keywords: Identity, colonialism, self- invention, oppression)

Identity development is a salient factor in this novel it is influenced through the ethico-political and socio-economic dynamics that continuously change characters' roles that fight to rebuild new identity in new surroundings. Colonial upheavals interrupt the contours of the roles assumed through persons in the social context. A superficial analyze of the novel may provide the influence that it is a historic novel set in the colonial period as it records the dramatic turns and destinies befalling the major protagonist and her interaction with a hodgepodge of other with whom she strikes from land to river climatically travel through sea. But the creation has a deeper grade that Ghosh has effortlessly long past to sea depths through cautiously shedding its social, financial and political layers and at a still deeper level,

the metaphysical. The episodes which observe the major character, Deeti stresses at one level, the battle between capitalism and socialism; at some other level, the narrative appears to be a conflict for the hierarchical power. Deeti can also be viewed to transform herself into a new identification, permitting for meta-fictional reflection and an acceptance of destinies as indicated in her decision to marry Kalua who rescued her from sati.

Even then she did not feel herself to be living in the same sense as before: a curious feeling, of joy mixed with resignation, crept into her heart, for it was as if she really died and been delivered betimes in rebirth, to her next life: “She had shed the body of the old Deeti, with the burden of its karma; she had paid the price her stars had demanded of her, and was free now to create a new destiny as she willed, with whom she chose..”(SOP 178).

It looks that Ghosh’s manner of setting up Deeti’s identity in his narrative is a two dimensional process. On the one hand, he combines and imaginatively interprets and interweaves the textual traces from the pages of Sir Gierson’s diary. Gierson mentions in this historical report that he had encountered with the father of a woman coolie in a village along the Ganges noting that the man “denied having any such relative, and probably she had gone wrong and been disowned by him” (Bahadur). This diary offers only a little reference of this woman with a processing number, while Ghosh tries to recreate and fill the blanks left through the archives with his creativeness as a novelist and with impulses as an anthropologist.

On the other hand, in the method of narration, Deeti’s character is developed as a product of its origins and circumstances; is also a method of self-invention. Moreover, the two elements are integrally associated with regard to the attention and building of identity. According to Singh “Though Deeti assumes another name and caste thus erases her caste

identity, she is distinctly recognizable for hereditary caste characteristics.” The significance of her new identity ‘Aditi’ suggests to a fabulous Hindu goddess who releases from sin and to a person having a deep internal desire to use her power in management and to have private independence. The management traits that Deeti possess can be related to Bass transformational chief who creates great change in the life of people. The followers of such a chief sense trust, admiration, loyalty and recognition for the leader who affords an inspiring vision and supply them an identity. Towards her fellow people on the ship, Deeti’s behavior is a conventional though of a truthful leader. Soon she comes to be known as bhauji and for many she is a friend, protector and confidant. It occurs naturally, as she takes accountability and speaks for truth and justice. Even Deeti shoulders the accountability of guarding the single women like Munia, Sarju and Heeru throughout their trip to Mauritius.

The central theme that runs through the novel is identity. Throughout it we examine how a person’s identity can be described through unique aspects, which includes appearance, family, relationships, men, oppression and liberation, motherhood, and age. The novel explores the devastating outcomes of colonialism on individual’s lives, and how it has penalties on the rest of their lives.

Work Cited

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